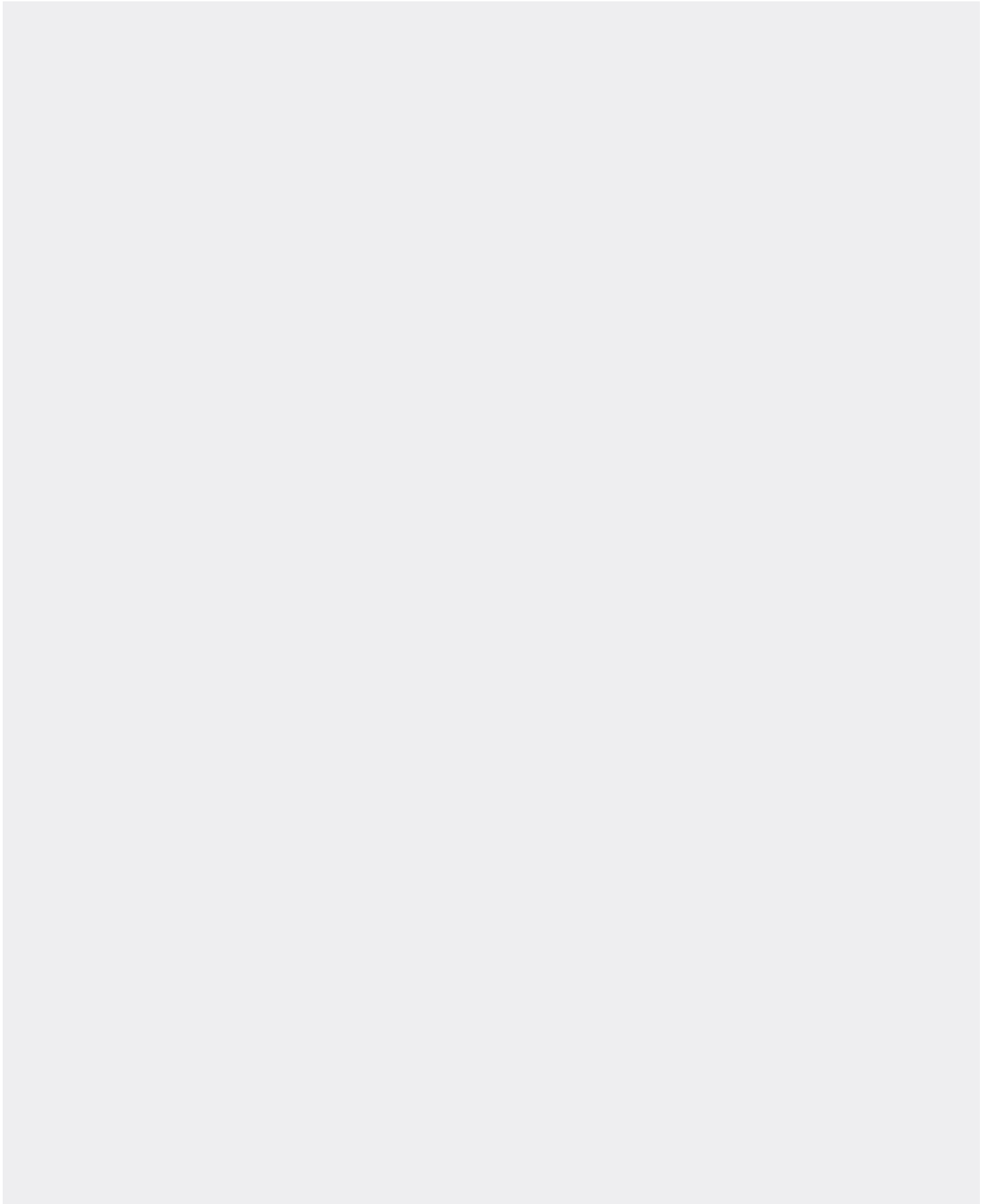# Global Brand Simplicity Index 2012

Understanding how simplicity sparks
profits, loyalty and innovation

# Letter from the CEOs

Simplicity isn't a trend; it's a necessity.

It's inescapable, as the results of our third annual Global Brand Simplicity Index show: the need for simplicity and its corresponding economic value is greater than ever. Not only are the simplest brands outperforming the major stock indexes, consumers continue to say they're willing to pay a premium for a simplified experience.

So why aren't more brands simply adapting and moving away from overly complex touchpoints and communications that only alienate their customers?
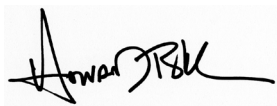
The simple answer is: simplicity isn't easy for most businesses. And the bigger the business, the more complicated things get with more priorities, more constituents and more decisions—from technologies and financials, to people, processes and products. Getting simple in a single-minded way is hard work for many brands, even though it's to their competitive advantage and one of the best paths to remaining relevant.

To further shed light on the challenges of putting simplicity to work, this year we looked at the extent to which people experience their work environments as being simple. The most alarming finding is that one of the most complex tasks for workers and industries around the globe is getting a new idea off the ground. That means business leaders must find simpler ways to encourage and engage innovation internally, because that same internal frustration is also reflected externally.

Finally, while the demand for simplicity is global, this year's study continues to provide insights on how attitudes toward brands vary from country to country—valuable information for any brand hoping to do business across borders. In fact, in certain industries, the global nature and scale of a brand can be seen as a simplifying advantage in one country and a perceived complexity in another. Knowing when to leverage scale and when to localize is critical to capturing the hearts and wallets of local consumers.

So take heart and take a serious look at our findings and your business. While achieving simplicity is anything but easy, the dividends for your employees, your customers, your brand and your bottom line are remarkable.


Sincerely,


**Howard Belk**
Co-CEO, Chief Creative Officer


**David B. Srere**
Co-CEO, Chief Strategy Officer

# Executive summary

## +99%

How much our Simplicity Portfolio has beat the average global stock index since 2009

## 80%

Consumers more likely to recommend a brand because it provides simpler experiences and communications

## Simplest Global Brand

Google

## Among the least simple global brands

Google+

## Complexity kills innovation…

**Innovation is simplicity…**

The top industries that provide the simplest experiences to consumers are the same ones in which promoting an innovative idea is simplest.

**…but not simple**

However, promoting an innovative idea is the third most complex task for employees within the global workplace.

## East versus West Big versus Small

Big banks were seen as simpler in the East while small banks were seen as simpler in the West.

Global chain restaurants were seen as simpler in the East while local restaurants were seen as simpler in the West for affluent customers.

**Why?**

Different perceptions regarding trust and the importance of personalized service

## Biggest industry simplicity fail

**Car rental**

Employees find their work simple, yet deliver the bottom 5 complex experiences to consumers.

**Most pressing solution**
Fix the contracts and multiplicity of insurance options

**Have common sense but no fear**. Complexity is, surprisingly, easy to create; it's the path of least resistance, letting things happen, not making the tough choices. Simplicity takes courage, but the reward far outweighs the risk.

**Make it simpler to innovate**. Empower employees to share ideas and make innovations happen. Foster creative thinking and use the brand as a filter for refining the right ideas. Coordinate your internal and external resources to speed up execution.

**Accept no man-made boundaries**. Transform the language in the master contract into plain language. Give the product away for free and then provide services at a premium. Get a premium for your product by going above and beyond on every free service. Don't just rethink your communications, rethink your business.

**Get an outside perspective**. Sometimes it's hard to see the forest for the trees. What you believe to be true internally is not always what the market thinks of you. A second opinion has never hurt anyone.

**Know your customer**. Understand every detail of the customer experience, because simplicity isn't as intuitive as you may think: Bigger is not always better, and small is not always beautiful.

**Have a big heart**. Place empathy for the customer at the heart of product, customer service and experience design.

# Table of contents

# Simplicity still pays
A rising tide of stock prices
lifts simple brands the most

**Investing in a stock portfolio based on simplicity continues to beat the major indexes. A portfolio made from the publicly traded top 10 global simplest brands outperforms the major indexes.**

**Percentage growth of index/portfolio since the beginning of 2009**



Simplicity
Portfolio
+190%

S&P +77%

Dow +70%

DAX +71%

FTSE +43%

200%

150

100

50

0

−50

2009          2010          2011          2012 through September 4th
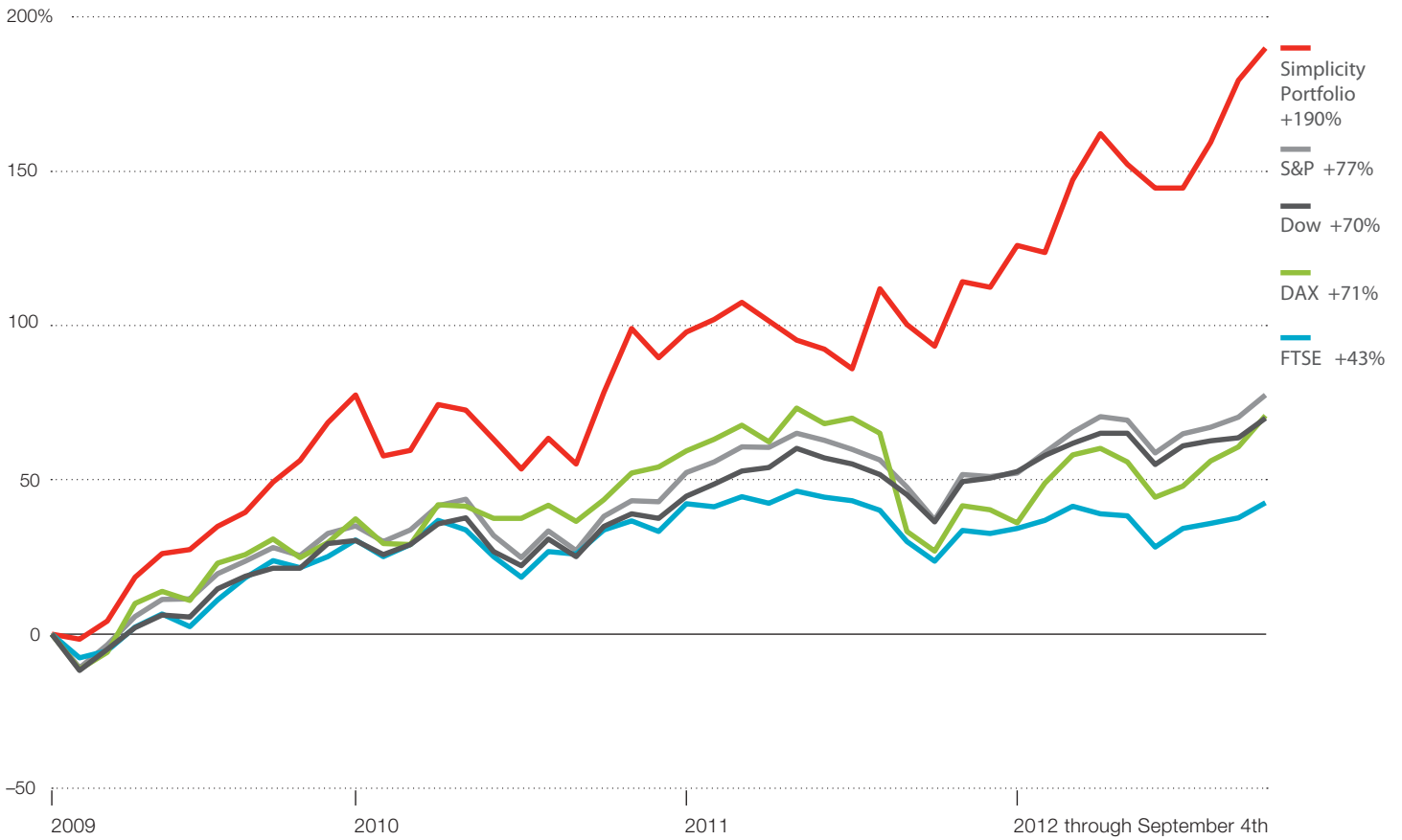
# The Global Brand Simplicity Index
## Our third year examining the state of simplicity around the world

**To determine the global state of simplicity, we asked over 6,000 people across 7 countries to evaluate perceived points of simplicity—or complexity—in their interactions with various brands and industries.**

Once the results were in, we used the data to generate two scores to measure simplicity:

- Brand Simplicity Score
- Industry Simplicity Score

### A Brand Simplicity Score

A score (from roughly 0 to 1,000) that rates each brand on its perceived simplicity

Brands were evaluated based on a question related to the simplicity/complexity of products, services, interactions and communications in relation to industry peers. The score takes into consideration the consistency of responses, the difference between user and non-user perceptions and the simplicity score for the brand's industry.

### An Industry Simplicity Score

A score (from roughly 0 to 1,000) that rates each industry on its perceived simplicity

Industries were evaluated on their contribution to making life simpler/more complex, the pain of interactions with companies within the industry and how the industry's communications rank in terms of ease of understanding, transparency/honesty, concern for customers, innovation/freshness and usefulness.

Automotive

Media

Retail banking

General insurance

Health insurance

Restaurants and entertainment

Electronics and appliances

Retail

Shipping and mail

Utilities

Travel

Telecommunications

# 6,067 people

# 7 countries

# 25 industries

# Global

Read about the industries and brands around the world that pass the simplicity test and uncover those that offer experiences mired in complexity. Next, dive into the details of the customer experience offered by the travel and hospitality, retail banking, and restaurant and grocery industries to understand how scale and different attributes of simplicity affect consumer perceptions. Then, learn how simple or complex people find their workplaces, and which industries are making it most simple for employees to innovate. Now's the time to look at the world through the lens of simplicity.

# Global Brand Simplicity Index

## Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | Google *(891)* | *Media* | |
| 2 | ▲ 2 | McDonald's *(812)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 3 | 0 | IKEA *(789)* | *Retail* | |
| 4 | ▲ 11 | C&A *(782)* | *Retail* | |
| 5 | 0 | Apple *(779)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 6 | ▲ 1 | Pizza Hut *(778)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 7 | ▼1 | Nokia *(772)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 8 | ▲ 15 | Yahoo! *(768)* | *Media* | |
| 9 | ▲ 2 | Carrefour *(767)* | *Retail* | |
| 10 | N/A | ALDI *(761)* | *Retail* | |
| 11 | ▲ 11 | SUBWAY *(749)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 12 | ▼ 10 | Amazon *(745)* | *Media* | |
| 13 | ▲ 19 | Honda *(744)* | *Automotive* | |
| 14 | 0 | Samsung *(743)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 15 | N/A | HTC *(742)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 16 | N/A | Lenovo *(742)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 17 | ▼ 7 | Starbucks *(734)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 18 | ▼ 9 | LG *(731)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 19 | ▲ 31 | Sephora *(729)* | *Retail* | |
| 20 | ▼ 1 | KFC *(728)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 21 | ▼ 8 | Sony *(723)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 22 | ▲ 2 | Toyota *(718)* | *Automotive* | |
| 23 | ▲ 21 | Volkswagen *(716)* | *Automotive* | |
| 24 | ▲ 16 | Burger King *(714)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 25 | ▲ 10 | Philips *(711)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 26 | ▲ 3 | YouTube *(709)* | *Media* | |
| 27 | ▲ 4 | H&M *(704)* | *Retail* | |
| 28 | ▼ 3 | Puma *(704)* | *Retail* | |
| 29 | ▲ 8 | Adidas *(702)* | *Retail* | |
| 30 | N/A | Skype *(699)* | *Telecom* | |
| 31 | ▲ 3 | BMW *(697)* | *Automotive* | |

Brands that were rated by consumers in at least two geographies have been ranked in the Global Brand Simplicity Index.

## Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | ▼ 6 | HP (693) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 33 | ▲ 3 | Nike (691) | Retail | |
| 34 | ▲ 18 | MSN (689) | Media | |
| 35 | ▼ 2 | Hilton (685) | Travel | |
| 36 | ▲ 13 | Expedia (680) | Travel | |
| 37 | ▲ 4 | eBay (679) | Media | |
| 38 | ▼ 22 | Walmart (677) | Retail | |
| 39 | ▲ 18 | Citibank (673) | Retail banking | |
| 40 | ▲ 22 | ZARA (673) | Retail | |
| 41 | ▼ 21 | Dell (673) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 42 | ▼ 12 | Canon (664) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 43 | ▲ 3 | BlackBerry (663) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 44 | ▼ 32 | Siemens (662) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 45 | ▲ 13 | Reebok (658) | Retail | |
| 46 | ▼ 19 | Holiday Inn (657) | Travel | |
| 47 | ▲ 17 | Gap (655) | Retail | |
| 48 | ▲ 6 | HSBC (651) | Retail banking | |
| 49 | ▲ 21 | Panasonic (650) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 50 | ▼ 12 | Debenhams (649) | Retail | |
| 51 | ▼ 4 | Mercedes-Benz (649) | Automotive | |
| 52 | ▼ 44 | Marks & Spencer (642) | Retail | |
| 53 | ▲ 12 | Marriott (640) | Travel | |
| 54 | ▲ 7 | DHL (639) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 55 | ▼ 4 | Topshop (634) | Retail | |
| 56 | ▼ 39 | Motorola (633) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 57 | ▲ 10 | Nissan (630) | Automotive | |
| 58 | ▼ 40 | Boots (627) | Retail | |
| 59 | ▲ 9 | Ford (623) | Automotive | |
| 60 | ▼ 5 | UPS (619) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 61 | ▼ 16 | Microsoft (619) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 62 | ▼ 9 | Haier (617) | Electronics/Appliances | |

## Laggards

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | ▼ 42 | Audi (609) | Automotive | |
| 64 | ▼ 36 | iTunes (607) | Media | |
| 65 | ▼ 5 | Bosch (607) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 66 | ▲ 7 | Virgin Mobile (606) | Telecom | |
| 67 | ▼ 25 | Vodafone (600) | Telecom | |
| 68 | ▲ 6 | Bing (595) | Media | |
| 69 | 0 | Best Western (594) | Travel | |
| 70 | ▼ 4 | Twitter (586) | Media | |
| 71 | ▲ 8 | Budget (560) | Travel | |
| 72 | ▼ 29 | Facebook (546) | Media | |
| 73 | N/A | Lufthansa (545) | Travel | |
| 74 | ▲ 13 | GE (537) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 75 | ▼ 19 | FedEx (533) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 76 | ▲ 7 | Peugeot (529) | Automotive | |
| 77 | ▼ 5 | Avis (522) | Travel | |
| 78 | ▲ 4 | LinkedIn (516) | Media | |
| 79 | ▼ 8 | Sky (509) | Telecom | |
| 80 | ▼ 17 | ING (508) | General insurance | |
| 81 | ▲ 4 | Enterprise (506) | Travel | |
| 82 | ▼ 1 | Hertz (502) | Travel | |
| 83 | N/A | T-Mobile (502) | Telecom | |
| 84 | ▼ 6 | Ramada (492) | Travel | |
| 85 | ▼ 46 | O2 (487) | Telecom | |
| 86 | ▼ 10 | Groupon (481) | Retail | |
| 87 | ▼ 28 | Google+ (465) | Media | |
| 88 | ▼ 11 | Bupa (461) | Health insurance | |
| 89 | ▼ 41 | easyJet (461) | Travel | |
| 90 | ▼ 15 | Europcar (446) | Travel | |
| 91 | ▼ 11 | AXA (414) | General insurance | |
| 92 | N/A | E.ON (377) | Utilities | |
| 93 | ▼ 9 | Allianz (283) | General insurance | |
| 94 | ▼ 8 | Ryanair (260) | Travel | |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# Global top 10 brands

## 01

Google, far and away the most popular web search engine, has transcended brand to become a term synonymous with finding information online. With its iconic homepage and simple user interface, indispensable Google repeats as a winner of the Simplicity Index. The speed and effectiveness of search results creates an experience that, as one respondent put it, "**makes your day simpler**," muffling protests around Google's privacy policies and use of consumer data.

## 02

Offering easy-to-order food from a well-known and well-understood menu, the fast-food giant wins because "**there are a lot of McDonald's but the quality is consistent**." The brand's jump to the #2 position globally indicates that now, more than ever, McDonald's is appreciated for its straightforward approach to fast-food, increasingly adapted to local market tastes.

## 03

A formula of simple, practical and modern product design presented at affordable prices has helped IKEA capture and defend its #3 spot. IKEA demonstrates a **strong commitment to accessibility online, in-store and post-purchase**. IKEA has ambitious goals to apply its simple, distinctly Swedish vision to much more than furniture design, with plans to enter the hotel and city-planning spaces in the near future.

## 04

With roots dating back to 17th century Holland, this family brand has leveraged its strong European foothold to become a truly global retail fashion brand. By offering **couture quality and style at reasonable prices**, C&A jumps 15 spots to #4 in recognition of its simple purpose to make fashion accessible.

## 05

Considered by some to be the most valuable brand on earth, Apple remains near the top of the Simplicity Index by continuing to offer products that "**strive for design perfection" and create intuitively simple user experiences**. Through brand and marketing strategies based on offering simple and fresh experiences to customers, Apple has created a passionate and loyal customer-base that often takes it upon themselves to make their brand allegiance known.

# 06

With close to 13,000 locations across more than 90 countries worldwide, Pizza Hut takes the pie as the world's largest pizza restaurant franchise and the sixth simplest brand in this year's Simplicity Index. Pizza Hut beats out the competition with **clear advertising, online ordering, excellent service and quick delivery**.

# 07

Nokia maintains a top-ranking position, especially in emerging markets such as India and China where it ranked #1 and #28, respectively. Nokia received accolades for its "**self-explanatory, straightforward products**" **with easy-to-use operating systems**. The brand has deepened its partnership with Microsoft and has plans to release new Lumia smartphones that incorporate innovative technology and software capabilities.

# 08

Yahoo!'s #8 finish globally—and a #2 finish in India—is a result of the overall simplicity of search paired with its still-strong **brand recognition and an easy browsing experience**. With a new CEO, Marissa Mayer, at the helm and new strategic alliances and partnerships with Facebook, CNBC and Spotify, Yahoo! aims to further improve the usefulness of its services.

# 09

Europe's largest retailer, Carrefour, makes its debut on the global top 10 list, largely due to the "**ease of navigating the product portfolio and good customer experience**." Carrefour's value proposition is clear—choice and quality for everyone—and is delivered consistently through its hypermarket and supermarket formats. Respondents also praised the retailer for its "easy-to-understand messages found in clear promotional materials."

# 10

With more than 9,000 locations worldwide, the European-based ALDI supermarket brand rounds out this year's simplest brands at #10. Through **straightforward, no frills advertising** around cost savings, along with **good quality and just the right amount of variety**, the ALDI brand employs simplicity to clearly communicate its concept of "the same for less."

# Global bottom 10 brands

## 85

Providing mobile and broadband services to more than 103 million European customers, O2, a Telefónica Europe brand, ranked near the bottom of this year's Simplicity Index. **Complex pricing and promotions, a confusing website** and as one respondent put it, "advertising that's not particularly informative," has made the O2 brand anything but a breath of fresh air.

## 86

The Chicago-based deal site faced harsh criticisms this year. Citing small print, an overload of emails and poor customer service, customers found that "**the whole Groupon process is complicated**." As Groupon works to improve the customer service experience, the only discount you can really count on is attached to the company's share price since its IPO.

## 87

Google's 2011 introduction of its social networking site Google+ promised the ideal combination of privacy and intimacy. And while its **Circles and Hangouts may lack a clear, intuitive user experience**, the real question is whether the world really needs another global social network. Google+'s hopes of a higher rank on future editions of the Simplicity Index may hinge on consumer rejection of market leader Facebook and fatigue with established social tools such as Twitter.

## 88

As a global health insurance and services provider, Bupa serves an industry that's notoriously complex. Nevertheless, with **complicated claims, changes in coverage** and "**slow treatments and poor follow-up with customers**," Bupa scored particularly poorly on this year's Simplicity Index.

## 89

The European-based budget airline again landed among the most complex brands. Complicated fees make it appear "lying, deceitful and dishonest" to customers. Based on consumer complaints about obscure pricing and the complicated online booking process, it appears that **easyJet may be compromising service for pricing**. New seating policies are intended to improve the customer experience, but this small fix will not solve the brand's systemic complexity.

# 90

European based rental car company Europcar, like other brands in this year's bottom 10, was faulted for its **confusing customer contracts with hidden clauses**, unclear pricing and an absence of advertising. Perhaps its recently announced fast track service, which allows customers to bypass the rental counter, will improve its rank against its competitors in future years.

**Europcar**

# Simplicity by industry
## Perceptions often differ by region

A country-by-country industry comparison
against the global industry ranking

| | | | a score of 701 or more | 700–601 | 600–501 | 500–401 | 400 and less |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | SCORE | GLOBAL RANK | US | UK | GERMANY | MIDDLE EAST | INDIA | CHINA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Internet search (most simple global industry) | 950 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Electronics | 734 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Restaurants | 712 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 12 | 9 |
| Appliances | 710 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| Internet retail | 710 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 16 | 10 | 2 |
| Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 691 | 6 | 7 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| Retail/Grocery | 689 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 15 |
| Retail/General (mega/department store) | 658 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| Travel/Hotels | 605 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 12 | 14 | 17 | 11 |
| Travel/Booking | 601 | 10 | 15 | 4 | 17 | 13 | 9 | 4 |
| Retail/Fashion; clothes | 597 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 19 |
| Telecommunications/Cell phone service providers | 582 | 12 | 18 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 4 | 8 |
| Travel/Air | 568 | 13 | 20 | 9 | 13 | 7 | 16 | 13 |
| Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 553 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 9 | 15 | 19 | 21 |
| Automotive | 538 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 18 |
| Social media | 515 | 16 | 19 | 21 | 20 | 10 | 18 | 10 |
| Fitness | 515 | 17 | 16 | 17 | 16 | 12 | 21 | 17 |
| Telecommunications/Cable providers | 489 | 18 | 23 | 20 | 19 | 21 | 13 | 12 |
| Banks/Retail | 486 | 19 | 13 | 22 | 22 | 20 | 11 | 20 |
| Shipping/Mail | 484 | 20 | 12 | 16 | 11 | 24 | 23 | 22 |
| Travel/Car rental | 465 | 21 | 21 | 18 | 18 | 23 | 22 | 14 |
| Travel/Train | 464 | 22 | 22 | 19 | 24 | 18 | 20 | 16 |
| Utilities | 450 | 23 | 17 | 23 | 23 | 19 | 14 | 23 |
| Health insurance | 354 | 24 | 25 | 24 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 24 |
| General insurance (most complex global industry) | 257 | 25 | 24 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |

# The Simplicity Premium
## Simpler experiences increase profits

Depending on the industry, up to 60% of people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant.

For simpler experiences, people would pay:

| up to 5.5% | 5.6-6.0% | 6.1-6.5% | 6.6% and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| General insurance | Internet search | Retail/General | Retail/Grocery |
| Shipping/Mail | Banks/Retail | Health insurance | Retail/Fashion; clothes |
|  | Travel/Air | Restaurants | Automotive |
|  | Internet retail | Travel/Train | Electronics |
|  | Travel/Car rental | Appliances | Fitness |
|  | Social media |  |  |
|  | Retail/Health and beauty |  |  |
|  | Travel/Hotels |  |  |
|  | Media |  |  |
|  | Travel/Booking |  |  |
|  | Telecom/Cable |  |  |
|  | Utilities |  |  |
|  | Telecom/Cell phone |  |  |

# Focus: Hospitality
## Suite comfort for big brands

**Turns out bigger is better in the hotel industry, as 74% of our study's respondents gave large global and national chains the "simple" advantage over local, independent counterparts.**

In the East, it appears global brands carry the same kind of allure internationally in the hotel industry as they do in restaurants—frequently perceived to have higher quality service simply because they are international, with the size of the chain seen as an additional indicator of prestige.

Respondents in the West didn't give global chains the same kind of automatic credit for luxury, but still preferred their familiarity and convenience.

**Percentage of people by country who believe a certain type of hotel provides a simpler experience**

88%

16%

84%

16%

80%

US

China

Middle East
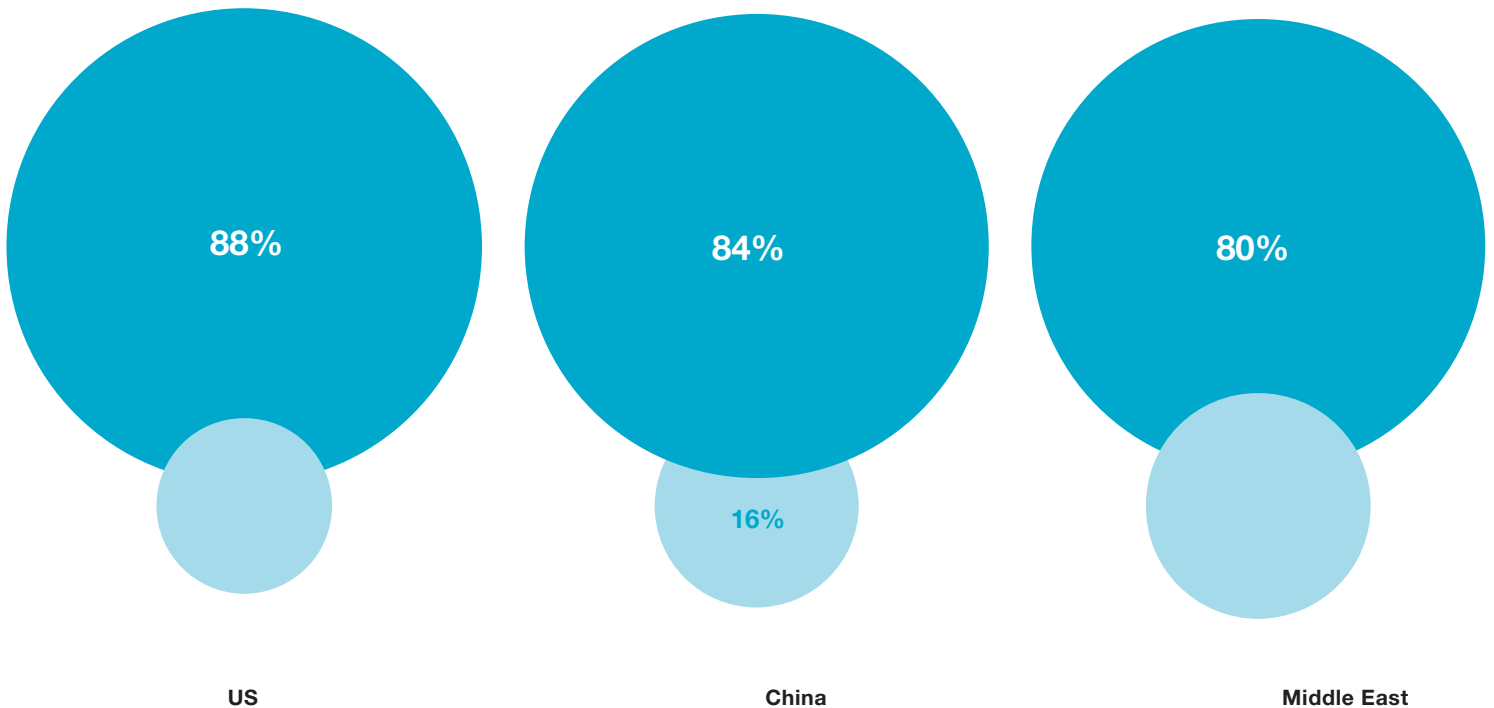
local hotels and
bed and breakfasts

global and
national hotels

**66%**

**66%**

**63%**

**34%**

**UK**

**Germany**

**India**
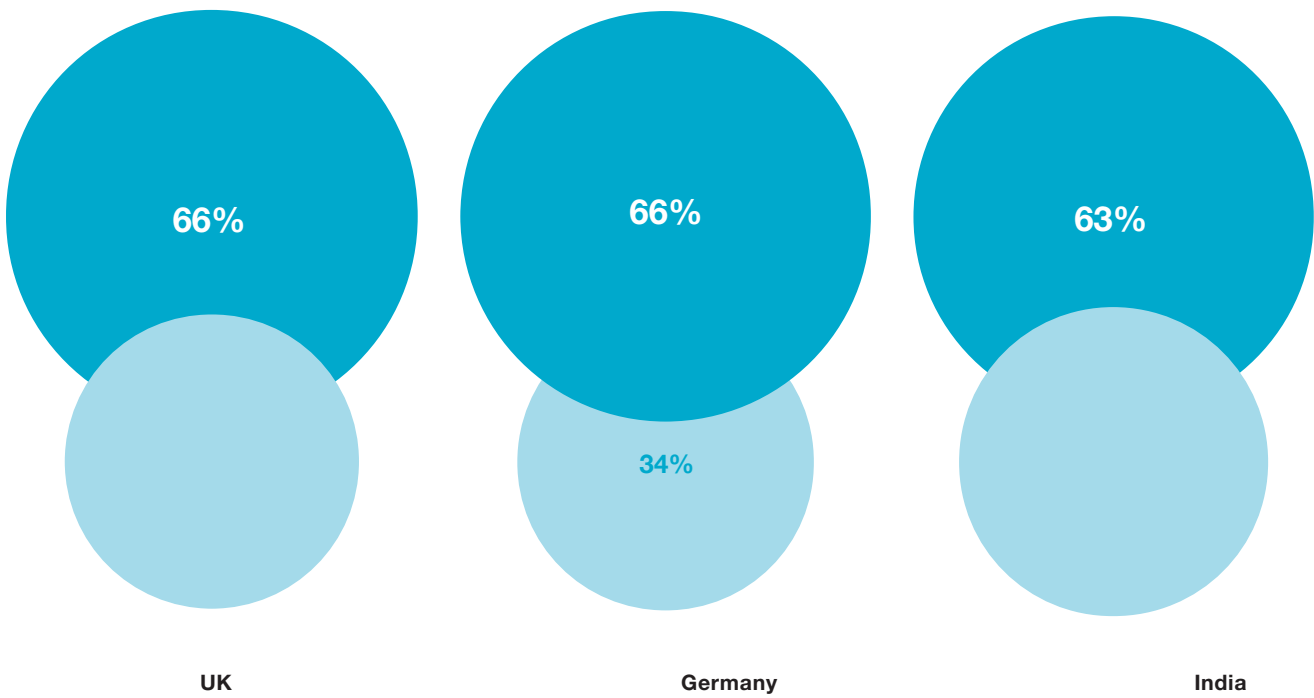
# Focus: Hospitality
## What's keeping people awake at night?

Loyalty reward programs play a big role for many travelers when it comes time to book a return trip to a global or national chain. Nevertheless, many hotels seem to have checked out on this point, failing to create easy-to-understand programs on which to capitalize.

Customers described their experiences with rewards—including complicated earning schemes, tiered redemption levels and booking jargon—as anything but simple.

Globally, technology gets the most credit for simplifying the hotel experience. Respondents preferred large chains with easy-to-navigate touchpoints ranging from websites and convenient booking to expedited check-in and checkout.

**How people rated touchpoints of the hotel experience**

SIMPLE

Navigating hotel websites and/or mobile apps

Making your reservation

Check-in process

Checkout process

Understanding what is on your bill

8.0

7.5

7.0

6.5

6.0

Understanding the differences between different brands within the same hotel company

Choosing the right hotel

Understanding up front what you will be charged

Finding your way around the hotel (signs to rooms, how to get to gyms, etc.)

Getting your needs met (room service, getting an extra towel, etc.)

Understanding hotel rewards programs

COMPLEX

Explore and choose the right hotel

A relationship begins

Maintain and service the relationship

Extend the relationship

**How people rated touchpoints of the
car rental experience**



SIMPLE

8.0

7.5

7.0

6.5

6.0

Navigating rental car
company websites
and/or mobile apps

Choosing a car
rental company

Getting the
car you want

Picking
up the car

Dropping
off the car

Understanding what is
included in the price

Securing the
best price

Understanding the contract
and insurance options

Understanding how you
are being charged for gas

Getting roadside
assistance

COMPLEX

Explore and choose the
right car rental company

A relationship begins

Maintain and service
the relationship

# Focus: Banking
## Cashing in on the experience

**People prefer to put their money where the simplicity is. But following the money in the East invariably leads to different destinations when compared to the West.**

More than 80% of the population surveyed in China, India and the Middle East consider national and global banks far simpler than local banks or credit unions. In sharp contrast, less than 45% of consumers in the US, UK and Germany considered global or national banks to be the simplest type

of bank, with the majority preferring local banks or credit unions—even when these smaller-scale institutions are not commonly available.

**Percentage of people in the East versus the West who believe a certain type of bank provides a simpler experience**

**West** / US, UK, Germany

Local bank
or credit union
**56%**

Global bank
**12%**

National bank
**32%**

**East** / India, China, Middle East

Local bank
or credit union
**19%**

Global bank
**30%**

National bank
**51%**
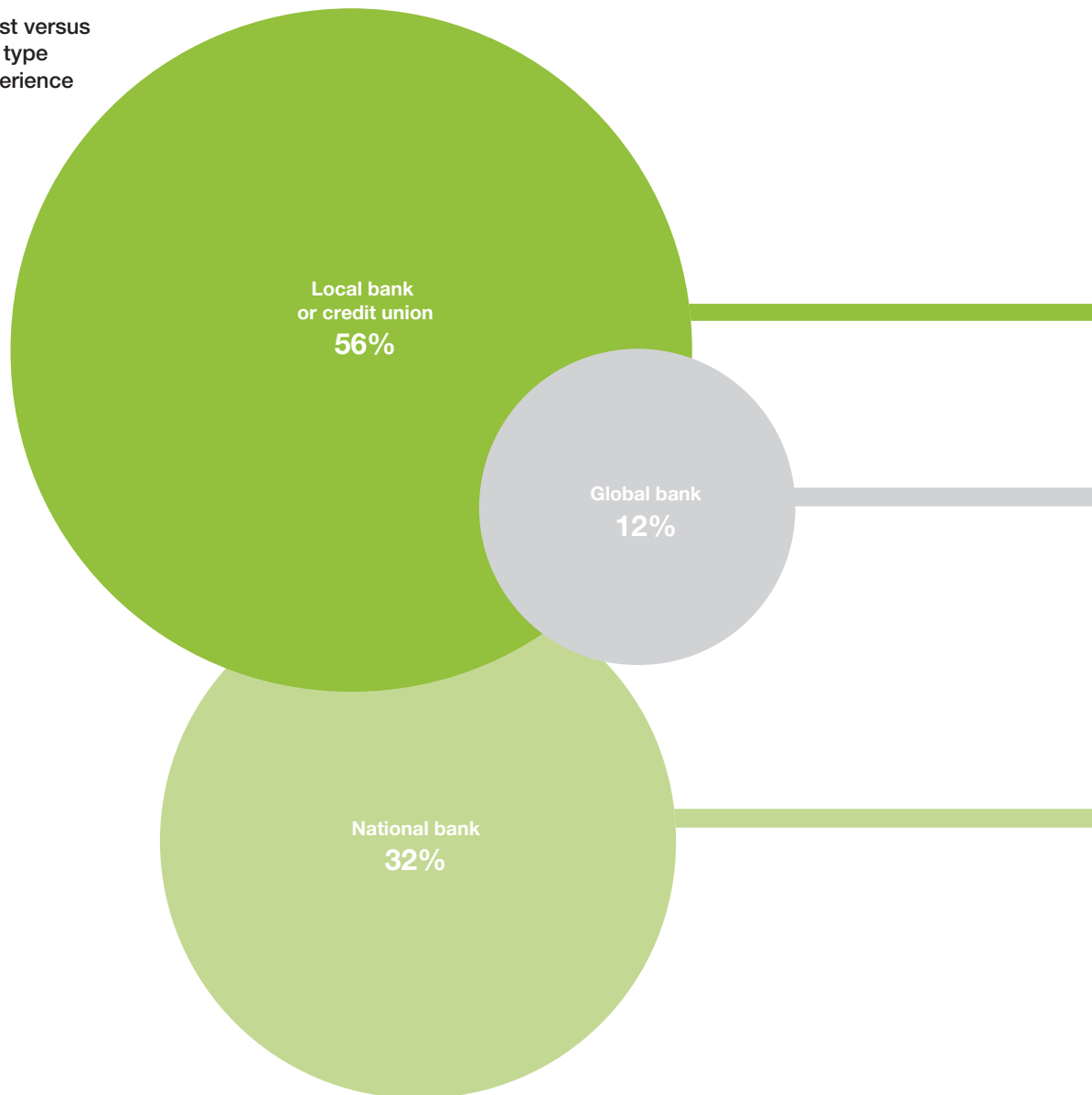
# Focus: Banking
## Simplicity carries the currency of trust

**Respondents everywhere associated simplicity in banking with similar traits—trust, service and accessibility. The differences in regional opinions were more pronounced, however, when the question turned to just how banks embodied those qualities.**

In China, for example, where trust is equated with credibility, reliability and quality assurance, national and global banks are considered simpler and safe havens for money. Conversely, respondents in the US, UK and Germany generally view global banks and larger institutions with suspicion, investing more faith in local banks. Local banks are perceived to provide a simpler, more personal experience with accessible staff and on-the-spot solutions that generate trust—especially in times of crisis.

## Banking on brands

The West's demand for personalized services raises the stakes as banks struggle to trim brick-and-mortar costs and cultivate mobile apps and low-touch online service models. In other parts of the world, where personalized service is considered a luxury, national and global bank brands may thrive without these expectations.

## What consumers want from their bank

**West** / US, UK, Germany          **East** / India, China, Middle East

### Trust

**People you can trust**

"A credit union treats me more as a customer, with a name; instead of a number."

**Quality assurance**

"My money is safer because the credibility of international banks is better."

### Service

**Knowledge of local needs**

"A local bank knows their community, and the people of their community."

**Full range of sophisticated products and services**

"They use advanced technologies and have a full range of financial services."

### Accessibility

**People are accessible to answer questions**

"You can walk in and talk to a person who smiles and knows what they are talking about."

**Convenient, easy to find**

"They have branches all over the world. It is convenient, widely distributed and easy to find."

# Focus: Restaurants
## Simplicity taste test serves up differences

**Simplicity is more than a matter of taste when it comes to restaurants. This year's study found respondents in the East and the West have distinctly different preferences when simplicity is on the menu.**

In the US and Europe, 76% of respondents said they look to local restaurants for a simpler dining experience, compared to 24% who chose global and national chains for simplicity's sake. In Western markets, where minimum standards of safety and quality are largely regulated and taken for

granted, simplicity is connected to unique, personal dining experiences and a strong desire to support owner-run businesses. The few respondents who chose global or national chains, in contrast, associated simplicity with familiarity and standardization.

**Percentage of people by country who believe a certain type of restaurant provides a simpler experience**

### West

| Germany | UK | US |
|---|---|---|
| 64% | 61% | 50% |
| 15% | 18% | 19% |
| 9% | 13% | 26% |
| 12% | 8% | 5% |
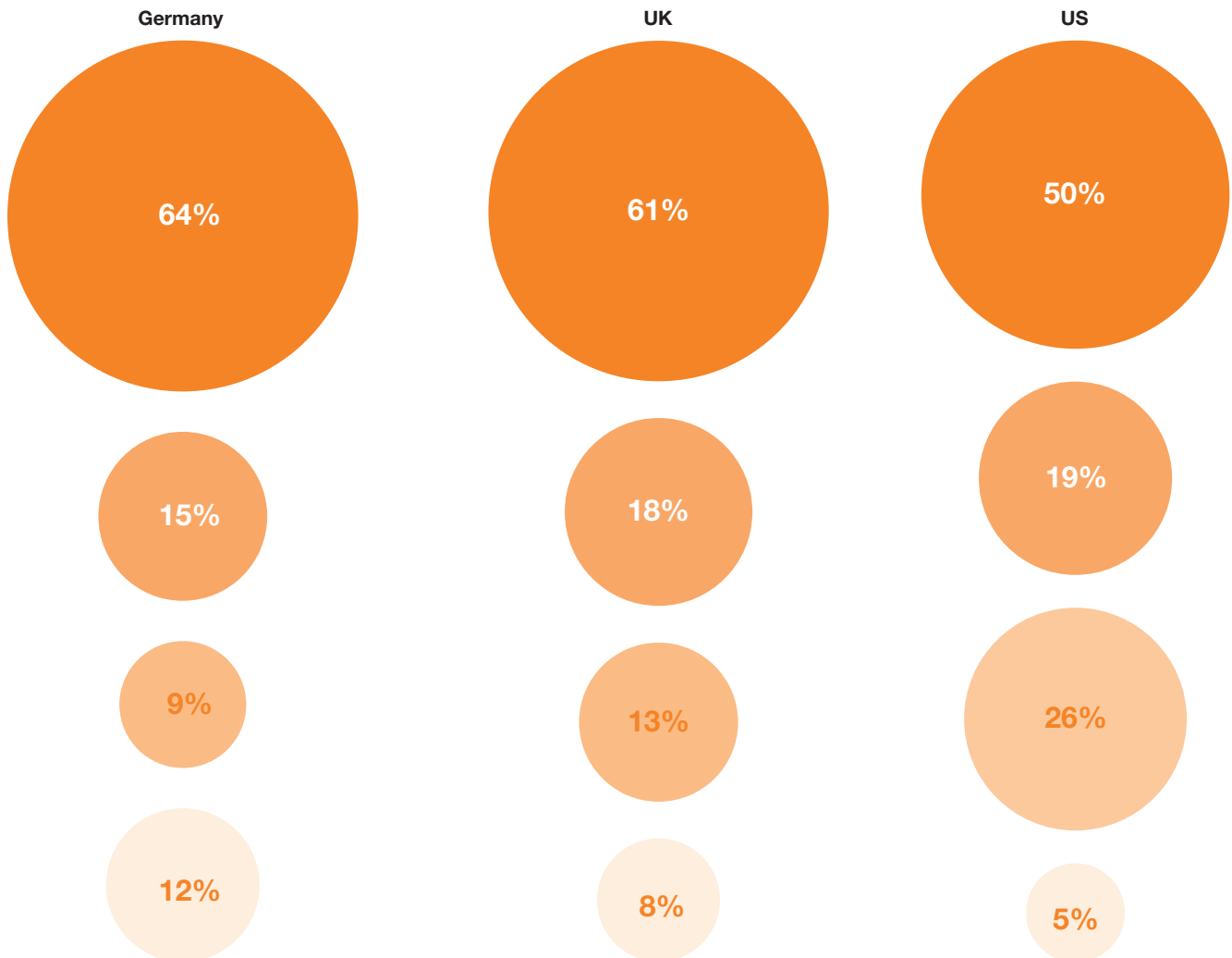
It's a different story in Asia and the Middle East, where 58% of respondents found their simple experiences at global or national chains and only 42% looked to local restaurants. In China, where food safety is a concern, global and national brands are considered a trustworthy option and foreign brands enjoy an added bit of prestige. In the Middle East, global brands are seen as markers of higher social standing and culinary diversity that add to otherwise homogenous local dining options.

- local non-chain
- local chain
- national chain
- global chain

## East

### India

19%

36%

24%

21%

### China

13%

17%

30%

40%

### Middle East

11%

28%

17%

44%
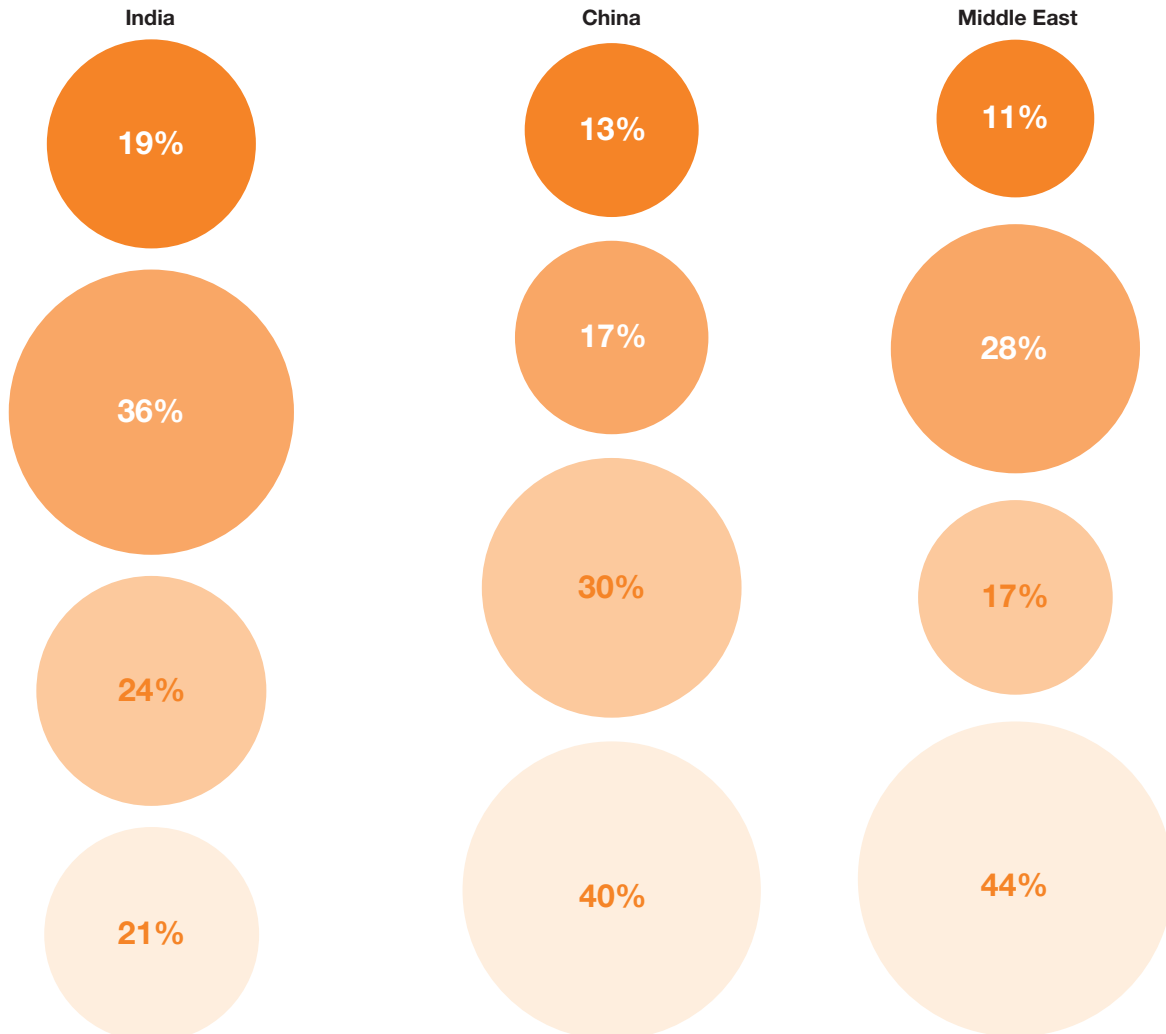
# Focus: Grocery
## More stores, choices feed grocery results

**The definition of simplicity changes with the territory in grocery shopping, but our study found that globally, there's common ground in a perceived simplicity for national and local chains.**

National grocery chains led the way in perceived simplicity with 38%, but local grocers were a close second with 34%, finishing ahead of regional chains. Respondents say local grocers get it right with a best-of-both-worlds shopping experience that combines a large

selection and local focus with "buying power [and] knowledge of local customers." But proximity played a major role in assessing simplicity across regions, too, with more stores translating to greater access and, therefore, greater convenience and simplicity.

**Type of grocery store rated most simple**

| Farmers market | Local supermarket | Regional chain | National chain |
|---|---|---|---|

**US**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12% | 27% | 39% | 22% |

**Middle East**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12% | 47% | 16% | 25% |

**India**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10% | 50% | 8% | 32% |

**Germany**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12% | 36% | 19% | 33% |

**China**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8% | 25% | 11% | 56% |

**UK**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12% | 22% | 6% | 60% |
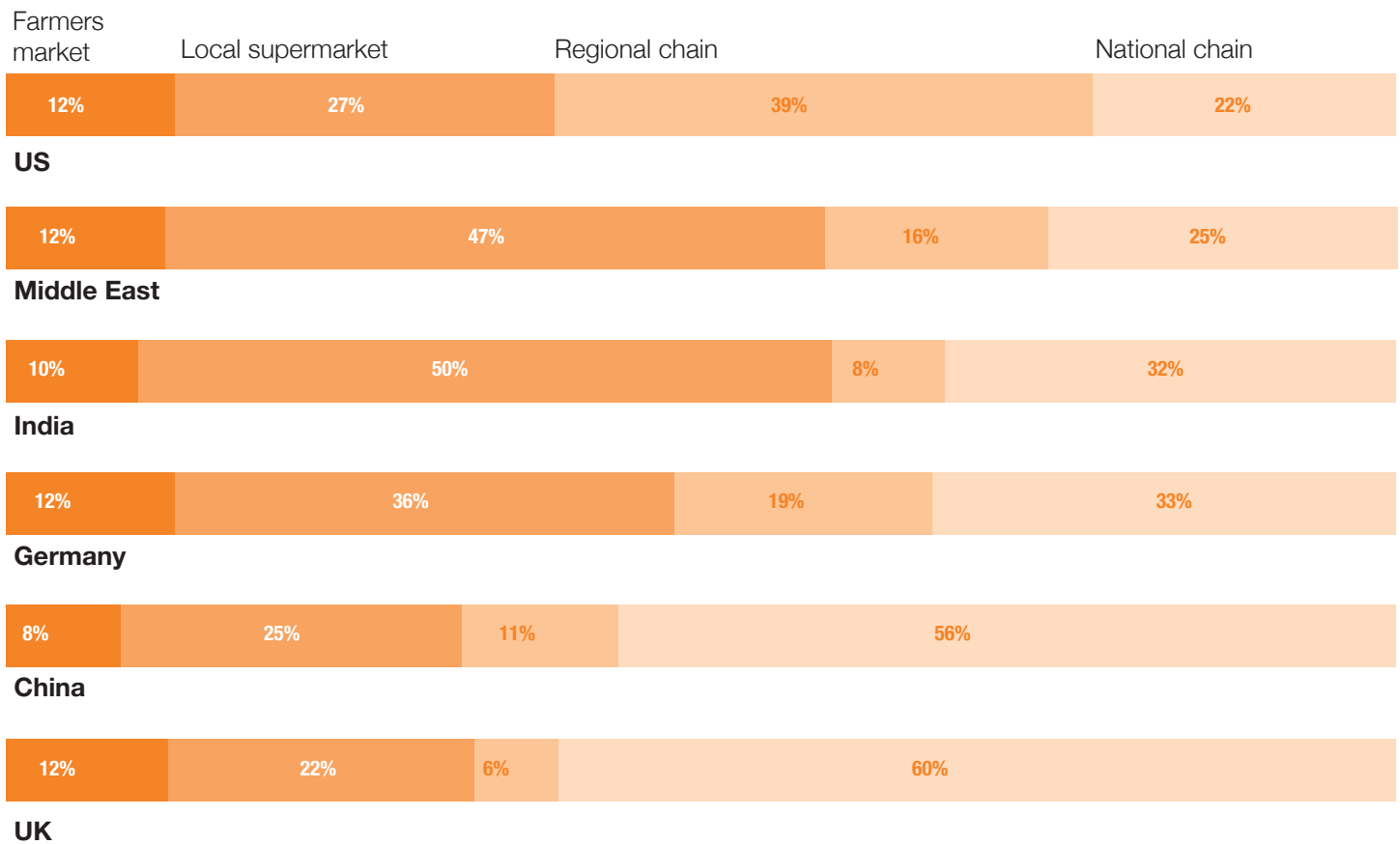
**When it comes to farmers markets, by comparison, simplicity is a matter of opinion.**

While farmers markets were seen as least simple in the category globally, shoppers who favor them are passionate boosters who look beyond higher costs, preferring a face-to-face experience with highly knowledgeable sellers offering higher quality produce. In suburban and rural settings in particular, the shopper's experience in farmers markets reflects a commitment to buy local, even if it means higher costs and fewer choices than those offered by larger chains.

How people rated touchpoints of the grocery shopping experience



SIMPLE

COMPLEX

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Navigating the aisles | Finding the product you need | Understanding promotions |

Using coupons

Checking out at a cashier

8.0
7.5
7.0
6.5
6.0
5.5

Navigating the grocery store websites and/or mobile apps

Finding the right product among different brands and varieties/flavors

Finding the best price

Lining up at counters (e.g., deli counter)

Using self checkout machines

Using a delivery option

Returning a product to the store

A relationship begins

Maintain and service the relationship

Extend the relationship

# Focus: Work life
## Employees seek clarity about career path

**Work may be hard, but it shouldn't be complicated. That's the global consensus on the role of simplicity in the workplace, where some of the most profound responses this year addressed the most fundamental workplace issues.**

Respondents say, in general, smaller companies make their work life simpler than large ones. Because while it is relatively easier taking time off and getting feedback at larger firms, communications at smaller companies are perceived as simpler and give employees a clearer picture of how company changes affect them.

Most notably, this year's Global Brand Simplicity Index reveals some fundamental,

across-the-board issues. Understanding a company's mission is one of the simplest aspects of work life for employees, but they have a harder time identifying the ways their work impacts the mission. Employees rated understanding opportunities for career growth near the bottom of the list.

The opportunity and answer for employers? Create clear communications that connect the dots between purpose ("Why we do what we do"), the employee's role and the contributions that lead to professional advancement.

Despite the bureaucratic headaches generally associated with large organizations, employees across regions and companies of all sizes praise the

clear divisions of labor synonymous with big companies. Respondents say they find it simpler to work within well-defined structures and hierarchies, while on a personal level, they see themselves enjoying tailored responsibilities.

Smaller may feel simpler overall, but there's support for a well-organized enterprise of any size.

One key differentiator for large companies —human capital—comes with a catch. When employers in large companies don't clearly or consistently let employees know how they can contribute to a company's success, our research points to what one respondent describes as a "loss of humanity." This loss impacts employees both personally and professionally.

## Simple recommendations

**Begin with a clear purpose and practices**
Employees know which management practices create simplicity and which ones drive complexity because they live with those practices and the results every day. Complexities that take hold in systems and processes waste precious resources that might otherwise be directed to service and innovation.

Employees need to be motivated—and united—by a clear purpose and the sense of pride that comes with contributing to a firm's success. Begin with simple, straightforward communications and a system of working that employees don't have to work around.

**Connect your people and stay connected**
Large or small, the firm that defines roles, connects people and supports collaboration, replaces anonymity and isolation with empowerment and pride.

The same kind of simplicity in communications that builds brand loyalty also applies to the workplace.

# Simplicity and innovation ride together

The industries that provide the simplest experiences to consumers were most often the industries in which promoting an innovative idea is simplest.

**Consumer perception of simplicity within industries**

**Employee perception of ability to promote an innovative idea within industries**

SIMPLE

| Consumer perception | Employee perception |
|---|---|
| Internet search | Restaurant |
| Electronics | Internet retail |
| Restaurants | Internet search |
| Internet retail | Publishing/Media |
| Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | Electronics |
| Retail/Grocery | Energy (power, utilities, oil, gas) |
| Retail/General (mega/department store) | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore |
| Travel/Hotels | Financial services |
| Retail/Fashion; clothes | Telecom/Cell phone |
| Telecom/Cell phone | Retail/Fashion; clothes |
| Travel/Air | Travel/Other (car rental, booking, train) |
| Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | Retail/General (mega/department store) |
| Automotive | Automotive |
| Travel/Other | Insurance (general and health) |
| Telecom/Cable | Telecom/Cable |
| Banks/Retail | Travel/Hotels |
| Shipping/Mail | Travel/Air |
| Utilities | Shipping/Mail |
| Insurance | Retail/Grocery |

COMPLEX

# Focus: Work life
## The workplace through a global lens

### Optimism from the East

Employer brands are not immune to regional differences. Employees in the East take pride in their association with a large global company. That's in stark contrast to the cynicism employees with large firms in the West display.

In India and the Middle East in particular, working for a large global brand is both a source of pride and a display of ambition.

Well-known brands are seen as better accreditation on resumes and elevate the stature of their employees. There's a halo effect, too. Workers at large firms are assumed to be higher paid and in possession of more manpower to get things done quickly. Much of the sentiment springs from a comfort level in developing regions where larger companies signal growth and feed optimism.

### Cynicism from the West

Employee views from more developed countries, including the US and UK, reflect mistrust and a general aversion to larger brands. The trend manifests itself in employer brands both as a logistics concern (red tape and inefficiency) and as a source of personal frustration (an overly political, decision-making process).

### Achieving work/life balance

Respondents in the US found *taking time off from work* simple but found *achieving work/life balance* complex.

● Achieving work/life balance   ● Taking time off from work

COMPLEX                                                                      SIMPLE

US

UK

India

Germany
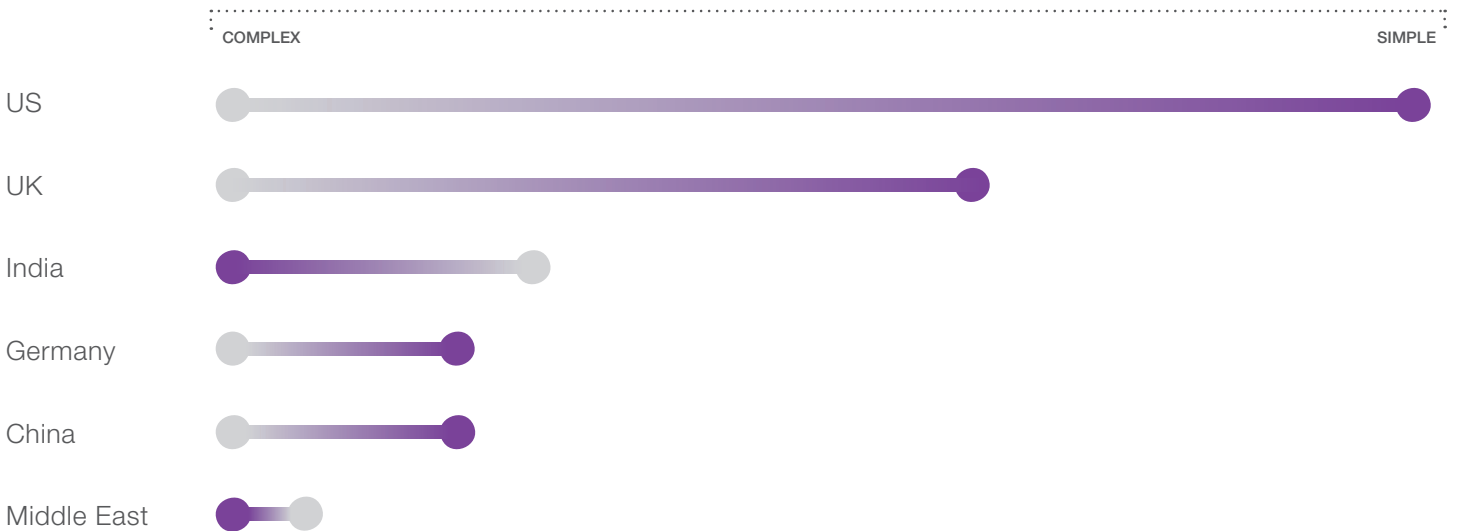
China

Middle East

## Where employees differ in their perception of work aspects

Work aspects with a lot of volatility reveal either pain points for employees or a learning opportunity for employers.

3 or fewer spots from the global rank

4 or 5 spots from the global rank

6 or more spots from the global rank

| | Global Rank | US | UK | Germany | Middle East | India | China |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Getting along with peers (most simple global work aspect) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 1 |
| Understanding my company's mission | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Socializing with colleagues at work or outside of work | 3 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| Understanding the organizational structure of my company | 4 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Getting my work done | 5 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Understanding my job expectations | 6 | 3 | 3 | 16 | 6 | 2 | 6 |
| Understanding my benefits | 7 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| Freely sharing ideas and opinions | 8 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 10 |
| Working with someone outside of my core team | 9 | 10 | 9 | 4 | 16 | 18 | 13 |
| Taking time off from work | 10 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 20 | 20 | 9 |
| Having the resources to do my job well | 11 | 13 | 16 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| Understanding how informal communication flows through the company | 12 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 14 |
| Getting a question answered | 13 | 11 | 17 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 15 |
| Getting feedback about my work | 14 | 15 | 14 | 18 | 13 | 10 | 11 |
| Understanding how company changes affect me | 15 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 15 | 17 | 16 |
| Understanding opportunities for career growth | 16 | 17 | 19 | 15 | 10 | 14 | 17 |
| Understanding senior leadership's communications | 17 | 18 | 15 | 8 | 12 | 11 | 20 |
| Reporting an ethical or personnel related issue | 18 | 14 | 12 | 19 | 17 | 19 | 19 |
| Promoting an innovative idea | 19 | 19 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 15 | 18 |
| Achieving work/life balance | 20 | 20 | 20 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 12 |
| Getting a pay increase (most complex global work aspect) | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 21 |

# Focus: Work life
## Simple is hard work

**Sometimes the simplest industries to work in are the most complex to interact with as a customer.**

| Simplicity of working in an industry | Simplicity of interacting with an industry as a consumer |
|---|---|
| | SIMPLE |
| Entertainment | Internet search |
| Travel/ Other (car rental, booking, train) | Electronics |
| Internet retail | Restaurants |
| Restaurant | Appliances |
| Publishing/Media | Internet retail |
| Electronics | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) |
| Real estate | Retail/Grocery |
| Retail/Fashion; clothes | Retail/General (mega/department store) |
| Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | Travel/Hotels |
| Telecommunications/Cell phone | Travel/Booking |
| Education | Retail/Fashion; clothes |
| Energy (power, utilities, oil, gas) | Telecommunications/Cell phone |
| Retail/Grocery | Travel/Air |
| Travel/Hotels | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore |
| Manufacturing | Automotive |
| Automotive | Social media |
| Government | Fitness |
| Food and beverage | Telecommunications/Cable providers |
| Professional services | Banks/Retail |
| Financial services | Shipping/Mail |
| Retail/General (mega/department store) | Travel/Car rental |
| Travel/Air | Travel/Train |
| Internet search | Utilities |
| Shipping/Mail | Health insurance |
| Healthcare/Medical | General insurance |
| Insurance (general and health) | |
| Nonprofit | |
| Telecommunications/Cable providers | COMPLEX |
| Aerospace/Defense | |

# Simplicity spotlight: Religion
## Differing beliefs

Across the world, life was perceived as simpler for those respondents who considered themselves "very" or "somewhat" religious. In India and China, respondents felt that religion played a larger role in how simple their lives were.

In contrast, German respondents felt that a belief system had little effect on how simple their lives were.



Legend:
- 🟢 Somewhat religious
- 🟠 Very religious
- 🟣 Not at all religious
- 🔵 Affiliated with a religion but not practicing

COMPLEX       SIMPLE

India
China
US
UK
Germany

# United States

# United States
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ▲ 6 | SUBWAY *(788)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 2 | ▲ 14 | Dunkin' Donuts *(752)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 3 | ▼ 1 | Google *(748)* | *Media* | |
| 4 | ▼ 1 | Amazon *(739)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 5 | ▼ 4 | Netflix *(737)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 6 | ▼ 1 | Publix *(732)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 7 | ▲ 34 | Apple *(728)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 8 | 0 | McDonald's *(721)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 9 | ▲ 2 | Starbucks *(721)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 10 | ▲ 9 | Zappos.com *(715)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 11 | ▲ 44 | H&M *(711)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 12 | ▼ 2 | Pizza Hut *(709)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 13 | ▲ 79 | The Wall Street Journal *(700)* | *Media* | |
| 14 | ▼ 10 | Target *(696)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 15 | ▼ 1 | Southwest Airlines *(695)* | *Travel* | |
| 16 | ▲ 2 | USA Today *(693)* | *Media* | |
| 17 | ▲ 68 | Volkswagen *(688)* | *Automotive* | |
| 18 | ▲ 15 | Kroger *(687)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 19 | ▼ 6 | IKEA *(686)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 20 | ▼ 8 | Trader Joe's *(677)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 21 | ▲ 22 | GEICO *(677)* | *General insurance* | |
| 22 | ▲ 13 | Toyota *(676)* | *Automotive* | |
| 23 | ▲ 7 | Victoria's Secret *(675)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 24 | ▲ 69 | KAYAK *(674)* | *Travel* | |
| 25 | ▼ 5 | KFC *(670)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 26 | ▲ 31 | Yahoo! *(670)* | *Media* | |
| 27 | 0 | Burger King *(663)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 28 | ▲ 36 | Gap *(663)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 29 | ▲ 17 | Bing *(660)* | *Media* | |
| 30 | ▼ 2 | Old Navy *(659)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 31 | ▼ 16 | Walmart *(655)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 32 | ▼ 15 | Honda *(650)* | *Automotive* | |
| 33 | ▼ 27 | UPS *(649)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 34 | ▲ 4 | Safeway *(642)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 35 | ▲ 35 | Sephora *(636)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 36 | ▼ 12 | Walgreens *(631)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 37 | ▲ 30 | Maytag *(629)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 38 | ▲ 10 | Holiday Inn *(616)* | *Travel* | |
| 39 | ▲ 10 | YouTube *(613)* | *Media* | |
| 40 | ▼ 6 | Ford *(612)* | *Automotive* | |
| 41 | ▼ 32 | Whole Foods Market *(611)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42 | ▲ 20 | Macy's *(608)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 43 | ▼ 14 | Albertsons *(608)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 44 | ▲ 6 | Nike *(607)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 45 | ▲ 49 | Best Western *(606)* | *Travel* | |
| 46 | ▲ 12 | The New York Times *(605)* | *Media* | |
| 47 | ▲ 14 | FedEx *(605)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 48 | ▲ 21 | Reebok *(605)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 49 | ▲ 23 | Budget *(604)* | *Travel* | |
| 50 | ▼ 8 | Groupon *(604)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 51 | ▼ 29 | iTunes *(602)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 52 | ▲ 13 | Marriott *(597)* | *Travel* | |
| 53 | ▼ 30 | Expedia *(596)* | *Travel* | |
| 54 | ▲ 23 | CNN *(589)* | *Media* | |
| 55 | ▼ 18 | CVS/pharmacy *(588)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 56 | ▲ 23 | Sears *(587)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 57 | ▲ 9 | Chevrolet *(586)* | *Automotive* | |
| 58 | ▼ 11 | Rite Aid Pharmacy *(584)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 59 | ▼ 14 | Samsung *(584)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 60 | ▼ 9 | Canon *(583)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 61 | ▼ 7 | Adidas *(583)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 62 | ▼ 2 | Yelp *(580)* | *Media* | |
| 63 | ▼ 24 | eBay *(579)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 64 | ▼ 39 | Comfort Inn *(577)* | *Travel* | |
| 65 | ▼ 6 | Whirlpool *(570)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 66 | ▼ 35 | MSN *(568)* | *Media* | |
| 67 | ▼ 46 | Hilton *(564)* | *Travel* | |
| 68 | ▲ 37 | JetBlue Airways *(564)* | *Travel* | |
| 69 | N/A | Pinterest *(563)* | *Media* | |
| 70 | ▼ 18 | Kmart *(562)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 71 | ▲ 15 | GE *(561)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 72 | ▼ 32 | Skype *(560)* | *Telecom* | |
| 73 | ▲ 36 | Twitter *(553)* | *Media* | |
| 74 | ▼ 48 | Sony *(550)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 75 | ▼ 12 | HP *(544)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 76 | ▲ 36 | US Bank *(541)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 77 | ▲ 1 | Dell *(538)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 78 | ▲ 5 | Ramada *(538)* | *Travel* | |
| 79 | ▼ 6 | MSNBC *(536)* | *Media* | |
| 80 | ▲ 34 | Alamo *(536)* | *Travel* | |
| 81 | ▲ 17 | Panasonic *(535)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 82 | ▲ 2 | Motorola *(531)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 83 | N/A | Instagram *(530)* | *Media* | |
| 84 | ▼ 13 | Allstate *(530)* | *General insurance* | |

## Laggards

| RANK | CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|------|-------|---------------|----------|---|
| 85 | ▲ 3 | Fox News (524) | Media | |
| 86 | ▼ 54 | Days Inn (516) | Travel | |
| 87 | ▼ 6 | T-Mobile (509) | Telecom | |
| 88 | ▲ 7 | DHL (504) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 89 | ▼ 14 | Priceline.com (501) | Travel | |
| 90 | ▲ 11 | Microsoft (497) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 91 | ▼ 23 | Orbitz (497) | Travel | |
| 92 | ▼ 3 | State Farm (496) | General insurance | |
| 93 | ▲ 26 | Nationwide (494) | General insurance | |
| 94 | ▼ 14 | Dodge (488) | Automotive | |
| 95 | ▲ 20 | Enterprise (488) | Travel | |
| 96 | ▼ 60 | USPS (484) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 97 | ▼ 21 | Progressive (484) | General insurance | |
| 98 | ▼ 16 | Avis (463) | Travel | |
| 99 | ▲ 8 | Delta Air Lines (445) | Travel | |
| 100 | ▲ 10 | DISH Network (441) | Telecom | |
| 101 | ▼ 1 | Chase (440) | Retail banking | |
| 102 | 0 | American Airlines (438) | Travel | |
| 103 | ▼ 47 | Google+ (430) | Media | |
| 104 | ▼ 30 | Verizon (422) | Telecom | |
| 105 | ▲ 15 | LinkedIn (421) | Media | |
| 106 | ▼ 53 | Hertz (419) | Travel | |
| 107 | ▲ 9 | Citibank (416) | Retail banking | |
| 108 | ▼ 4 | Wells Fargo (415) | Retail banking | |
| 109 | ▼ 6 | Bank of America (385) | Retail banking | |
| 110 | ▼ 14 | Farmers (385) | General insurance | |
| 111 | ▼ 12 | Haier (382) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 112 | ▲ 5 | United/Continental (380) | Travel | |
| 113 | ▼ 22 | DIRECTV 380 | Telecom | |
| 114 | ▼ 17 | Sprint (374) | Telecom | |
| 115 | ▼ 25 | Amtrak (373) | Travel | |
| 116 | ▼ 8 | BlackBerry (368) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 117 | ▼ 11 | US Airways (341) | Travel | |
| 118 | ▼ 31 | Facebook (331) | Media | |
| 119 | ▼ 1 | Time Warner Cable (326) | Telecom | |
| 120 | ▲ 5 | Aetna (311) | Health insurance | |
| 121 | ▼ 10 | AT&T (310) | Telecom | |
| 122 | ▲ 2 | CIGNA (307) | Health insurance | |
| 123 | ▼ 2 | UnitedHealth Group (305) | Health insurance | |
| 124 | ▼ 1 | Comcast (283) | Telecom | |
| 125 | ▼ 3 | HUMANA (139) | Health insurance | |

## US industry ranking

| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|------|----------|-------|
| 1 | Internet search | 950 |
| 2 | Restaurants | 838 |
| 3 | Retail/Grocery | 808 |
| 4 | Internet retail | 807 |
| 5 | Electronics | 713 |
| 6 | Appliances | 698 |
| 7 | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 661 |
| 8 | Retail/General (mega/department store) | 658 |
| 9 | Travel/Hotels | 636 |
| 10 | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 632 |
| 11 | Retail/Fashion; clothes | 618 |
| 12 | Shipping/Mail | 606 |
| 13 | Banks/Retail | 559 |
| 14 | Automotive | 552 |
| 15 | Travel/Booking | 540 |
| 16 | Fitness | 530 |
| 17 | Utilities | 526 |
| 18 | Telecommunications/Cell phone service providers | 465 |
| 19 | Social media | 460 |
| 20 | Travel/Air | 448 |
| 21 | Travel/Car rental | 446 |
| 22 | Travel/Train | 436 |
| 23 | Telecommunications/Cable providers | 393 |
| 24 | General insurance | 341 |
| 25 | Health insurance | 240 |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# United States
## The value of simplicity

### Money to be made

Industries that are perceived as simple still have money to gain
by further simplifying their customer experience.

$$$$$ **MORE MONEY TO BE MADE**

Health insurance

Banks/Retail

Retail/Grocery

Restaurants

Utilities

Automotive

Travel/Air

Telecom/Cell phone service providers

Electronics

Internet retail

Travel/Hotels

Telecom/Cable providers

Retail/General

Retail/Fashion

Media

General insurance

Retail/Health and beauty

Travel/Booking

Travel/Train

Travel/Car rental

Internet search

Shipping/Mail

Fitness

Social media

Appliances

$ **SOME MONEY TO BE MADE**

COMPLEX INDUSTRY
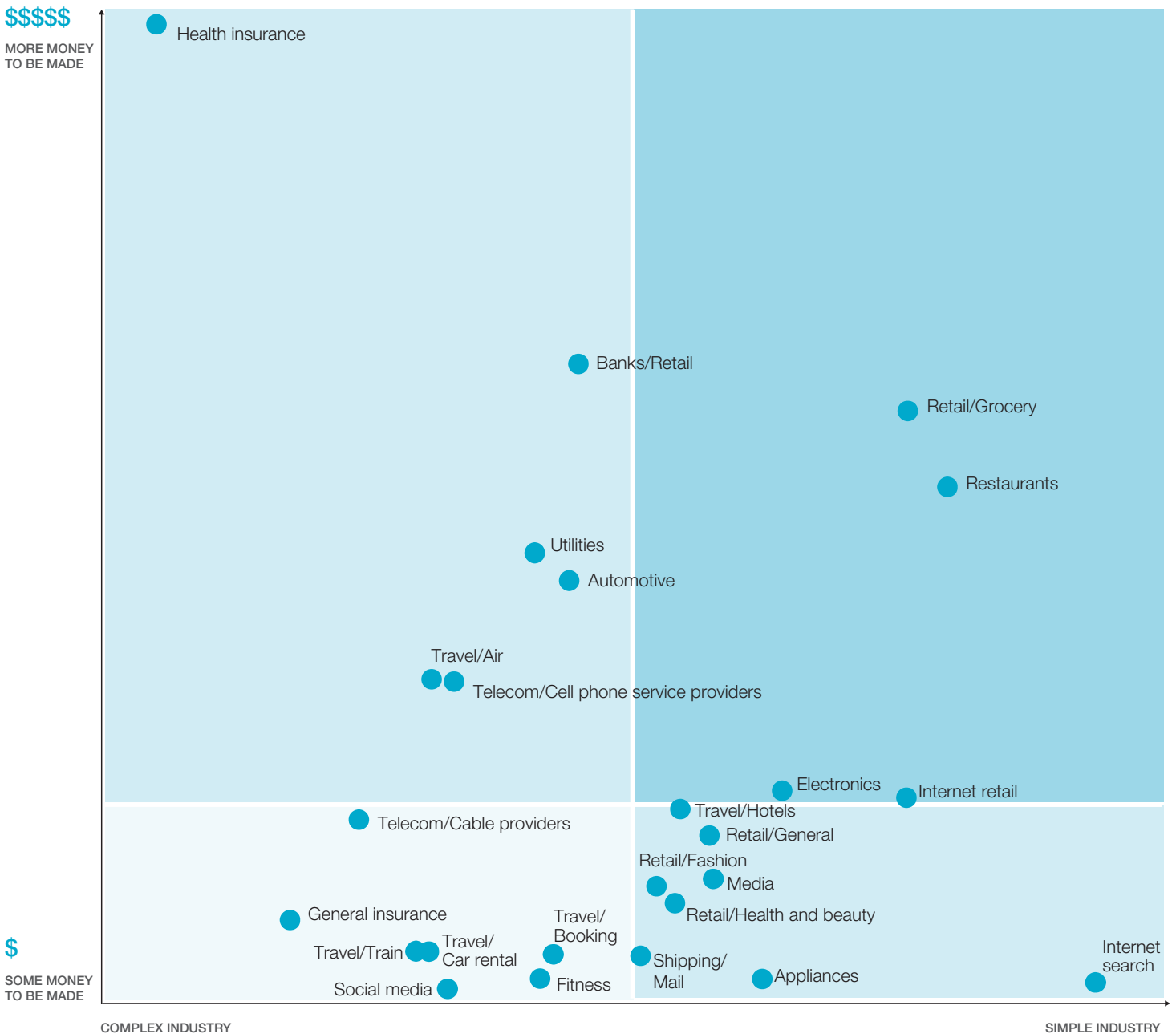
SIMPLE INDUSTRY

## Money left on the table

In the US, businesses are leaving more than $30 billion on the table.
While all industries stand to gain from simplicity, the industries
below stand to gain the most. Total amounts, expressed in millions.

| Industry | Amount |
|---|---|
| Health insurance | $5,035 million |
| Banks/Retail | $3,279 |
| Retail/Grocery | $3,036 |
| Restaurants | $2,643 |
| Utilities | $2,302 |
| Automotive | $2,159 |
| Travel/Air | $1,648 |
| Telecom/Cell phone | $1,636 |
| Electronics | $1,072 |
| Internet retail | $1,036 |
| Travel/Hotels | $977 |
| Telecom/Cable | $922 |
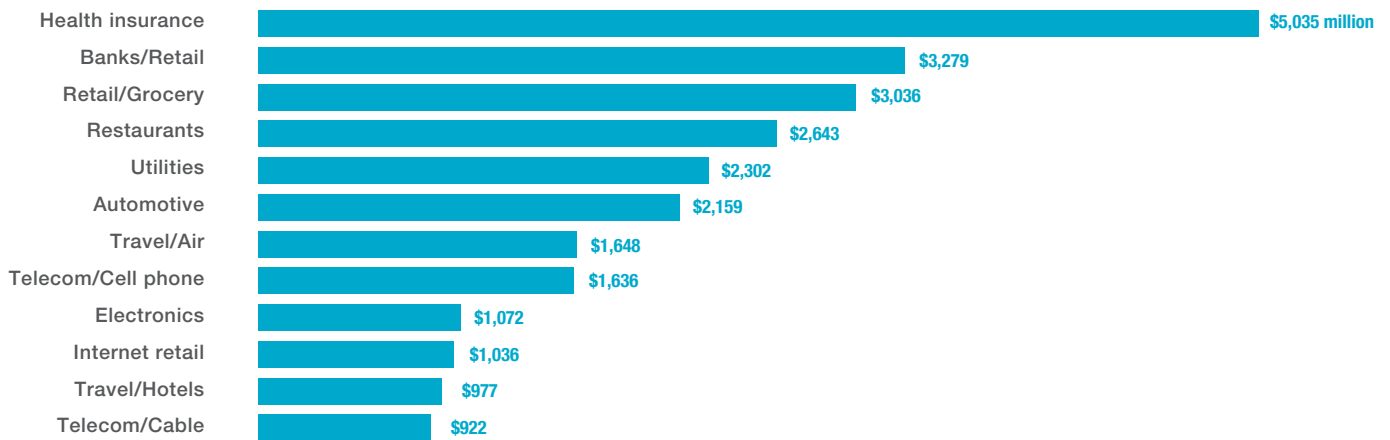
## The Simplicity Premium can increase profits across industries

Depending on the industry, up to 31% of people are willing to pay
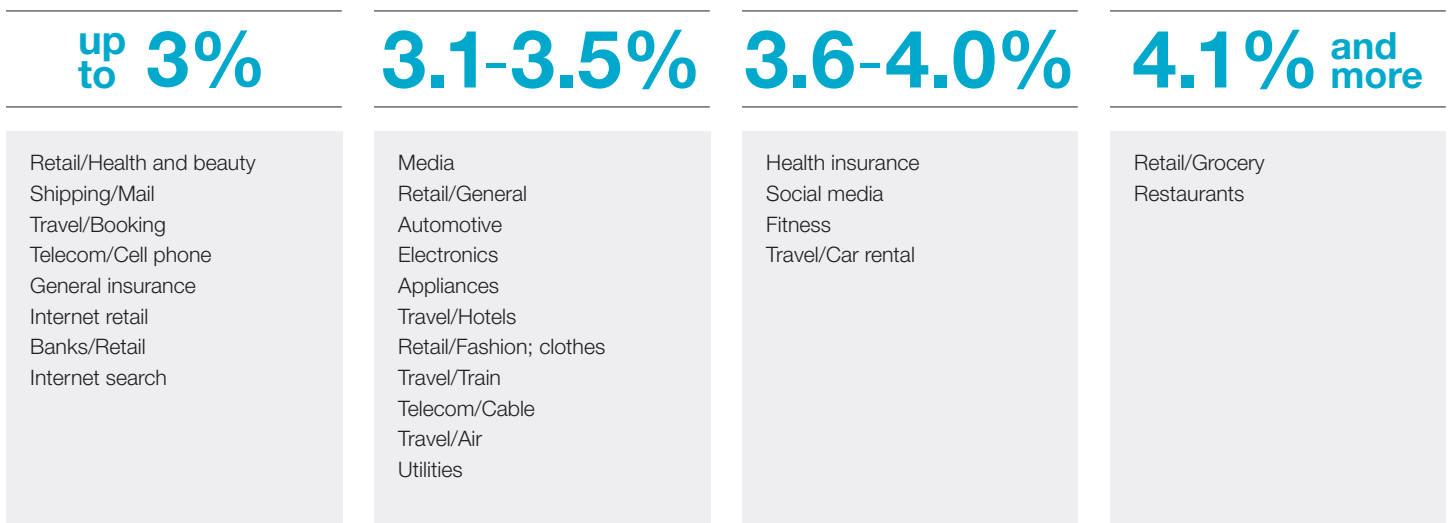more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they
are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant. For simpler
experiences, people would pay:

| up to 3% | 3.1-3.5% | 3.6-4.0% | 4.1% and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Retail/Health and beauty | Media | Health insurance | Retail/Grocery |
| Shipping/Mail | Retail/General | Social media | Restaurants |
| Travel/Booking | Automotive | Fitness | |
| Telecom/Cell phone | Electronics | Travel/Car rental | |
| General insurance | Appliances | | |
| Internet retail | Travel/Hotels | | |
| Banks/Retail | Retail/Fashion; clothes | | |
| Internet search | Travel/Train | | |
| | Telecom/Cable | | |
| | Travel/Air | | |
| | Utilities | | |

# United States
## Brand and industry focus

### ELECTRONICS
### Simplicity still at the core of Apple

"They just make good, simple, easy-to-understand products."

Apple rolls into this year's Simplicity Index at #7 among all brands in the US. Proving that the passing of Steve Jobs hasn't changed the brand's core values, Apple continues to score big simplicity points with its user-friendly products, intuitive design and plain-language communications. Apple is also using simplicity effectively to win over non-users. Meanwhile, technology brands like Twitter, Amazon and Bing, suffer the widest gaps in perceptions of simplicity between users and non-users.

BlackBerry landed near the bottom of the brand rankings at #116 out of 125 total, continuing its downward trend. Respondents complain that BlackBerry smartphones are more complex and less intuitive than those of their competitors, and that the brand has been slow to adapt to changes in the marketplace.

### INSURANCE
### Gecko gets GEICO message across

GEICO comes in an impressive #21 in this year's US rankings, far above other insurance brands. Hobbled by low brand awareness and a combination of intangible and largely commoditized offerings, the general insurance industry finished 24th out of 25 industries. All the more impressive that GEICO, using unconventional humor as a differentiator in its marketing, effectively cut through a mundane market with a gecko. Supported by its easily navigated website, GEICO's simple messaging and whimsical mascot continues to earn loyal brand fans.

### RESTAURANTS
### Dunkin' Donuts and SUBWAY: Simplicity in the bag

Respondents served up the restaurant industry as their #2 ranking out of 25 industries in this year's US Simplicity Index with four brands landing in the top 10.

SUBWAY earned the #1 position in the US, having positioned itself in the "eat healthy" territory long before its fast-food competitors made a move. By providing transparency in ingredients and nutritional information across its 35,000 locations globally, SUBWAY used simplicity to establish a solid customer base. SUBWAY's $5 menu makes pricing and purchasing easy as well as affordable and builds loyalty.

"Their menu hardly ever changes, and there's a lot of variety. If you're craving something different, there's always the sub of the month."

Dunkin' Donuts (#2) is a brand with an unmistakable "simple emphasis on product" [coffee] and a brand experience baked right into its name: donuts and the coffee to dunk them in. Thanks to the long-running success of its "America runs on Dunkin'" campaign and its 10,000 locations globally, the ubiquitous Dunkin' translates as "simple product offerings, many locations." Beyond the basics, Dunkin' innovates and simplifies for its customers, offering Dunkin's mobile payment solution so customers can pay with their phone and send mobile gift cards to friends and family.

### TRAVEL/AIR
### Southwest flying high

Southwest (at #15) and JetBlue (at #68) were the clear US Simplicity Index leaders from the airline industry, having successfully created a differentiated customer experience for passengers.

Respondents cited superior customer service, the absence of baggage fees and a singular message to explain why they considered Southwest the best airline today. Southwest is perceived as simpler, not only by those flying with the airline but also by those who have never flown Southwest.

JetBlue won its share of simple kudos, too, with one respondent declaring, "The JetBlue brand stands for a 'better' way of doing things, which implies simplicity and everyday luxuries."

While pricing and flight availability remain primary considerations, the results reinforce the idea that success in the industry is found in a streamlined customer experience that extends from messaging and social media to booking and check-in.

### TRAVEL/BOOKING
### KAYAK's smooth sailing

KAYAK's rise—up 69 spots from last year to #24—shows its streamlined, intuitive web and app interfaces are winning simplicity points. Respondents say KAYAK has raised the bar for online booking with a "clear, simple, easy-to-use website" that shows how "simple looking for reservations can be" by offering itinerary management tools, flight status updates and price alerts.

SOCIAL MEDIA

## The fall of Facebook

This year, social media darling Facebook has fallen perilously close to the bottom of the US Simplicity Index to #118. In the same year the company went public and plummeted on the stock market, its simplicity points were dropping, too. Users say they're frustrated by Facebook's "incomprehensible" personal privacy policies, frequent changes to the interface and a lack of usability in general. It's just been one big "dislike" for those seeking simplicity. As one respondent put it, "Facebook keeps changing for the worse...which makes it hard to keep up with and very frustrating."

Facebook's brand, however tarnished, remains firmly connected to the lives of its users. But Google+ (#103), by comparison, has never found its footing in the increasingly crowded field of social media outlets. Respondents were confused by the intended purpose of Google+. Said one respondent, "I don't understand what it's for and why I need it."

But fresh brands like Pinterest (#69) and Instagram (#83) are riding high as newcomers with straightforward, practical and intuitive user experiences, a strong signal that simplicity registers in mobile and web-based customer engagements.

RETAIL BANKING

## Bigger isn't better when it comes to simple banking

Few industries in the US incite such strong customer reactions as banking. Sixty-four percent of US respondents rate the local bank experience as the simplest—more than in any other region. Meanwhile, large banks continue to put their quest for high-profit margins ahead of consumer needs: they increase fees, steer customers online for self-service, route calls to outsourced, foreign phone centers and reduce personal service in branches. It's no wonder that America's confidence in banks has now dwindled to 21%, down 2 points from 2011 and significantly lower than pre-2007 rates, according to a June 2012 Gallup poll.

Large banks may be on borrowed time as their monopoly on essential services fades. The percentage of US consumers who are unbanked—not doing any business with a bank at all—is growing, according to a 2011 FDIC study. This trend is likely to accelerate as consumers adopt digital wallet offerings from Google and PayPal that replace high-fee credit cards issued by traditional banks. They are also signing up for services from start-ups such as m-Via to send money using text messages. In this environment, consumers may cease to view as essential some of the advantages held by large banks such as a large network of ATMs and comprehensive online banking services.

Local banks put a human face on each financial relationship, earning trust and loyalty one-customer-at-a-time by offering personal service and accountability. Credit unions and small banks are striving to offer online services and alerts to effectively compete with larger banks. And small banks, less restricted by regulations, are approving an increasing percentage of small business loans just as approval rates at large banks decline.

So what can big US banks learn from their smaller counterparts? They should re-focus the big banks' significant resources to re-create a customer experience that is truly simple:

- Customer accounts should be inherently simple by design. Create a zero-tolerance policy for complicated fee structures and convoluted transaction processing rules.

- Technology should support—not replace—personal service. Banks which provide websites that are easy-to-navigate, as well as well-written and designed, will be recognized and rewarded for their simplicity. Remember, there's no substitute for speaking with a smart and friendly assistant to solve problems and offer advice. Clear goals for training and service quality will create a customer experience that is consistent across branches and touchpoints.

- The money belongs to the customer. In the end, customers are entrusting their money to the bank's care. When the balance of power tips too far in favor of the bank's complex "Rule Book," the customer's trust has been violated. Game over.

# Simplicity spotlight
## Politics

### Politics: a complexity issue for the US

With the presidential election just weeks away at the time of this writing, the state of the union in the US has reached the point where respondents said the less they engage in politics, the simpler their lives become.

### Simplicity follows party lines

Perhaps predictably, when asked to rank the simplicity or complexity of political communications, Democrats found President Barack Obama's messages to be more simple and clear than Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's communications. Republicans saw it the other way—giving Mitt Romney more points for simplicity and clarity. If there was a game-changer in the statistical mix, it was the difference between the two parties individually. Using a 10-point scale, Democrats gave their candidate, President Obama, a 6.7. Republicans, by comparison, gave Mitt Romney a 5.8 for simplicity.

### Controversial social issues are "easiest to understand"

In the US, respondents said hot-button social issues, such as same-sex marriage and abortion, were the easiest to understand, while money issues, such as taxes and the economy, were considered the most complex.
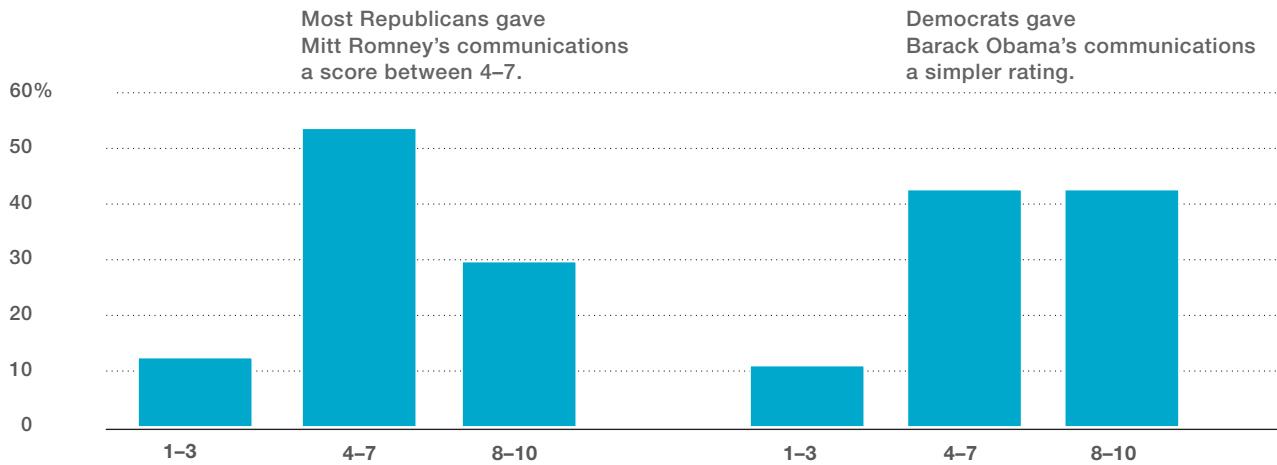
### Health insurance: a case of chronic complexity?

Perceptions around complexity and health insurance in the US can be traced to more than a few sources. In the most basic sense, however, the US offers significantly more health insurance options—for better or worse—than the UK and Germany, which instantly adds to complexity. And, as the 2012 election reminds us, US healthcare has been a controversial topic across several presidential administrations and remains a polarizing topic for Democrats and Republicans. As one respondent put it "health insurance is baffling, and [insurance companies] don't make it any simpler to understand."

**Eliminating complexity as a model for health**
So how does the healing begin around healthcare's complexity in the US? Start simple: give citizens the basic facts about health insurance in the same fashion that banks are now required to provide disclosures about financial issues and fees. Brand leaders in other industries have leveraged basic information to minimize complexity and confusion, and gain brand loyalty and profit. Clearly, health insurance needs to do the same.

## How supporters of the two main US political parties rate their candidates' communications

Most Republicans gave
Mitt Romney's communications
a score between 4–7.

Democrats gave
Barack Obama's communications
a simpler rating.



## Issues that may be guided by religious beliefs were considered more complex to understand by those who were religious.



Legend:
- Not at all religious
- Affiliated with a religion but not practicing
- Very religious
- Somewhat religious

SIMPLE

COMPLEX

Foreign policy, Healthcare, Economy, Taxes, Budget/Deficit, Defense spending, Social Security, Welfare, Education reform, Immigration, Environment, Gun control, Abortion, Same-sex marriage
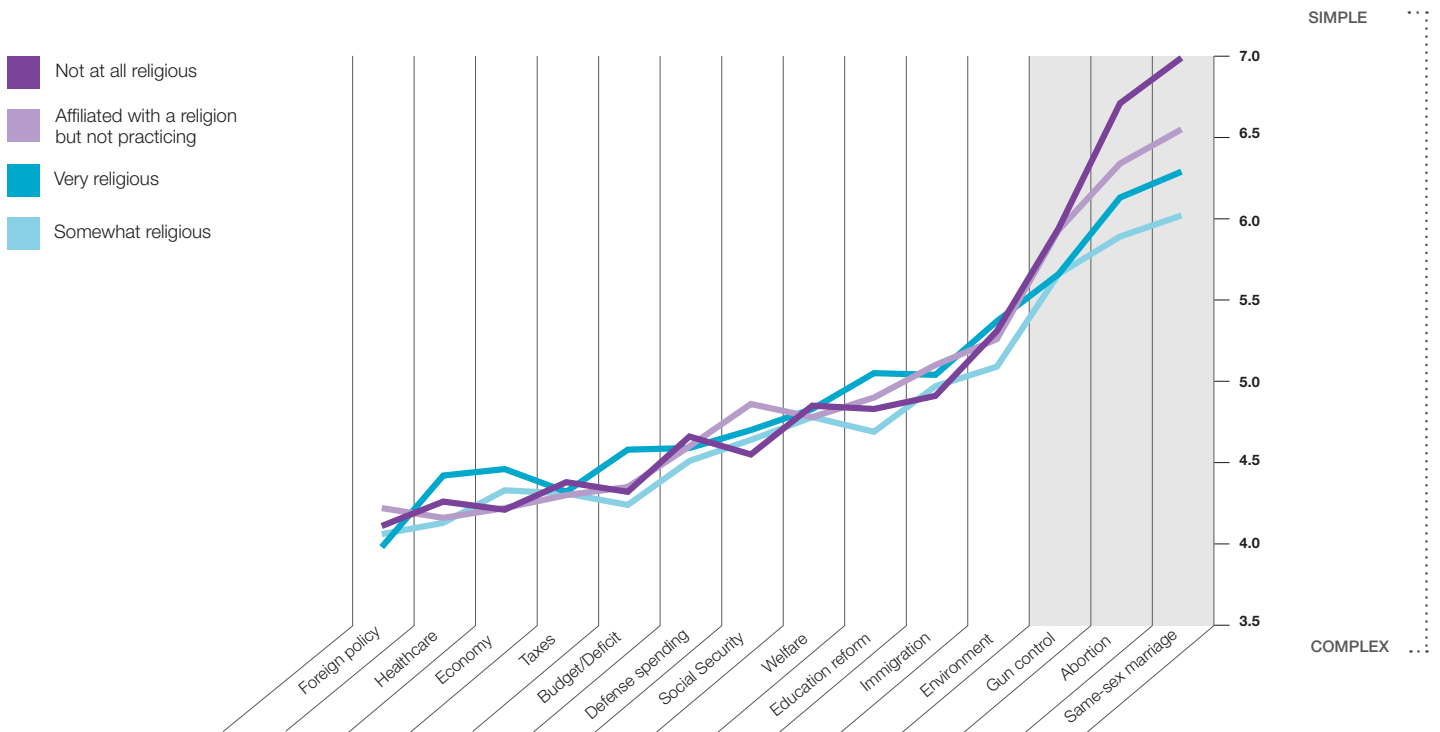
# United Kingdom

# United Kingdom
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | Google (885) | Media | |
| 2 | ▲ 14 | Virgin Atlantic (768) | Travel | |
| 3 | ▲ 5 | McDonald's (767) | Restaurants | |
| 4 | ▲ 16 | LOVEFiLM (755) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 5 | ▲ 6 | Asda (747) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 6 | ▲ 12 | Sainsbury's (726) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 7 | 0 | Premier Inn (723) | Travel | |
| 8 | ▲ 16 | Holiday Inn (721) | Travel | |
| 9 | ▼ 6 | John Lewis (713) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 10 | ▼ 8 | Amazon (710) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 11 | ▼ 6 | Travel Lodge (701) | Travel | |
| 12 | ▲ 19 | First Direct (684) | Retail banking | |
| 13 | ▼ 1 | Waitrose (683) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 14 | ▲ 23 | Starbucks (679) | Restaurants | |
| 15 | ▲ 13 | Burger King (679) | Restaurants | |
| 16 | ▲ 1 | Marks & Spencer (676) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 17 | ▲ 2 | IKEA (675) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 18 | ▲ 28 | Hilton (672) | Travel | |
| 19 | ▲ 6 | KFC (668) | Restaurants | |
| 20 | N/A | ALDI (666) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 21 | ▼ 11 | Apple (666) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 22 | N/A | The Co-operative Bank (665) | Retail banking | |
| 23 | ▼ 2 | Expedia (665) | Travel | |
| 24 | ▲ 9 | Volkswagen (659) | Automotive | |
| 25 | ▼ 16 | BBC (654) | Media | |
| 26 | ▲ 1 | Gap (646) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 27 | ▲ 24 | Primark (644) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 28 | ▼ 22 | Lastminute.com (642) | Travel | |
| 29 | ▲ 12 | British Airways (642) | Travel | |
| 30 | ▼ 7 | The Sun (638) | Media | |
| 31 | ▲ 52 | Yahoo! (636) | Media | |
| 32 | ▲ 54 | Mercedes-Benz (633) | Automotive | |
| 33 | ▲ 11 | Nokia (631) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 34 | ▲ 32 | Ford (630) | Automotive | |
| 35 | ▼ 5 | Toyota (626) | Automotive | |
| 36 | ▼ 4 | New Look (625) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 37 | ▲ 15 | Samsung (620) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 38 | ▲ 4 | eBay (620) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 39 | ▲ 22 | H&M (615) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 40 | ▲ 15 | BMW (612) | Automotive | |
| 41 | ▼ 37 | Tesco (609) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 42 | ▼ 3 | BHS (608) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 43 | ▲ 19 | Peugeot (608) | Automotive | |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 44 | ▲ 51 | Nissan (604) | Automotive | |
| 45 | ▼ 32 | The Co-operative Food (600) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 46 | ▲ 3 | Superdrug (597) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 47 | ▲ 26 | Debenhams (594) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 48 | ▼ 12 | iTunes (592) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 49 | ▼ 27 | Boots (592) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 50 | N/A | Skype (590) | Telecom | |
| 51 | ▲ 2 | Topshop (588) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 52 | ▲ 20 | ZARA (584) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 53 | ▼ 19 | Channel 4 (584) | Media | |
| 54 | ▲ 5 | YouTube (583) | Media | |
| 55 | ▲ 37 | MSN (582) | Media | |
| 56 | ▲ 24 | Selfridges (581) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 57 | ▲ 11 | Panasonic (578) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 58 | ▲ 23 | Vauxhall (577) | Automotive | |
| 59 | ▲ 18 | Adidas (576) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 60 | ▲ 29 | Virgin Money (571) | Retail banking | |
| 61 | ▲ 52 | Bing (566) | Media | |
| 62 | ▲ 13 | Philips (564) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 63 | ▼ 28 | Sony (563) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 64 | ▲ 26 | Guardian (563) | Media | |
| 65 | ▼ 20 | Canon (561) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 66 | ▲ 18 | Orange (556) | Telecom | |
| 67 | ▲ 11 | Radisson Edwardian (552) | Travel | |
| 68 | ▼ 5 | Nike (550) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 69 | 0 | The Times (544) | Media | |
| 70 | ▲ 32 | Sky (541) | Telecom | |
| 71 | ▼ 21 | Virgin Mobile (535) | Telecom | |
| 72 | ▼ 15 | Bosch (533) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 73 | ▼ 44 | Renault (530) | Automotive | |
| 74 | ▲ 2 | Enterprise (525) | Travel | |
| 75 | ▼ 1 | O2 (524) | Telecom | |
| 76 | ▲ 17 | HP (522) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 77 | ▲ 2 | Reebok (519) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 78 | ▲ 31 | DHL (519) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 79 | ▲ 28 | UPS (516) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 80 | ▼ 13 | easyJet (516) | Travel | |
| 81 | ▼ 43 | Groupon (516) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 82 | ▲ 33 | GE (514) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 83 | ▲ 5 | Vodafone (512) | Telecom | |
| 84 | ▼ 58 | Audi (511) | Automotive | |
| 85 | 0 | Microsoft (510) | Electronics/Appliances | |

## Laggards

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 86 | N/A | **Lufthansa** *(508)* | *Travel* | |
| 87 | ▼ 47 | **HSBC** *(508)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 88 | ▼ 30 | **Metro** *(505)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 89 | ▼ 29 | **Dell** *(500)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 90 | ▲ 10 | **Budget** *(500)* | *Travel* | |
| 91 | N/A | **T-Mobile** *(494)* | *Telecom* | |
| 92 | ▲ 2 | **Hertz** *(493)* | *Travel* | |
| 93 | ▼ 23 | **Twitter** *(490)* | *Media* | |
| 94 | ▲ 2 | **Lloyds TSB** *(488)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 95 | ▲ 6 | **NatWest** *(477)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 96 | N/A | **Churchill** *(463)* | *General insurance* | |
| 97 | ▼ 41 | **Virgin Media** *(458)* | *Telecom* | |
| 98 | 0 | **Avis** *(455)* | *Travel* | |
| 99 | ▼ 8 | **Parcelforce Worldwide** *(454)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 100 | ▼ 57 | **Three** *(454)* | *Telecom* | |
| 101 | ▼ 36 | **Facebook** *(453)* | *Media* | |
| 102 | ▲ 10 | **BT** *(453)* | *Telecom* | |
| 103 | ▼ 6 | **ING** *(447)* | *General insurance* | |
| 104 | ▼ 40 | **Google+** *(444)* | *Media* | |
| 105 | ▼ 6 | **BlackBerry** *(442)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 106 | ▼ 52 | **Royal Mail** *(423)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 107 | ▼ 3 | **Europcar** *(418)* | *Travel* | |
| 108 | ▲ 6 | **British Gas** *(411)* | *Utilities* | |
| 109 | N/A | **Scottish and Southern Energy** *(402)* | *Utilities* | |
| 110 | N/A | **ScottishPower** *(401)* | *Utilities* | |
| 111 | ▼ 3 | **The Royal Bank of Scotland** *(395)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 112 | ▲ 7 | **Bupa** *(394)* | *Health insurance* | |
| 113 | ▼ 3 | **Aviva** *(393)* | *Health insurance* | |
| 114 | ▼ 11 | **The Financial Times** *(389)* | *Media* | |
| 115 | ▲ 3 | **E.ON** *(384)* | *Utilities* | |
| 116 | ▼ 5 | **Santander** *(372)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 117 | ▲ 3 | **LinkedIn** *(371)* | *Media* | |
| 118 | ▼ 31 | **FedEx** *(368)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 119 | ▼ 37 | **Allianz** *(354)* | *General insurance* | |
| 120 | ▼ 14 | **Barclays** *(353)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 121 | ▲ 1 | **NPower** *(353)* | *Utilities* | |
| 122 | ▼ 1 | **EDF Energy** *(317)* | *Utilities* | |
| 123 | ▼ 18 | **TalkTalk** *(305)* | *Telecom* | |
| 124 | ▼ 8 | **AXA PPP Healthcare** *(257)* | *Health insurance* | |
| 125 | ▼ 8 | **Ryanair** *(189)* | *Travel* | |

## UK industry ranking

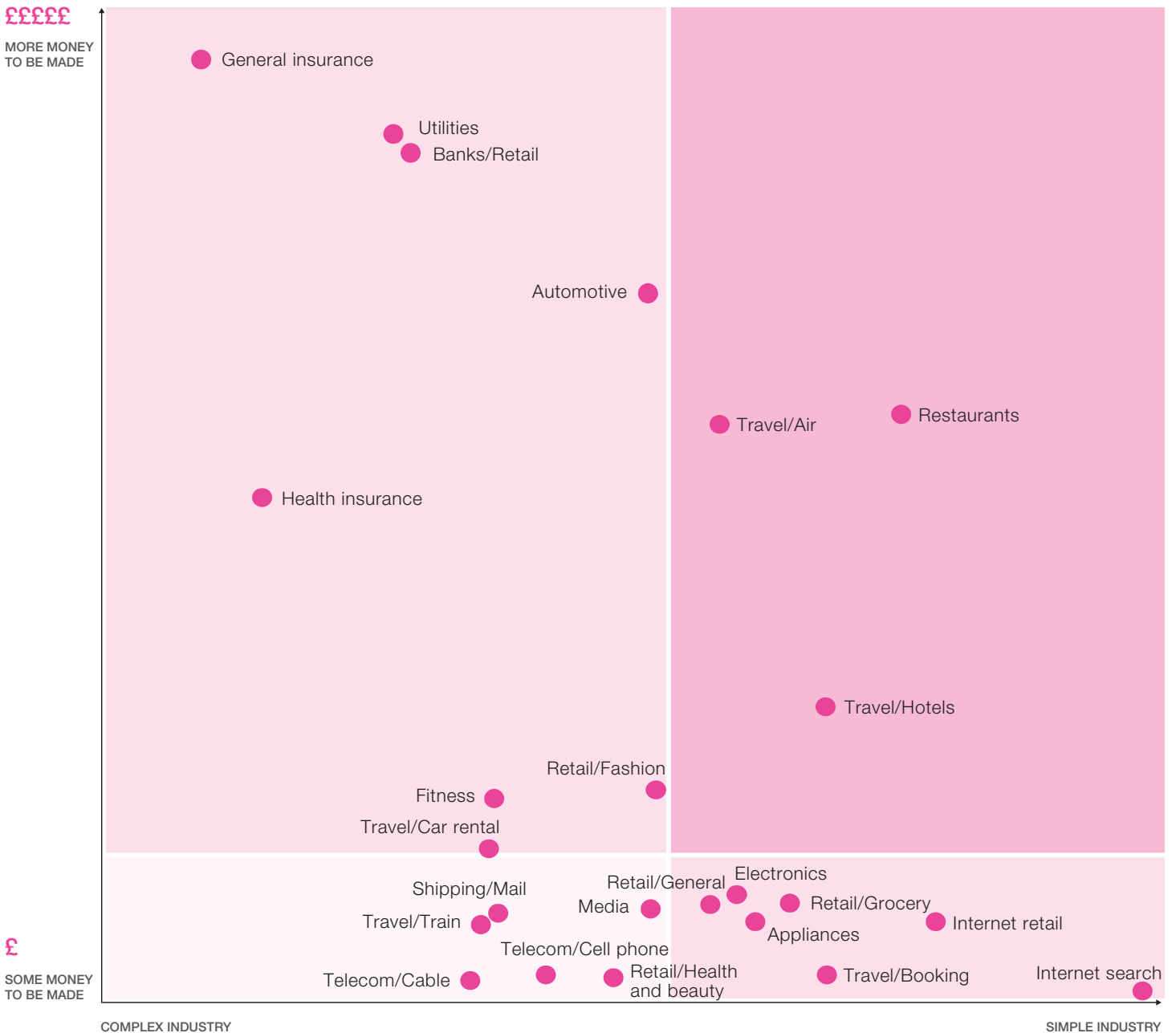| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Internet search | 950 |
| 2 | Internet retail | 794 |
| 3 | Restaurants | 768 |
| 4 | Travel/Booking | 712 |
| 5 | Travel/Hotels | 711 |
| 6 | Retail/Grocery | 684 |
| 7 | Appliances | 658 |
| 8 | Electronics | 644 |
| 9 | Travel/Air | 631 |
| 10 | Retail/General (mega/department store) | 624 |
| 11 | Retail/Fashion; clothes | 583 |
| 12 | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 579 |
| 13 | Automotive | 577 |
| 14 | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 551 |
| 15 | Telecommunications/Cell phone | 500 |
| 16 | Shipping/Mail | 464 |
| 17 | Fitness | 461 |
| 18 | Travel/Car rental | 457 |
| 19 | Travel/Train | 451 |
| 20 | Telecommunications/Cable providers | 443 |
| 21 | Social media | 430 |
| 22 | Banks/Retail | 398 |
| 23 | Utilities | 385 |
| 24 | Health insurance | 286 |
| 25 | General insurance | 240 |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

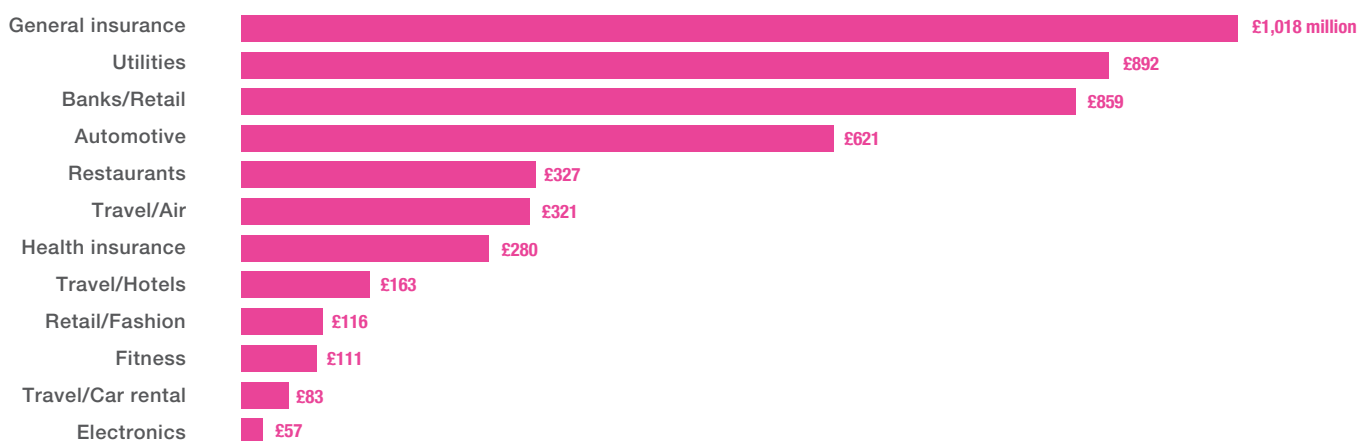# United Kingdom
## The value of simplicity

### Money to be made

Industries that are perceived as simple still have money to gain by further simplifying their customer experience.

£££££
**MORE MONEY
TO BE MADE**

● General insurance

● Utilities
● Banks/Retail

Automotive ●

● Travel/Air          ● Restaurants

● Health insurance

● Travel/Hotels

Retail/Fashion
Fitness ●          ●
Travel/Car rental
●
Shipping/Mail          Retail/General          Electronics
Media ●          ● ●          ● Retail/Grocery
Travel/Train ●          ● Appliances          ● Internet retail
●
£          Telecom/Cell phone          ● Travel/Booking          Internet search
**SOME MONEY**          Telecom/Cable ●          ● Retail/Health          ●
**TO BE MADE**          and beauty
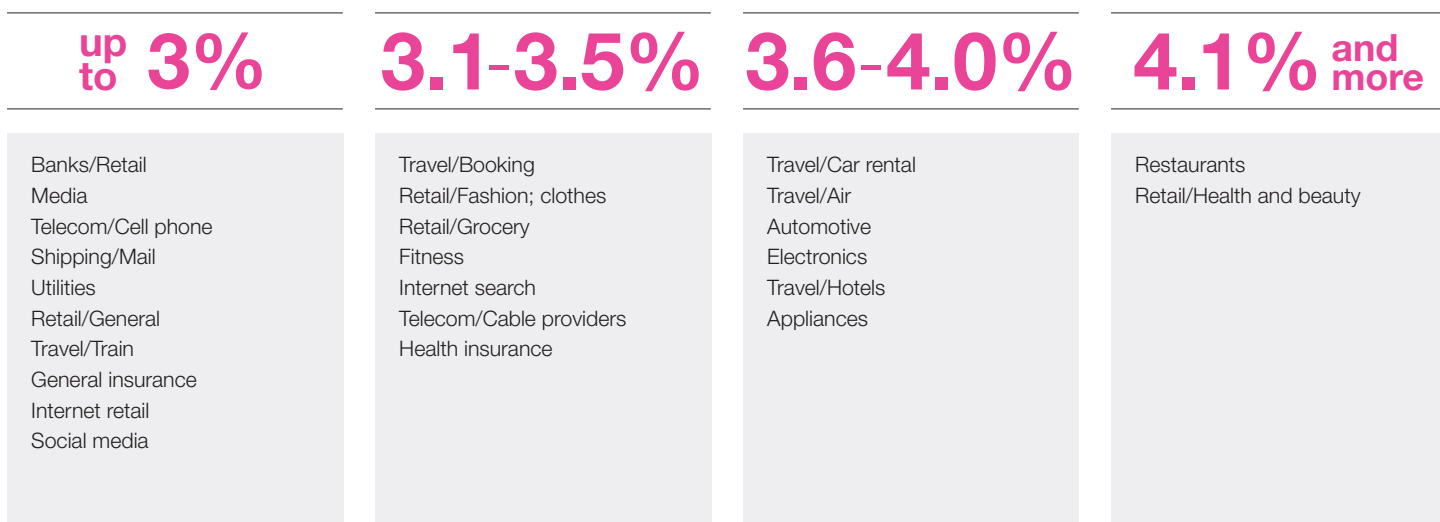
**COMPLEX INDUSTRY**          **SIMPLE INDUSTRY**

## Money left on the table

In the UK, businesses are leaving more than £5.2 billion on the table. While all industries stand to gain from simplicity, the industries below stand to gain the most. Total amounts, expressed in millions of pounds.

| Industry | Amount |
|---|---|
| General insurance | £1,018 million |
| Utilities | £892 |
| Banks/Retail | £859 |
| Automotive | £621 |
| Restaurants | £327 |
| Travel/Air | £321 |
| Health insurance | £280 |
| Travel/Hotels | £163 |
| Retail/Fashion | £116 |
| Fitness | £111 |
| Travel/Car rental | £83 |
| Electronics | £57 |

## The Simplicity Premium can increase profits across industries

Depending on the industry, up to 38% of people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant. For simpler experiences, people would pay:

| up to 3% | 3.1-3.5% | 3.6-4.0% | 4.1% and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Banks/Retail | Travel/Booking | Travel/Car rental | Restaurants |
| Media | Retail/Fashion; clothes | Travel/Air | Retail/Health and beauty |
| Telecom/Cell phone | Retail/Grocery | Automotive | |
| Shipping/Mail | Fitness | Electronics | |
| Utilities | Internet search | Travel/Hotels | |
| Retail/General | Telecom/Cable providers | Appliances | |
| Travel/Train | Health insurance | | |
| General insurance | | | |
| Internet retail | | | |
| Social media | | | |

# United Kingdom
## Brand and industry focus

**CELL PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### Industry signal weak

Based on the results of this year's UK Simplicity Index, the telecom market isn't getting through to consumers. And, if the industry is getting its message across, it certainly doesn't seem to be sending the right one. The industry finished 15th in a field of 25—a weak connection at best. Among the complicating factors weakening the position of cell phone service providers—a crowded market with increased competition and infighting over 4G exclusivity rights.

If there is a bright spot in the bad news, it's Orange, one of the UK's traditional service providers. Orange jumped 18 spots in the rankings this year, finishing 66th out of 125 brands. Though customers have complaints about what they see as Orange's complicated contracts and bills, the company earned simplicity points for easy-to-understand bundling of services. Orange's personable advertising campaigns and consistent brand voice also lifted the brand's simplicity profile. "Their message is clear, direct and simple," said one respondent.

On the flip side, low-cost provider Three fell 57 spots to a 100th place finish. Despite moves to offer consumers innovative package deals, Three still has problems with some of the basics. Respondents point, for example, to the brand's reputation for poor reception and a "very cumbersome experience" overall.

**CABLE PROVIDERS**

### Service snags tying up cable

There's more than one reason the telecom cable provider industry finished 20th in a field of 25 industries in simplicity.

Consumers have a healthy appetite for increasingly fast broadband, which cable providers have clearly tapped into. But no one UK provider has managed to distinguish itself when it comes time to deliver the experience in a simple, satisfying way that also communicates value.

As with many service industries, the true test for cable companies comes when a technical difficulty arises or a product fails. And that's where they suffer. The industry has a reputation for poor service, insufficient problem resolution and a lack of empathy from largely outsourced call centers.

There was some comparatively good news for Sky, however, which jumped 32 spots to #70, earning the highest simplicity rating in its category, even topping rival Virgin Media (#97). Sky's significant improvements to its service offerings and packages have clearly paid off with one respondent calling Sky "television made easy."

**TRAVEL/HOTEL**

### An "Extended Stay" ahead of the competition

By focusing on the customer experience, Hilton has become the fastest-growing hospitality chain in the world. The hotel giant also earned a spot among the leaders in this year's UK Simplicity Index, upgrading its position 28 spots to #18. Innovations such as its Connectivity Station and Valet offer simple solutions to technology and storage problems, enabling Hilton to stay ahead of its rivals. The company's commitment to simplicity and consistency also carries through to the website, which respondents say is clear, easy to use and provides "first-class information."

**TRAVEL/AIR**

## Virgin Atlantic ascends, Ryanair grounded

Virgin Atlantic soars to the #2 spot in this year's UK Simplicity Index, up from #16. The ascent reflects the power of the Virgin brand and its "customer-centric" associations. It's a message that flies with customers and is reinforced clearly and consistently in advertising, on the Virgin Atlantic website and in communications that promote the Virgin brand rather than the product.

"We are big Virgin fans. Their website is straight to the point."

That's in contrast to Ryanair, which was the lowliest brand in the Simplicity Index—in its category, in the UK and in the world, where it landed dead last. While most no-frills brands are usually synonymous with simplicity, that's not the case with Ryanair. Customers complain about hidden charges they are "not aware of until further down the booking line, making it hard to compare prices." In the minds of many respondents, Ryanair has become a master of complexity with a cluttered website they say is "designed to deceive"—concealing the true cost of tickets and drawing people to a stage in the booking process where it's easier to go on than turn back.

**RETAIL BANKING**

## Top bank invests in trust

Once again the UK retail banking industry comes in near the bottom of the UK industry rankings at #22 out of 25. With big banks still in crisis mode, customers are taking closer looks at the institutions that protect their money while, at the same time, demanding quality products and services.

The simplicity leader in the UK banking industry is online-only bank First Direct,

coming in at #12. By re-launching its customer website, First Direct successfully implemented an online dialogue with consumers (digital channels) to replicate its customer-service success (telephone). Consumers say First Direct connects through easy-to-use online banking tools, excellent customer service and a straightforward approach to banking.

The Co-operative Bank joins the simplicity leaders at #22. Promoting its ethical values, the bank's trustworthy image has played a key role in propelling it up the simplicity charts. Group CEO Peter Marks vows that his "customer-led, ethically driven" bank will provide the "biggest shake-up in high-street banking in a generation." The bank is also praised by respondents for its "clear communications on complex banking issues."

To win back trust and overcome the general dismay of customers, the UK banking sector needs to demonstrate a genuine commitment to reconnect with local communities. UK consumers view local banks as simpler even though virtually all British banks are global conglomerates. Consumers are clearly seeking the personalization and trust that is associated with smaller banks in the West.

**UTILITIES**

## Big doubts dog utilities

The utilities sector is one of the most politically charged business arenas in Britain. No surprise, then, that it also shows up as one of the most complex industries in the UK rankings, finishing 23rd in our field of 25. A legacy of perceived dishonesty and poor customer service, as well as an obvious focus on short-term profit at the expense of any real brand differentiation, has powered customer mistrust. There are, however,

# United Kingdom
## Brand and industry focus

signs of clearing on the horizon, as the "big six" utilities companies are now required to provide information to customers that identify the best rates available and how to get them.

No utilities brand finished better than #108 in the UK Simplicity Index. The most complex brand in the industry, EDF Energy, earned a #122 ranking for its complex rates, complicated bills and difficulty in getting someone on the phone to answer questions or address issues.

"EDF's customer service is poor…and their billing is complex and not easy to understand."

**GENERAL INSURANCE**

### Nothing fine about fine print

Yet again, the general insurance industry lands at the very bottom of the rankings, finishing last out of 25 industries. Consumers say that products still contain too much fine print in written materials and websites, which may protect the industry but leaves consumers feeling helpless and confused.

Churchill (#96) led general insurance brands, bolstered by its personable and memorable advertising. More important is the fact that Churchill is a familiar and trusted brand recognized for providing clear comparisons of its products versus competitors.

Another player in the industry, Allianz, drops 37 spots in the UK Simplicity Index, landing near the very bottom at #119. From an outdated website and confusing terms and conditions to unclear advertising with "too much jargon," respondents say Allianz fails to explain its complex products to consumers.

**SHIPPING/MAIL**

### A Royal fall from grace

Royal Mail, the UK's government-owned postal service, has spent the last few years preparing itself for privatization or sale. It operates in a fiercely competitive industry where other companies are offering better and cheaper services. The impact of technology has also led to a steep decline in personal mail, and players like Royal Mail are struggling to redefine their role in customers' lives. As a media target in the UK, Royal Mail's smallest mishaps are sensationalized, further influencing consumer perceptions. Despite efforts to compete with domestic and international private counterparts by moving portions of its business services online, respondents point to inefficient and unreliable delivery, complicated postage rates and poor customer service as justification for the low marks for simplicity and a #106 ranking, down 52 spots since last year.

**GROCERY**

### Technology drives UK shopper loyalty to national chains

While UK respondents appreciated lower prices and good customer service, it was technology and extra services, like online ordering and self-checkouts, that drove preferences for national grocery chains significantly higher than any other region in our study.

Despite the fact that online grocery sales in the UK are on the rise, customers still encounter difficulty navigating grocery store websites, cited as one of the most complex touchpoints in the grocery industry. Grocery chains that feed customers' appetite for a streamlined experience are likely to reap the greatest rewards.
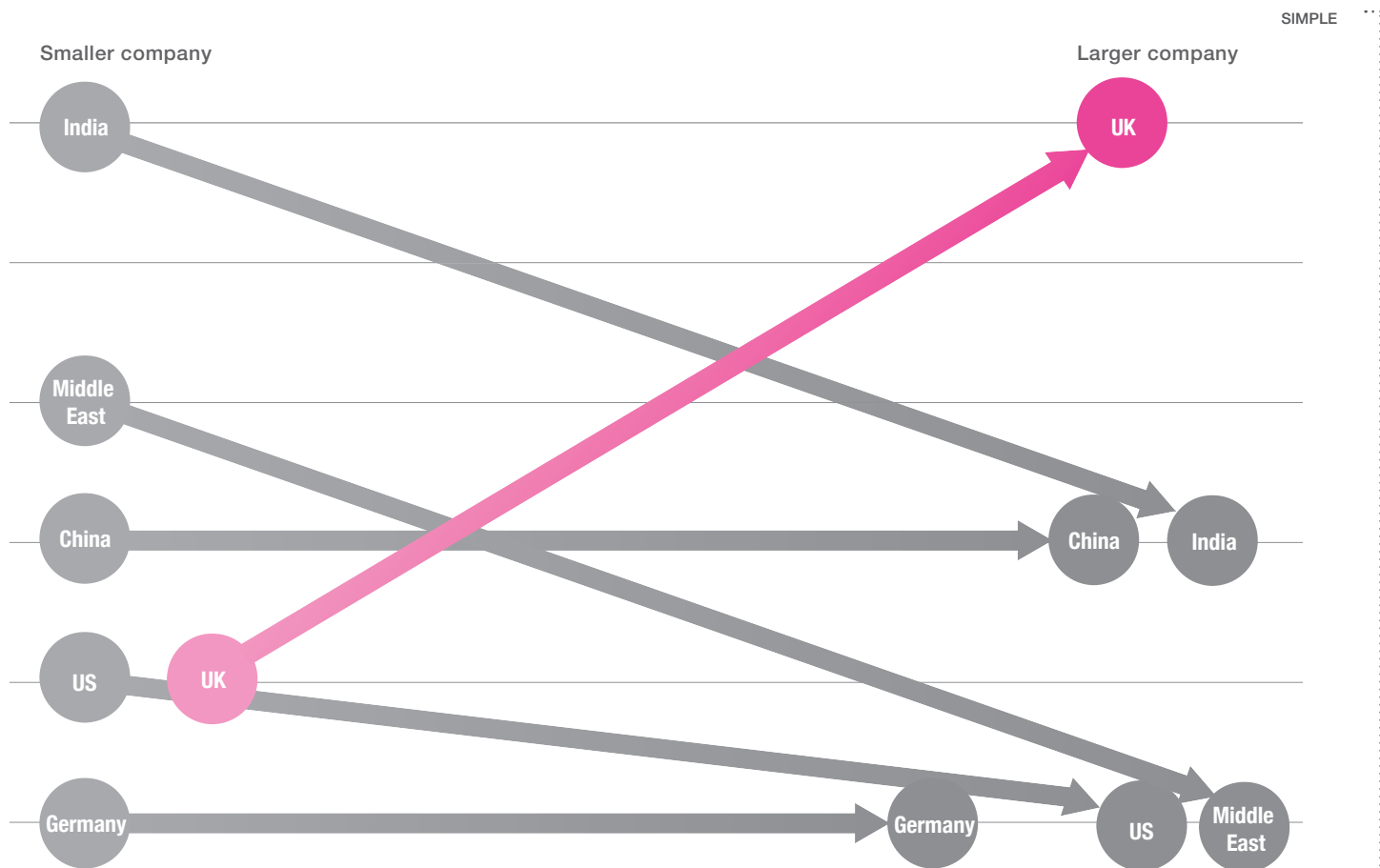
# Simplicity spotlight
## Work life

### Promoting innovation at a big company

Although promoting an innovative idea was perceived as one of the most complex work aspects overall, most countries considered it simpler to achieve at a smaller company—except in the UK where it was considered simpler at a larger company.

**In the UK, promoting an innovative idea is simpler at a larger company.**



SIMPLE

Smaller company

Larger company

India

UK

Middle East

China

India

China

US        UK

Germany

Germany        US        Middle East

COMPLEX

# Germany

# Germany
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | Amazon *(934)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 2 | 0 | Google *(914)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 3 | ▲ 15 | Bild *(881)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 4 | ▲ 25 | McDonald's *(861)* | *Restaurants* | 🍴 |
| 5 | ▲ 56 | Rossmann *(857)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 6 | ▲ 7 | ALDI *(856)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 7 | ▲ 7 | Lidl *(852)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 8 | ▲ 20 | DM *(847)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 9 | ▲ 35 | KIK *(835)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 10 | ▲ 28 | Real *(817)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 11 | ▼ 5 | Apple *(814)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 12 | ▼ 8 | Zalando *(806)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 13 | ▼ 10 | IKEA *(805)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 14 | ▲ 61 | Burger King *(801)* | *Restaurants* | 🍴 |
| 15 | ▲ 51 | Penny Markt *(790)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 16 | ▼ 11 | Tchibo *(790)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 17 | ▲ 16 | C&A *(774)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 18 | ▲ 29 | REWE *(770)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 19 | ▼ 4 | Miele *(766)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 20 | ▲ 59 | Müller *(756)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 21 | ▲ 18 | Spiegel *(754)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 22 | ▲ 5 | H&M *(753)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 23 | ▲ 3 | Edeka *(750)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 24 | N/A | Kaufhof *(736)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 25 | ▲ 59 | Nordsee *(734)* | *Restaurants* | 🍴 |
| 26 | ▲ 44 | Adidas *(731)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 27 | ▼ 19 | OTTO *(727)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 28 | ▲ 66 | KFC *(724)* | *Restaurants* | 🍴 |
| 29 | ▼ 19 | Canon *(723)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 30 | N/A | Karstadt *(722)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 31 | ▲ 46 | EP/Elektronik Partner *(722)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 32 | ▲ 4 | Yahoo! *(713)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 33 | ▲ 56 | SUBWAY *(710)* | *Restaurants* | 🍴 |
| 34 | ▼ 10 | Media Markt *(707)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 35 | ▼ 26 | Toyota *(703)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |
| 36 | ▼ 24 | eBay *(701)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 37 | ▲ 34 | MEDIMAX *(686)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 38 | ▲ 4 | Panasonic *(685)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 39 | ▲ 26 | Philips *(685)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 40 | ▲ 60 | Puma *(682)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 41 | ▼ 1 | Bosch *(682)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42 | ▲ 48 | Hilton *(678)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 43 | ▼ 26 | Audi *(671)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |
| 44 | ▼ 28 | Sony *(670)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 45 | ▲ 43 | RTL *(669)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 46 | ▲ 49 | Peek & Cloppenburg *(667)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 47 | ▲ 5 | Saturn *(664)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 48 | ▼ 28 | Samsung *(663)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 49 | ▲ 34 | AEG *(657)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 50 | ▼ 27 | YouTube *(656)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 51 | ▲ 34 | Budnikowski *(652)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 52 | ▲ 53 | Reebok *(644)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 53 | ▼ 8 | Opel *(642)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |
| 54 | 0 | Prosieben *(640)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 55 | ▲ 9 | Thomas Cook *(640)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 56 | N/A | Skype *(638)* | *Telecom* | 📶 |
| 57 | ▼ 1 | Nike *(638)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 58 | N/A | LG *(637)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 59 | ▲ 14 | Sixt *(636)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 60 | ▼ 19 | Siemens *(632)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 61 | ▼ 30 | Nokia *(631)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 62 | ▼ 43 | BMW *(628)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |
| 63 | 0 | Volkswagen *(624)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |
| 64 | ▼ 18 | HP *(615)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 65 | ▼ 44 | Motorola *(609)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 66 | ▼ 16 | TUI *(605)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 67 | ▲ 37 | BARMER GEK *(602)* | *Health insurance* | ✚ |
| 68 | ▲ 42 | Avis *(590)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 69 | 0 | ZARA *(584)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 70 | ▼ 21 | Best Western *(583)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 71 | ▼ 39 | Lufthansa *(582)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 72 | ▼ 42 | Hermes *(582)* | *Shipping/Mail* | 📠 |
| 73 | ▼ 62 | iTunes *(581)* | *Retail/Shopping* | 🛒 |
| 74 | ▼ 67 | Dell *(577)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 75 | ▲ 6 | Techniker Krankenkasse *(571)* | *Health insurance* | ✚ |
| 76 | ▼ 39 | ING-DiBa *(570)* | *Retail banking* | 🏛 |
| 77 | ▼ 5 | Twitter *(568)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 78 | ▼ 10 | Holiday Inn *(567)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 79 | ▼ 5 | ITS Travel *(563)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 80 | ▼ 21 | Bing *(559)* | *Media* | 🖥 |
| 81 | ▲ 6 | Marriott *(552)* | *Travel* | ✈ |
| 82 | ▼ 47 | Microsoft *(549)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | ⏻ |
| 83 | ▼ 16 | Mercedes-Benz *(548)* | *Automotive* | 🚗 |

## Laggards

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 84 | ▼ 31 | Sparkasse (548) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 85 | ▼ 60 | airberlin (539) | Travel | ✈ |
| 86 | ▼ 10 | Deutsche Post/DHL (529) | Shipping/Mail | 🚚 |
| 87 | ▼ 32 | Ford (527) | Automotive | 🚗 |
| 88 | ▼ 37 | Google+ (522) | Media | 📺 |
| 89 | ▲ 26 | Hertz (505) | Travel | ✈ |
| 90 | N/A | Volksbanken Raiffeisenbanken (497) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 91 | ▼ 34 | Alltours (484) | Travel | ✈ |
| 92 | ▼ 12 | DER (478) | Travel | ✈ |
| 93 | ▼ 11 | Sky (477) | Media | 📺 |
| 94 | ▲ 8 | Europcar (474) | Travel | ✈ |
| 95 | ▲ 18 | Wüstenrot (468) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 96 | ▲ 1 | UPS (462) | Shipping/Mail | 🚚 |
| 97 | ▲ 9 | Commerzbank (460) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 98 | ▼ 50 | Deutsche Postbank (452) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 99 | ▼ 77 | O2 (450) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 100 | ▼ 2 | AOK (449) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 101 | ▲ 16 | Ramada (447) | Travel | ✈ |
| 102 | ▼ 40 | Vodafone (436) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 103 | ▼ 11 | Xing (421) | Media | 📺 |
| 104 | ▼ 18 | ePlus (406) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 105 | ▼ 47 | easyJet (405) | Travel | ✈ |
| 106 | ▼ 10 | Facebook (390) | Media | 📺 |
| 107 | ▲ 1 | RWE (379) | Utilities | 🚰 |
| 108 | ▼ 30 | Deutsche Bank (376) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 109 | ▲ 3 | E.ON (370) | Utilities | 🚰 |
| 110 | ▲ 11 | HDI-Gerling (369) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 111 | ▲ 9 | ERGO (357) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 112 | ▲ 4 | DAK Industries (348) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 113 | ▲ 12 | EWE (341) | Utilities | 🚰 |
| 114 | ▼ 7 | AXA (338) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 115 | ▲ 4 | Ryanair (331) | Travel | ✈ |
| 116 | ▲ 6 | Vattenfall (321) | Utilities | 🚰 |
| 117 | ▼ 14 | HypoVereinsbank (314) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 118 | ▼ 27 | TARGOBANK (300) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 119 | ▼ 26 | Deutsche Telekom (296) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 120 | ▼ 60 | FedEx (286) | Shipping/Mail | 🚚 |
| 121 | ▼ 10 | EnBW (278) | Utilities | 🚰 |
| 122 | ▲ 2 | Allianz (260) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 123 | ▼ 5 | Deutsche Bahn (236) | Travel | ✈ |
| 124 | ▼ 15 | R+V Versicherung (230) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 125 | ▼ 2 | Generali (211) | General insurance | ☂ |

## Germany industry ranking

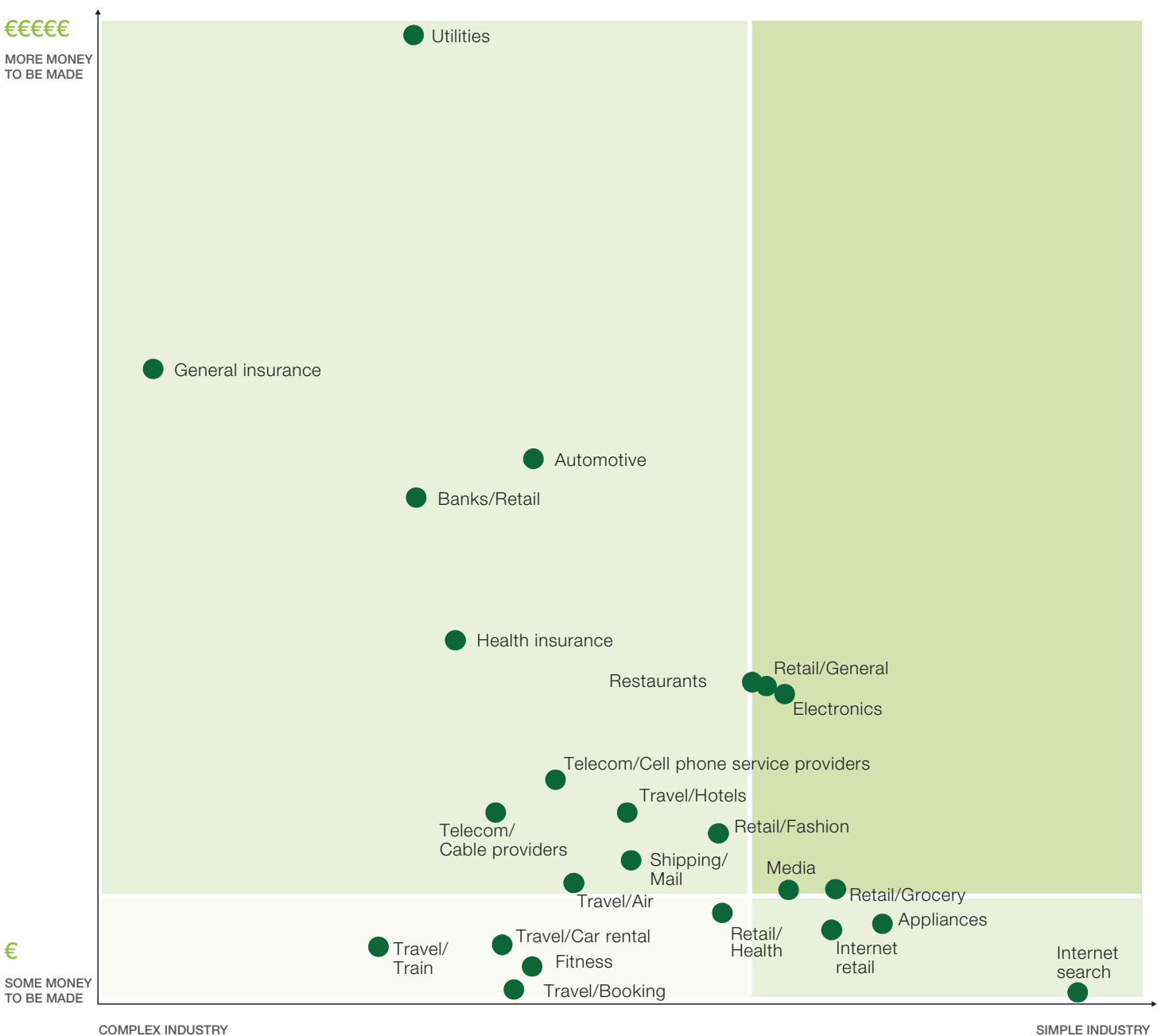| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Internet search | 950 |
| 2 | Appliances | 800 |
| 3 | Retail/Grocery | 764 |
| 4 | Internet retail | 761 |
| 5 | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 728 |
| 6 | Electronics | 725 |
| 7 | Retail/General (mega/department store) | 711 |
| 8 | Restaurants | 700 |
| 9 | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 677 |
| 10 | Retail/Fashion; clothes | 674 |
| 11 | Shipping/Mail | 607 |
| 12 | Travel/Hotels | 604 |
| 13 | Travel/Air | 563 |
| 14 | Telecommunications/Cell phone | 549 |
| 15 | Automotive | 532 |
| 16 | Fitness | 531 |
| 17 | Travel/Booking | 517 |
| 18 | Travel/Car rental | 508 |
| 19 | Telecommunications/Cable providers | 503 |
| 20 | Social media | 480 |
| 21 | Health insurance | 472 |
| 22 | Banks/Retail | 442 |
| 23 | Utilities | 440 |
| 24 | Travel/Train | 413 |
| 25 | General insurance | 240 |

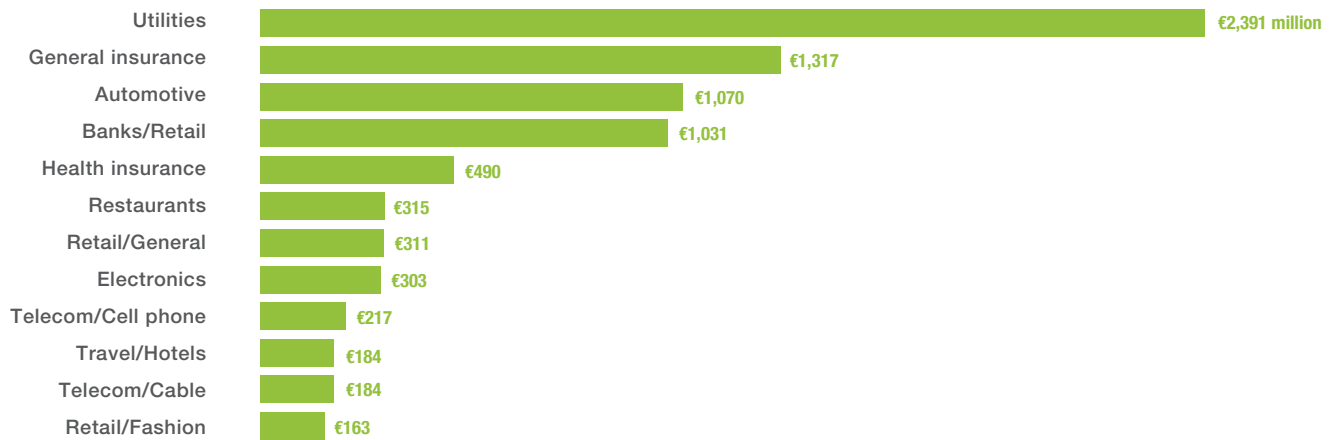*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# Germany
## The value of simplicity

### Money to be made

Industries that are perceived as simple still have money to gain
by further simplifying their customer experience.

€€€€€

**MORE MONEY
TO BE MADE**

- Utilities

- General insurance

- Automotive
- Banks/Retail

- Health insurance

Restaurants
- Retail/General
- Electronics

- Telecom/Cell phone service providers
- Travel/Hotels
- Telecom/
Cable providers
- Retail/Fashion
- Shipping/
Mail
- Media
- Travel/Air
- Retail/Grocery
- Appliances
- Retail/
Health
- Travel/Car rental
- Travel/
Train
- Fitness
- Internet
retail
- Internet
search
- Travel/Booking

€

**SOME MONEY
TO BE MADE**

COMPLEX INDUSTRY

SIMPLE INDUSTRY

## Money left on the table

In Germany, businesses are leaving more than €8.8 billion on the table. While all industries stand to gain from simplicity, the industries below stand to gain the most. Total amounts, expressed in millions of euros.

| Industry | Amount |
|---|---|
| Utilities | €2,391 million |
| General insurance | €1,317 |
| Automotive | €1,070 |
| Banks/Retail | €1,031 |
| Health insurance | €490 |
| Restaurants | €315 |
| Retail/General | €311 |
| Electronics | €303 |
| Telecom/Cell phone | €217 |
| Travel/Hotels | €184 |
| Telecom/Cable | €184 |
| Retail/Fashion | €163 |

## The Simplicity Premium can increase profits across industries

Depending on the industry, up to 29% of people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant. For simpler experiences, people would pay:

| up to 4% | 4.1-4.5% | 4.6-5.0% | 5.1% and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Telecom/Cable providers | Retail/Fashion; clothes | Travel/Car rental | Restaurants |
| Media | Travel/Train | Fitness | Appliances |
| Internet retail | Telecom/Cell phone | Travel/Air | Internet search |
| Health insurance | Social media | Retail/Grocery | Travel/Hotels |
| Banks/Retail | General insurance | Travel/Booking | Retail/Health and beauty |
| | | Utilities | |
| | | Retail/General | |
| | | Electronics | |
| | | Automotive | |
| | | Shipping/Mail | |

# Germany
## Brand and industry focus

**RETAIL/HEALTH AND BEAUTY**

### The right prescription for Rossmann

Rossmann jumps 56 spots on this year's Germany Simplicity Index to land at #5, reflecting efforts to expand its product portfolio. Rossmann's revenue has continued to grow in 2012 while it focuses on expansion with new stores planned in Germany over the next year. The insolvency of former competitor Schlecker has also led to increased market share for Rossmann.

Respondents point to a good product selection, a clear presentation of products and helpful employees as reasons for Rossmann's simplicity. Rossmann offers "a great way to save money" through weekly promotions that make shopping affordable. Rossmann is also credited for providing an easy and convenient shopping experience both in-store and online.

**GROCERY**

### Penny-wise, very wise

Despite steadily decreasing revenue in 2011, Penny Markt surged 51 spots for a #15 ranking among all brands in Germany. This jump reflects a significant investment by parent REWE to revitalize and re-launch the Penny Markt brand. A refreshed logo and aggressive communications campaign attracted new customers, along with revamped stores with modern interior designs and improved signage. Respondents praise the convenience of Penny's store hours (longer than competitors), design of the stores, great prices and selection. Penny's success underscores how a great point-of-sale experience creates brand strength and customer loyalty.

**RESTAURANTS**

### More than burgers and franks

The restaurant industry in Germany moves up from 13th to rank 8th with strong performances by fast-food brands including McDonald's (#4), Burger King (#14), Nordsee (#25), KFC (#28) and SUBWAY (#33). Each of these companies made significant improvements to land in the top 35 German brands.

Burger King found success on this year's Germany Simplicity Index, up 61 spots. The company's efforts to renew its stores' interior design, enlarge its product portfolio and refresh its communication strategy are starting to pay off. This year, Burger King has opened more stores and attracted more consumers with new products and flavors catering to local tastes. The chain now offers more healthy food choices and a comfortable lounge environment, following McDonald's lead. Respondents praise Burger King for clearly communicating new products and offers in advertising and in restaurants.

SUBWAY's revenue in Germany is growing and its image as a purveyor of healthy, freshly prepared fast-food is showing improvement. With new management, SUBWAY improves its ranking 56 spots. The company has implemented new strategies, including a new pricing system, a simplified menu and expanded TV advertisement campaigns. Respondents appreciate that they "know what to expect" from the friendly staff and that the signage is clear and explains everything a diner needs to know.

**INTERNET RETAIL**

### Mighty Amazon

While Apple lands at #11 on the Germany Simplicity Index, iTunes falls significantly (62 spots) to #73, far behind Internet retailer Amazon, the #1 simplest brand in Germany. Many respondents feel that iTunes has a confusing layout that is "unnecessarily complicated" and that frequent changes in its terms and conditions agreements are complex. Additionally, iTunes is docked for only being compatible with Apple products. As the market for online music and movies becomes more competitive with many new startups entering this market, respondents point to brands like Spotify and Music Hub (Samsung) as offering easier, more innovative products without compatibility hurdles.

**RETAIL BANKING**

### The hidden cost of hidden fees

The global banking crisis has led to diminishing trust across the board in an industry that fell four spots from #18 to #22, finishing near the bottom of 25 industries in this year's Germany Simplicity Index. Deutsche Postbank, owned by fellow complex brand Deutsche Bank (#108), drops 50 spots, coming in at #98. Deutsche Postbank was called out for its hidden and complicated fees, limited access to ATMs and branches, long waiting times and poor service, making it an unpleasant retail banking experience overall. While both banks are perceived to be inflexible, respondents cite Deutsche Bank for its lack of consultation and transparency, key elements of the banking experience.

**TRAVEL/AIR**

## Losing altitude

Germany's second-largest airline, airberlin, is especially popular for short route flights within Germany. This year, airberlin falls 60 spots to #85, reflecting a confusing new tariff structure, hidden costs in the fine print and an "unattractive loyalty program." The brand's missteps coincide with negative publicity on the postponed opening of a new airport in Berlin, one of airberlin's most important hubs.

**AUTOMOTIVE**

## At a crossroads

This year, the German automotive sector has been challenged by new regulations as well as consumer demands for affordable, energy-efficient cars. As a result, it crosses the finish line at 15 in a field of 25 industries. New innovations and city planning concepts mean smaller cars are critical, evidenced by BMW's drop to #62, down 43 spots. Audi, one of the most popular brands in Germany, fell 26 spots to #43, losing simplicity points for its "confusing price structure" and a bad retail experience. Clearly car shoppers continue to seek an easy, simple and convenient car-shopping experience.

**HEALTH INSURANCE**

## A healthy dose of simplicity

Within the health insurance industry—ranked near the bottom at #21 of 25 industries—much of the discussion is about extra fees that irritate people. While most health insurance companies raised their fees, the simplest health insurance brand in Germany, BARMER GEK, did not, contributing to its improvement of 37 spots to a #67 ranking.

BARMER GEK is the biggest health insurance company within this sector and has increased its customer base by 400,000 over the past year. With more than 1,000 offices and convenient hours of operation, it is praised for its good customer service and the fact that customers can interact with "competent" employees to receive straightforward advice.

**CELL PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

## Dropped calls, ranking falls

O2 drops 77 spots, falling to #99 on this year's Germany Simplicity Index. O2 has been steadily raising its prices without improving its service. Respondents frequently comment about the lack of a transparent tariff structure, confusing rates, "poor quality of service" and uninformative advertisements. In addition, O2 now faces challenges from more prepaid and low budget providers that are entering this highly competitive market.

# Simplicity spotlight
## Work life

**German respondents ranked these work aspects as simpler than any other country.**

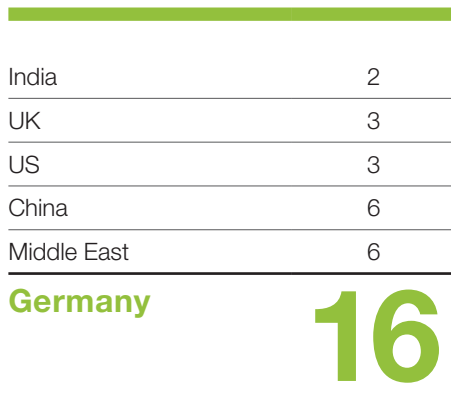### Understanding senior leaderships' communication
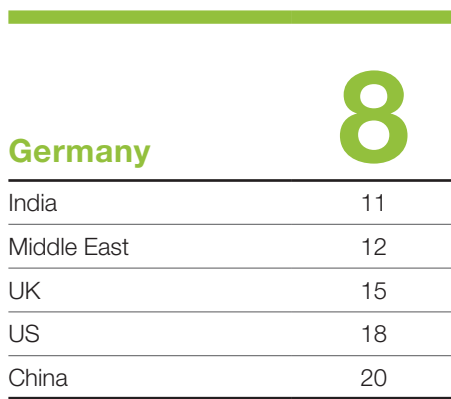
| Germany | **8** |
| --- | --- |
| India | 11 |
| Middle East | 12 |
| UK | 15 |
| US | 18 |
| China | 20 |

### Working with someone outside of my core team

SIMPLE

| Germany | **4** |
| --- | --- |
| UK | 9 |
| US | 10 |
| China | 13 |
| Middle East | 16 |
| India | 18 |

COMPLEX

**German respondents ranked these work aspects as more complex than any other country.**

### Understanding my job expectations

| India | 2 |
| --- | --- |
| UK | 3 |
| US | 3 |
| China | 6 |
| Middle East | 6 |
| Germany | **16** |

### Understanding my benefits

SIMPLE

| China | 3 |
| --- | --- |
| India | 6 |
| US | 6 |
| UK | 7 |
| Middle East | 8 |
| Germany | **13** |
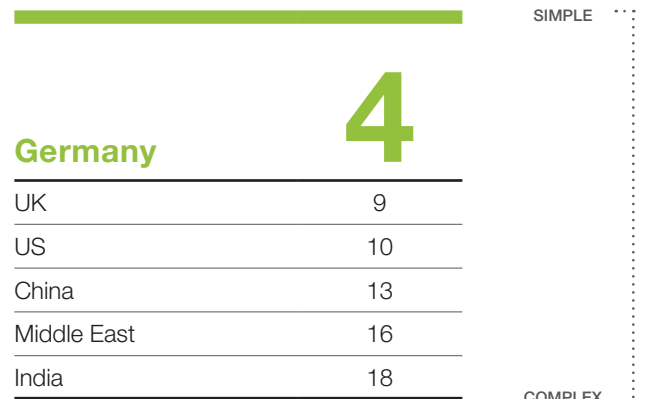
COMPLEX

*Freely sharing ideas* is much simpler for those at some of the highest positions.

| | COMPLEX | | | SIMPLE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chairman/Board Member | ● | | | |
| Partner/Principal/Business Owner | | | | ● |
| Executive Leadership/C-Level | | | ● | |
| Practitioner/Professional (e.g., Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer, etc.) | | ● | | |
| Senior Management (e.g., SVP, VP) | | | ● | |
| Mid-Level Managerial | ● | | | |
| Mid-Level Non-Managerial | ● | | | |
| Entry Level Employee | | ● | | |
| Administrative/Clerical/Hourly Employee | | ● | | |
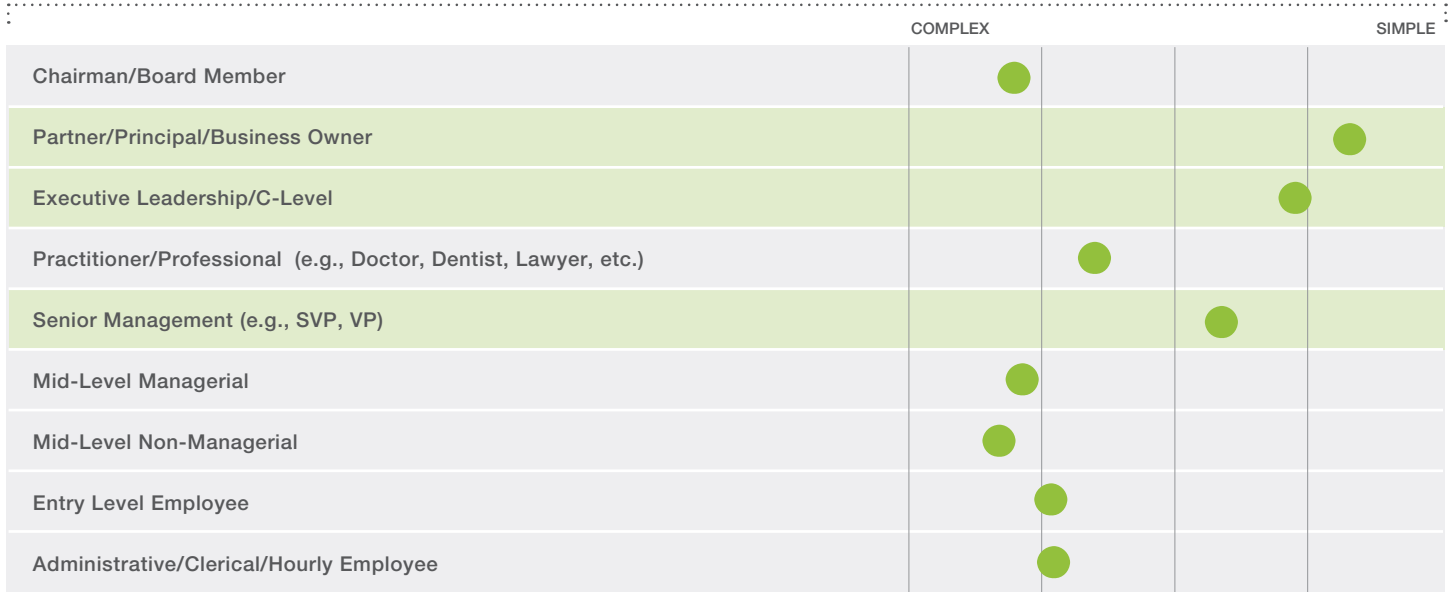
*Having the resources to do my job well* is most complex for those at mid-level and senior management.

| | COMPLEX | | | SIMPLE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chairman/Board Member | | ● | | |
| Partner/Principal/Business Owner | | | ● | |
| Executive Leadership/C-Level | | ● | | |
| Practitioner/Professional (e.g., Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer, etc.) | | | ● | |
| Senior Management (e.g., SVP, VP) | ● | | | |
| Mid-Level Managerial | ● | | | |
| Mid-Level Non-Managerial | ● | | | |
| Entry Level Employee | | | ● | |
| Administrative/Clerical/Hourly Employee | | | ● | |
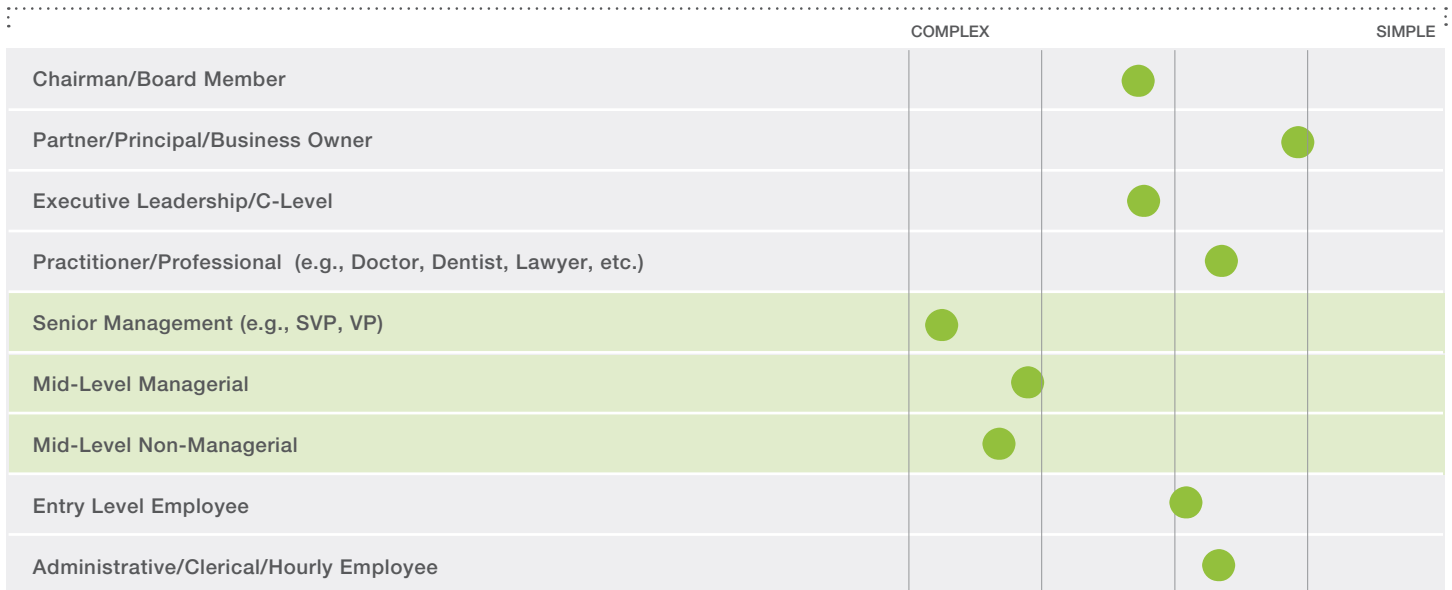
# Middle East

# Middle East
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | Google (1003) | Media |
| 2 | ▲ 7 | Samsung (904) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 3 | ▼ 1 | McDonald's (865) | Restaurants |
| 4 | ▲ 2 | Gulf News (860) | Media |
| 5 | ▲ 42 | BlackBerry (858) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 6 | ▲ 11 | Yahoo! (856) | Media |
| 7 | ▲ 22 | Dell (846) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 8 | ▲ 19 | YouTube (845) | Media |
| 9 | ▲ 43 | Spinney's (844) | Retail/Shopping |
| 10 | ▲ 21 | Toshiba (826) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 11 | ▼ 7 | Sony (826) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 12 | N/A | Skype (820) | Telecom |
| 13 | ▲ 62 | Etisalat (816) | Telecom |
| 14 | 0 | Carrefour (807) | Retail/Shopping |
| 15 | ▼ 10 | IKEA (805) | Retail/Shopping |
| 16 | ▲ 40 | Dubai Metro (804) | Travel |
| 17 | ▼ 14 | Apple (802) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 18 | ▲ 27 | Sharaf DG (799) | Retail/Shopping |
| 19 | 0 | MSN (788) | Media |
| 20 | ▲ 18 | LG (779) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 21 | ▲ 21 | Home Centre (779) | Retail/Shopping |
| 22 | ▼ 1 | Pizza Hut (769) | Restaurants |
| 23 | ▲ 1 | Al Baik (767) | Restaurants |
| 24 | ▼ 9 | Emirates (766) | Travel |
| 25 | ▲ 24 | KFC (764) | Restaurants |
| 26 | ▲ 62 | Mercedes-Benz (764) | Automotive |
| 27 | ▲ 34 | Dubai TV (759) | Media |
| 28 | ▲ 16 | Etihad Airways (756) | Travel |
| 29 | ▲ 1 | HP (756) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 30 | ▲ 88 | Jumeirah (751) | Travel |
| 31 | ▲ 45 | SABB (743) | Retail banking |
| 32 | ▲ 47 | Reebok (742) | Retail/Shopping |
| 33 | ▲ 58 | Rotana (740) | Travel |
| 34 | ▲ 76 | Diesel (740) | Retail/Shopping |
| 35 | ▲ 77 | Saudi Railways (735) | Travel |
| 36 | ▲ 10 | Twitter (732) | Media |
| 37 | ▼ 30 | Starbucks (732) | Restaurants |
| 38 | ▼ 20 | Al Jazeera (731) | Media |
| 39 | ▼ 13 | Toyota (729) | Automotive |
| 40 | ▼ 32 | Asharq Al Awsat (729) | Media |
| 41 | ▲ 46 | Citibank (728) | Retail banking |
| 42 | ▲ 12 | Puma (725) | Retail/Shopping |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 43 | ▼ 33 | Mobily (725) | Telecom |
| 44 | ▼ 7 | Herfy (722) | Restaurants |
| 45 | ▼ 12 | Microsoft (721) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 46 | N/A | SACO (720) | Retail/Shopping |
| 47 | ▲ 15 | Nike (713) | Retail/Shopping |
| 48 | ▲ 5 | GoNabit (713) | Retail/Shopping |
| 49 | ▲ 57 | BMW (712) | Automotive |
| 50 | ▲ 21 | Adidas (710) | Retail/Shopping |
| 51 | ▼ 39 | Holiday Inn (707) | Travel |
| 52 | ▼ 29 | eXtra (706) | Retail/Shopping |
| 53 | ▲ 6 | Debenhams (704) | Retail/Shopping |
| 54 | ▼ 41 | Fly Dubai (703) | Travel |
| 55 | ▲ 9 | STC (699) | Telecom |
| 56 | ▲ 40 | Sheraton (698) | Travel |
| 57 | ▲ 15 | Choitram's (697) | Retail/Shopping |
| 58 | ▲ 32 | Saudi TV (695) | Media |
| 59 | ▼ 48 | Al Arabiya (694) | Media |
| 60 | ▼ 21 | du (692) | Telecom |
| 61 | ▲ 22 | ADNOC (691) | Utilities |
| 62 | ▼ 19 | Siemens (691) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 63 | ▲ 39 | Zain (688) | Telecom |
| 64 | N/A | HTC (687) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 65 | ▲ 1 | The Body Shop (682) | Retail/Shopping |
| 66 | ▲ 37 | Topshop (681) | Retail/Shopping |
| 67 | ▲ 46 | Philips (680) | Electronics/Appliances |
| 68 | ▲ 9 | Paris Gallery (677) | Retail/Shopping |
| 69 | ▼ 4 | GMC (676) | Automotive |
| 70 | ▼ 20 | Emirates NBD (670) | Retail banking |
| 71 | ▼ 11 | Chili's (668) | Restaurants |
| 72 | ▼ 9 | ENOC (668) | Utilities |
| 73 | ▼ 51 | Souq.com (668) | Retail/Shopping |
| 74 | ▲ 23 | ZARA (663) | Retail/Shopping |
| 75 | ▼ 6 | MANGO (663) | Retail/Shopping |
| 76 | ▼ 60 | Boots (662) | Retail/Shopping |
| 77 | ▲ 4 | Al Rajhi Bank (662) | Retail banking |
| 78 | ▼ 8 | The National (661) | Media |
| 79 | ▲ 7 | Nissan (656) | Automotive |
| 80 | ▲ 18 | iTunes (654) | Retail/Shopping |
| 81 | ▼ 53 | Alriyadh (652) | Media |
| 82 | N/A | dr. CAFÉ (651) | Restaurants |
| 83 | ▲ 2 | Aramex (647) | Shipping/Mail |
| 84 | ▲ 24 | Audi (646) | Automotive |

## Laggards

| RANK CHG.* | | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 85 | ▼ 49 | Facebook (641) | Media | 📺 |
| 86 | ▼ 31 | Arab News (639) | Media | 📺 |
| 87 | ▼ 9 | Emirates Islamic Bank (638) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 88 | N/A | Lenovo (634) | Electronics/Appliances | ⏻ |
| 89 | ▼ 32 | DHL (629) | Shipping/Mail | 🛒 |
| 90 | ▼ 42 | Fedex (629) | Shipping/Mail | 🛒 |
| 91 | ▲ 10 | Gazzaz (629) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 92 | ▼ 52 | Panda (628) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 93 | ▼ 11 | H&M (628) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 94 | ▼ 27 | Orbit Showtime Network (616) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 95 | ▲ 4 | UPS (616) | Shipping/Mail | 🛒 |
| 96 | ▲ 21 | Tawuniya (610) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 97 | ▼ 72 | Marks & Spencer (608) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 98 | ▼ 5 | Marriott (608) | Travel | ✈ |
| 99 | N/A | Al Tayyar (603) | Travel | ✈ |
| 100 | ▼ 42 | LinkedIn (601) | Media | 📺 |
| 101 | ▼ 28 | Neuron (601) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 102 | ▼ 7 | Amazon (597) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 103 | ▼ 19 | Abu Dhabi National Insurance (592) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 104 | ▲ 5 | HSBC (590) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 105 | ▲ 6 | Saudi Post (588) | Shipping/Mail | 🛒 |
| 106 | N/A | Medgulf (584) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 107 | ▼ 33 | Avis (582) | Travel | ✈ |
| 108 | ▼ 40 | Alinma Bank (575) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 109 | ▲ 11 | Budget (575) | Travel | ✈ |
| 110 | ▼ 78 | NEXT (574) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 111 | ▼ 31 | NCB (567) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 112 | ▼ 20 | Saudi Airlines (557) | Travel | ✈ |
| 113 | ▼ 93 | nasair (548) | Travel | ✈ |
| 114 | ▼ 63 | Bupa (529) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 115 | ▲ 4 | Thrifty (524) | Travel | ✈ |
| 116 | ▼ 9 | Hertz (514) | Travel | ✈ |
| 117 | ▼ 12 | Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts (511) | Travel | ✈ |
| 118 | N/A | Hanco (505) | Travel | ✈ |
| 119 | ▼ 4 | AXA (490) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 120 | ▲ 1 | Oman Insurance Co (485) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 121 | ▼ 80 | Daman (464) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 122 | ▲ 2 | SALAMA Islamic Arab Insurance Company (409) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 123 | ▼ 7 | Massimo Dutti (376) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 124 | ▼ 1 | Groupon (323) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 125 | ▼ 3 | Allianz (234) | General insurance | ☂ |

## Middle East industry ranking

| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Internet search | 950 |
| 2 | Electronics | 789 |
| 3 | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 749 |
| 4 | Appliances | 733 |
| 5 | Restaurants | 707 |
| 6 | Retail/Grocery | 654 |
| 7 | Travel/Air | 598 |
| 8 | Telecommunications/Cell phone service providers | 590 |
| 9 | Retail/General (mega/department store) | 581 |
| 10 | Social media | 555 |
| 11 | Retail/Fashion; clothes | 537 |
| 12 | Fitness | 526 |
| 13 | Travel/Booking | 515 |
| 14 | Travel/Hotels | 505 |
| 15 | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 500 |
| 16 | Internet retail | 460 |
| 17 | Automotive | 445 |
| 18 | Travel/Train | 428 |
| 19 | Utilities | 420 |
| 20 | Banks/Retail | 413 |
| 21 | Telecommunications/Cable providers | 409 |
| 22 | Health insurance | 404 |
| 23 | Travel/Car rental | 375 |
| 24 | Shipping/Mail | 361 |
| 25 | General insurance | 240 |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# Middle East
## The Simplicity Premium

**The Simplicity Premium can increase
profits across industries**

Depending on the industry, up to 57% of people are willing to pay
more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are
willing to pay varies by industry but is significant.

For simpler experiences, people would pay:

| up to **4.5%** | **4.6**-**5.0%** | **5.1**-**6.0%** | **6.1%** and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Travel/Booking | Utilities | Automotive | Retail/Grocery |
| Shipping/Mail | Travel/Air | Restaurants | Retail/Fashion; clothes |
| | Retail/Health and beauty | Retail/General | Travel/Train |
| | Banks/Retail | Fitness | Health insurance |
| | Internet search | Telecom/Cable providers | Electronics |
| | General insurance | Appliances | |
| | | Telecoms/Cell phone | |
| | | Media | |
| | | Travel/Hotels | |
| | | Social media | |
| | | Travel/Car rental | |
| | | Internet retail | |
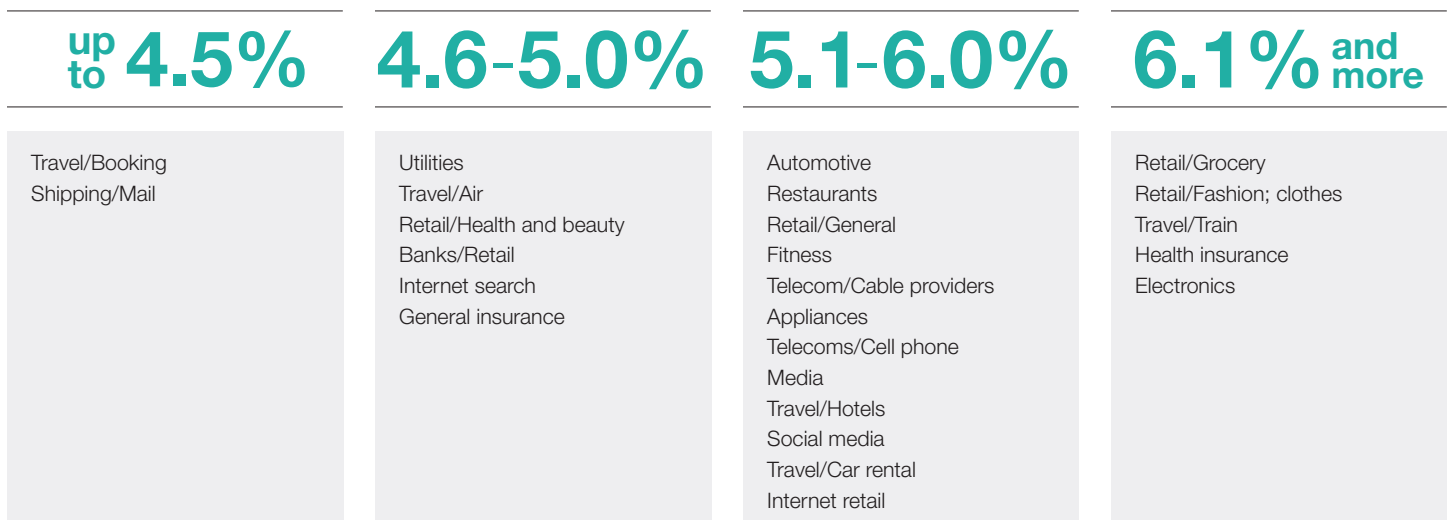
# Simplicity spotlight
## Work life

*Achieving work/life balance* is more complex than
*getting a pay increase* for the most senior employees.

● Getting a pay increase    ● Achieving work-life balance

|  | COMPLEX | | | | SIMPLE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chairman/Board Member | | ● | | ● | |
| Partner/Principal/Business Owner | | | | ● | ● |
| Executive Leadership/C-Level | | ● | | ● | |
| Practitioner/Professional (e.g., Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer) | ● | | | ● | |
| Senior Management (e.g., SVP, VP) | ● | | | ● | |
| Mid-Level Managerial | | ● | | | ● |
| Mid-Level Non-Managerial | ● | | | ● | |
| Entry Level Employee | | ● | | ● | |
| Administrative/Clerical/Hourly Employee | | ● | | | ● |
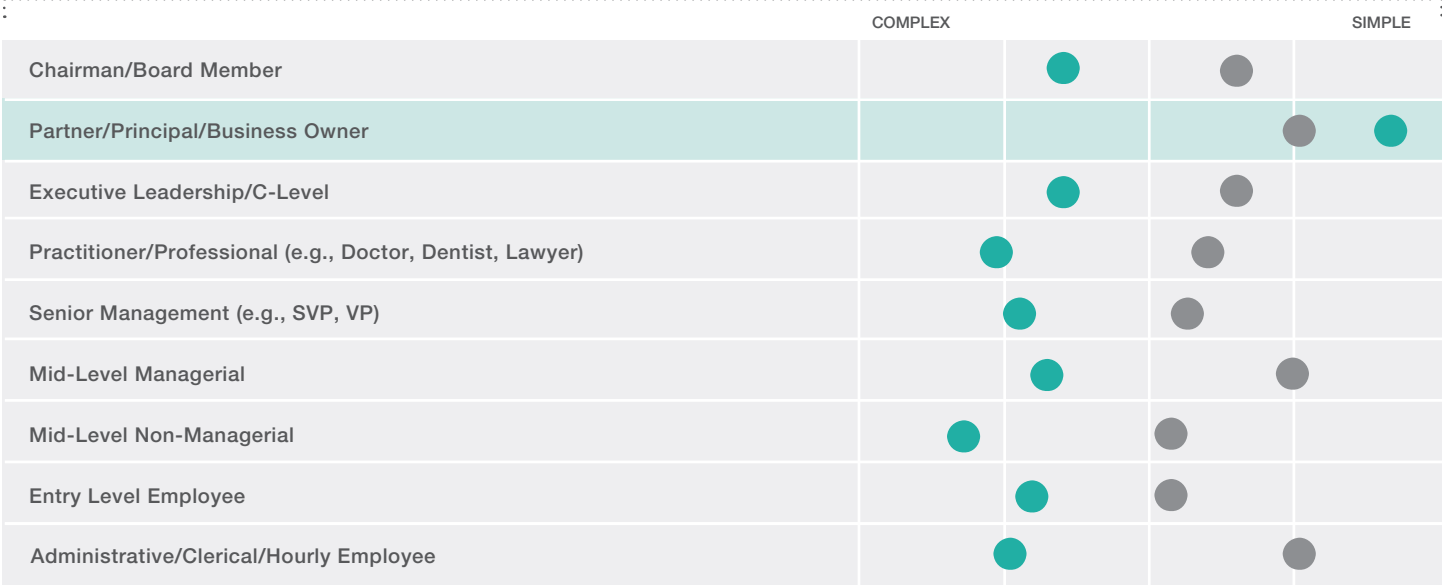
People in the Middle East who work for a global company
consider their lives as simpler than those at a national
company. Everywhere else in the world, people working at a
global company consider their lives to be far more complex.

COMPLEX SCORE                                           SIMPLE SCORE

**Rest of the world**

Global company — 5.67

Local company — 6.32    National company — 6.46

**Middle East**

National company — 6.17

Global company — 6.45    Local company — 6.53
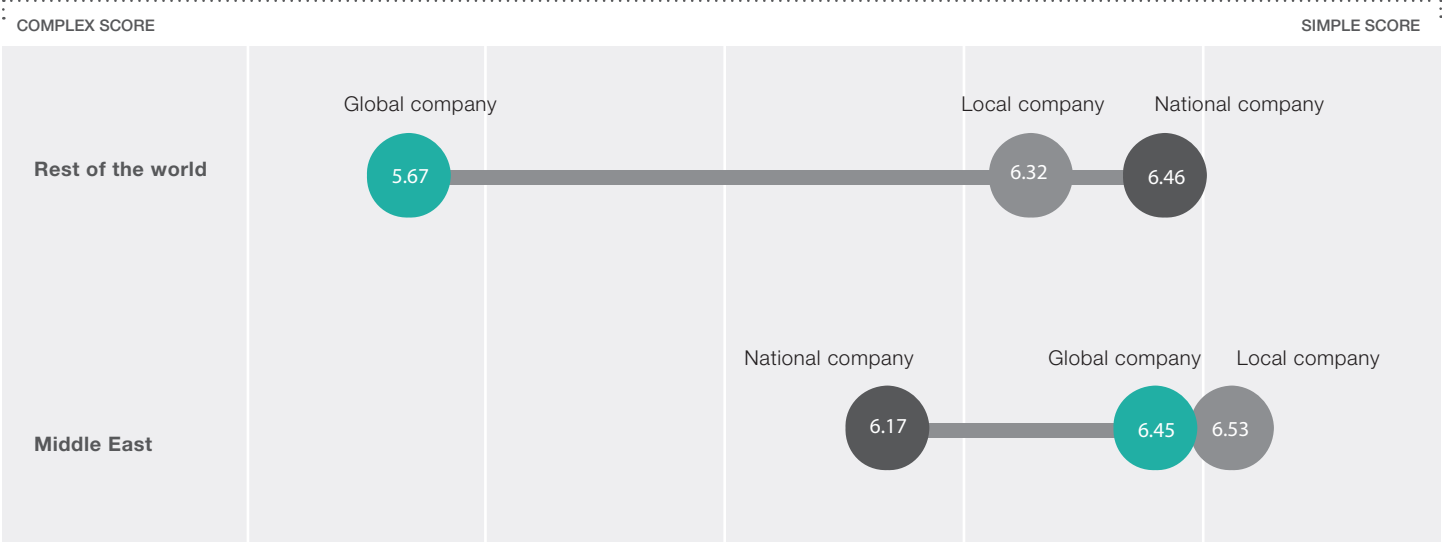
# Middle East
## Brand and industry focus

**INTERNET RETAIL**

### Why more people aren't meeting at the Souq.com

Consumers in the Middle East prefer shopping malls and retail stores for social and entertainment escapes that fall within accepted social and religious norms. They also prefer to look, touch and feel a product before buying. While shoppers may increasingly go online to learn about product features or buyers' opinions, the region lacks the professional, end-to-end experience that online customers in other markets have come to expect—on-time delivery, availability of stock and transparent processing. It comes as no surprise that the Internet retail industry finishes in the bottom half of the pack, coming in at #16 in a field of 25. Until a seamless online experience becomes the norm, the in-store brand experience remains essential to winning shoppers' loyalty.

Souq.com, last year's simplest Internet retail brand, is failing to deliver a simple, satisfying shopping experience, dropping 51 spots to #73 in the Middle East Simplicity Index. It has earned a reputation for delayed deliveries and unanswered customer complaints. Respondents criticize the company for its unclear shipping policies and a lack of confidence in the quality of products. One dissatisfied respondent described the brand's problems: "The act of ordering was very complex and [Souq.com was] not very trustworthy." Respondents also feel that the site is not as easy to use as competitor eBay and has too many products on sale.

**ELECTRONICS**

### A fresh market for BlackBerry

While BlackBerry caters to the business professional crowd, in the Middle East its phones are marketed as social devices. This strategy appears to have paid off: With increased awareness and the perception that BlackBerry provides a simpler product, the brand earned a #5 finish in this year's Middle East Simplicity Index. Respondents consistently cite BlackBerry's ease of use and the ability to connect using BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) in support of its top 5 ranking.

**CELL PHONE SERVICE AND CABLE PROVIDERS**

### Clearer branding signals from the signal carrier

The Middle East telecom industry is still a developing story within the larger economy. The shift from monopolies to a multi-operator market is opening the doors for increased competition. And those companies offering targeted communications are differentiating themselves and building loyalty among consumers.

Etisalat, a Middle Eastern telecom brand, is on the rise this year, moving up 62 spots to #13 in the Middle East Simplicity Index. With a new chairman and new strategy, the brand has gained a solid reputation across the region, especially among expats. Etisalat also recently launched new services—such as 4G in the United Arab Emirates—and benefited from a lengthy promotion that offered free data roaming among Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

**TRAVEL/AIR**

## No air for nasair

In Saudi Arabia, low-fare airline nasair has spiraled down 93 spots to #113 in the Middle East Simplicity Index, following in the footsteps of its European counterpart Ryanair, 2012's most complex global brand. The drop is attributed to nasair's decision to adopt a new fare system and new rules about changing reservations and checked luggage, leading to confusion among customers. In addition, nasair changed its promotional strategy and has been offering fewer low-cost fares.

**RETAIL/GENERAL (MEGA/DEPARTMENT STORE)**

## At the bottom-end of the supply chain, a frustrated customer

Despite the general retail industry's relatively high ranking (#9 out of 25), the region's brick-and-mortar stores often suffer from inconsistent service from sales staff and limited stock. Service training programs in brand and experience are the exception rather than the norm. In addition, third parties manage many of the international brands in the region, leading to frustrating and unpredictable experiences between stores in Riyadh, Dubai and around the world. A notable example is #97 Marks & Spencer (down 72 spots), which, after years of expansion in the region, is failing to provide a consistent retail experience for customers. The company has been unable to deliver the spacious, expansive and welcoming environment found in its other locations worldwide.

**TRAVEL/TRAIN**

## Rail progress

The Saudi government has invested in its railway system, adding new trains, stations and services including online booking. That's good news for Saudi Railways, which jumped 77 spots to #35 in this year's Middle East Simplicity Index. The Saudi Railways's simplicity score underscores the convenience of train travel and lower prices especially when compared to air travel.

# India

# India
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ▲ 1 | Nokia *(971)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 2 | ▲ 2 | Yahoo! *(963)* | *Media* | |
| 3 | ▲ 5 | Big Bazaar *(917)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 4 | ▲ 3 | Facebook *(915)* | *Media* | |
| 5 | ▼ 2 | Samsung *(915)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 6 | ▲ 5 | Sony *(909)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 7 | ▲ 21 | MakeMyTrip *(903)* | *Travel* | |
| 8 | ▼ 3 | Dell *(902)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 9 | ▲ 15 | Tata Sky *(901)* | *Telecom* | |
| 10 | ▼ 9 | Google *(896)* | *Media* | |
| 11 | ▲ 69 | Tata Motors *(893)* | *Automotive* | |
| 12 | ▼ 3 | Pizza Hut *(873)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 13 | ▲ 24 | Maruti Suzuki *(863)* | *Automotive* | |
| 14 | ▼ 8 | Tata DoCoMo *(858)* | *Telecom* | |
| 15 | 0 | McDonald's *(852)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 16 | ▼ 6 | Vodafone *(852)* | *Telecom* | |
| 17 | ▲ 25 | Shoppers Stop *(849)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 18 | ▲ 3 | HP *(847)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 19 | ▲ 4 | YouTube *(847)* | *Media* | |
| 20 | ▲ 12 | State Bank of India *(836)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 21 | ▲ 15 | Levi's *(835)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 22 | ▼ 4 | Airtel *(834)* | *Telecom* | |
| 23 | ▲ 27 | Philips *(825)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 24 | ▲ 16 | Hero Honda *(822)* | *Automotive* | |
| 25 | ▲ 50 | Volkswagen *(820)* | *Automotive* | |
| 26 | ▲ 47 | Croma *(819)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 27 | ▲ 47 | MSN *(818)* | *Media* | |
| 28 | ▼ 12 | Microsoft *(817)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 29 | ▲ 26 | eBay *(814)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 30 | ▲ 13 | Godrej *(811)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 31 | ▲ 35 | Peter England *(811)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 32 | ▲ 47 | Snapdeal.com *(810)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 33 | ▲ 16 | Lakme *(809)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 34 | ▲ 43 | Panasonic *(803)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 35 | ▲ 23 | Times Group *(793)* | *Media* | |
| 36 | ▲ 72 | Worldwide Communication India *(790)* | *Telecom* | |
| 37 | ▼ 25 | Canon *(790)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 38 | ▲ 14 | Lee *(785)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 39 | ▲ 33 | BSNL *(785)* | *Telecom* | |
| 40 | ▲ 70 | Viveks *(784)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 41 | ▲ 16 | Cleartrip *(783)* | *Travel* | |
| 42 | ▲ 47 | Himalaya Healthcare *(784)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 43 | ▼ 29 | Videocon *(783)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 44 | ▼ 18 | Adidas *(782)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 45 | ▼ 6 | Lifestyle *(781)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 46 | ▼ 24 | Reebok *(780)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 47 | ▲ 35 | Reliance Grocery *(779)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 48 | ▲ 15 | Expedia *(779)* | *Travel* | |
| 49 | ▲ 27 | FedEx *(776)* | *Shipping/Mail* | |
| 50 | ▼ 37 | LG *(776)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 51 | ▲ 11 | Nike *(776)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 52 | ▼ 4 | Megamart *(775)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 53 | ▼ 34 | Haldiram *(775)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 54 | N/A | Skype *(774)* | *Telecom* | |
| 55 | ▲ 9 | Yatra *(770)* | *Travel* | |
| 56 | ▼ 27 | Apple *(770)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 57 | ▼ 24 | Café Coffee Day *(765)* | *Restaurants* | |
| 58 | ▼ 5 | Reliance Mobile *(763)* | *Telecom* | |
| 59 | ▲ 24 | ITC *(763)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 60 | ▼ 15 | Pantaloons *(763)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 61 | ▼ 27 | TVS Motors *(760)* | *Automotive* | |
| 62 | ▼ 11 | Onida *(752)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 63 | ▼ 32 | BlackBerry *(747)* | *Electronics/Appliances* | |
| 64 | ▲ 21 | Jet Airways *(747)* | *Travel* | |
| 65 | ▲ 3 | HDFC Bank *(747)* | *Retail banking* | |
| 66 | ▲ 21 | SoSasta *(738)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 67 | ▼ 37 | Bata *(735)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 68 | ▼ 14 | Westside *(734)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |
| 69 | ▲ 27 | Toyota *(732)* | *Automotive* | |
| 70 | ▼ 14 | Hyatt *(730)* | *Travel* | |
| 71 | ▼ 1 | Taj *(723)* | *Travel* | |
| 72 | ▲ 21 | Ford *(721)* | *Automotive* | |
| 73 | ▼ 38 | The Hindu *(716)* | *Media* | |
| 74 | ▲ 14 | Spencers *(714)* | *Retail/Shopping* | |

## Laggards

| RANK CHG.* | | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 75 | ▼ 48 | **Bank of India** (710) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 76 | ▼ 29 | **Orkut** (705) | Media | ⬛ |
| 77 | ▼ 60 | **DNA** (701) | Media | ⬛ |
| 78 | ▲ 14 | **LIC** (699) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 79 | ▲ 20 | **Godrej Nature's Basket** (699) | Retail/Shopping | 🛒 |
| 80 | ▼ 42 | **Domino's** (699) | Restaurants | 🍴 |
| 81 | 0 | **DHL** (694) | Shipping/Mail | 📮 |
| 82 | ▼ 62 | **Tata Indicom** (691) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 83 | ▲ 24 | **MINT** (684) | Media | ⬛ |
| 84 | ▼ 38 | **ICICI Bank** (683) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 85 | ▲ 12 | **Virgin Mobile** (678) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 86 | ▼ 27 | **Holiday Inn** (673) | Travel | ✈ |
| 87 | ▼ 22 | **LinkedIn** (669) | Media | ⬛ |
| 88 | ▲ 18 | **Birla Sun Life** (669) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 89 | ▼ 3 | **Leela** (668) | Travel | ✈ |
| 90 | ▼ 49 | **Kingfisher** (667) | Travel | ✈ |
| 91 | ▲ 12 | **Max India** (665) | Health insurance | ✚ |
| 92 | ▲ 3 | **Travelocity** (658) | Travel | ✈ |
| 93 | ▼ 22 | **T24 Mobile** (658) | Telecom | 📡 |
| 94 | ▼ 27 | **Bajaj Auto** (655) | Automotive | 🚗 |
| 95 | ▲ 7 | **Marriott** (655) | Travel | ✈ |
| 96 | ▼ 12 | **Oberoi** (655) | Travel | ✈ |
| 97 | ▼ 19 | **Travelguru** (649) | Travel | ✈ |
| 98 | ▼ 29 | **Barista** (649) | Restaurants | 🍴 |
| 99 | ▼ 39 | **Haier** (644) | Electronics/Appliances | ⏻ |
| 100 | ▼ 39 | **HSBC** (631) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 101 | ▼ 3 | **Air India** (624) | Travel | ✈ |
| 102 | ▼ 11 | **Standard Chartered** (623) | Retail banking | 🏛 |
| 103 | ▼ 9 | **UPS** (622) | Shipping/Mail | 📮 |
| 104 | ▼ 60 | **TravelChaCha** (599) | Travel | ✈ |
| 105 | ▼ 5 | **Bajaj Allianz** (599) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 106 | ▼ 2 | **ICICI Prudential** (590) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 107 | ▲ 5 | **Hertz** (577) | Travel | ✈ |
| 108 | ▲ 1 | **The Oriental Insurance Company** (572) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 109 | ▼ 8 | **Tata AIG General Insurance** (518) | General insurance | ☂ |
| 110 | ▼ 5 | **Peugeot** (451) | Automotive | 🚗 |
| 111 | 0 | **IFFCO Tokio General Insurance** (432) | General insurance | ☂ |

## India industry ranking

| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Internet search** | 950 |
| 2 | **Electronics** | 758 |
| 3 | **Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile)** | 721 |
| 4 | **Telecommunications/Cell phone service providers** | 693 |
| 5 | **Appliances** | 674 |
| 6 | **Retail/General (mega/department store)** | 670 |
| 7 | **Retail/Grocery** | 642 |
| 8 | **Retail/Fashion; clothes** | 613 |
| 9 | **Travel/Booking** | 610 |
| 10 | **Internet retail** | 600 |
| 11 | **Banks/Retail** | 599 |
| 12 | **Restaurants** | 591 |
| 13 | **Telecommunications/Cable providers** | 554 |
| 14 | **Utilities** | 552 |
| 15 | **Automotive** | 552 |
| 16 | **Travel/Air** | 548 |
| 17 | **Travel/Hotels** | 538 |
| 18 | **Social media** | 523 |
| 19 | **Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore** | 487 |
| 20 | **Travel/Train** | 478 |
| 21 | **Fitness** | 465 |
| 22 | **Travel/Car rental** | 413 |
| 23 | **Shipping/Mail** | 404 |
| 24 | **Health insurance** | 353 |
| 25 | **General insurance** | 240 |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# India
## The Simplicity Premium

### The Simplicity Premium can increase profits across industries

Depending on the industry, up to 63% of people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant.

For simpler experiences, people would pay:

| up to **6.5%** | **6.6-6.9%** | **7.0-7.5%** | **7.6%** and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Travel/Air | Restaurants | Internet search | Electronics |
| Internet retail | Media | Fitness | Retail/Grocery |
| Telecom/Cable providers | Travel/Train | Retail/General | Retail/Fashion; clothes |
| Telecom/Cell phone | Health insurance | Automotive | |
| General insurance | Retail/Health and beauty | Banks/Retail | |
| Utilities | Social media | | |
| Travel/Car rental | | | |
| Travel/Booking | | | |
| Appliances | | | |
| Travel/Hotels | | | |
| Shipping/Mail | | | |

# Simplicity spotlight
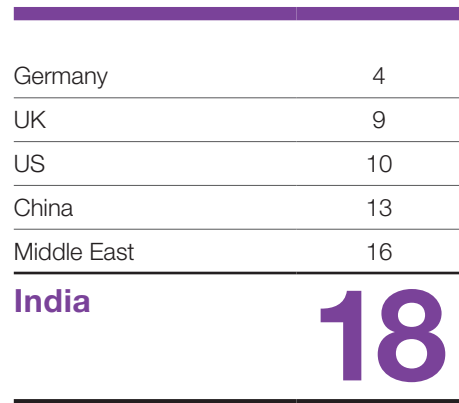## Work life

People in India ranked these work aspects as more
complex than any other country.

### Getting along with peers

| US | 1 |
|---|---|
| UK | 1 |
| Germany | 1 |
| China | 1 |
| Middle East | 2 |
| **India** | **8** |

### Working with someone outside of my core team

| Germany | 4 |
|---|---|
| UK | 9 |
| US | 10 |
| China | 13 |
| Middle East | 16 |
| **India** | **18** |
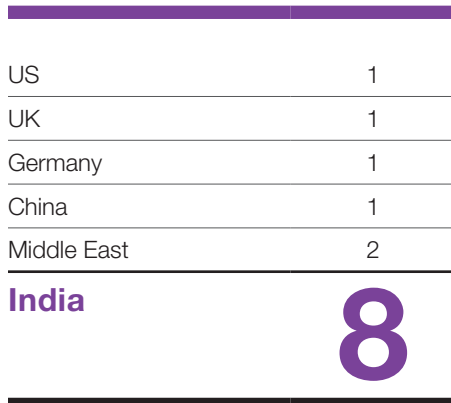
SIMPLE

COMPLEX

People in India felt that being a Chairman/Board Member
was more complex than any other country.

COMPLEX                                                                 SIMPLE

Chairman/
Board Member

India        UK    Germany    China    Middle East    US
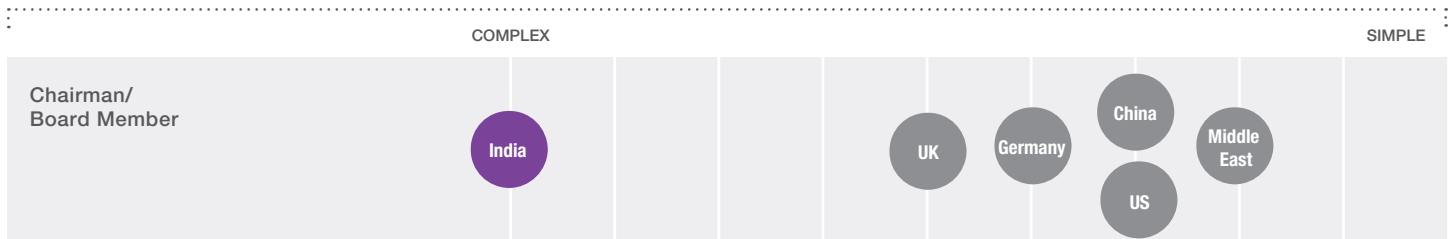
People in India felt that being a Practitioner/Professional
was simpler than any other country.

COMPLEX                                                                 SIMPLE

Practitioner/Professional
(e.g., Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer)

Germany    China    UK    Middle East    US                India
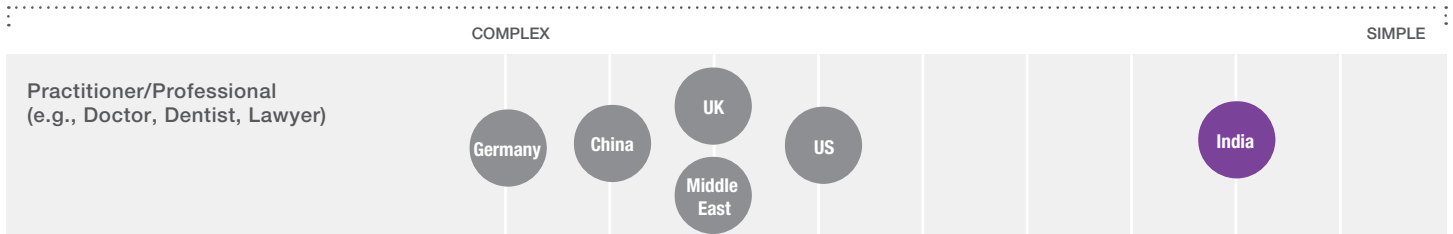
# India
## Brand and industry focus

**RETAIL**

### India is open for e-commerce

The Indian retail market is one of the fastest growing in the world, more than doubling in size from 2008 to 2011. Many analysts believe that it will double again by the end of 2012. What's driving growth? Most notably, India's base of users on the Internet and mobile platforms is expanding rapidly. At the same time, technology platforms are becoming cheaper and more robust, enabling e-commerce players to stay ahead of the curve with innovative offerings.

A leading e-commerce player is Snapdeal .com, one of India's fastest-growing tech companies, which moves up 47 spots to hit #32 in this year's India Simplicity Index. Founded in 2010, the company is India's version of Groupon, and sells travel packages, consumer goods and restaurant services at a discount. It has become India's No.1-rated e-commerce site and is recognized by respondents for its simple user interface with clear messaging, user-friendly instructions, a fast process and good deals at the lowest prices. Better still, respondents like the site because "it's simple to purchase items" and Snapdeal .com offers a variety of payment options.

Croma, the electronics megastore, also rode the e-commerce wave, launching its online retail platform earlier this year and rising up 47 spots to #26. The company offers more than 6,000 products in a variety of categories—from phones and computers to home and kitchen appliances—and provides free delivery within seven days of purchase. Respondents praised Croma for "taking care of customer needs" by offering a wide range of products and for "bringing the majority of international brands under one roof."

Viveks—"The Unlimited Shop"—soars to #40, up 70 spots this year. Launched as a traditional offline retailer more than 30 years ago, Viveks is now a major source for electronics on- and offline. Viveks's website boasts that the company is "more trusted than the brands it sells," and respondents praise the company for offering the best service, attractive advertising and clear pricing.

**TRAVEL/AIR**

### Great news if you love airports

As deregulation continues in the Indian airline industry (#16 out of 25), brands struggle to achieve profitability amidst extreme competition, government interference, high fuel prices, and poor infrastructure and management. Kingfisher Airlines has had its share of woes this past year. Nearly bankrupt and plagued by pilot strikes, the airline skids 49 spots this year to land at #90. Customers have not been immune to the troubles, with respondents describing the airline as irregular and "a mess" with poor service and questionable credibility.

**RETAIL BANKING**

## Bank of India needs to make itself at home

Given that India's billion-plus people and economy have emerged from the global financial crisis relatively unscathed, it's surprising that the Mumbai-based Bank of India slipped to #75 on this year's India Simplicity Index, down 48 spots.

Since only 40% of India's population is banked, there's a huge domestic opportunity for growth, yet Bank of India has focused its efforts on expanding overseas. Respondents point out that Bank of India should concentrate on improving customer service in its home market and strengthening its local branch network to support the country's rapid economic growth.

Respondents find Bank of India's technology lacking on two important fronts: its complex website's inability to support online transactions and the need for more mobile banking technology. Today, there are approximately 400 million cell phone users in India with bank accounts, so Bank of India has a huge opportunity to build a loyal customer base by delivering a cohesive and engaging mobile banking experience.

**AUTOMOTIVE**

## Tata Motors passes the competition

India's leading automaker jumps nearly 70 spots, rolling in at #11 in the India Simplicity Index and just missing this year's top 10. Tata Motors has grown into one of the biggest players in the global automobile industry as well as a respected regional competitor. Capitalizing on India's emerging automotive market, Tata Motors has

increased sales of its affordable Nano and, in the past year, unveiled a line of new generation vehicles that showcased its technological capabilities.

Volkswagen jumps 50 spots to park at #25 this year. Considering how rapidly the company has increased market share in India (from virtually no share in 2009 to nearly 4% of the market), the increased rank is not surprising. VW's reputation is formed by a combination of its premium positioning, international cache and an added dose of local, in-country visibility through memorable advertising. Time will tell if the company is successful in extending its reach across India and producing the smaller, less expensive vehicles the market favors.

# China

# China
## Brand Simplicity Index and industry ranking

### Leaders

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ▲ 7 | IKEA (973) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 2 | ▼ 1 | Baidu (967) | Media | |
| 3 | ▲ 6 | Home Inns (931) | Travel | |
| 4 | N/A | Xiaomi (928) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 5 | ▲ 6 | 7-Days Inn (906) | Travel | |
| 6 | ▲ 11 | Google (903) | Media | |
| 7 | 0 | BlackBerry (900) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 8 | ▲ 20 | Midea (900) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 9 | ▼ 6 | Apple (898) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 10 | ▲ 4 | Taobao (894) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 11 | ▲ 20 | Tencent (891) | Media | |
| 12 | ▲ 12 | 7-Eleven (888) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 13 | ▲ 37 | China Auto Rental (886) | Travel | |
| 14 | ▲ 54 | S.F. Express (878) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 15 | ▼ 3 | Southern Weekend (876) | Media | |
| 16 | ▲ 32 | Citibank (876) | Retail banking | |
| 17 | ▲ 89 | HSBC (876) | Retail banking | |
| 18 | ▲ 4 | HP (872) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 19 | ▲ 18 | OPPO (868) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 20 | ▲ 34 | Sasa (867) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 21 | ▲ 26 | YOUKU (865) | Media | |
| 22 | ▲ 22 | Nike (864) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 23 | ▲ 58 | Mannings (861) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 24 | ▲ 62 | ZARA (861) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 25 | ▲ 77 | Motel 168 (859) | Travel | |
| 26 | ▲ 41 | MangoCity (858) | Travel | |
| 27 | ▲ 47 | Geely (855) | Automotive | |
| 28 | ▼ 23 | Nokia (855) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 29 | ▲ 28 | Sina Weibo (854) | Media | |
| 30 | ▼ 17 | Qunar (852) | Travel | |
| 31 | ▼ 4 | Ctrip (851) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 32 | ▲ 27 | UPS (851) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 33 | ▼ 23 | Vancl (851) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 34 | ▲ 5 | DHL (850) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 35 | ▼ 2 | Lenovo (849) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 36 | ▲ 33 | Toyota (845) | Automotive | |
| 37 | ▲ 61 | Zkungfu (842) | Restaurants | |
| 38 | ▲ 3 | Honda (838) | Automotive | |
| 39 | N/A | BMW (835) | Automotive | |
| 40 | ▲ 25 | Adidas (833) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 41 | ▲ 72 | China Merchants Bank (833) | Retail banking | |
| 42 | ▲ 13 | Konka (832) | Electronics/Appliances | |

### Middle-of-the-pack

| | RANK CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43 | ▼ 17 | Gree (832) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 44 | ▲ 68 | Hexie Hao (831) | Travel | |
| 45 | ▼ 41 | 360buy (829) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 46 | ▼ 17 | Haier (826) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 47 | ▲ 11 | Hilton (825) | Travel | |
| 48 | ▲ 22 | ChangHong (823) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 49 | ▲ 15 | RT Mart (821) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 50 | ▲ 29 | Sephora (821) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 51 | ▲ 15 | 361 Degrees (820) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 52 | ▼ 29 | Sony (817) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 53 | ▲ 23 | People's Daily (817) | Media | |
| 54 | ▼ 22 | QQ (816) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 55 | ▼ 53 | eHi Car Service (815) | Travel | |
| 56 | N/A | Suning (815) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 57 | ▼ 12 | KFC (813) | Restaurants | |
| 58 | ▼ 20 | UNIQLO (812) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 59 | ▼ 3 | H&M (812) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 60 | N/A | Skype (812) | Telecom | |
| 61 | ▲ 11 | Baleno (811) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 62 | ▼ 16 | eLong (810) | Travel | |
| 63 | ▼ 48 | Lashou (807) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 64 | ▼ 46 | McDonald's (807) | Restaurants | |
| 65 | ▲ 8 | ANTA (806) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 66 | ▲ 28 | HI-24 (806) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 67 | ▼ 48 | Starbucks (803) | Restaurants | |
| 68 | ▼ 43 | Philips (800) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 69 | ▼ 63 | HTC (797) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 70 | ▲ 17 | Hisense (797) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 71 | ▲ 38 | China Southwest Airlines (796) | Travel | |
| 72 | ▲ 24 | Chery QQ (796) | Automotive | |
| 73 | ▼ 12 | Metersbonwe (795) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 74 | ▼ 38 | Li-Ning (795) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 75 | ▲ 10 | Yonghe Dawang (794) | Restaurants | |
| 76 | ▼ 25 | Tudou (793) | Media | |
| 77 | ▲ 7 | Sohu (792) | Media | |
| 78 | ▼ 44 | Volkswagen (792) | Automotive | |
| 79 | ▲ 3 | Giordano (791) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 80 | ▼ 37 | Douban (791) | Media | |
| 81 | ▲ 11 | C&A (790) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 82 | ▼ 4 | Marriott (789) | Travel | |
| 83 | ▼ 20 | Shijihualian (789) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 84 | ▲ 11 | Air China (784) | Travel | |

## Laggards

| RANK | CHG.* | BRAND (SCORE) | INDUSTRY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 85 | ▲ 14 | CAR/Zuche.com (778) | Travel | |
| 86 | ▼ 15 | HaiDiLaoHuoGuo (778) | Restaurants | |
| 87 | ▲ 6 | Watson's (778) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 88 | ▼ 5 | China Unicom (776) | Telecom | |
| 89 | ▲ 19 | China International Travel Service (773) | Travel | |
| 90 | ▲ 14 | FAW HongQi (772) | Automotive | |
| 91 | ▼ 51 | Samsung (771) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 92 | N/A | GOME (769) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 93 | ▼ 13 | Shanghai Airlines (769) | Travel | |
| 94 | ▼ 3 | China Southern Airlines (763) | Travel | |
| 95 | ▼ 75 | PHtv (761) | Media | |
| 96 | ▼ 61 | Kaixin001 (760) | Media | |
| 97 | ▼ 67 | Pizza Hut (760) | Restaurants | |
| 98 | ▼ 82 | Motorola (759) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 99 | ▼ 37 | RenRen (759) | Media | |
| 100 | ▼ 79 | Sina (758) | Media | |
| 101 | ▼ 48 | ZTE (754) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 102 | ▼ 14 | K-Touch (752) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 103 | ▼ 13 | China Eastern Airlines (747) | Travel | |
| 104 | ▲ 7 | Bank of China (746) | Retail banking | |
| 105 | ▼ 28 | Wumart (745) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 106 | N/A | Lafaso (738) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 107 | ▼ 58 | BYD (736) | Automotive | |
| 108 | ▼ 33 | TCL (730) | Electronics/Appliances | |
| 109 | ▼ 12 | China Construction Bank (728) | Retail banking | |
| 110 | ▼ 10 | Carrefour (728) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 111 | ▼ 4 | Tongrentang (727) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 112 | ▼ 23 | Shentong Express (717) | Shipping/Mail | |
| 113 | ▼ 10 | HunanTV (700) | Media | |
| 114 | ▼ 72 | Walmart (698) | Retail/Shopping | |
| 115 | 0 | AIA (688) | General insurance | |
| 116 | ▼ 64 | Qzone (686) | Media | |
| 117 | ▼ 16 | CCTV (683) | Media | |
| 118 | ▼ 13 | ICBC (679) | Retail banking | |
| 119 | ▼ 59 | China Mobile (673) | Telecom | |
| 120 | N/A | South Beauty (658) | Restaurants | |
| 121 | ▼ 4 | China Pacific Insurance (629) | General insurance | |
| 122 | ▼ 12 | Agricultural Bank of China (581) | Retail banking | |
| 123 | ▼ 9 | China Life Insurance (552) | General insurance | |
| 124 | ▼ 8 | Ping An Insurance (505) | General insurance | |
| 125 | ▼ 7 | People's Insurance Company of China (472) | General insurance | |

## China industry ranking

| RANK | INDUSTRY | SCORE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Internet search | 950 |
| 2 | Internet retail | 836 |
| 3 | Electronics | 777 |
| 4 | Travel/Booking | 710 |
| 5 | Media (newspapers, TV, online, mobile) | 707 |
| 6 | Retail/General (mega/department store) | 702 |
| 7 | Appliances | 700 |
| 8 | Telecommunications/Cell phone service providers | 692 |
| 9 | Restaurants | 668 |
| 10 | Social media | 641 |
| 11 | Travel/Hotels | 640 |
| 12 | Telecommunications/Cable providers | 631 |
| 13 | Travel/Air | 618 |
| 14 | Travel/Car rental | 591 |
| 15 | Retail/Grocery | 584 |
| 16 | Travel/Train | 578 |
| 17 | Fitness | 576 |
| 18 | Automotive | 572 |
| 19 | Retail/Fashion; clothes | 558 |
| 20 | Banks/Retail | 504 |
| 21 | Retail/Health and beauty; drugstore | 472 |
| 22 | Shipping/Mail | 464 |
| 23 | Utilities | 376 |
| 24 | Health insurance | 368 |
| 25 | General insurance | 240 |

*Change from previous year; N/A: Not applicable

# China
## The Simplicity Premium

### The Simplicity Premium can increase profits across industries

Depending on the industry, up to 60% of people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. The amount they are willing to pay varies by industry but is significant.

For simpler experiences, people would pay:

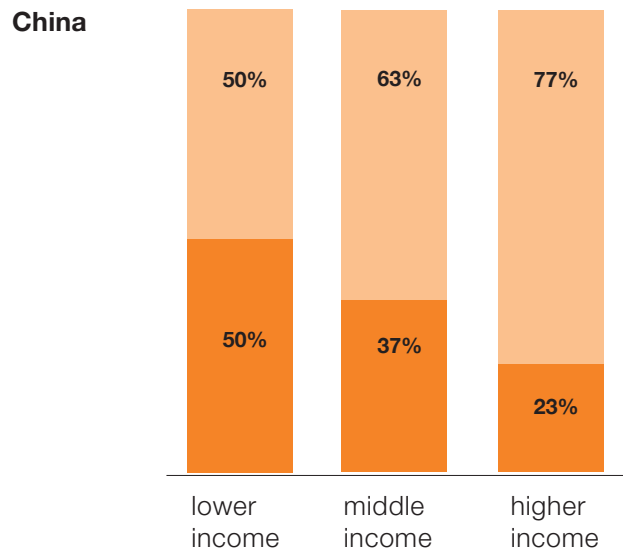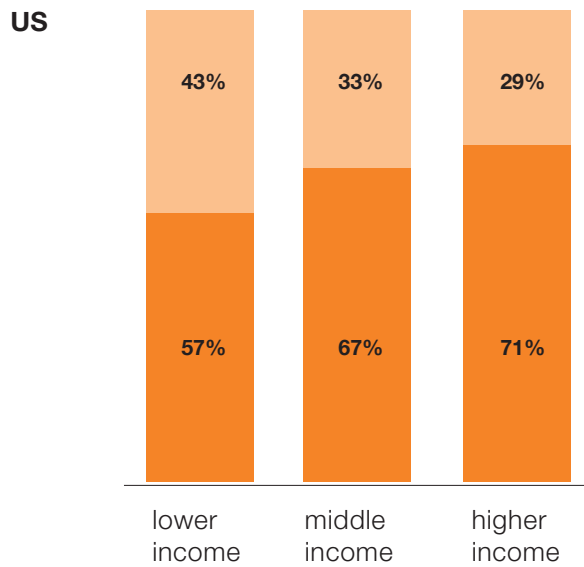| up to 5.5% | 5.6-6.0% | 6.1-6.5% | 6.6% and more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Utilities | Travel/Car rental | Retail/Grocery | Automotive |
| Social media | Travel/Hotels | Retail/Fashion; clothes | Appliances |
| Internet search | Internet retail | Restaurants | |
| Telecom/Cable providers | Travel/Train | Health insurance | |
| Telecom/Cell phone | Retail/Health and beauty | Fitness | |
| Banks/Retail | | Travel/Air | |
| Media | | Electronics | |
| General insurance | | Retail/General | |
| Shipping/Mail | | Travel/Booking | |

# Simplicity spotlight
## Restaurants

**In the US, preference for local restaurants increases with income, while in China, more affluent consumers prefer global chain restaurants.**

Global and national chain restaurant

Local chain and local non-chain restaurant

**US**

| lower income | middle income | higher income |
|---|---|---|
| 43% | 33% | 29% |
| 57% | 67% | 71% |

**China**

| lower income | middle income | higher income |
|---|---|---|
| 50% | 63% | 77% |
| 50% | 37% | 23% |

# China
## Brand and industry focus

**SHIPPING/MAIL**

### S.F. Express knows how to deliver

As the pace of e-commerce accelerates in China, so does S.F. Express, the leader in simplicity in a complex industry that ranks #22 in a field of 25. Despite being more expensive than its competitors, S.F. Express improved 54 spots to #14 on the China Simplicity Index, proving once again that people are willing to pay more for simpler experiences and interactions. Respondents cite S.F. Express as reliable, trusted and providing better service overall with a speedy and guaranteed delivery. Also mentioned is the company's strong focus on the service experience including frequent SMS alerts of package status and simple, to-the-point advertising. The quick rise of this delivery brand emphasizes the importance of focusing on the end-to-end customer experience as a broader opportunity beyond just the e-commerce purchase.

**NEWS MEDIA**

### The great wall of complexity

While Sina Weibo's social media business vaults to a #29 ranking, the parent company, Sina, drops to #100, down 79 spots on the China Simplicity Index. Respondents complain about the complexity of the website, saying the "design is not simple and there are too many details that need to be set up." Sina inundates the reader with too much information and a complex layout that discourages visitors from exploring all the services it has to offer.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

### China is connecting from within, and it's big business

Sina Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter, is the leading social media brand, jumping 28 spots to #29 in this year's China Simplicity Index. Fueled by rapid growth in users, Sina Weibo is known as a convenient and trendy way to communicate and socialize with friends. Beyond its social networking capabilities, the company's news sharing platform gives people even more reasons to spend time on the site. With Sina Weibo providing the simple, clear and straightforward experiences that users crave, there's not much reason to consider their competitors.

Tencent QQ (Qzone), the entertainment-driven social network, fell to #116 (down 64 spots) at a time when social media is growing at a rapid rate. While the company attempts to evolve its offerings through product innovation, it has overlooked that users are seeking a simpler and more straightforward experience. Qzone loses simplicity points for its unclear navigation and for making "updates too often." Users also complain about an unnecessary "variety of functions."

Kaixin001 (#96), the Chinese version of Facebook, was the leading social media brand on last year's China Simplicity Index and a particular favorite of students, who valued the integrated social functions and online games. But this year the brand has lost market share as competitors launch new, innovative services that relegate Kaixin to yesterday's trend. Today, as Sina Weibo attracts users with its convenience and speed, Kaixin001 is failing to clearly differentiate the social and entertainment functions it offers.

**RETAIL BANKING**

## Banking on complexity

Consumers have low expectations of banks—and with poor customer service, a lack of transparency and too much paperwork, who can blame them? China is no exception and its retail banking sector ranked at #20 out of 25 industries on the China Simplicity Index.

In China, doing business with foreign banks is associated with a higher level of social status. While 30% of respondents indicate that global banks are simplest to interact with, overall these brands represent only a small portion of market share. This forces consumers to choose between location and convenience or better, more professional service.

Benefiting from government policies that are becoming more favorable toward foreign banks that open additional branches and offer comprehensive offerings, HSBC soared to #17 (up 89 spots). HSBC's rise in the rankings is also a result of its decision to localize its advertising and messaging to appeal to Chinese consumers.

The lone bright spot for national Chinese banks is China Merchants Bank, which shot up 72 spots to land at #41. China Merchants Bank has shaken up the national banking sector by offering better and more consumer-oriented products and services. Not only do consumers believe that its processes are simpler and more effective, but they are also rewarded through loyalty programs offered in partnership with local department stores, restaurants and entertainment venues. Respondents speak highly of its easy-to-understand finance and investment products and excellent credit card service.

With knowledge of local markets and strength in distribution, Chinese national banks have a major advantage over foreign banks. Focusing efforts on improving the overall experience can provide a powerful opportunity to attract new customers and expand market share and loyalty.

**GENERAL INSURANCE**

## Insuring complexity

Once again, the inherent complexity of the insurance industry came in dead last at #25. Although AIA, a global insurance brand, beat out domestic Chinese providers to achieve the highest insurance position (#115), AIA remains laggard in the pursuit of simplicity.

AIA has achieved some success by differentiating itself through high-quality advertising campaigns and consistent communication. Respondents commended AIA for its straightforward advertising and praised the AIA experience as more convenient and efficient, while others docked the insurer for having unclear terms. AIA—and the industry as a whole—have much work ahead to create a more compelling customer experience to drive transparency and simplicity.

**RESTAURANTS**

## A balanced diet: safety and simplicity

China is inundated with negative stories concerning food safety, so when it comes to choosing a restaurant brand, it's no surprise that what customers crave is simple—integrity and quality.

Fast-food brands topped the restaurant category showing that, in addition to taste, consumers appreciate and value an easy-to-understand food menu, simple promotions and efficient service. Nevertheless, when it comes to eating out, food quality is an important factor in a simple and enjoyable experience. Case in point: domestic brand Zkungfu (#37) bettered both KFC (#57) and McDonald's (#64) for its simple yet healthy food.

As a cautionary tale, restaurants should be aware that "more" communication is no substitute for addressing every touchpoint of the brand experience. South Beauty (#120) was viewed by one respondent as "communicating too much but doing too little," and falling far behind competitors.
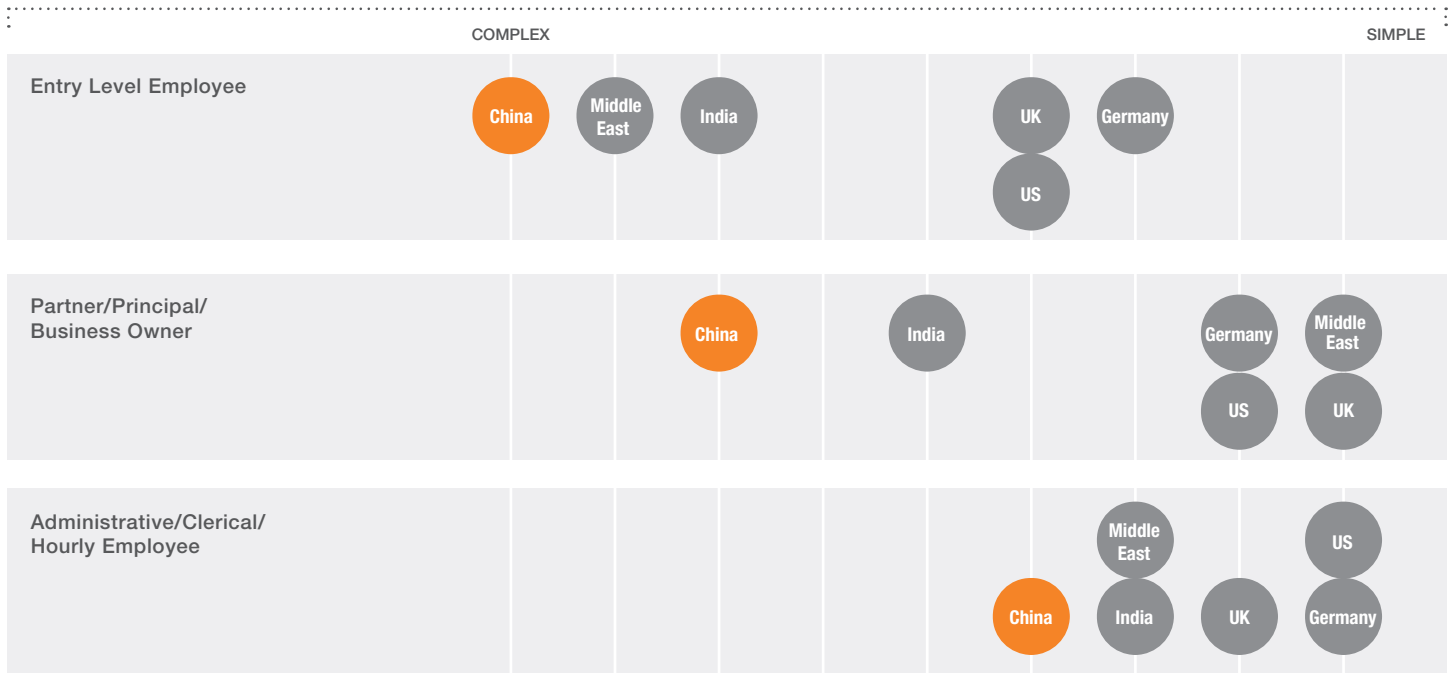
**ELECTRONICS**

## The phone that listens to its customers

Xiaomi is a rising star today in China's mobile industry, rocketing to the #4 spot in its debut on the China Simplicity Index. What makes Xiaomi stand out among competitors in a congested market? Respondents point to easy-to-use products and the brand's innovative and understandable marketing and business strategies. In addition, Xiaomi is lauded for its ability to create straightforward and uncomplicated phones while constantly making improvements based on customer feedback. Xiaomi proves once again that low price is only part of the story.

# Simplicity spotlight
## Work life

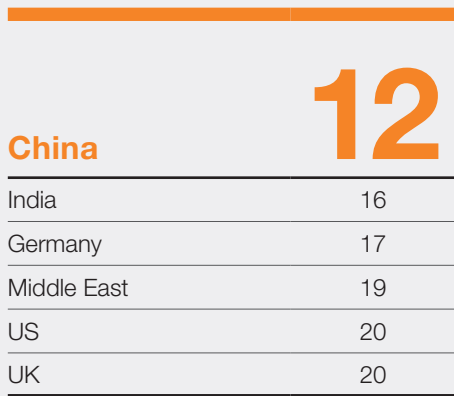In China, people who hold certain titles consider their jobs to be more complex in comparison to other countries.

COMPLEX                                                                                          SIMPLE

**Entry Level Employee**

China   Middle East   India                                    UK   Germany
                                                               US

**Partner/Principal/
Business Owner**

China                     India                    Germany   Middle East
                                                   US         UK

**Administrative/Clerical/
Hourly Employee**

                                         Middle East                            US
                            China   India   UK   Germany

Chinese respondents felt that holding a position in Senior Management was simpler than in any other country.

COMPLEX                                                                                          SIMPLE

**Senior Management
(e.g., SVP, VP)**

UK      US                                         India          China
Middle East   Germany

**Chinese respondents ranked these work aspects as simpler than any other country.**

Achieving work/life balance

| China | 12 |
|---|---|
| India | 16 |
| Germany | 17 |
| Middle East | 19 |
| US | 20 |
| UK | 20 |

Understanding my benefits

SIMPLE

| China | 3 |
|---|---|
| India | 6 |
| US | 6 |
| UK | 7 |
| Middle East | 8 |
| Germany | 13 |

COMPLEX

**Chinese respondents ranked these work aspects as more complex than any other country.**

Freely sharing ideas and opinions

SIMPLE

| UK | 5 |
|---|---|
| Germany | 6 |
| Middle East | 7 |
| India | 7 |
| US | 7 |
| China | 10 |

COMPLEX

# Research methodology

To determine the global state of simplicity, Siegel+Gale fielded an online survey with over 6,000 respondents in 7 countries to gather perspectives on simplicity and how industries and brands make people's lives simpler or more complex.

During the study, respondents rated 500 brands. The brands were selected as a representative set that respondents would be most likely to know and/or use in each country.

## Sample Set

Between June 4th and July 18th, 2012, Siegel+Gale used an online survey to poll 6,067 consumers in 7 countries:

United States N=1,017

United Kingdom N=1,019

Germany N=1,006

Mainland China N=1,007

India N=1,010

UAE and Saudi Arabia (ME) N=1,008

The sample is representative of national demographic distributions in each country.

## Survey Topics

This year's respondents answered questions about brand touchpoints within specific industries, loyalty programs, the workplace, and the relationship between simplicity and scale, among other topics.

Respondents answered questions around:

- How simple or complex they perceive their life to be
- How familiar they are with certain brands
- If they recently used these brands
- The simplicity/complexity of a brand's communications and interactions in relation to their industry peers

**Brand Simplicity Score**

Each country rated more than 100 brands. Siegel+Gale researchers used input from 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 are unable to report on smaller, lesser-known brands for which we could not collect sufficient responses.

The Brand Simplicity Score was calculated with the following inputs:

- How each brand was rated on the simplicity/complexity of their products, services, interactions and communications in relation to their 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 the ratings)
- How aligned non-user and user perceptions were, privileging aligned perceptions (the difference between user and non-user ratings)
- The simplicity score for the brand's industry or category(ies)

**Industry Simplicity Score**

Each country rated the following industries: Automotive, Banking (Retail), Electronics/Appliances, General Insurance, Health Insurance, Media, Restaurants/Entertainment, Retail, Shipping/Mail, Telecommunication, Travel and Utilities.

The Industry Simplicity Score was calculated with the following inputs:

- The industry's contribution to making life simpler/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
  - Communicating that customer needs are being cared for/Making the customer feel valued and appreciated
  - Innovation/Freshness
  - Usefulness

# About Siegel+Gale

Siegel+Gale is a strategic branding firm committed to building world-class brands through elegantly simple, unexpectedly fresh strategies, stories and experiences. With Simple is Smart as its operating philosophy, Siegel+Gale delivers powerful services in brand development, simplification, research and digital strategy.

Since its founding by branding pioneer Alan Siegel in 1969, Siegel+Gale has helped drive business results for brands such as Aetna, American Express, Bank of America, Dell, Delta Energy Systems, Dow Chemical Company, Eaton, The Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, the Internal Revenue Service, The King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Li-Ning, Microsoft, Motorola, Nestlé, NetQin, Pfizer, Qatar Telecom, SAP, Sony PlayStation, Yahoo! and the YMCA. For organizations ranging from financial services and healthcare companies to government agencies, Siegel+Gale has transformed complex, incomprehensible information into clear and relevant communications.

Siegel+Gale has offices in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, London, Hamburg, Riyadh, Dubai, Shanghai and Beijing and strategic partnerships around the world as a member of the Omnicom Group of companies.

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simple is smart