Coffee Meets Bagel Dating App Co-Founder Talks About Being on ‘Shark Tank’

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Interview by Lori Bizzoco. Written by Lori Bizzoco and Emma Wells.

Looking for a unique way to find love on your mobile device? Well, one of the biggest names in dating and relationship apps is about to get some air time on television tonight (and no, it’s not Tinder). Coffee Meets Bagel co-founders and sisters, Dawoon, Arum, and Soo Kang, are heading to ABC’s *Shark Tank* for the season premiere to seek funding for an Android app expansion that launched two days ago to compliment their growing business.

What is the Coffee Meets Bagel Dating and Relationship App?

Coffee Meets Bagel was started by the Kang sisters in April 2012 in New York. As smart, attractive, young, and busy professionals who weren't having much success with dating, they wanted to make finding love easier and more fun for singles by creating a unique dating and relationship app. According to their website, Coffee Meets Bagel operates under three guiding principles: Firstly, your dating life should be as private as you want it to be; secondly, meeting people through friends is safe and easy; and finally, it shouldn't be hard, uncomfortable, or tricky to meet good potential partners.

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Coffee Meets Bagel sets itself apart from other dating and relationship apps by providing users with only one potential match – or "Bagel" – per day at noon. Users then have 24 hours to either "like" or "pass" on their match. If you select "like" and your match does too, you get connected via SMS messages and can schedule a date. Additionally, Coffee Meets Bagel only provides matches it finds through your Facebook friend network. Perhaps this is why it has been so successful: They claim one million matches/introductions since they launched!

Their Experiences on Shark Tank

Executive Editor Lori Bizzoco had the chance to meet Dawoon a few years back at the New York launch party, and she spoke to her again this week. She wouldn't disclose too much information about what happens on *Shark Tank* or about the company's user numbers. "We don't give out our numbers," she reveals. Well, that's going to make for an interesting segment

tonight considering *Shark Tank* investors are ALL about the numbers! When asked if we'll find out more about this on the show, she replies, "You'll have to wait and see!" Interestingly, Mashable reported that the sisters were attacked by the sharks for being coy about their users.

It's not that the sisters don't know the premise of the show. In fact, Dawoon said that they are big fans. However, she does tell us that they didn't seek out the opportunity to be on *Shark Tank*, explaining that ABC actually contacted them directly. "I never considered going on *Shark Tank* before because we are a bigger company than the entrepreneurs they typically have on the show," referring to her company's 11 person team and their recent funding. The company received their first round of funding in September 2012 for 600,000 dollars from LightBank Venture Capital and the co-founder of Match.com, Peng T. Ong. They received a second round of venture capital – 2.8 million dollars – from an unknown source in May 2014. Speculation is that this came from one of the sharks, but Dawoon confirms it did not. "The investment happened before the announcement was made and before *Shark Tank*," she says.

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But when the opportunity presented itself, they knew it was too good to turn down. "We thought it would be amazing to have one of the sharks involved because they are so smart and experienced," she shares. "So we decided to go for it. It was very nerve-racking, but it was a lot of fun!"

When asked if there was a particular shark they would want as an investor, she points to Mark Cuban. "If I were to pick one shark [to work with], I would probably love to have him involved because he's just so tech savvy. All the sharks are very straightforward and sharp, but I find Mark to be particularly so. I can totally see him adding a lot of value

to Coffee Meets Bagel. We are very excited at the prospect of getting any of the sharks involved though.”

Like any good reality television show, there is always the possibility of some drama. We’ll just have to wait and see if Coffee Meets Bagel will be a match on the premiere episode of *Shark Tank*!

Tune in for Shark Tank *tonight on ABC at 9/8c!*