CASE OF THE WEEK

FORMER CEO OF ABERCROMBIE & FITCH INDICTED ON SEX TRAFFICKING CHARGES





PRESENTATION BY ARIELLE VALERA

CURRENT NEWS EVENT

Former CEO of Abercrombie & Fitch Co., Mike Jefferies was alleged to have engaged in a sex trafficking scheme with two other men, Matthew Smith and James Jacobson.

The three men exploited their victims, many of whom hoped to become a model for the Abercrombie & Fitch brand, “by using the so-called casting couch system”

This crime was said to have started approximately in December 2008 and continued till March 2015, despite Jefferies to have stepped down as CEO of Abercrombie & Fitch in December 2014.

This has caused Abercrombie & Fitch to be associated with the case and the negative attention that was brought upon the company.





POINT OF VIEW

I will be analyzing this situation from the perspective of Abercrombie & Fitch and how a lot of news is related to the former CEO’s crimes, thus bringing negative light onto the brand.

Before Rebrand



“At Abercrombie & Fitch Co., we work to ensure that our customers and associates feel respected and represented. We know when we embrace diversity in all forms, we can build a stronger sense of community across every aspect of our business”



After Rebrand

ANALYSIS 1

REBRANDING

“We go after the attractive all-American kid with a great attitude and a lot of friends. A lot of people don’t belong [in our clothes], and they can’t belong. Good-looking people attract other good-looking people, and we want to market to cool, good-looking people. We don’t market to anyone other than that”

- Mike Jefferies, former CEO of A&F

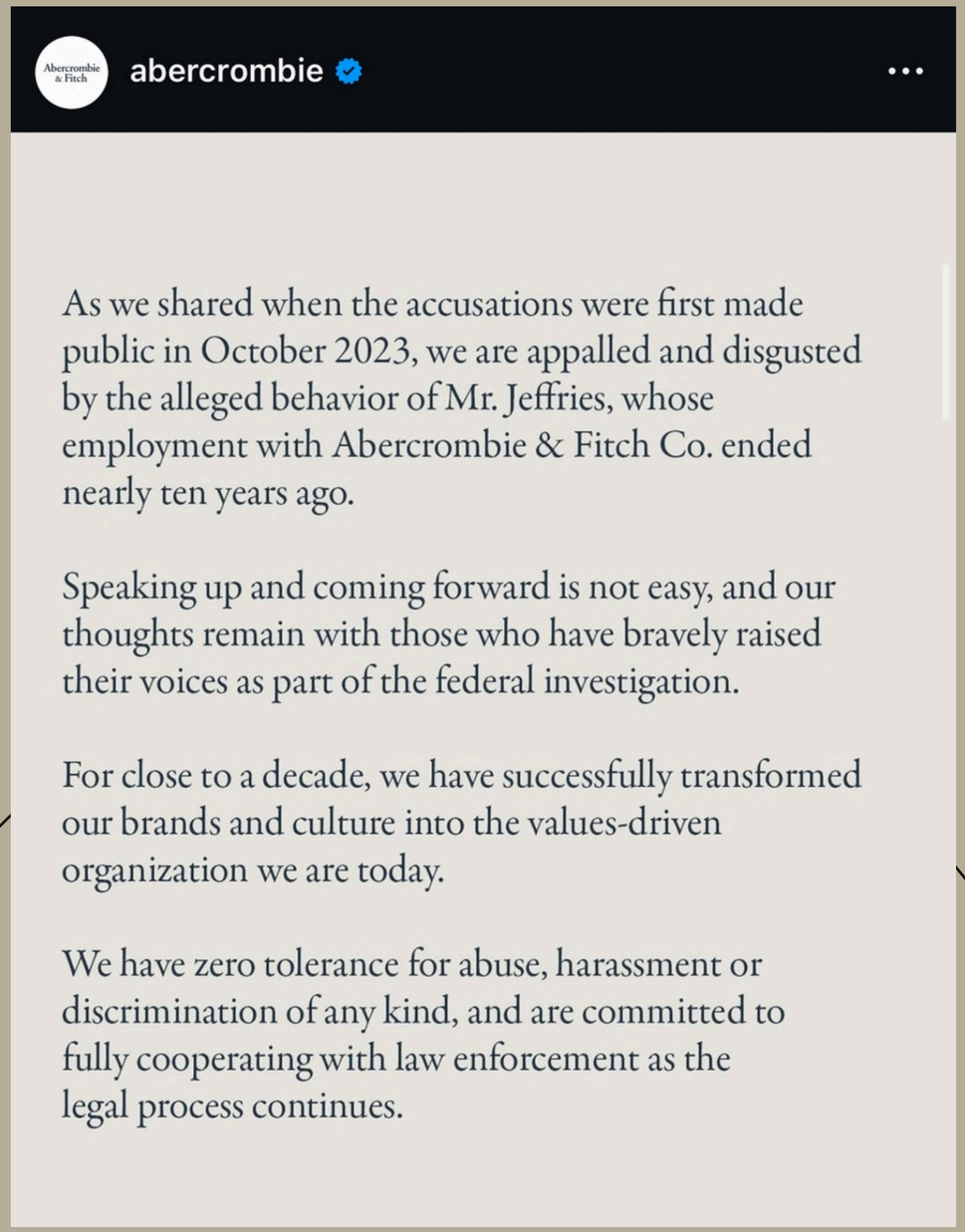
- Rebrand to where anyone can wear its clothing by not using sexualized marketing and catering more to an older audience rather than teens
- The company has continued to maintain this new branding by constantly pushing for more clothes that fit for numerous body types and cater to ethnically diverse individuals.

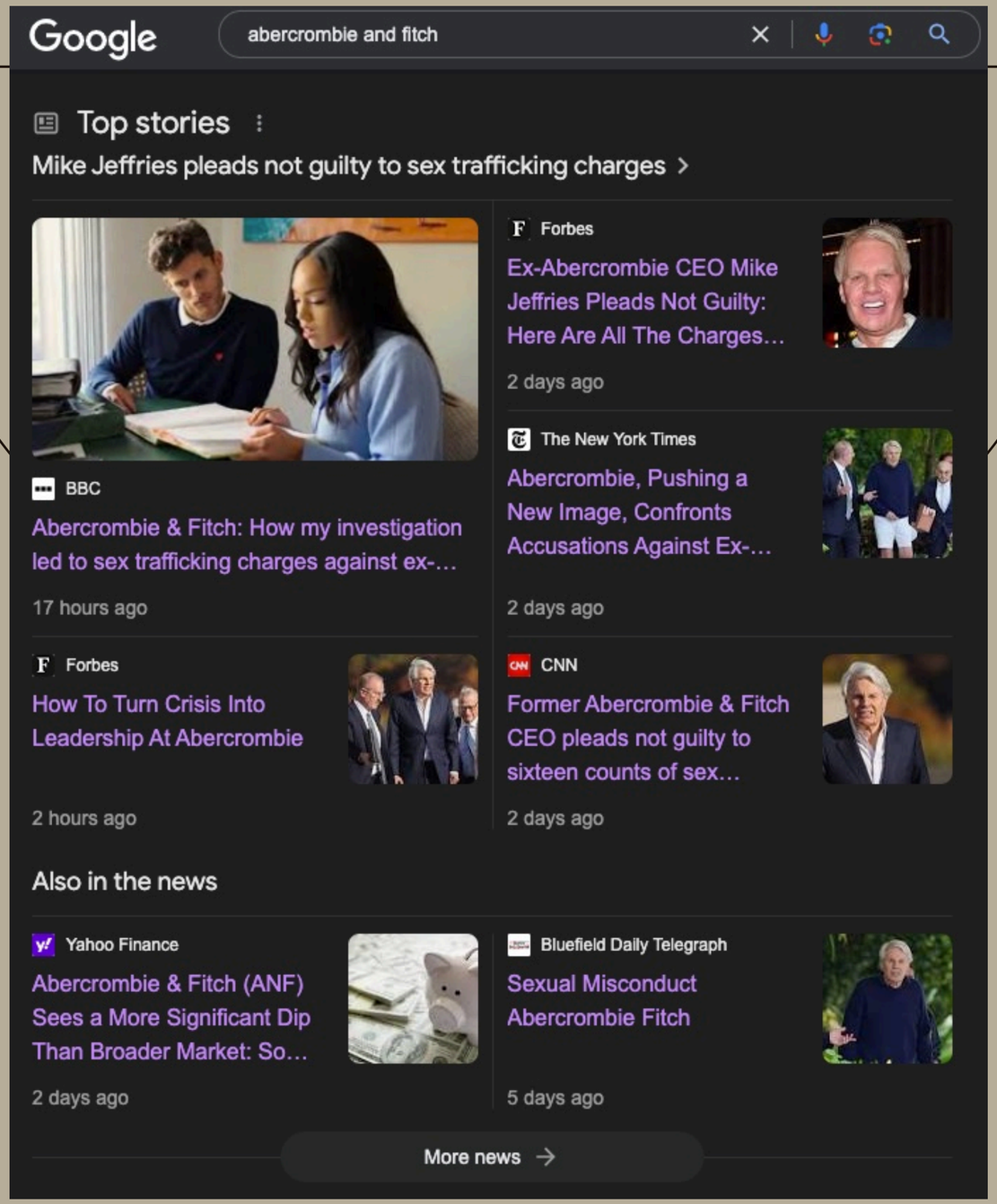
ANALYSIS 2

ABERCROMBIE & FITCH'S STATEMENT

This statement has been their only statement that has been released by the brand, thus showing that the brand is doing its best to disassociate with the former CEO.

The statement also allows Abercrombie & Fitch's stance to be more prominent and organized rather than having numerous statements about the case that could cause disarray.





ANALYSIS 3

NO FURTHER COMMENTS

Besides the statement posted on the brand's Instagram case, the company's attorney has declined ABC's news request for a comment

There are no other statements from A&F regarding the case

Stating another comment could add more fuel to the fire, therefore it might be best that the company is making no more public comments and just help with the law instead.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Should Abercrombie & Fitch stick to only one statement or should the company continue to make statements about its stance on the case and Mark Jefferies? Why or why not?

What could Abercrombie & Fitch do to distance the company from the case? Should the company do anything at all?

What steps can Abercrombie & Fitch take in the near future to effectively communicate their commitment to inclusivity and diversity?

