Built to Last: Patagoniaâ??s Sustainable Fashion

## Description

Patagoniaâ??s â??Worn Wearâ?? campaign aims to re-sell their worn garments

Global sportswear brand Patagonia are passionate about the great outdoors, and the role we play within it. On the one hand, their clothes are tough, durable and built to last, designed to withstand the wildest and most remote adventures the planet has to offer. But Patagonia are also deeply aware of the destructive impact clothing production has had on the world so far, and they have made it their mission to create garments in the most ecologically aware and sustainable ways. From the outset, Patagoniaâ??s founder, the alpinist, environmentalist and explorer Yvon Chouinard, set about establishing a clothing brand with a difference â?? one that was dedicated to caring for its employees, its garments, and the environment. Thatâ??s why they came up with their tagline: â??Buy less. Buy used. Repair. Demand more.â•

Patagoniaâ??s alternative advertising campaign â?? â??Donâ??t Buy This Jacketâ•

When Chouinard first established Patagonia in California in 1973, he knew from the outset that he wanted to build a fashion brand with a difference. He

was aware of how destructive the industry could be, and he made it a lifeâ??s mission to turn around the nature of clothing production so it could be less harmful and wasteful. He said, â??Everything we personally own thatâ??s made, sold, shipped, stored, cleaned, and ultimately thrown away does some environmental harm every step of the way, harm that weâ??re either directly responsible for or is done on our behalf.â•

Yvon Chouinard

As Patagonia expanded into a global brand, Chouinard held on to his core belief that his companyâ??s clothing should be made in an ecologically aware way. In his memoir, *Let My People Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman,* published in 2006, Chouinard outlined the challenges he has faced while building up a successful business, and his desire to avoid turning into a destructive or damaging empire. He writes, â??â?¦ business â?¦ has to take the majority of the blame for being the enemy of nature, for destroying native culturesâ?¦ and for poisoning the earth with the effluent from its factories. Yet business can [also] produce food, cure diseaseâ?¦ employ people, and generally enrich our lives.â?•

Today, Patagonia only works with high-quality renewable or recycled raw materials that are designed to last forever. They work with a variety of natural, organically sourced materials including cotton, wool, rubber and down that are grown in ethically responsible ways, with no pesticides or fertilisers, on land that has not been cleared by deforestation. The company

are currently exploring the creative possibilities of hemp, which is known for having a low impact on the environment. When they do make synthetic fabrics, including nylon and polyester, they are made from durable recycled materials. Patagoniaâ??s garments are made in Fair Trade Certified companies, and they pay a premium to the garment factories to ensure the fair treatment of their staff. In order to maintain these practices, Patagonia are members of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition. Chouinard is also co-founder of 1% for the Planet, a company that encourages businesses to donate 1% of their profits to the preservation of nature.

In contrast with many fashion houses, Patagonia actively encourage their customers to buy less, through cleverly worded marketing campaigns featuring slogans like, â??Donâ??tâ?? buy this jacketâ?•, and instead to make the most of the items they already own. They offer a lifetime repair guarantee on all their garments, and even offer DIY tutorials on their website, showing how to repair damaged clothing at home, â??Because keeping good gear going, and out of landfill, is awesome!â?• In their â??Worn Wearâ?? programme, Patagonia goes a stage further, buying back worn items from customers, and reselling them second-hand on their website. With all these activities in mind, it is Patagoniaâ??s goal to be completely carbon neutral by

2025, through a gradual process of refinement and simplification. But Chouinard notes how challenging it can be to combat the consumerist practices of capitalism, writing, â??The hardest thing in the world is to simplify your life; itâ??s so easy to make it complex.â?•

## CATEGORY

1. FASHION DESIGN
2. SUSTAINABILITY

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rosie-lesso