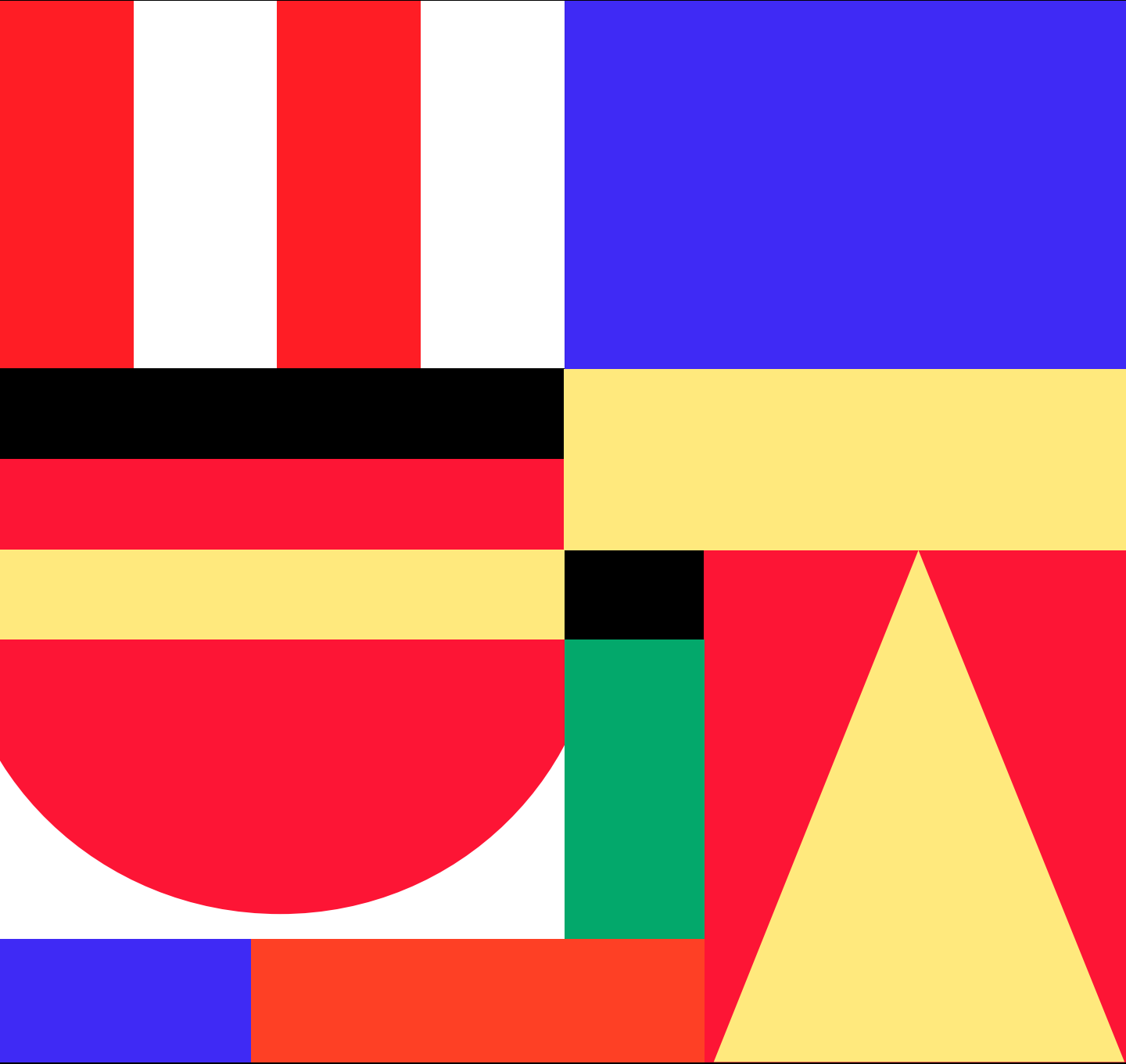


World's Simplest Brands

Ninth Edition



A study on how consumers rank leading brands,
and what companies can gain by simplifying

Siegel+Gale
Simple is smart.

Table of Contents

4

Introduction

8

Highlights

8

Simplicity Pays

12

Movers and Shakers

14

Trends

18

The Current Era

22

Global

22

Top 10 Brands

24

Simplicity Premium

26

Industry Rankings

30

Top 10 Brands

30

United States

32

United Kingdom

34

Germany

36

Sweden

38

United Arab Emirates

40

Saudi Arabia

42

India

44

China

46

Japan

50

Conclusion

50

Methodology

52

Simplicity in Demand

54

About Siegel+Gale

Brands require agility,
dynamism and resilience
to overcome complexity
in this time of

TRANSITION.

BEING A PROFITABLE, PURPOSEFUL BRAND IS COMPLEX.

Simplicity is the answer.

From where they shop, to the way they communicate, to what they expect from their investments, people put a premium on experiences that are easy to understand; transparent and honest; caring for and meeting their needs; innovative and fresh; and useful. In short, simple.

But which brands thoroughly and meaningfully offer these experiences, therefore addressing—and satisfying—this growing global demand for simplicity? And how might this vary across the world?

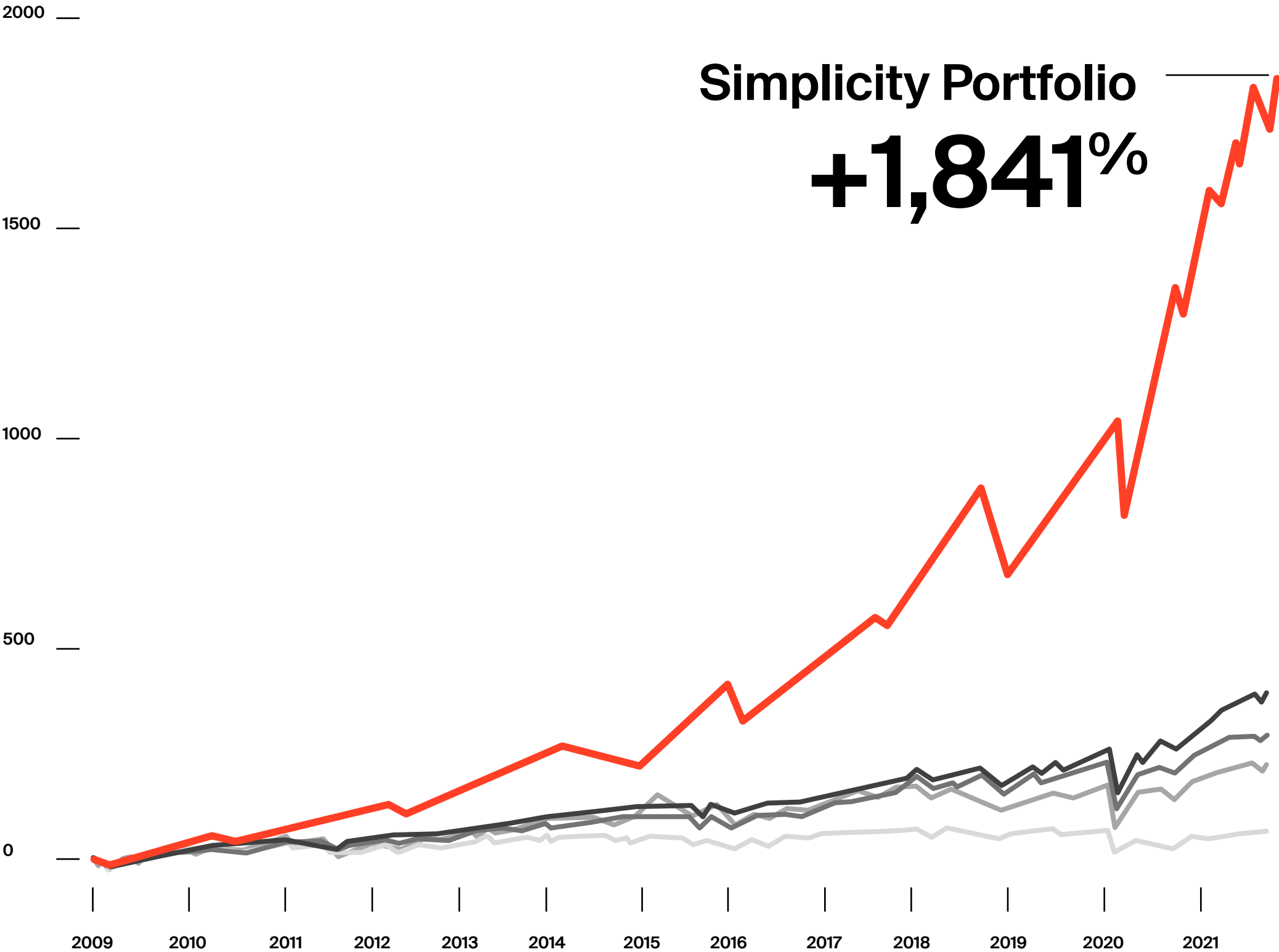
We surveyed more than 15,000 people worldwide to understand which brands and industries provide the simplest experiences, ultimately reducing stress and improving the lives of consumers everywhere.

In its ninth edition, our study consistently reveals that the world's simplest brands are ones that put simplicity at the heart of the customer experience. Our findings reaffirm that simplicity inspires deeper trust, strengthens loyalty, and increases willingness to spend. People are also more likely to recommend a brand that delivers simple experiences. In the end, simplicity drives financial gain for the brands that embrace it and shapes a better future for everyone.

HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2009, a stock portfolio comprised of the publicly traded simplest brands in our Global Top 10 has outperformed the major indexes.

- S&P
- DOW
- DAX
- FTSE





57%

Premium

The percentage of consumers willing to pay more for simpler experiences



76%

Loyalty

The percentage of consumers who are more likely to recommend a brand because it provides simpler experiences and communications



1,600%

Beating the Index

How much a portfolio of the world's simplest brands has beaten the average global stock index since 2009

\$402
Billion

Money on the table

The amount of money brands are leaving on the table when they don't simplify

“Hey Google, tell me the world’s simplest brand.”

From email to maps to virtual assistants, Google is engrained in our daily lives. This year, the search engine found what it was looking for: the title of world’s simplest brand.



Hot Wheels

Speeding up 55 spots, Nissan left competitors in the dust. Nissan certainly wasn’t on cruise control.



Happier Meal

McDonald’s consistently serves up juicy hamburgers, crispy French fries, and a spot in the Global Top 10. But one thing that will no longer be on the menu? Single-use-plastic toys in the Happy Meal®. Now, there’s a treat that’s scrumptious *and* sustainable.



Good Jeans

The skinny on Levi’s? The heritage denim brand did the opposite of bell-bottom out. With their 10-spot advancement globally and 62-spot advancement in the U.S., they had a high rise.



Oh Snap!

Snapchat filtered through other social media competitors to rise 52 spots.



High-Performance Apparel

Adidas, Nike, and Under Armour went up 20, 24, and 49 spots, respectively. Because much of the world has spent the last 20 months sporting chic, comfortable tracksuits, the brands’ quick pace was anything but ath-leisurely.



I came. I saw. I contoured.

With a 46-point rise, health-and-beauty retailer Sephora had a major glow up.



Guardians of the Galaxy

Though known for the popular smartphone, Samsung didn’t phone it in. The technology company advanced 10 spots, earning a place in the Global Top 10. Given the phone-on-fire fiasco of years past, Samsung’s comeback is out of this world.



In this era of transition, our habits as consumers are continuously evolving, because the world is constantly **ADAPTING.**

So, naturally, the way we engage with brands is changing. When looking further into the top-performing brands in our simplicity index, we saw they leaned into three key areas: sustainability, glocalization, and digitization.

These meaningful and timely themes—encapsulated in the ninth edition of *World's Simplest Brands*—signal the future of branding and, ultimately, the future of simplicity.

1
Climate-Conscious Innovation

2
Shop “Glocal”

3
Home Screen Home

1

Climate-Conscious Innovation

Many companies are on a quest to proactively and positively impact people and the planet, spurring sustainability to be a vital component of brand passion and purpose. From Boston to Berlin, Stockholm to Shanghai, people awarded brands that prioritized sustainability and, in doing so, the success of society—both present and future.

In China, KFC is offering more vegan options, including ice cream, chicken nuggets, and burgers. United Arab Emirates’ LuLu Hypermarket has instituted a zero-waste refill program, encouraging customers to use their own reusable containers when shopping. The German retailer dm has created a series of environmentally neutral products called “Pro Climate.” And the Swedish furniture giant IKEA’s buy-back program resells secondhand furniture, embodying the idea of being stylish and sustainable.

But there is a vast gulf between greenwashing and genuine goodwill. When enforcing programs that align purpose with planet, success with sustainability, analyze:

On behalf of our brand, what concrete commitments will make a positive environmental impact?

Where can our brand travel, as it relates to sustainability?

How can we provide all stakeholders with sustainability-related value?

2

Shop “Glocal”

Glocalization involves expanding a global brands’ influence in a local market—making a brand both intercontinental and individual. And, while a global brands’ efforts might have a local accent in each market, the company’s purpose is consistent and authentic. This makes a global brand come to life in the context of the local community, engendering trust and brand loyalty.

Google Pay’s partnership with Groupon—experience-supplier extraordinaire—highlights their commitment to supporting local businesses, as users have access to thousands of unique local experiences. While known for their e-commerce, Amazon has opened a brick-and-mortar hair salon in East London. Exemplifying the “try-before-you-buy” approach, shoppers can use augmented reality to test new styles. Uniqlo has placed vending machines—stocked with down jackets and T-shirts—in local airports, positioning the Japanese retailer as a travel essential and a household name.

Valuably balancing globalization and localization is a complex task facing many brands today. But, when successful, the rewards are immense, and, in some cases, necessary for business continuity. When transplanting a global brand to a local setting, explore:

Will our brand purpose translate?

What role will our brand play in collaborating with the local community?

What local values can we infuse in our global brand?

3

Home Screen Home

The journey for many brands that we welcome into our lives and homes begins on a screen. In the current era, whether working, learning, shopping, streaming, investing, escaping, communicating, or gaming, pivoting across screens is a part of daily life. As our world becomes increasingly more digital, people across the globe prefer and rely on brands that generate congruency between online and offline.

In the United States, Dunkin’ has opened their first digital-only restaurant. Customers make selections through the mobile app or an in-store kiosk, ordering their coffee with a splash of convenience. In India, the MyGov Corona Helpdesk on WhatsApp enables users to locate the nearest vaccination centers and book vaccine appointments. And in Saudi Arabia, Snapchat users are utilizing the power of augmented reality to interact with and explore brands across a variety of industries.

Digital transformation has sped up—and isn’t slowing down. With every digital experience comes a new opportunity for connection. When occupying multiple channels, consider:

What is our commitment to taking our brand’s digital experience(s) to the next level?

How have we crafted online and offline to be synergistic?

How are we serving our consumers in a meaningful way?

“How much simpler or complex has your life become since COVID-19?”

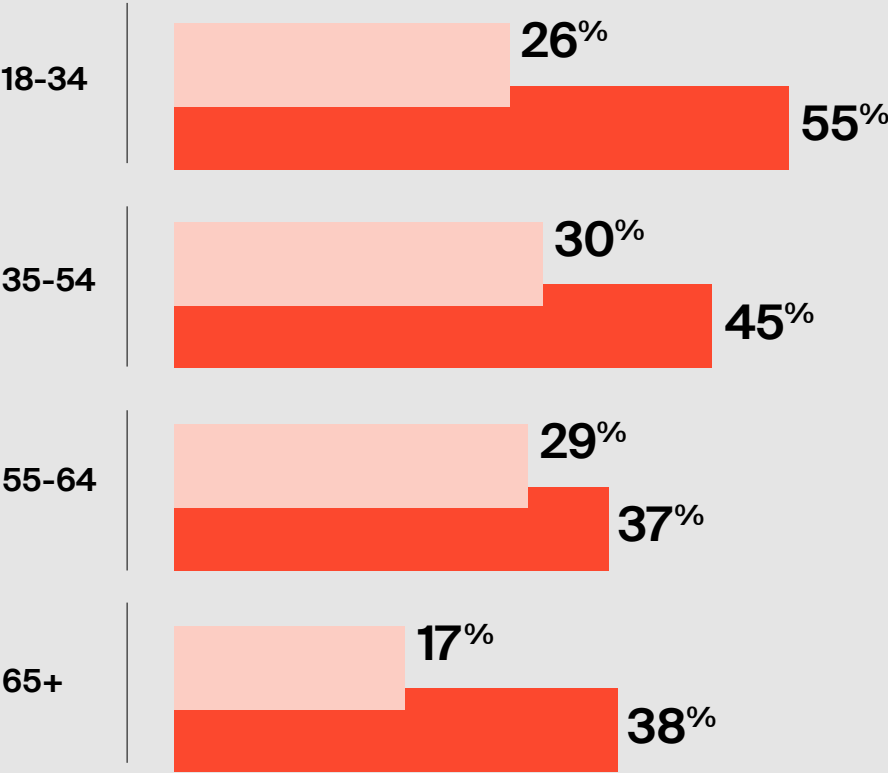


To better understand the ongoing pandemic’s effects on simplicity, we asked participants this question.

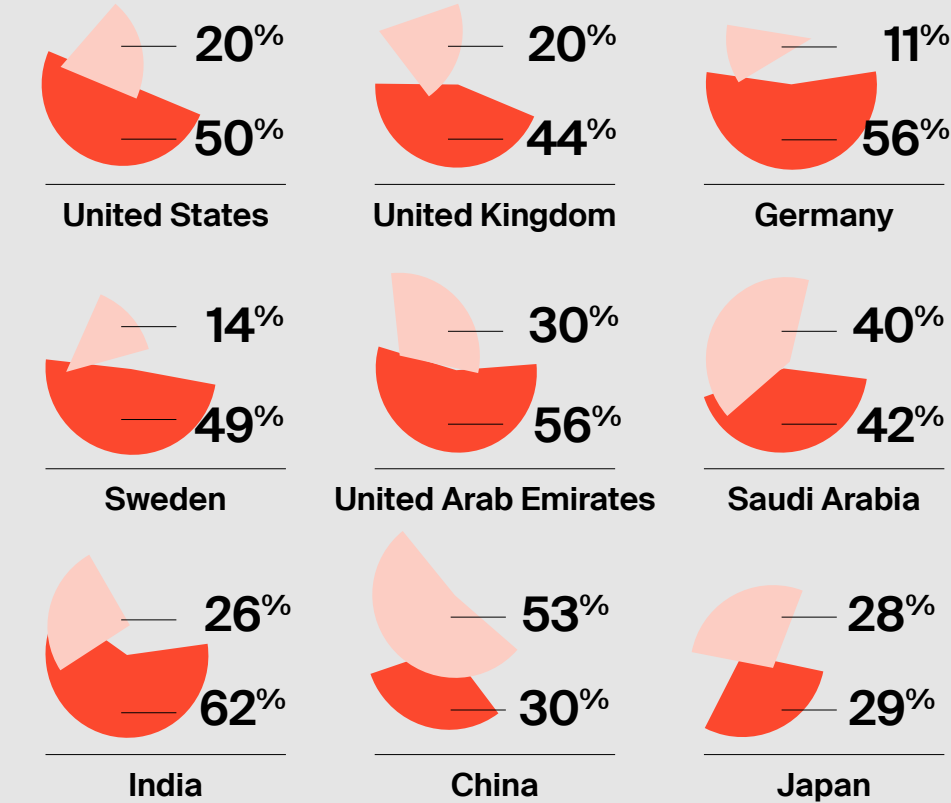
While 26.9% of participants reported their life was simpler and 26.6% reported there was no difference, 46.6% reported their life was more complex.

Here are several highlights of our data, analyzed by age, country, gender, and income. The results underline the resounding demand for simplicity.

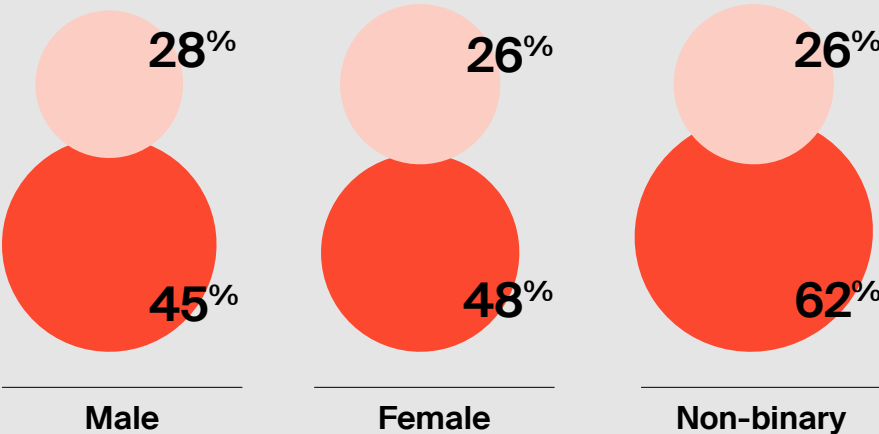
Age



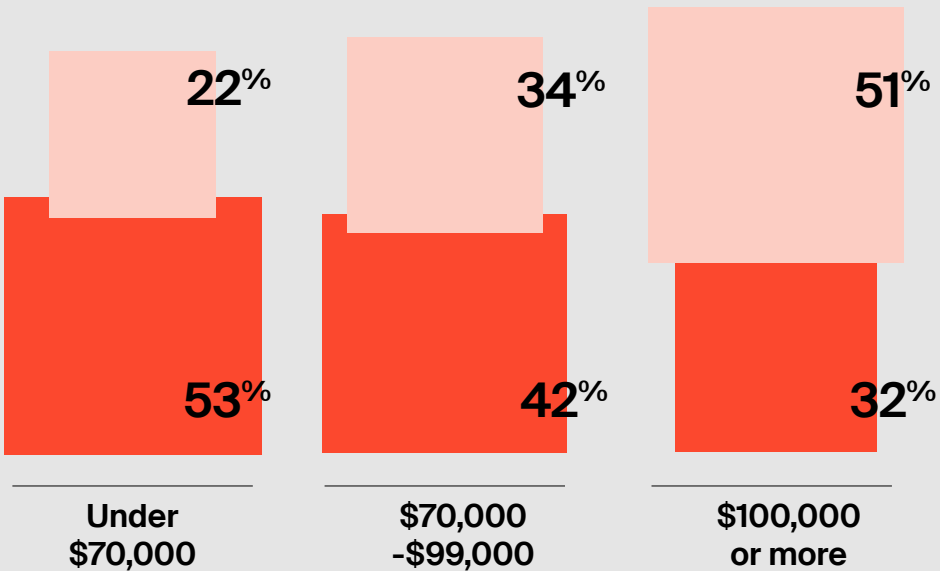
Country



Gender



Income



GLOBAL

There isn't one way to be a simple brand, for simplicity is not formulaic. The winning brands brought simplicity to life in various ways.



Across numerous platforms—including cloud storage, navigation, and analytics, to name a few—Google adheres to their mission: “to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.” And, with their acquisition of Fitbit—the wizards of wearable fitness trackers—Google is only strengthening that purpose. The portfolio addition puts Google one step closer to simplifying the path to better health and wellness for all.

2



In a time of social distancing, Netflix has made it simple for people throughout the world to connect. For instance, you and your New Delhi-doppelgänger can, simultaneously, stream—and scream at—*Squid Game*. And worldwide access isn't Netflix's only diversity effort. The streaming platform is committed to creating and celebrating content that features a variety of communities, pressing play on their mission to “entertain the world.”

3



The German discount-supermarket chain Lidl is known for their simple offering: high-quality products at low prices. But there's a new thing in store: plant-based alternatives. And to emphasize how plugged in they are to the spirit of sustainability, Lidl has committed to installing 350 electric-vehicle-charging stations at stores across the UK.

4



YouTube's simple, easy-to-navigate interface prevents the inundation of information. And, this year, the video-sharing platform doubled down on this tenet, announcing they would prohibit climate-change-denying advertisements. In other words, they would unsubscribe.

5



Aldi is known for innovation—regarding prices, products, and personability. The Deutschland discounter has yet another innovation: the “Charcuterie Board of Directors.” The meat-and-cheese mavens share tips and tricks for building the best boards, simplifying both the shopping and savoring experience. And Aldi's smooth, rich chocolate sweetens the deal.

6



McDonald's makes simplicity delicious. Take their French fries. The humble potato is sliced, fried, and salted to perfection. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, McDonald's has added a new ingredient: goodwill. The company has donated millions of meals to first responders, healthcare workers, and educators. Food and philanthropy make for an excellent combo meal.

7



Samsung is renowned for their innovation. Take The Frame. The television transitions effortlessly from displaying content when turned on and works of art when turned off—the simple, picture-frame-like trim accentuating the masterpieces. Given ongoing travel restrictions, many people have been unable to visit museums. The Frame has acted as a personal museum. And Mona Lisa has joined #Quaranteams worldwide.

8



Amazon is a revolutionary—from e-commerce to philanthropy to entertainment. Recently, the online marketplace revolutionized another medium: podcasts. Now offering synchronized transcripts of select podcasts for deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences, Amazon simplifies the user experience and advances their inclusion and equity ambitions. Yet again, Amazon offers a prime example for delivering curated, hyper-personalized experiences.

9



In this long period of loungewear, the Japanese retailer Uniqlo has outfitted consumers worldwide. One way the emporium of essentials has attracted broad appeal is through their partnerships with such cultural icons as Disney and *Sesame Street*. In addition to these chic collaborations, Uniqlo's capsule collection includes quality, longevity, and simplicity.

10



With more than three million podcasts and 70 million songs, Spotify occupies airwaves worldwide. Recently, the streaming service introduced Car Thing, a dashboard-mounted, voice-activated device that enables users to simply—and safely—navigate through content. So that means listeners can belt Olivia Rodrigo's “drivers license” while keeping theirs.

The percentage of consumers willing to pay more for simpler experiences varies by industry.

Travel Car Rental
Health Insurance
Travel Hotels

General Insurance
Fitness
Travel Air

Internet Retail
Shipping Mail
Retail Health
Media
Restaurants
Retail Grocery

15%

13%

12%

11%

10%

9%

7%

Automotive

Travel Booking

Electronics
Telecom Cable
Telecom Cellular
Retail Fashion
Banks Retail
Retail General
Travel Train

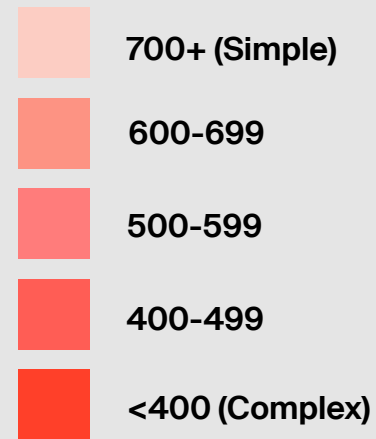
Appliances
Utilities

Global

Industry Rankings

How do simplicity scores compare by industry across the globe?

Simplicity scores out of 1000,
from simple to complex



* Change from eighth edition
For methodology, see page 50.

[illegible]

TOP 10 BRANDS

United States

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



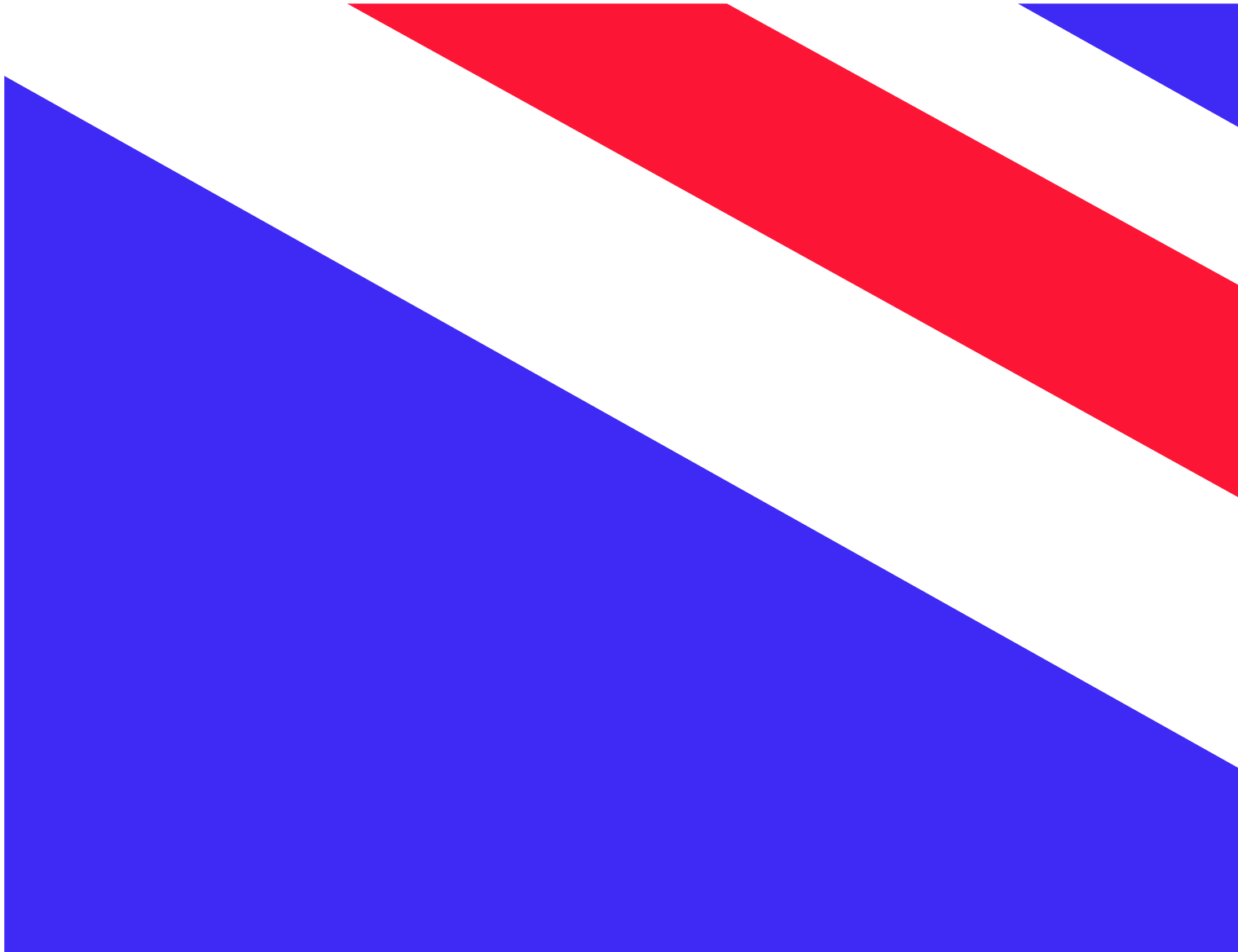
9



10



United Kingdom



1		2	
3		4	
5		6	
7		8	
9		10	

Germany

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



Sweden

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



United Arab Emirates

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



Saudi Arabia

1

SAMSUNG

2

YouTube

3


WhatsApp

4

Google

5

 zain

6

NETFLIX

7



8

 noon

9



10

stc

India

1		2	 WhatsApp
3		4	SONY
5		6	
7		8	NOKIA
9		10	

Top 10 Brands

China



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



Japan

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



CONCLUSION

15,000+
Consumers

9
Countries

25
Industries

800+
Brands

To determine the global state of simplicity, we fielded an online survey to gather perspectives on simplicity and how industries and brands make people’s lives simpler or more complex.

For this study, we surveyed consumers through a third-party panel. The sample is representative of the national demographic distribution in each country.

Researchers used input from past surveys, in-country offices, and existing third-party research to select a representative set of brands that in-country respondents would be most likely to use or experience.

We were unable to report on smaller, lesser-known brands for which we could not collect sufficient responses.

Survey Topics

This year’s respondents answered questions about brand touchpoints within specific industries and brands, including:

- Their perceptions of experiences within 25 industry categories they experience in daily life
- How familiar they are with certain brands
- Whether they recently used these brands
- Their willingness to pay more for brands they currently use if they provided simpler experiences
- The simplicity/complexity of a brand’s communications and interactions in relation to their industry peers

Brand Simplicity Score

The score was calculated with the following inputs:

- How each brand was rated on the simplicity/complexity of its products, services, interactions and communications in relation to its industry peers
 - User/non-user ratings were weighted to give more importance to the user experience and remove any possible bias for higher proportions of users for some of the brands.
- How consistently the brand experience and communications were rated across respondents (the standard deviation of ratings)
- How aligned non-user and user perceptions were, privileging aligned perceptions
- The Simplicity Score for the brand’s industry or category(ies)

Industry Simplicity Score

The score was calculated with the following inputs:

- The industry’s contribution to making life simpler or more complex
- The pain of typical interactions with companies/organizations within the industry
- How the industry’s typical communications rank in terms of:
 - Ease of understanding
 - Transparency/honesty
 - Communicates that customer needs are being cared for/Making the customer feel valued and appreciated
 - Innovation/freshness
 - Usefulness

Now, more than ever, consumers demand simplified brand experiences. And they will reward brands that deliver them.

This dynamic period presents challenges and opportunities for consumers and brands, alike.

So how do you know if your brand is delivering simple experiences? And, if it isn't, how do you begin to simplify?

Ask yourself the following questions. The more you can answer with a definitive "Yes," the closer you are to reaping the rewards of simplicity and, ultimately, becoming a top brand.

Do we know our brand purpose, and is it articulated in a simple, memorable, and inspiring way?

Is senior leadership committed to providing a simpler customer experience?

Do we have the tools in place to get everyone to consistently deliver our brand's purpose?

Are our products and services clear and easy to navigate?

Do we know the brand experiences where simplicity would be most appreciated by customers and inspire greater brand loyalty?

Still experiencing a lot of complexity at your organization?

Lets talk.

Conclusion

About Us

Our services

Brand Communication

Brand Management

Brand-led Change

Business Analytics + Insights

Design

Experience

Naming

Strategy

Global footprint

New York

Los Angeles

San Francisco

London

Dubai

Shanghai

Tokyo

We believe in the power of simplicity.

At Siegel+Gale, we own it, defend it and live by it.

We are a brand strategy, design and experience firm. With unlimited imagination and a dedication to the facts, we build brands that cut through the clutter—and unlock success for our clients.

Since 1969, we have championed simplicity for leading corporations, nonprofits and government organizations worldwide. No matter the brand challenge, we activate our brand purpose: to make it simpler for our clients and colleagues to succeed. Furthermore, we embody our four core values of smart, nice, unstoppable, and inclusive.

We are a part of Omnicom Group Inc., and we have strong partners all around the world.

New York, NY 10007



Siegel+Gale
Simple is smart.