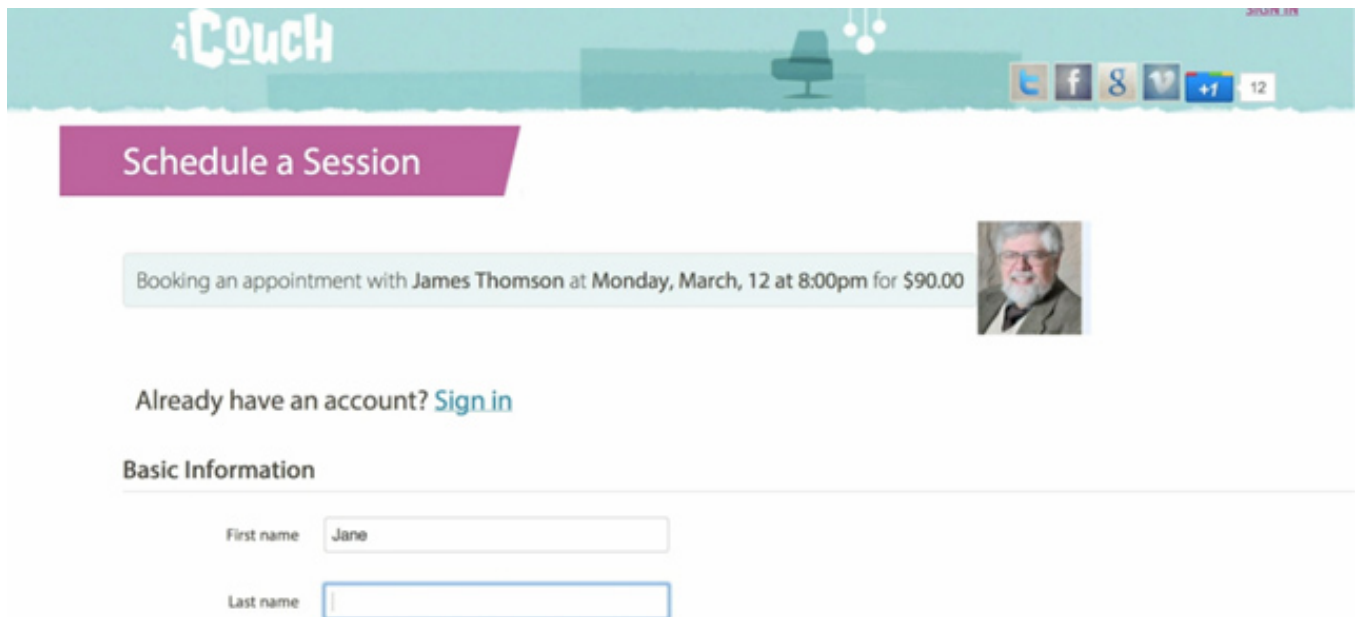


## Counseling and therapy via online video or chat



The screenshot shows the iCouch website interface. At the top, there is a teal header with the iCouch logo and social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and LinkedIn. Below the header is a purple button labeled "Schedule a Session". A light blue box displays a booking confirmation: "Booking an appointment with James Thomson at Monday, March, 12 at 8:00pm for \$90.00". To the right of this box is a small profile picture of James Thomson, a man with a beard and glasses. Below the booking confirmation, there is a link that says "Already have an account? Sign in". Underneath is a section titled "Basic Information" with two input fields: "First name" containing the text "Jane" and "Last name" which is empty.

If [mood-altering “drugs”](#) and [concentration enhancements](#) can both be offered online, they why not general therapy sessions as well? That, indeed, is precisely the premise behind [iCouch](#), a New York-based service that offers counseling and therapy via online video or chat on a PC or mobile device.

“One of the big barriers to getting help has always been the nonsense traditionally associated with going to a therapist’s office,” explains company co-founder Jessica Rios. “First you have to find one that’s right for you, then you call, make an appointment that’s probably weeks away. Finally, you have to commute to an office, sit in a waiting room trying not to feel embarrassed and then, you have your session.” iCouch aims to turn that model upside down. Using the site, in fact, it takes only five clicks to go from the home page to starting a session via video or chat with a licensed and verified therapist. Single, 50-minute sessions are generally priced at USD 90, and iCouch keeps USD 10 of that as a commission, it says. For those not ready for professional therapy, a [“self-serve” mobile app](#) is available as well for USD 1.99. Either way, iCouch.me is HIPPA-compliant, meaning that it follows the same privacy and security rules hospitals do. The video below explains the premise in more detail:

There's no denying that the tech-enabled delivery of mental health services is tricky territory from both an ethical and a legal perspective, and the American Psychological Association has already been struggling to develop [guidelines](#). Still, between consumers' time poverty today and the ubiquity of technology, the potential is compelling. Mental health professionals around the globe: one to get involved in?

Website: [www.secure.icouch.me](http://www.secure.icouch.me)

Contact: [www.secure.icouch.me/contact](http://www.secure.icouch.me/contact)