

Affair site Ashley Madison reboots as 'open' dating hub

5 July 2016



Ashley Madison is rebooting under a new leadership following last year's hack which affected 30 million members

Ashley Madison, the website for cheaters that was hit by a massive hack that exposed millions, is rebooting under new leadership as an "open-minded dating" service.

And its Canadian-based parent company said it will no longer use female "bots" or automated programs that respond to members pretending to be women on the hunt for men.

A statement Monday from Avid Life Media, the parent firm of Ashley Madison, announced "a new direction and total repositioning" of the service.

It said that newly appointed chief executive Rob Segal and president James Millership are three months into their new roles and were making "transformative changes" for the company and its flagship brand Ashley Madison.

"Our new team is committed to taking care of our members and to building on our portfolio of unique and open-minded online dating brands," said

Millership.

"Millions of people have continued to connect on our sites during the past year and they deserve a discreet, open-minded community where they can connect with like-minded individuals."

The statement said the company's forensic accounting investigation confirmed that "bots" were no longer in use, stopped in North America in 2014 and internationally in 2015.

"My understanding is that bots are widespread in the industry, but they are no longer being used, and will not be used, at Avid Life Media and Ashley Madison," said Millership.

Some media reports after last year's hack claimed that many of the female members on Ashley Madison were in fact bots that gave the impression there were more women on the site.

Last year, a hacker group released what was said to be personal data on more than 30 million members of Ashley Madison. The fallout led to reports of blackmail and even suicides.

The company said it was stepping up security and had hired a cyber-security team from professional services firm Deloitte to implement new safeguards and monitoring.

On the Ashley Madison website, the longtime slogan "Life is Short, Have an Affair" was gone, and replaced by an image of a modestly dressed woman and a button saying "See Your Matches."

The retooled website says it is "more than an affair site."

"Ashley Madison today is about so much more than infidelity, it's about all kinds of adult dating," the website says.

"In fact, a large number of our millions of members around the globe are singles drawn to the site because they want the kind of discretion Ashley Madison has been synonymous with for over a decade. Many members are in fulfilling relationships and need a safe place to explore polyamory together. Others still are looking for same-sex relationships but want to keep it separate from their personal and professional networks."

The site says it has "over 46 million [members](#)."

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APA citation: Affair site Ashley Madison reboots as 'open' dating hub (2016, July 5) retrieved 22 February 2020 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-07-affair-site-ashley-madison-reboots.html>

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