



# Good used to be Easy

## Finding new ways to navigate complexity

Everyday decisions have never been so complicated. For a variety of reasons — from increasing access to information, globalization, and a marketplace chock-full of choices — people are recognizing their place within the global community and are thinking beyond their personal needs. Many ask how their purchasing decisions impact economic, environmental, political, and social systems. They want to know how products are made and where they came from. They are taking the larger view.

As more product options enter the market and as our understanding of short-term and long-term effects evolve, we are finding that where “good” used to be easy, it is now complex. Our more nuanced view has forced businesses to compete not only on price, but on consumer values.

*How might businesses and organizations seize this opportunity to help people navigate the complexity of “good”?*

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### TAKE ACTION – *designing for Good Used to Be Easy*

1.

#### *Make the complex simple*

Provide a service to help mediate the complexity around “good” (i.e., Seafood Watch, GoodGuide, and Walmart’s sustainability index).

2.

#### *Take the guesswork out of ‘good’*

Curate for your consumers based on established values (i.e., Trader Joe’s, Meiloo.com, and Urban Outfitters).

3.

#### *Create a walled garden*

Answer big issues with your brand and leave personal needs to products (i.e., Newman’s Own, American Apparel, and Apple).

4.

#### *Engage third parties to endorse your offer*

Leverage experts, provocateurs, and everyday arbiters of “good” to win over consumers (i.e., Google Favorite Places, Walmart’s Elevenmoms, and Robert Parker).

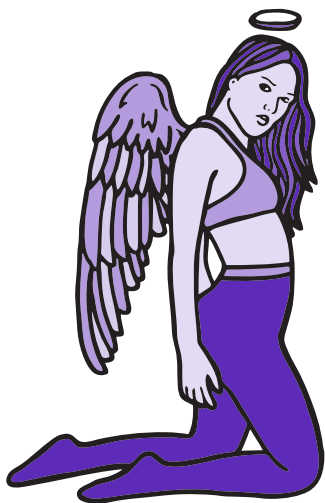
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## American Apparel thinks big

When it comes to buying basics, Ariel shops exclusively at American Apparel. She admits the advertising is iffy, and that founder and CEO Dov Charney is no saint, but Ariel is willing to let that go because she knows the clothes are made in Los Angeles with no sweatshop labor. What she doesn't know is that American Apparel has also installed solar panels on the roof of its factory, provides affordable health care for workers and their families, has a recycling program for scrap fabric, and a history of donating to an educational nonprofit in LA.

Standing amidst the Technicolor array of T-shirts and leggings, Ariel doesn't have to think about the big stuff — she can focus on which hoodie to buy. American Apparel provides a walled garden within which consumers like Ariel can indulge their personal needs while knowing that the brand is looking out for the big issues.

*How might we address big issues through brands and leave personal needs to products?*



## Seafood Watch: easy-to-swallow fish stories

Jeff loves to cook, and whenever possible, he buys the organic, local, grass-fed, wild-caught, or free-range options at the grocery store — not because he is an activist or do-gooder — but because for him “good” food is defined by taste, and those products simply taste better to him. But when a friend introduced him to the Seafood Watch iPhone app created by the Monterey Bay Aquarium, his standards for “good” fish became more complex.

Where “good” once meant the “wild caught” option, Jeff has now learned that taste is influenced not only by how the fish was caught, but where it came from, its relative toxicity, who caught it, and where it is sold. To his surprise, some farmed fish actually meets Seafood Watch's rigorous standards. Seafood Watch has at once raised Jeff's awareness and simplified his decision-making process, whether at the market or when he's out to eat.

*How might we empower consumers by creating services that simplify decisions about what is “good”?*

## Walmart's sustainability index elevates the everyday

With the recession threatening her job security, Nora has taken measures to save money. For one thing, she switched from shopping at stores like Safeway and Macy's to shopping at Walmart. Nora felt this was a step down, however she loves the low prices and is heartened by Walmart's efforts to help her live better, among which is Walmart's forthcoming Sustainability Index.

Previously, Nora had never really considered the relative sustainability of the products she buys. With the complex lifecycle analyses and supply chain sleuthing left to a panel of experts, Walmart will give Nora an easy way to make choices about food, household products, and even electronics. In a way, she is hopeful that Walmart will make her a more empowered shopper; the Index will give her the knowledge she needs to be a discerning consumer, voting with her dollars from a more informed position, and taking part in something greater than herself.

*How might retailers build loyalty to their brands by providing insight at the point of purchase?*



## Google's Favorite Places

When Francine and Jake decided to take a family vacation to New York, they consulted Google's Favorite Places for recommendations from their favorite TV personalities. Favorite Places is a “collection of favorite places around the world” identified and explained by 200 local experts. With Favorite Places, Francine and Jake found a simple and authentic way of navigating city life based on their values and tastes.

## Maker's Diet

Luke has always struggled with his weight. Several years ago, Luke began following the Maker's Diet. The Maker's Diet categorizes foods as “clean” or “unclean” based on certain passages of the Bible. The rules cover varieties of food, as well as how the food was raised, grown, cooked, or cleaned. For Luke, a devout Christian, the Maker's Diet provides a rule set for him to make healthy decisions driven by his spiritual beliefs.



## Meiloo.com

Having recently moved from her native Dalian to Beijing, Lili needed to find a new dentist. Lili has always been a savvy consumer, but when it comes to her health she is especially discerning. When she discovered Meiloo.com, a website that helps people find health-care services in China, she was skeptical that it would help her find a good dentist. But Meiloo.com provided a wealth of credible information — from medical licenses to photographs of exam rooms to patient reviews — that she used to make her decision.

PATTERNS are a collection of shared thoughts, insights, and observations gathered through our work and the world around us. We invite you to join the conversation, so we can raise the bar and develop richer design thinking experiences collectively.

**Be a pattern spotter:** Now that you've been exposed to a few different examples, don't be surprised if you start seeing *Good Used to Be Easy* patterns all around. Keep your eyes open and let us know what you find, especially if it's the next new pattern.

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