

Section for everyone to put thoughts

Good for everyone to read - [The history of A & F](#) as a brand

Corey Lane w/ Elevation Advertising in Richmond.

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Nicole:

Specific to the brand:

- [Abercrombie and Fitch is trying new marketing approach that focuses on body positivity](#)
  - <https://www.abercrombie.com/shop/us/fierce>
- [Abercrombie and Fitch partners up with Megan Rapinoe to tackle mental health](#)
  - <https://www.instagram.com/p/CGKp4qjn-rS/>

#### Gen Z spending habits

- Very thrifty, cares a lot about the price of products
  - Not loyal to brands ("value transparency and authenticity in the brands that they shop from")
  - Turned to subscription services (renting clothes)
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Gabby:

Interesting Articles:

- [Abercrombie and Fitch is giving up on teenagers](#) - (from 2015 tho) they have stopped targeting teens specifically and have now tried to talk to a "broader audience."
- [Abercrombie and Fitch and Hollister are slowly becoming Gen Z favorites again](#) - they were ridiculed for their past practices and have been trying to change since then. New CEO helped boost new image and made a difference.
- [Abercrombie and Fitch staying close to Millennial audience through new tactics](#) - They're trying to grow up with the teens they were popular with. (apparently Hollister is targeted directly to teens and A&F is supposed to be older)
- [Why does Abercrombie have so much stigma around it?](#) - It has a bro stigma from when its audience was younger and they had the dark stores, over sexual ads, etc and people haven't revisited it since.
  - "It certainly still has the "Bro" stigma that a lot of us grew up around. You're correct though, their clothing is decent and a value choice when on sale thanks to the lack of giant moose logos."
  - "I agree about the "growing up around" part. My first experiences with the brand were when they had shirtless greeters and the air inside was likely combustible from all the fragrance. So that pretty much turned me off forever."
  - "You've made me realize how much growing up with this brand affects my perception of it. I've always thought of them as the brand that was sued for racial discrimination, probably because of how young I was when that happened in 2004. Didn't help that my grade school considered Abercrombie a white people brand."

- [Twitter moment poking fun at Abercrombie](#) - Shopping back when abercrombie was at its height of preppy douche fashion left scars on some people.
- [Why do people make fun of other people who shop at Abercrombie?](#)
  - "I'm 23. When people around my age were in our teens those two stores were the *pinnacle* of preppy rich kid must have clothes, and were unlike any other mainstream clothing stores up until that point. You'd walk in and the store itself was super dark, they basically had dumped a whole bottle of cologne on the floors and the smell could assault your nose just walking by the store, there was super loud music, and \$80 t-shirts. I believe it's making it's rounds on Twitter by making fun of those who still shop there because we now realize the stupidity of those stores and that fad."
- Viral memes show off how mean Abercrombie used to be - this really put such a bad taste in the mouths of their new target who to this day hold the grudge. These are the first 3 tiktoks when you search "abercrombie" on the app (the comments are also funny but mocking lol):
  - <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMJH2kmk1/> (89.9k views)
  - <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMJH2e3oX/> (62.0k views)
  - <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMJH2hBg9/> (241.8k views)
- [Some people feel embarrassed](#) about wearing the clothing in recent years because of the perception people have of the brand.
  - "As someone who never wore their clothes in middle/high-school and now wears them well after graduating college, I kind of feel self conscious."
  - "Based on the reactions in the other thread, it does seem the majority still associate AF with its mid 2000 era of stinky clothes with obnoxious branding."
- [Even business investor people](#) don't see A&F succeeding w/ 20 somethings.

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Ana:

The problem they cant compete with a&e, pacsun, aerie

P: Mean kid attitude

They're not focused on you, just the people you aspire to be

a&e has done popups, turned around made profit

Not every1 wants to be a fashion nova brand

a&F is refined GAP?

PPL love their jeans tho

Your fav Nostalgia

Less surfer, casual comfort

Creating on trend things

Working with influencers, owing to racial inequality

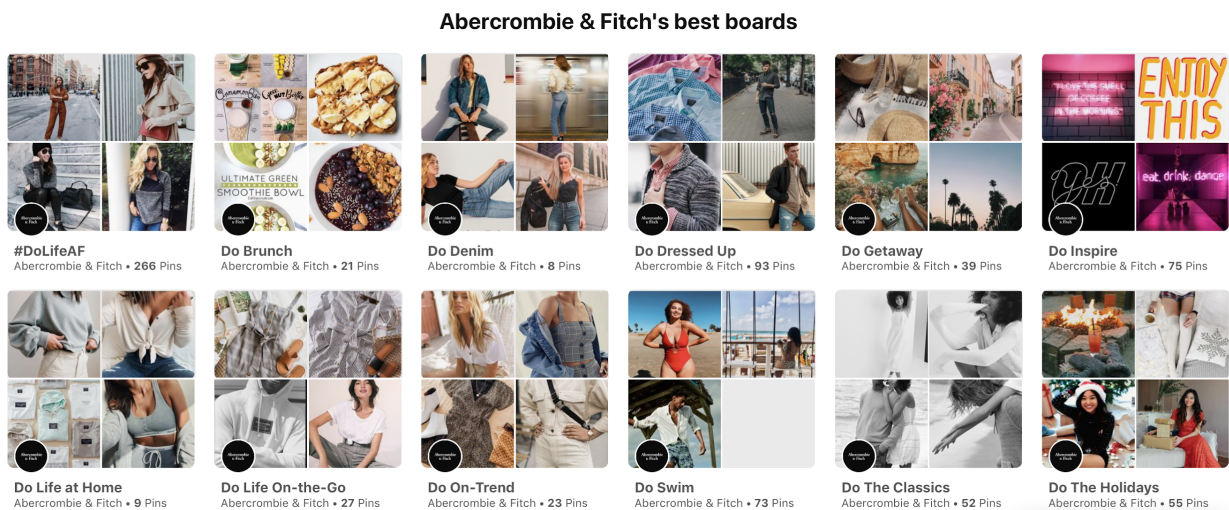
What's the breakthrough?

Be more accepting

a&f is a legacy brand, history of being problematic - q is how do you push thru it

Brand it correctly

## Pinterest



## Reference

<https://www.businessinsider.com/abercrombie-fitch-crazy-history-2011-4>

Abercrombie has transformed many times over the years.

It went from an outdoor gear shop in the late 19th century to a retailer known for oversexed, borderline-softcore pornographic ads. It was later maligned, and it looks like it's headed towards tame basics.

**Abercrombie was the place to go for hunters in the early 1900s.**

David T. Abercrombie founded the company's first store in 1892. It sold hunting and fishing equipment and was called David T. Abercrombie Co.

In 1988, it was swept up by The Limited for \$47 million, according to [Bloomberg](#).

## **Michael Jeffries transformed A&F into a very sexy teen store.**

It's worth noting that Abercrombie & Fitch is now targeting an older consumer, someone 18 to 25, chairman Arthur Martinez told Business Insider in a phone interview this fall — hence the [dramatic shift in marketing](#).

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Colton:

[https://issuu.com/charlotteroulstone/docs/final\\_af\\_report2](https://issuu.com/charlotteroulstone/docs/final_af_report2)

<https://today.yougov.com/topics/consumer/articles-reports/2017/11/08/millennials-recommend-bercrombie-fitch-hollister>

<https://www.marketing91.com/marketing-strategy-bercrombie-fitch/>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/history-of-clothing-brand-bercrombie-and-fitch>

<https://bercrombieandfitchcompany.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/bercrombie-fitch-launches-new-miniseries-focused-mental-health>

A&F Racist and Sexual Harassment Claims:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/news/bercrombie-fitch-model-tells-racism-sexual-harassment-and-discrimination-store-10175646.html>

Old Michael Jeffries Quote from 2006: "It's almost everything. That's why we hire good-looking people in our stores. Because 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. In every school there are the cool and popular kids, and then there are the not-so-cool kids. Candidly, we go after the cool kids. 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. Are we exclusionary? Absolutely."

Has been compared recently to Zara and H&M

My parents still perceive A&F as the sexual brand that they were in the late 90s and naughts.

Do we try to say, "this is who we were... now this is who we are"? This way, we show that A&F acknowledges how people perceive them and flip it on its head. People may not take us seriously and will potentially perceive A&F as virtue signalling with their new campaigns (such as "Face Your Fierce") if that's the first thing they see after a negative perception. OR acknowledging the past may not be good because it reminds people of the things you did....

A&F Kids, Hollister, and A&F sells to people from childhood into early adulthood

A&F needs to do a lot more advertising to showcase their new image to the world. They seem to be doing a good job over the last few years to rebrand into a more positive image for the current times, but many people don't seem to know about this. Also, their rebranding has lost the polarizing effect that their older advertising accomplished so successfully, which in turn has reduced the drama and the conversation around them. This seems intentional, but could be potentially problematic.

A&F needs to be consistent across their branding. That's a major problem they currently face.

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Komal:

A&F

Perception

being body-positive

Face your Fierce

Problems:

1. They are not targeting teens anymore, they are targeting aged 20+ people and that demographic has grown out of the brand.
2. The perception of Abercrombie is horrible based on the branding throughout the early 2000s under their old CEO.
  - a. People pay \$\$\$ for logos (nike, apple, balenciaga, etc) but would NEVER pay a dime for an abercrombie logo.
  - b. Are new ad campaigns virtue signaling? Or are they genuine? The world may never know....
    - i. The campaign is about body positivity, but if you look at the [packaging](#) of the Fierce fragrance, it doesn't align with the message of the campaign
3. They have a reputation for not providing inclusive sizing.
4. They have a background in sexual harassment (and racism).
5. They don't have much social media presence (except Instagram), which makes it difficult to connect with gen z/millennials who use platforms like TikTok

**PROBLEM:** Abercrombie's target audience still sees Abercrombie as they were in the naughts, leading to the perception that they are still exclusive, "mean," and perpetuating the image of a preppy rich white kid.

**TARGET:** People aged 21-30 who are young professionals living in cities. They are beginning their young lives and living them to the fullest.

Not talking to teens.

We want them to think like A&F is a respectable brand for clothes they would want to wear now and that is in style. (to work, on weekends, whatever).

Feel comfortable and proud of the brand.

THE TARGET SHOULD BE 21-30 young, working professionals in the city (yuppies).

**INSIGHT (UNIVERSAL TRUTH):**

- **If we're going with virtue signaling:** Despite their new marketing approach with body positivity, the packaging of the Fierce cologne features a shirtless, muscular man. This paradox makes it challenging for consumers to differentiate between the old Abercrombie and Fitch and the new Abercrombie and Fitch.
- Cancel culture teaches us that the best way to be forgiven is to admit your part in something and apologize with meaning. Then prove that you've changed.
- Their body positivity approach contradicts what they're selling
  - It's inconsistent across the board
- Everybody makes mistakes. (Everybody has those days)
  - Mistakes are okay, as long as you learn and actually improve from them.
- Redemption arcs:
  - Chuck Bass from Gossip Girl
  - Kylo Ren from Star Wars
  - Cady Herring from Mean Girls
  - Zuko from Avatar
  - Theon Greyjoy from GOT
  - People LOVE an underdog story
- People don't want apologies that make the apologizer feel better, they want a genuine apology.
- People can change
- Growing up is awkward for everyone.
  - Growing up. Everyone does it.
- Everyone has regrets
- Social media is IMPORTANT
  - Step up on Pinterest
  - Snapchat
  - Facebook
  - YouTube
  - Whateva
- Everyone wants to forget who they were in middle school.
  - Everyone is embarrassed when you bring up who they were in middle school.
  - No one wants to be reminded of who they were in middle school.
  - PEN15
  - 8th Grade
  - Why?
    - Because it was awkward
    - Because they've changed / matured
    - People don't want to be reminded of who they were, especially if they're making an effort to change
    - You don't want to be limited to the old image of who you were
    - Judge them by who they are now
    - Tagline: Nobody should be remembered
    - Most people are forgiven for who they were when they were in middle school, so why are we still being judged for it?
    - Why?
      - Because it makes all the progress you've made seem futile
        - Yeah, if people still judge your old self, what's the point of trying to change?
- First impressions stick HARD
- Abercrombie's rebrand was unsuccessful

- They still have the moose
- They didn't change their typeface
- The signature scent is still a signature scent
  - Washboard abs
- People don't believe things just because you tell them things
  - Only when they see it or experience it themselves
- Social media isn't real life depicted
  - It's curated like an art gallery
- People have grown out of the teenage Abercrombie and don't want to feel immature wearing a children's brand
  - Yuppies want to be seen as mature. They want to be a grown-up. Be taken seriously.
- Social justice is necessary
- The Internet is better than cable.
- Subscription service for clothes
  - Nordstrom Box
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#### **REASONS TO BELIEVE:**

#### **CREATIVE CONSIDERATIONS (BRAVE THOUGHTS, PROVOCATIVE THOUGHTS):**

**(evolve)**