

Grindr Founder Joel Simkhai Launches Motto, a Gay and Queer Matchmaking App That Rethinks Hookup Culture

Motto's goal is to enable sexual exploration and expression while eliminating catfishing, headless torsos, endless scrolling, toxicity, and discrimination.

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-- Motto, a sex-positive matchmaking app for gay and queer hookups and casual dating, from Joel Simkhai and Alex Hostetler, is now available in New York City. Motto is Simkhai's first venture since leaving Grindr five years ago, and was created as a premium, ad-free alternative for gay and queer community members. Motto focuses on finding you the right people, not just the closest - on the quality of interactions, not the quantity. Motto sends a push notification at the same time every day with a personalized group of people, then members decide if they want to start a conversation or not.

"The vast majority of gay and queer people aren't satisfied with their online hookup and dating experiences.

Motto's goal is to help you find someone you're into without frustration, reduce the amount of time you spend on hookup apps to just a few minutes a day, and bring people together in the physical world," said Motto founder Joel Simkhai. "Grindr created a lot of positivity in the world. It helped a lot of queer people find



Motto logo



Joel Simkhai

each other and gave people access they didn't have before. That said, I am the first to admit the unintended consequences that came along with it. We built Motto to address those issues, simplify the process of hooking up, and bring back the fun in finding someone you're into. Motto should be just as positive for your mental health as it is for your sex life."

Motto is a free, membership-based app, developed and designed using research and input from thousands of gay and queer people from different backgrounds across the country. Motto focuses on profile quality, personalization, verification and creating rich interaction between members. Every profile and photo is reviewed and verified to ensure it's real. Each profile must have three face pictures, so members will not see any blank profiles or headless torsos. Motto believes that by requiring face photos, people are more likely to be kinder and show up more authentically to each other.

"We heard a lot of frustration and fatigue with the existing apps. Fundamentally, we think hookup culture needs a refresh," said Motto co-founder and Head of Product Alex Hostetler. "The gay apps are good if you're just looking for someone close, right now. But the process is impersonal, addictive, repetitive and often toxic. In many ways, Grindr defined hookup behavior and created a culture of immediate, transactional sex. That works well for some people, but our community is very diverse in its approach to hookups and casual dating. We created Motto to rethink that paradigm, to give people with different values another option."

Motto will launch new matchmaking features and product improvements in the coming weeks. It's live in New York City and Miami now, with plans to expand across the United States and globally as the waitlist in each city grows. You can download the app in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store to join the waitlist for your city. To stay updated and see job openings, visit findmotto.com.

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Motto co-founders Alex Hostetler and Joel Simkhai

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