

Bay Area singles are lining up to pay \$1 million for a dating service
The program is available to 3 people, and more than 100 have already applied

By Timothy Karoff, Culture Reporter

Val Brennan of Three Day Rule on Shark Tank Sept. 21, 2012.

Kelsey McNeal/Disney General Entertainment Con

True love, we know, is priceless. Connection isn't a commodity, and its value can't be reduced to a monetary sum. Even so, it turns out scores of wealthy relationship seekers are willing to drop a million dollars for a soulmate.

On Tuesday, Austin-based matchmaking company Three Day Rule launched a dating service called Million Dollar Matchmaking, which costs — take a wild guess — a million dollars. The service is available to only three clients, and the steep cost doesn't seem to deter customers; more than 100 people applied for the service on its first day, CEO Adam Cohen-Aslatei told SFGATE, and about 15% of the applicants are from the San Francisco Bay Area.

It's the sort of thing that raises eyebrows. After all, how could a matchmaking service cost seven figures? Who lines up for this?

Cohen-Aslatei described the service as a "one-year intensive dating program," in which Three Day Rule manages practically every aspect of clients' dating lives. The company assigns each client a dedicated recruiter, who flies across the country, visiting social clubs, bars and Equinox gyms in search of a match. Matchmakers plan dates in minute detail, and dating coaches prep clients and their matches for dates on everything from hairstyling to etiquette.

"Dating is a skill, and most people don't have it," Cohen-Aslatei explained in a Zoom interview.

The price tag accounts for the salaries of three dedicated employees, plane tickets for a dedicated recruiter, relationship coaching and, if someone pops the question within six months of the program's finish, a three-carat engagement ring.

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Of the pool of applicants, a “leadership committee” is looking for clients who are, in the CEO’s words, “coachable” and seeking long-term commitments.

Although Three Day Rule isn’t based in the Bay Area, the region is one of the service’s largest markets. Cohen-Aslatei alluded to some “very notable, very famous tech entrepreneurs” who employ the company’s matchmaking services. Bay Area clients tend to prize ambition in their partners, he said. And the client pool has a higher proportion of men than other locales.

The recruiting process goes something like this:

Matchmakers begin by scanning through the company’s database of eligible singles, singling out potential matches for in-person interviews. If nobody clicks, the company compiles a dossier on the client’s dating profile, using photos of exes as a basis for physical compatibility. A recruiter then travels to places where a likely match would appear: concerts, bars, singles events, and approaches likely prospects.

“We’re trying to map out where the type of person you’re interested in hangs out and spends their time,” Cohen-Aslatei said.

From there, the process is similar to applying for an apartment.

Recruiters run background and credit checks, then forward along promising names.

For those who can afford it, the service promises to find the right person. And for those looking to be recruited for the dating pool, Cohen-Aslatei offered a bit of Cinderella advice: Never wear sweatpants to an airport.

“A lot of business travelers, especially men, are just sitting there with tons of time to kill,” he said. “And so we send our recruiters to airports around the country to sit at the gates going to the cities our clients are located in. And they strike up conversations, they get to know them, and then we decide they’re going to be palatable and tBay Area singles are lining up to pay \$1 million for a dating service

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