Apparel retailer Abercrombie's sales fall for 13th straight quarter

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Teen apparel retailer Abercrombie & Fitch Co's sales fell for the 13th straight quarter as customer traffic to its stores dropped, mainly in markets outside the United States.

Shares of the company, whose brands include Hollister and abercrombie kids, plunged 13 percent in premarket trading on Thursday.

Comparable sales at international stores open at least a year slumped 7 percent in the first quarter, surprising analysts, who had expected a 0.2 percent rise, according to research firm Consensus Metrix.

Same-stores sales fell 8 percent in the Abercrombie brand, a much bigger decline than the 0.6 percent expected by analysts.

Abercrombie has been hurt by fierce competition from fast-fashion retailers such as H&M (HMb.ST) and Inditex's (ITX.MC) Zara. To woo back shoppers, the company has been remodeling its Hollister stores, hiring designers from top brands to keep up with trends and moving from logo-centric designs.

"We expect the second quarter to remain challenging, but to see better results in the back half of the year as our assortments continue to improve," Executive Chairman Arthur Martinez said.

Abercrombie's revenue fell 3.4 percent to $685.5 million in the quarter ended April 30, missing the average analyst estimate of $710.3 million, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

The net loss attributable to the company narrowed to $39.6 million, or 59 cents per share, from $63.2 million, or 91 cents per share, a year earlier.

The loss was bigger than the 51 cents per share analysts on average had expected.

Abercrombie shares were trading at $21.83 before the bell.