An introduction campaign for Abercrombie & Fitch to the digital native teen.
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#THEPLAN

A MORE DETAILED LOOK INTO OUR NEW STRATEGIC MARKETING COMMUNICATION PLAN
WHAT’S IN IT
BRAND
MARKETING MIX

PRODUCT
AF offers everything from clothes, accessories, shoes, bags to perfume. This gives customers a chance to find a complete, mischievous, preppy American lifestyle look. The products are always of high quality and comfortable to wear, often also referred to with 'laidback sophistication'.

PLACE
AF has an online webshop, 248 US stores and 16 stores in Europe. While it’s a household name in all American malls, globally the brand has lost recognition. AF is present on social media like YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest but not at all active at the moment.

PRICE
As a consequence of this high quality combined with comfort the prices are considered more on the expensive side and range from 40 to 200 euros. This fits with AF’s aim to be more exclusive and not available to everyone: when you buy at AF you invest.

PROMOTION
Abercrombie & Fitch is known for clever, unconventional promotion. They used their retail environment and a magazine, A&F Quarterly, as aspirational pieces to connect directly with the audience.
VISION
BEING A TEEN IS DEVELOPING YOUR ID

It’s the moment in life where everything you know starts changing. It’s time to explore and develop.

MISSION
PROVOKE TO DO

Nothing will teach you more than doing. For teens it’s important to discover who you are and what you stand for. We’ve had most success by being a trigger to explore so that is what we should always focus on.

VALUES
YOUNG - MISCHIEVOUS - PREPPY

Being young was once understood as carefree, but being at the prime of life nowadays is seen more as a pre-phase of real life. In this phase it is important to collect all the life hacks and develop your personality to the fullest. Mischief used to be superficially going against the grain, and testing the borders. Today it’s much more about being a rebel with a cause.

Preppy is known for the American wealth in ‘prep’aration for college. It used to be more about visible status but it has now shifted to something more knowledge-based. It has become more of a global know-it-all.
There was a time when the high school spirit of different groups like cheerleaders, nerds, footballers etc. was the clear mentality amongst teens. This has changed to a more individualistic approach. Where one might be really good at soccer, one could also be a great talent in math and therefore be part of multiple social groups. Nowadays it’s not about superficially belonging and being one thing. You excel when you are diverse and have a lot to show for.

The brand has always had an exclusive, superior tone of voice that showed the brand always strived for perfection, eventually turning into excluding people from joining the cool kids. What once was deemed cool and exclusive soon became aggressive alienation. Next to that CEO Mike Jeffries also went on multiple rants enhancing this alienating message saying things like “A lot of people don’t belong [in our clothes], and they can’t belong.” And “In every school there are the cool and popular kids, and then there are the not-so-cool kids.” However people that think they are cooler than others are often not found to be, cool is expressed without saying so.

With the recession in 2008 and the significant rise of fast fashion over the years Abercrombie struggled to compete with brands like H&M, Pull&Bear and Jack&Jones. These brands offer trendy, low quality pieces for a third of the price of an Abercrombie & Fitch piece. A brand needs to offer an exciting experience to make up for that.

Whilst the brand had a hard time admitting they were not up to date with the zeitgeist and needed to adjust, they slowly started making changes within the company to guide towards a brighter future. However, there is little to no insight into the current teen market and digitalization. They keep creating static and boring content that doesn’t capture the fun and cheeky spirit of Abercrombie and isn’t innovative in this digital age.
BRAND TODAY

Currently Abercrombie & Fitch has a bad reputation amongst people of 25 and up. These were the people who consciously saw the brand turn from something innovative and new into something arrogant and same old. Teens of today have little to no connotation with the brand, which gives Abercrombie a great opportunity to re-introduce themselves with a clean slate.

The brand’s strength lies in its mischief, preppiness and ability to explore the boundaries of adulthood. The exact interpretation of this is dependent on the zeitgeist and the company should be open to grow with time.
COMPETITORS

DIRECT
Brandy&Melville, Urban Outfitters, Subdued and Scotch&Soda are similar to these brands in the way they attract young teens figuring out and growing into adulthood. They also all offer trendy but quality clothes. How AF differentiates itself is by being more modern, with an eye on the future instead of emulating these brands that often have a vintage and nostalgic look. Social media play a big role for all these brands and aside from the standard social media like Facebook and Twitter, they also all have Instagram and Snapchat. With new snaps every day, daily they keep the relationship with their target audience up-to-date.

INDIRECT
H&M, Jack&Jones and Pull&Bear will always have a strong presence in the target groups’ mind (they’re everything to everyone) but when it comes to wanting quality unique pieces they will look somewhere else.

PREPPY
DIFFERENT KINDS
Ralph Lauren
American preppy heritage for Americans
Countryside Polo
Old money, according to the book

Tommy Hilfiger
American dream preppy sold to Europe
Boarding School Cricket
Staged, uniform, clean heritage

Lacoste
Modern European chique preppy
Parisian tennis
Uber perfect, plastic, lighthearted

Abercrombie & Fitch
Adolescent Mischievous Preppy
Outdoor dare games
Cheeky, daring, outgoing, fun
AF SPARKS EXCITEMENT IN YOUNGSTERS TO GO OUT AND DISCOVER.

EVEN IF IT MEANS BREAKING THE RULES ONCE OR TWICE. WHATEVER THE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE AT LEAST WITH AF YOU KNOW YOU’RE DRESSED READY TO TAKE ON THE WORLD.
GETTING YOU READY
SINCE 1892
CONSUMER
SOCIETY CHANGE
DIGITAL NATIVES

From about 25 and under you are considered a digital native, someone who has grown up with technology instead of having to grow into it. With the rise of this new mindset common perceptions have changed with it. For instance:
- Digital Natives see almost no difference between on and offline, the worlds blur into each other and never have been as connected. Online, however, is a supplement to offline and not at all a replacement.
- While previously it was all about who you are as an individual and in which box you belong, nowadays it’s about what you do and showcasing this. Sharing your activities is the new kind of social currency. With this comes that everything needs to be open, authentic and sharable.

TARGET AUDIENCE
WISE & WITTY ADOLESCENT

Like Abercrombie & Fitch’s original teen target audience this group is outgoing, mischievous and discovering adult-life. They are excited of what adulthood has to offer but not rushing into taking on too many responsibilities and constantly fighting a boring rut or routine. They have always had plenty of resources and never really had to worry about money, there is no overload but also definitely no shortage. They love spending time with their friends and going out on adventures.

Unlike the previous teen target audience, this group is more worldly than American and focused way more on sharing than being all too exclusive. What in their eyes is cool and exclusive is knowing more than another and being able to share unheard facts.

INSIGHTS

#FOMO
The consumers are constantly connected and sharing everything they do. Seeing that your friends are at a concert while you’re at home creates a great fear of missing out.

#COLLECTTHEMHACKS
The consumers are very self-sufficient: everything can be found online and tutorials or how-to’s are googled daily. Connected to FOMO, they’d rather say they know something and quickly Google how to do it than actually admitting they’re the only ones not knowing.
CONCEPT
1. THE BRAND
2. CONSUMER
3. CONCEPT
4. EXECUTION
5. SOURCES
COMMUNICATION TACTICS

PROBLEMS
The target group knows little to nothing about the brand.

AF's current communication doesn't spark the same excitement and level of understanding from the target group it used to do.

ADVANTAGES
AF already has a large number of followers on social media like Facebook and Instagram. When this will be updated with a new campaign, and with that stand out from it's normal feed, it will already create buzz.

SOLUTION
Even when AF's message is changed to something the audience wants to hear it takes a precise strategy to get this message across.

AF needs to infiltrate and be part of the online world and start spreading their message from there on out, instead of just randomly spreading it.

Once they're accepted in the online community they should give the audience something worth their while, this will be the bridge back to the brand.
THE BIG IDEA

#READYAF

Provide an entertaining twist on how to's and diy's that this generation googles daily, to show that with AF, you are ready for anything.

PAYOFF

#READYAF

So nice we had to use it twice. It’s s both cheeky reference to young slang ‘As Fuck’ and short for Abercrombie & Fitch. By using a hashtag we will create multiple social opportunities, which will help the campaign grow.

MESSAGE

WITH AF YOU'RE READY

What is a better defense against FOMO than being ready for everything? AF offers a huge relieve of stress regarding FOMO.

TONE OF VOICE

YOUNG SLANG - CLEVER - CHEEKY

Tone of voice is key with this campaign. This because it’s the first time for AF to speak the language of these kids, and it has changed quite a bit.

CONDITIONS

> The content should always be useful to the consumer and a direct answer to what they were looking for.
> The content should always be quick and easy to understand.
> Even though it can have a vlogger feeling the content should always be styled, it’s still a brand representation.

VISUAL STYLE

BOLD - STORY TELLING - PERSONAL

We will be bold with a strong combination of photography and text. With story telling we mean that there’s always something happening on an image, this again can be created by adding text over images as caption. We’ll be personal in the sense that we talk to our consumer in a familiar way, this makes it easy to relate for them.
EXECUTION
CUSTOMER JOURNEY

As stated with the communication tactics we need to place ourselves where the consumer is; Infiltrate the online community and spread the buzz from there. Redrawing the customer journey is key in understanding how a relationship is formed with this generation.
CUSTOMER TOUCHPOINTS

THE SEARCH
The consumer googles how to's, tutorials or diy's on a daily basis. From creating a perfect makeup look to how to build a nightstand. AF has always positioned themselves as selling the supplements that helps you, whether it’s hunting in leisure time or getting the girl at school. Creating own how to clips is a perfect match and locates the brand exactly where the consumer already is.

HOW TO TIE A TIE

youtube.com/abercrombie-how-to

PAYED ADVERTISMENT IS NOT YET USED
WHEN SEARCHING FOR HOW TO'S ON GOOGLE,
THIS WILL PLACE US RIGHT AT THE TOP OF THE SEARCH

#WINNING
THE GURU

Vloggers are bigger than ever and their power doesn’t seem to slow down. Vlogger endorsement is very popular and therefor doesn’t always seem sincere. So while it is a smart move to collaborate with vloggers it should be done in a bit more authentic way. We will collaborate with local hero’s like beautygloss in Holland and Alfie Deyes in England, they already have “how to” segments in their vlogs so it will fit with the big idea of this introduction campaign.

Firstly, we will use their names as a discount code on the webshop, creating a direct reward for the consumer and link to the webshop. Secondly, we insert clickable links into their how to vlogs, a direct link to our own YouTube channel.
THE INTRODUCERS

YOUTUBE

YouTube should be used as a direct referral to AF’s webshop, other social media like Snapchat and an easy to access archive of all how to’s. This will hold all the life hacks you need in just on click.

WEBSHOP

So called “one page” websites are becoming increasingly more popular. Research into generation Z and their use of the internet has shown that they prefer to have everything within hand’s reach.

That’s why our new webshop should solely be an easy to access, mobile device-friendly point of sales. Other than that, it’s a direct referral to all social media platforms.

#READYAF
RELATIONSHIPMAKERS

SNAPCHAT

Snapchat is the number one social media platform to be on right now. This is where you can create a real connection with your consumer. This because they view content that is posted on Snapchat as real, authentic and unique. There are two touch points for the consumer with the brand on Snapchat. There is our own channel which will serve as life brand feed and there is Snapchat’s Discover. This is where the magazine can be relaunched. After all, AF’s quarterly magazine was a huge success and became a true collectors item, it’s time to carry on that tradition in the digital age.

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is considered to be a more staged brand appearance but is still valued. It’s important not to make things overly perfect to still have an authentic feel. Posts from behind the scenes or taken from a main designer perspective is an engaging way to connect with the target audience instead of just posting campaign content.

GURU TAKEOVERS

A bit further down the line we will have our vloggers do a Snapchat take over. This will be introduced both on their Instagram account as well as ours, creating and expanding our Snapchat audience.

beautygloss

Tomorrow I’ll be taking over the @abercrombie snapchat. Tune in to see some of my day to day outfit hacks.
BRAND
INTERNAL

BRAND
EXTERNAL
Brandy & Melville. 05 May 2016. #brandymelville # brandymelvilleeu. Instagram. 13 May 2016
Urban Outfitters. 03 May 2016. Road trip packing: done. Follow us on Snapchat at urbanout to see all of our #UOroadtrip must haves and learn how you could win a trip to the final stop: Miami! #UOonyou. Instagram. 13 May 2016
Subdued. 03 May 2016. Seventeen. Instagram. 12 May 2016
Scotch & Soda. 01 May 2016. Marrakesh-blue embroideries suit any sunny situation. Instagram 12 May 2016

CONSUMER
Pham, Evelyn. 18 May 2016. dog emoji. Instagram. 19 May 2016
Van Eijk, Alexander. 1 Aug. 2013. Figured it was about time for a douchebag summer selfie. Instagram. 25 May 2016

CONCEPT

EXECUTION
Feoktistova, Mascha. 02 Nov. 2015. Later vandaag heb ik weer een live hangout op het YT kanaal van @whkamp! Houd mijn twitter in de gaten voor meer info. Instagram. 15 May 2016.