

Siegel+Gale
Simple is smart.

World's Simplest Brands

Tenth Edition

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

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About Siegel+Gale

15,000+ consumers have spoken

They've represented nine countries.

They've ranked 800+ brands and 25 industries according to how simple or complex they are.

And they've told us their experiences have never been more abundant or more complex.

Because of this proliferation and complexity, how brands rank depends on the experiences they deliver.

In addition to evaluating how the world's leading brands stack up and how DEI and ESG initiatives drive profit, this year's study reveals that, while brand experiences occur at every touchpoint across a consumer's journey, they're not all created equal. But when brands understand and simplify their most important experiences, it pays—inspiring deeper trust, strengthening loyalty, and increasing willingness to spend.

At Siegel+Gale, we champion simplicity and define it across these five dimensions:

- Easy to understand
- Transparent and honest
- Caring for and meeting consumer needs
- Innovative and fresh
- Useful

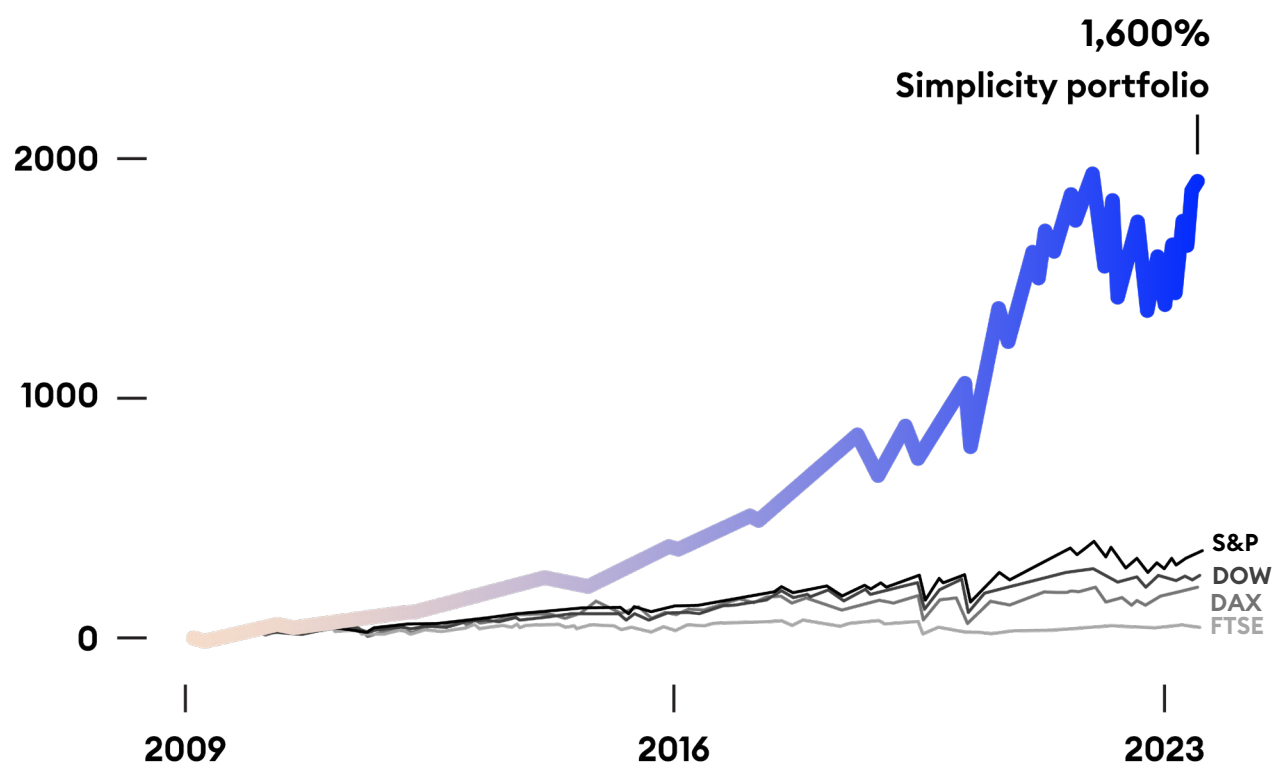
Thanks to consumers' perspectives on simplicity over ten editions, our World's Simplest Brands study has consistently determined the global state of simplicity.

Now in its tenth edition, the findings prove that simplicity is not a byproduct of success; rather, it is the reason why brands thrive. For simplicity is the means through which to become a top brand.

Highlights

Simplicity pays

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



1,600%

Simplicity performs

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

78%

Simplicity builds loyalty

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

64%

Simplicity earns a premium

The percentage of consumers willing to pay more for simpler experiences

Complexity costs

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

\$780 Billion

Movers + shakers



The Lidl engine that could

After placing in the Top 10 in the last five editions, the German discount supermarket Lidl had number one in the bag, because the brand consistently provides consumers with the products they love at guaranteed bargain prices.



The suite life

In the global ranking, with 34-, 30-, and 20-spot rises, respectively, Hilton, Holiday Inn, and Ramada signaled “Do Not Disturb” to other hotel chains.



Sixth sense

Like their signature McNuggets, McDonald's proves that all good things come in sixes: the fast-food giant has placed in the Global Top 10 in the past six editions. There's nothing sour about that accomplishment—only sweet.



Got game

Sported by Jordan Spieth, Steph Curry, and Lindsey Vonn, Under Armour's 26-spot rise proves who is the true G.O.A.T.



Word on the tweet

Plummeting 39 spots to the bottom of the U.S. ranking, tweeting is taking a beating—especially now that Instagram's Threads has entered the chat. With Twitter's bird X-ed out of the equation, it remains to be seen if their rebrand is the answer.



Golden delicious

Rising 81 spots to the Top 10 U.K. ranking, Apple travels well from Cupertino to Cardiff.



Style stars

Clothing-and-accessories retailers Uniqlo and Old Navy had excellent fashion showings, with a spot in the Global Top 10 and a 51-spot rise in the U.S. ranking, respectively. Low-cost looks are always in style.



Sharing is caring

The rideshare service Lyft didn't tire, earning five stars for their 49-spot rise in the U.S. ranking.



Joy ride

Cruising up 34 spots, Honda is proving it can go the distance by steering clear of complexity.



Naturally simple

Placing first in the U.S. ranking, Whole Foods Market had a 17-spot rise, thanks to making it simple for consumers to make healthy choices.



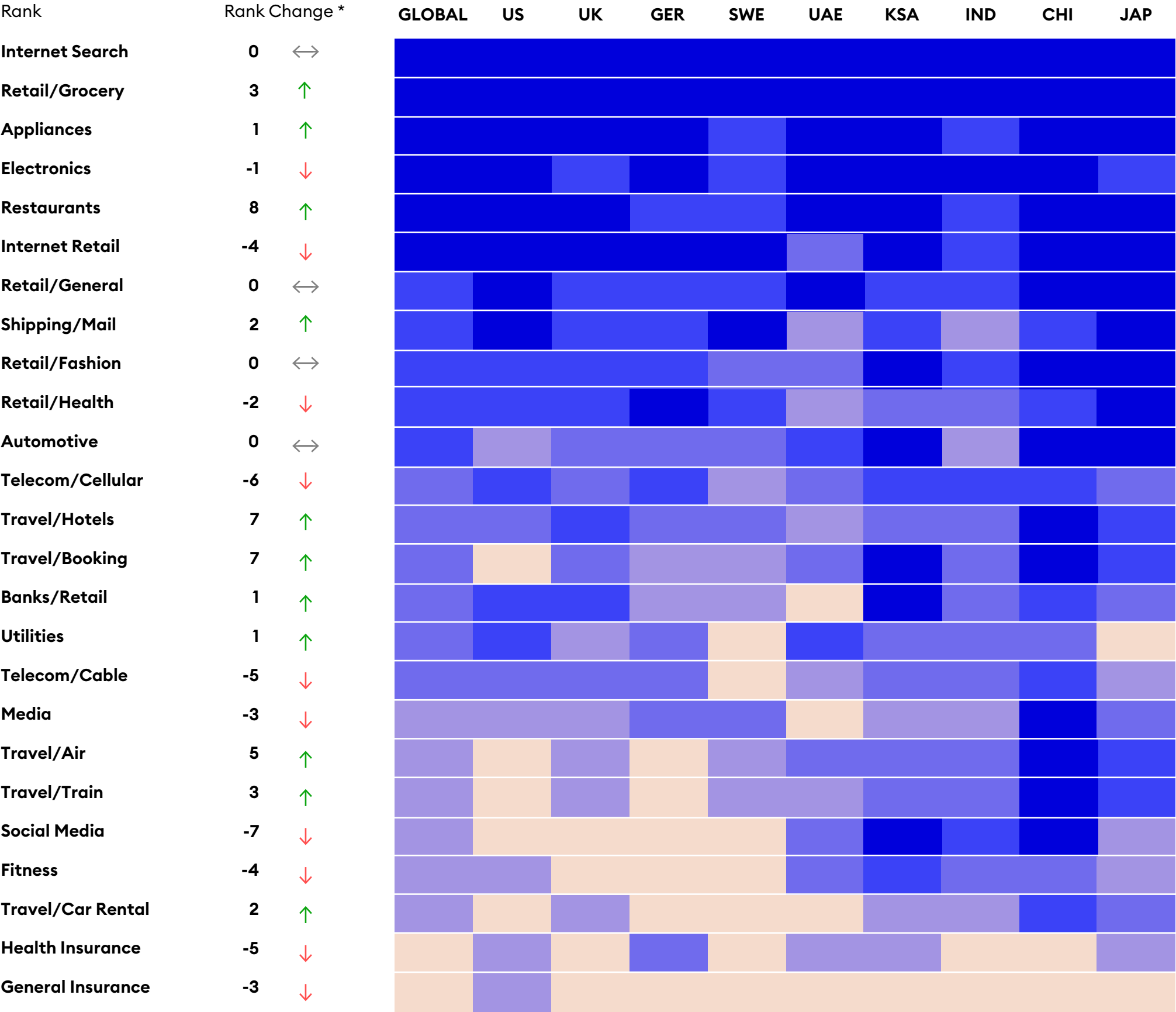
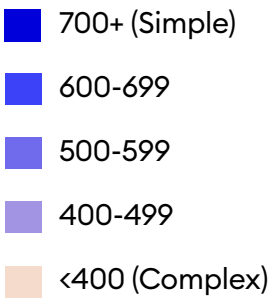
Stamp of approval

Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays United States Postal Service from delivering a 49-spot rise to place second in the U.S. ranking.

Insights by
industry

How do simplicity scores compare by industry across the globe?

Simplicity scores out of 1000, from simple to complex



* Change from ninth edition. For methodology, see page 56.

Simplicity premium

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

16%

Automotive
Health Insurance



13%

General Insurance
Travel/Air
Travel/Hotels



11%

Telecom/Cable
Banks/Retail
Electronics



9%

Telecom Cellular
Retail/Grocery
Retail/Health
Media



14%

Travel/Car Rental
Travel/Booking

12%

Fitness

10%

Internet Retail
Retail/General
Retail/Fashion
Travel/Train
Restaurants
Shipping/Mail

7%

Utilities
Appliances

How can brands deliver simpler experiences?

To better understand which aspects of the consumer journey are perceived to be the simplest or most complex, we asked participants to rate touchpoints of 15 industries on a scale of 1 (most complex) to 10 (simplest).

Journey maps visualize the process of interacting with an industry.

With more products, choices, and touchpoints in every industry than ever before, it's more difficult to win consumers' hearts, minds, and wallets. Our findings revealed four levers with which brands can capitalize to cut through the literal and metaphorical clutter. While brands can, of course, benefit from implementing all these strategies, in an environment with finite resources, opportunities vary by industry.

-  Be transparent
-  Educate consumers
-  Invest in customer support
-  Emphasize human interaction

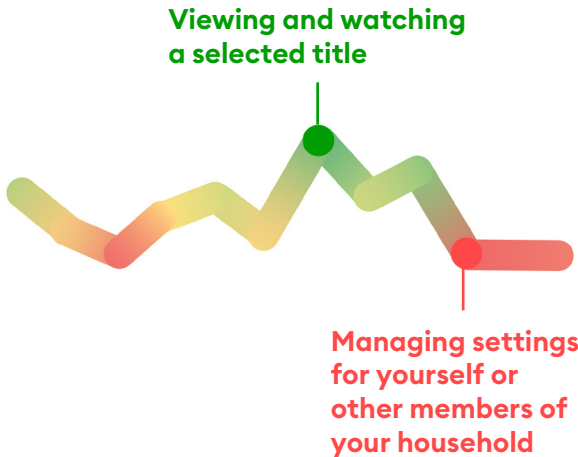
Be transparent

● Simplest touchpoint ● Most complex touchpoint

Consumers often lack clarity about the services and terms they are being offered.

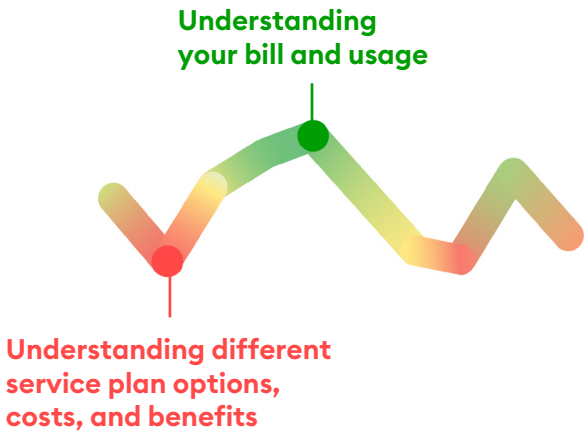
Streaming/video-on-demand

In a complicated, overlapping sea of options, illuminate the way for consumers by showcasing not only the content library, but also what differentiates versus other streamers (i.e. service specs.).



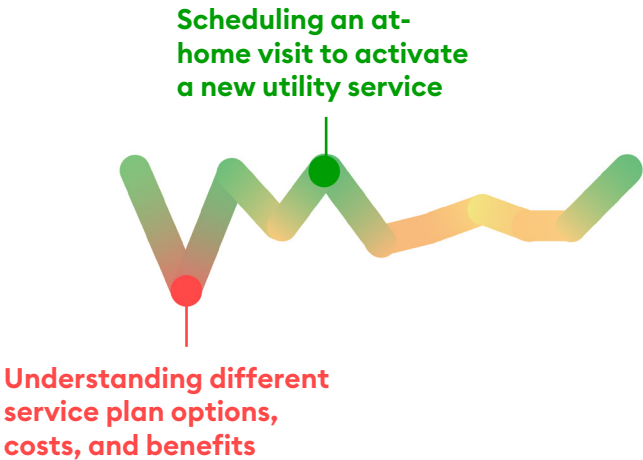
Telecommunications

Highlight distinguishing details and differences in plan options for consumers looking to choose a new provider.



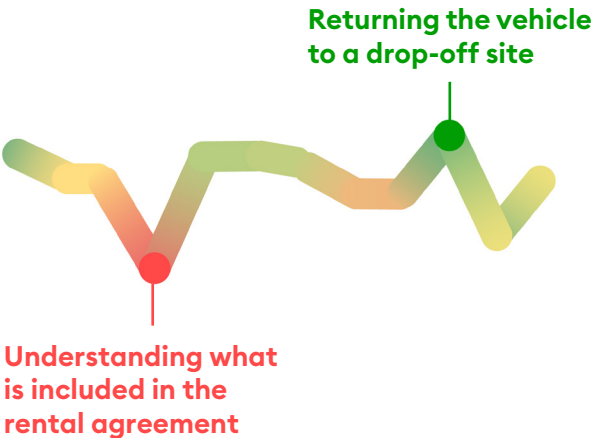
Utilities

Clearly communicate consumer data use and measurement to differentiate through simplifying sustainability.



Car rental

To limit surprises for consumers and simplify the car-renting journey, clarify what's included in the rental agreement.



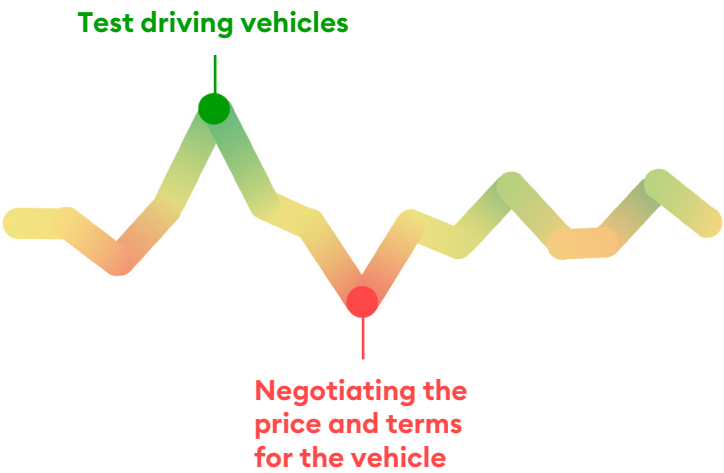
Educate consumers

Complexity arises when consumers do not have sufficient knowledge at key journey stages.

● Simplest touchpoint ● Most complex touchpoint

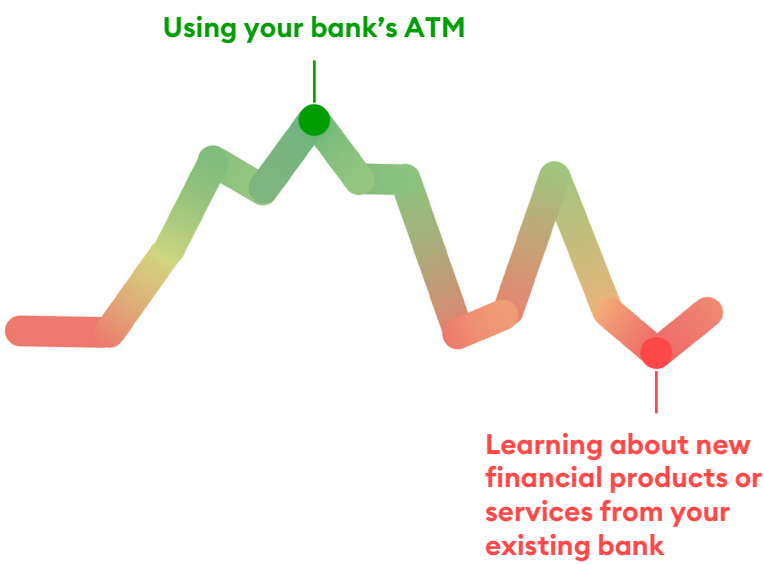
Automotive sales

Streamline the car-buying journey by facilitating the exchange of information.



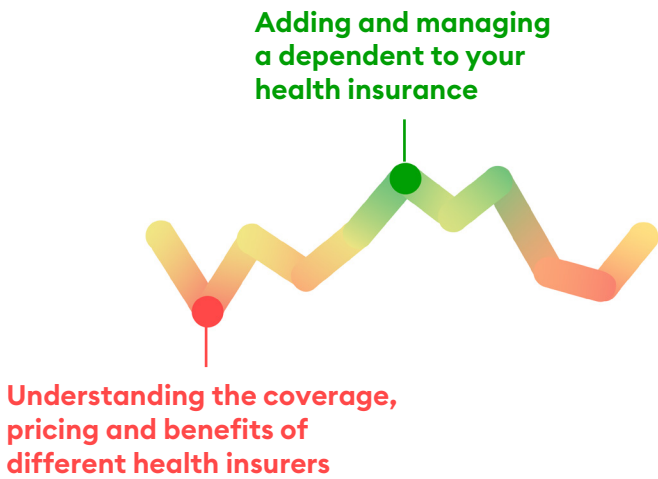
Consumer finance

For increased trust and loyalty, enhance financial literacy and enable consumers to make more informed financial decisions.



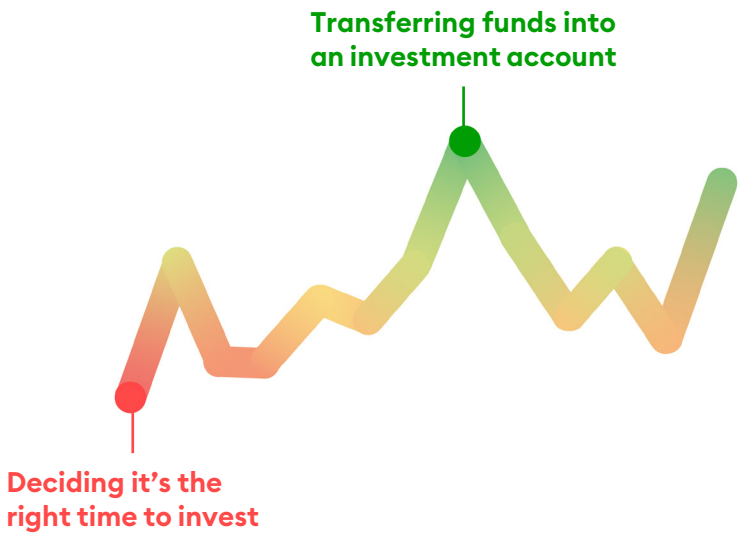
Health insurance

Educate consumers on the realities and restrictions of their plan, clearly communicating what is required from them.



Financial investment

Through financial literacy, empower customers to make more enlightened financial choices.



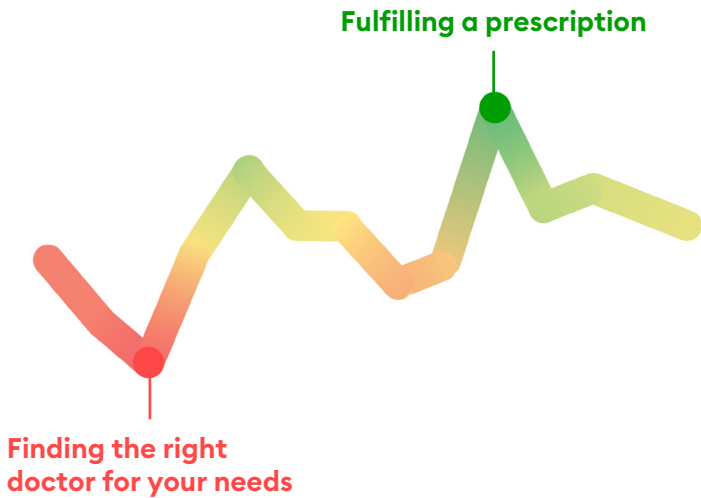
Invest in customer support

● Simplest touchpoint ● Most complex touchpoint

Consumers experience complexity when they find it hard to get help.

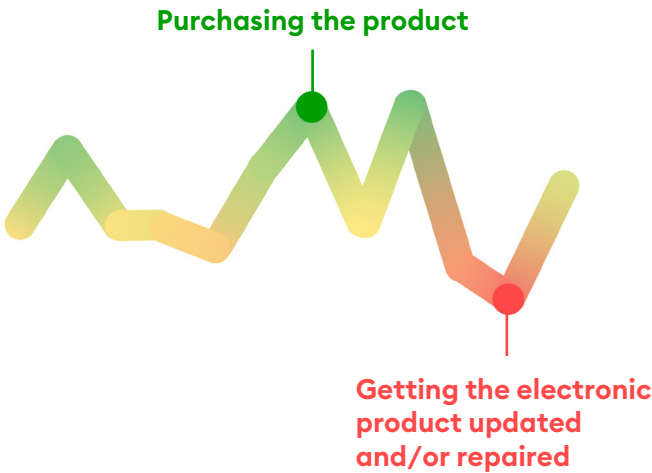
Healthcare

Lower complexity for patients by empowering them to have a sense of agency with their health, with simultaneous guidance and support from their professional care team.



Consumer electronics

Invest in support options for lifetime loyalty as consumers update, repair and replace electronics.



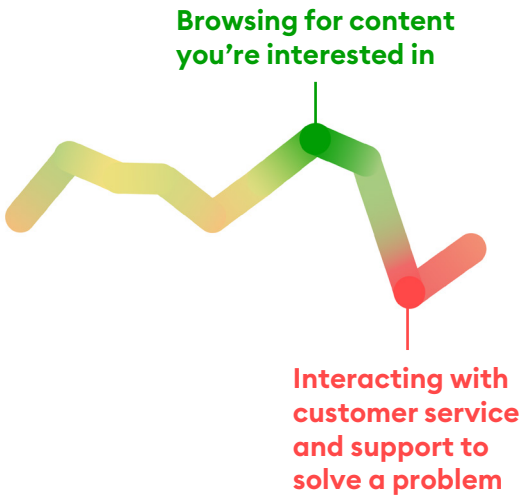
Media and news

Establish and maintain trust as a critical component to help customers validate stories, which will encourage customers to more readily rely on and lengthen their engagement with the source.



Social media

Consistently stand by social media users as a platform advocate, but especially when customer service needs arise.



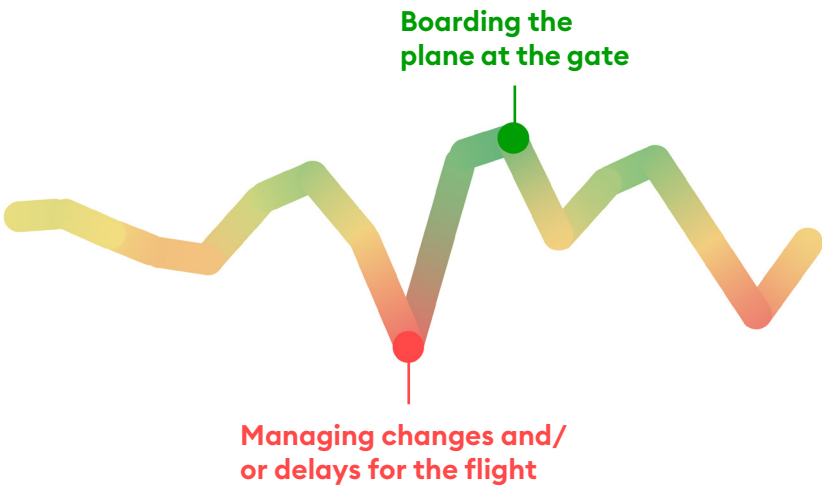
Emphasize human interaction

Lack of in-person resolutions leads to complexity.

● Simplest touchpoint ● Most complex touchpoint

Airline

Ease of the flight experience through airline crew interactions in moments that provide peace of mind.



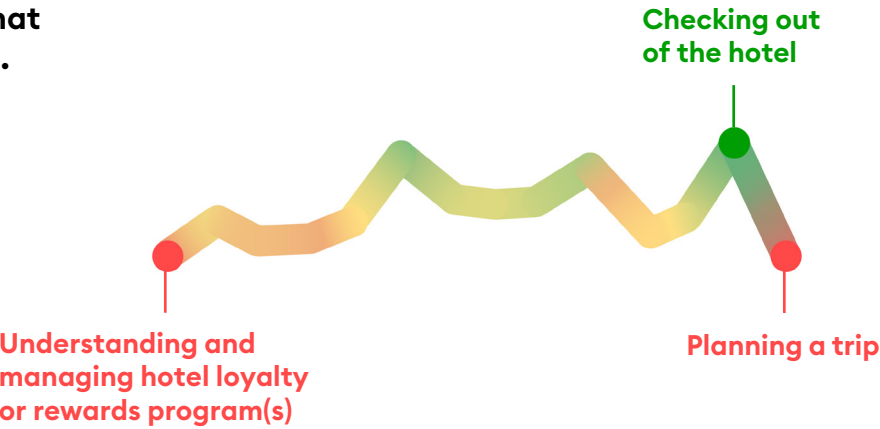
Retail clothing

Take account of the value tangible shopping experiences provide for consumers in brick-and-mortar stores.



Hotel/hospitality

Further simplify the hospitality experience by leaning into touchpoints that feature human interaction.



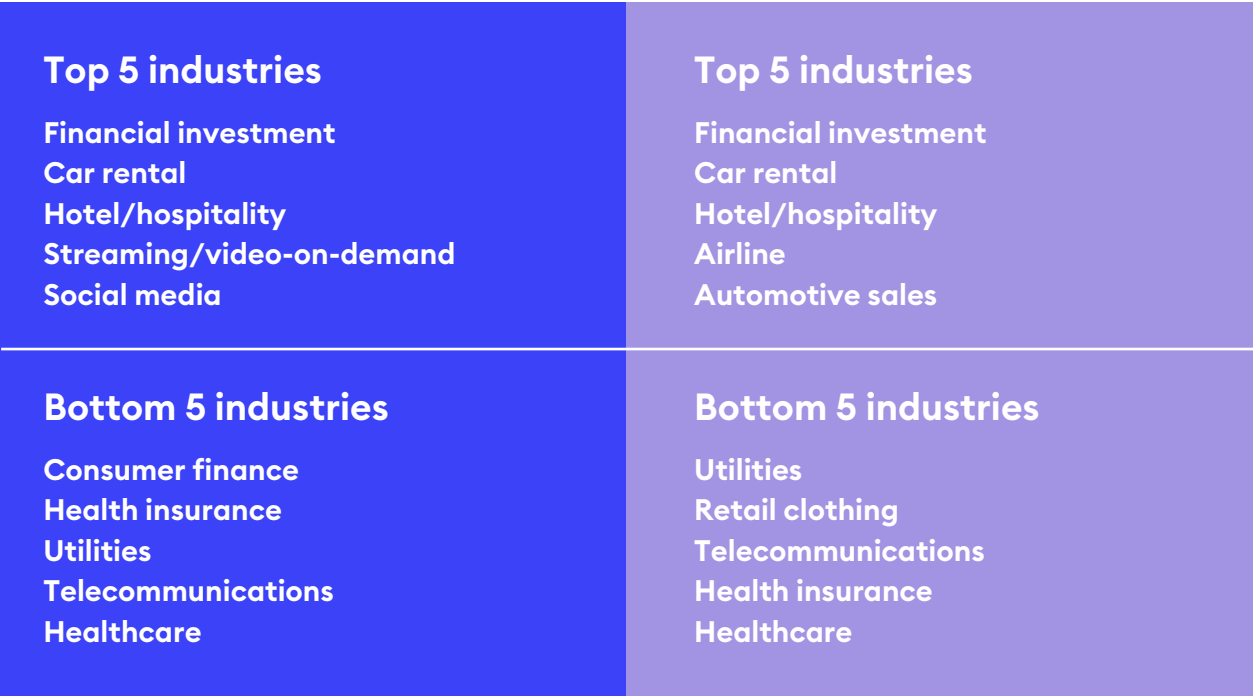
Simplify DEI and ESG communications

In recent years, many brands have made bold commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives. We set out to measure how simple it was for consumers globally to understand these efforts in 15 industries.

However, across industries, understanding of DEI and ESG programs is low, maxing out at 37% and 42%, respectively.

There is opportunity in every industry to remove complexity in order to maximize impact of DEI and ESG initiatives.

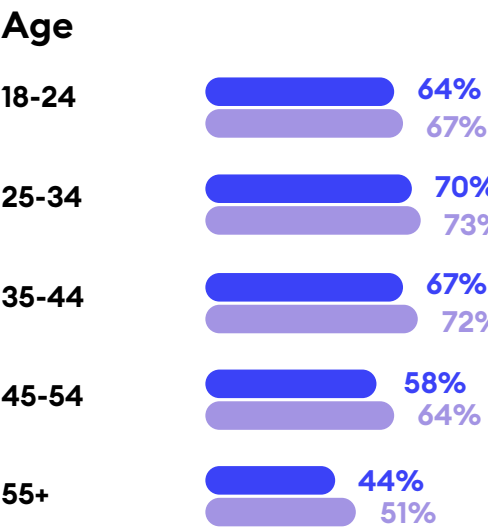
DEI ESG



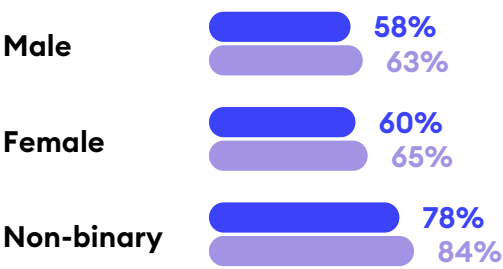
The percentage consumers are more likely to purchase from a brand because of their demonstrated commitment

59% 64%

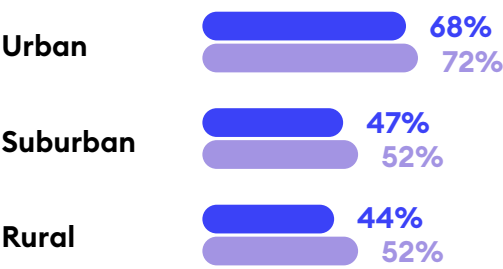
Regarding the impact of commitment to DEI and ESG on likelihood to purchase, we analyzed the data by age, gender, residential area, and region. In each dimension, millennials, non-binary consumers, urban dwellers, and consumers in eastern countries, respectively, are motivated to reward brands for their DEI and ESG programs.



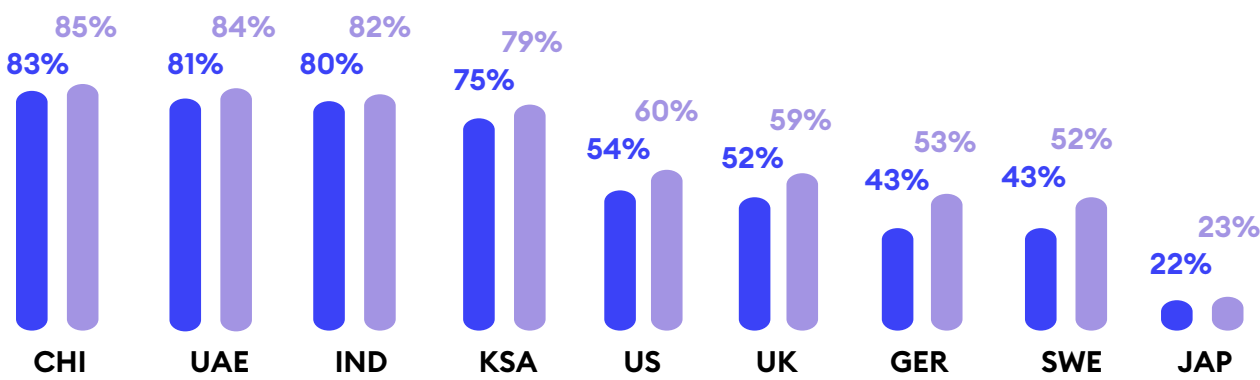
Gender



Residential area



Region



Simplicity: a retrospective

Top-performing brands through the years

Simplicity all-stars



Lidl
Top 10 in six editions



Google
Top three in nine editions



McDonald's
Top 10 in nine editions



Amazon
Top 10 in seven editions

Edition 1 (2010)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER			ME	IND	CHI	
	NETFLIX	ASDA	amazon	—					—
Edition 2 (2011)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER			ME	IND	CHI	
Google	NETFLIX	Google	amazon	—		Google	Google	Baidu 百度	—
Edition 3 (2012)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER			ME	IND	CHI	
Google	SUBWAY	Google	amazon	—		Google	NOKIA	IKEA	—
Edition 4 (2013)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER			ME	IND	CHI	
	amazon	amazon		—		Google	NOKIA	QQ	—
Edition 5 (2014)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER			ME	IND	CHI	
	Zappos	amazon		—		Google	Google	WeChat	—
Edition 6 (2015)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER	SWE		ME	IND	CHI	
	Google		Google	IKEA		Google	Google	淘宝网 Taobao.com	—
Edition 7 (2016-2017)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER	SWE		ME	IND	CHI	JAP
	Google	amazon	amazon	IKEA		WhatsApp	Google	Hilton	YOSHINOYA
Edition 8 (2018-2019)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER	SWE	UAE	KSA	IND	CHI	JAP
NETFLIX	lyft	NETFLIX		IKEA	Google	ALBAIK	Google	UNI QLO	YOSHINOYA
Edition 9 (2021-2022)									
GLOBAL	US	UK	GER	SWE	UAE	KSA	IND	CHI	JAP
Google	amazon	Google	NETFLIX	NETFLIX	amazon	SAMSUNG	Google	KUAISHOU	UNI QLO

— Sweden and Japan were added in the sixth and seventh editions, respectively.

Simplicity disrupts industries

Entrants across industries have leaned into simplicity to change how consumers buy and live. However, consumers now have more choice of products, channels and services than ever before—driving complexity.

World's Simplest Brands first edition	
iPad, Instagram, and Uber launch	
Lyft launches	
Alexa and Robinhood launch	
230M Pokémon GO users	
1B Instagram users	
1B streaming subscribers	
76% of U.S. hospitals use telemedicine	
62M video conferencing-app downloads March 14-21	
Automotive giants commit to EV futures	
1B wearable-tech users	
\$1B fast-fashion market	
"Metaverse" added to Merriam-Webster Dictionary	
\$2.4T global spend using QR code payments	

2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023

Airbnb evolves to house rentals

Seamless and GrubHub merge
Zoom launches

500M WeChat users

100M+ TikTok downloads
Crypto Bull Run

1B food-delivery-app users
100M+ Uber users
30M+ self-driving cars

\$150B food-delivery market
\$128B U.S. D2C e-commerce sales

World's Simplest Brands tenth edition
6.92B smartphone users
1M ChatGPT users
51% of U.S. uses contactless payment

Brand rankings by region

Global



1

The German discount retailer—and world’s simplest brand—Lidl is simplifying healthy, sustainable eating for generations to come. Lidl has introduced kid-friendly fruit-and-vegetable packaging to encourage kids to notch up their nutrient intake. They’ve also committed to removing cartoon characters from all unhealthy products by spring 2024. But these cuisine commitments aren’t the only root of Lidl’s success. For 50 years, Lidl has produced high-quality items, low prices, and simple experiences.



Making their mark in the top three for the ninth consecutive edition, the tech leader Google embodies perennial simplicity. Now, the future of Google search is coming into focus through SGE (Search Generative Experience): the new AI-driven search-engine results page. In this new era of search, Google continues to provide users with simple experiences by unlocking a world of information faster than ever before.

2



Selling everything from hammocks to HDMI cables to hoverboards, the e-commerce giant Amazon added a new offering: healthcare. Amazon’s acquisition of primary-care practice One Medical simplifies the often-fraught experience, making it easier to find, choose, afford, and engage with healthcare. Effective, accessible virtual care services, on-site labs, and an array of healthy-living programs promote physical and mental health. The prescription for painfully complex healthcare experiences? Simplicity.

3



With 90% of their products private label, the German grocer ALDI simplifies the shopping experience by limiting the paradox of choice. Don’t spend hours debating which tomato sauce to buy. Instead, trust that ALDI will deliver high quality and low prices so you can just grab a can and go. And this fall, look out for their seasonal maple-, pumpkin- and cinnamon-stocked shelves.

4



Samsung continues to take their place at the frontline of innovation. Take the Galaxy Z Fold 5 and Flip 5. By urging consumers to defy norms and enjoy new experiences on the “flip side,” this electronics corporation challenges everything people know about ordinary smartphones. Even as the phone market declines, the foldable phone sector continues to grow—and other tech companies are beginning to follow-suit. The future is foldable; it’s as simple as that.

5



The convenience-store chain 7-Eleven keeps simplicity well stocked. Supplying everything from snacks to magazines to gas, the smorgasbord of the full-service store simplifies any experience—from the everyday to the exceptional. By cancelling any complexity, 7-Eleven isolates brain freeze to their iconic icy treat: the Slurpee.

6



The fast-food chain McDonald’s famous golden arches are going green, thanks to a goal to have 100% of products in recycled or renewable materials by 2025. For consumers and employees alike, easy-to-understand campaigns like this simplify McDonald’s sustainability mission. And simplicity spans from packaging to patties. Rather than introduce new items, McDonald’s has upgraded classics with softer buns, gooier cheese, and richer condiments. And with that, the beloved Happy Meal® smile widens.

7



Enhancing user experience is woven into the fabric of UNIQLO. In response to consumer feedback, the Japanese retailer crafted UV-protection clothes and anti-fog sunglasses. These tailor-made tweaks model their mission to deliver clothing that enriches the lives of all consumers around the world—and prove that sartorial simplicity is always on trend.

8



As a one-stop shop for all necessities, the Japanese convenience-store chain FamilyMart keeps life simple. And their enhanced fashion products set them apart from a typical corner store. With new apparel items geared towards all ages, like unisex shorts and sandals, the FamilyMart brand has got you covered—from head to toe. Simple designs meet unusual colors, and it’s all at your convenience.

9



Burger King takes their seat on the throne, providing royally tasty and conveniently simple consumer experiences. Offering over 200,000 ways to uniquely customize their signature Whopper—whether it’s through pickles for crunch, jalapeños for spice, or barbecue sauce for tang—Burger King adds personal flair to their fast-food franchise. Can’t decide between French fries or chicken nuggets? Curb both cravings with their one-of-a-kind chicken fries.

10

United States



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

United Kingdom

Google

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Germany

amazon

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Sweden

Google

1

APOTEK 

2

WILLY:S

3



4



5

blocket

6



7

 apoteket

8



9

COMVIQ

10

United Arab Emirates



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Saudi Arabia

SAMSUNG

1



2



WhatsApp

3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

India

Google

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

China



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Japan



1



2

LAWSON

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gusto

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5



6



7

DOUTOR

8

FamilyMart

9



10

Questions to ask

Methodology

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.

15,000+ Consumers

9 Countries

25 Industries

800+ Brands

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 consumer needs are being cared for
 - Innovation/freshness
 - Usefulness

How simple is your brand experience?

Ask yourself these questions. The more you can answer with a definitive “Yes,” the closer you are to embracing simplicity, thereby satisfying consumer demand and shaping the future.

- Is senior leadership committed to providing simple consumer experiences?
- Are our products and services clear and easy to navigate?
- Do we know the brand experiences where simplicity would be most appreciated by consumers and inspire greater brand loyalty?
- Do we know our DEI and ESG initiatives, and are they articulated in a simple, memorable and inspiring way?
- Do we have the tools in place to get everyone to consistently deliver our brand’s purpose?

Still striving to deliver simple experiences?

Let’s talk.

Siegel+Gale is a global brand experience firm

Since 1969, our branding experts have blended emotion, art and rigor to design brand experiences that surprise, delight and drive measurable results.

For over 50 years, 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. We're a community of brand builders who are committed to our core values: smart, nice, unstoppable and inclusive.

We are a part of Omnicom, and have offices in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, London, Dubai, Shanghai and Tokyo.

Where we shine

Building brands to drive business growth

Rebranding and refreshing brand strategy

Evolving a brand for a M&A or spin-off

Creating visual + verbal identities

Defining brand purpose

Optimizing product portfolios

Measuring brand + quantifying ROI

Naming companies, products or services

Delivering category-defining brand experiences

Launching new products + services

Crafting employee value propositions + experiences

Implementing and governing large-scale brand transformations

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Siegel+Gale

Simple is smart.