

Nic Mckinley: Targeting Traffickers

In the video, “Targeting Traffickers” interviewing Nic Knckinley, he informed listeners on how impactful the internet is on human trafficking and how companies like Deliver Fund assist Law Enforcement in apprehending these traffickers.

The interview begins with Nic Mckinley explaining where his program comes into place when it comes to catching Human Traffickers. Deliver Fund is an organization that provides the necessary “intelligence” to Law Enforcement, such as software and data in order for Law Enforcement to detain traffickers. He went on to mention that the National Center for missing and exploited children reported an 846 percent increase in cases regarding sexual child trafficking. Mckinley says that the cause of the spike in cases derive from “Internet Advertising Technologies.” This ultimately means that people will market advertisements on social media to appeal to a certain audience. Traffickers can use fake advertising to lure in children and exploit them. Following that, he talks about how it’s assumed that most online human trafficking takes place in Western Countries, when in fact it occurs mainly in the United States. Mckinley then broke down the process of catching human traffickers in order for law enforcement to subpoena them. Deliver Fund collects data from the “commercial sex advertising space” They then take the data and layer it so they can find out who the human traffickers are, how many victims they have, and who their victims are, along with other essential information. Mckinley went on to explain the patterns of human traffickers. For instance, there are traffickers in every state in the

United States but some states may not possess the necessary technology that bigger states may have to catch these traffickers and traffickers use this to their advantage in order to escape being caught. Traffickers often try to be anonymous but what they don't know is that that often highlights them and makes them a target. The interview with Mckinley ends with him advising parents to be more cautious of what their kids do and who they interact with since human trafficking is becoming more prevalent.

Companies and Human Trafficking

In the video, Mckinley mentions how there are major companies who purposely turn a blind eye to Human Trafficking because it makes their companies too much money. For example, he talks about Visa recently named Co-Conspirator in a human trafficking case. I decided to further my research on this and I came across a story about a young girl who was offered a ride by a stranger and kidnapped. After kidnapping her, the young girl was raped, beaten, and given drugs. The kidnappers then sold her on backpage. Eventually, her parents found her image on backpage and rescued her. The parents noticed that their daughter's image was still on the platform even after finding her and the kidnappers being apprehended. They requested backpage to take it down several times. However, backpage refused without the exchange of money.

Kubiiki's anger at Backpage grew and grew. "Here was my child, destroyed and changed forever by what she'd gone through. Anyone could see from the pictures in the ad she was just a child, yet they allowed her to be bought and sold in this public marketplace and Backpage was making money off this abuse? I talked to MA and we said: 'Oh no, this has to stop.'"

So, there are corporations that knowingly profit off of child exploitation. Stories like the one mentioned above aren't unknown and actually happen quite often. The parents of the young girl mentioned above ended up suing backpage. They accused the corporation of knowingly facilitating child sex trafficking. The article I read stated that "all a pimp needs is a classified website to post ads and a cellphone. All the client needs is an internet connection." The internet has made it extremely easy for traffickers to conduct their business and easily sell innocent children. Annie Kelly mentions in the article "Small ads sex trafficking: the battle against backpage" that although the exact number of how many children that have been sold on backpage. About 73 percent of reported Child sex trafficking cases have been linked to backpage. Companies like backpage aren't working towards deterring child exploitation, they're more concerned about how much profit they can make from it. After the cases started piling up, backpage eventually removed their adult ads listing which ultimately prevented children being trafficked on the website in the future.

In the interview with Nic Mckinley, he discussed how human trafficking is facilitated online and how organizations like Deliver Fund aid Law Enforcement in catching the Traffickers. One of the many important topics explored in this interview was how a company can knowingly or unknowingly help traffickers in selling their victims. I furthered my research on the involvement that large corporations can have in Human Trafficking and found that this is not uncommon.

Companies who participate in this kind of activity are often more concerned about bringing in profit rather than putting an end to human trafficking on their platforms.

Works Cited

Kelly, Annie. "*Small ads sex trafficking: the battle against backpage.*" The Guardian.

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