Everlane was created in 2010 when Michael Preysman left a Venture Capital job to pursue a passion in design and address frustrations with how retail was working. Preysman has since assembled a team of people who have “cut their teeth” at well-known tech companies like Google, Yelp, and American Apparel. Their San Francisco office is beautifully minimalist. Their ethically sound factories operate in countries such as the United States of America, Spain, China, and many more. They sell aesthetically pleasing, minimalist clothing through their online channels and occasional pop-up event stores in dense & urban areas to men and women who want ethical clothing, at an affordable price. The following information is a compilation of my findings on the unique design principles, colors used, and potential opportunities for Everlane.

“They say you should start a business that you wish already existed, so we quit our day jobs.”
Transparency

Everlane approaches business with a refreshingly clear objective: radical transparency. They embody this in their pricing, sourcing, and overall company strategies. Traditionally in the retail business, manufacturers source materials, create them into fabrics and usable mediums, assemble the product, and then reward their hard work by slapping on exorbitant price premiums to be passed on to YOU. Everlane doesn’t do away with adding a price premium to cover overhead and generate profit, but they inform the customer exactly where their money goes. At the bottom of each product page is a beautifully crafted “Transparent Pricing” chart. It outlines the

Guiding Principles
costs of materials, hardware, labor, duties and tariffs, and transportation. They then show you the “true cost” of a product (the sum of its previously mentioned parts), the Everlane price, and the traditional retail price.

With regards to how they approach transparency in their sourcing, they provide consumers with a map of factories used by Everlane to manufacture products. Select a factory, and consumers can see how Everlane came to find them, how they utilize the factory in their supply chain, the product(s) produced there, the number of employees working on the product, as well as pictures of the facility.

As a company, transparency is integral to their core competency of
providing affordable, ethical, and fashionable clothing to consumers. Everlane’s interesting Snapchat campaign “Transparency Tuesday’s,” allows people to ask any and all questions, while employees respond to them through the company Snapchat story. Additionally, Everlane identifies macroeconomic trends in their raw materials prices and passes the drops in price onto the consumers.

Humor
Everlane has some spunk, and this can be seen, heard, and felt through their various social medias as well as through the people who work there. The language employed by the company is laden with atypical business phrases. For example, on
their jobs page lies the phrase: “Dear rule breakers, questioners, straight-A students who skipped class: We want you.” Additionally, on their twitter and Instagram pages the company routinely makes puns out of pop culture references. Everlane has pulled together a unique crew of employees that works as a community, and they allow their personality traits to shine through, giving their brand a humanistic sense of humor.

Urban Minimalism

Everlane designs and releases products that are very minimalist in nature, and generally targeted towards
younger professionals in urban areas. Through their brand colors (discussed later), typefaces, images, office, and other brand materials, it is evident that they approach their company with an aesthetic minimalism that is quite attractive and present in all of their communications. The minimalism lends a sense of simplicity and easiness, while it also helps Everlane stand out against cluttered competition.

**Purity**

Another guiding principle in their brand communications is a sense of purity, or rawness. Their designs are simple—untouched by gaudy or intricate design trends. They often use white. They are young company with a fresh and optimistic mind, unspoiled by the dirty world of retail.
Human

Another way Everlane breaks the traditional rules of retail is how they interact with people; they put people above sales. They give their employees voices to be heard, because after all they are a community of people. One way they demonstrate this is by passing their Snapchat account off to various employees in various departments, allowing consumers to see the faces of Everlane. They approach people how they want to be approached, and follow this strategy in their brand communications.
Everlane’s Color Scheme:
Everlane uses a more reserved palate of color, with subtle and very sparing splashes of color. The more classical palate lends itself directly to the guiding principles of purity and minimalism, while the occasional color splashes lend themselves well to the touch of humanity and potentially humor. Typically, when Everlane is not running a special event or has no breaking news, they resort to whites, light grays, dark navy blues, and blacks. When they have an event going, they typically add more color, such as the blue and camel recently. Another example is the white and green employed for their “Shoe Park” in New York City. Overall the Everlane color scheme is very soothing, sophisticated, and trendy; the colors employed are translated to their clothing and other products.
What I saw

Through my analysis of the Everlane brand communications I saw a strong cohesion between their visual and textual elements. The colors applied align with their guiding principles, and are put through to their product lineup. All text used in Everlane’s communications can be traced back to the design principles, and do not leave room for consumers or viewers to begin to think Everlane as a company it isn’t: stagnant, boring, traditional, inauthentic, or deceptive. My current recommendations for the young and ambitious climber are to stay true to who they are as a company, and not stray from their design principles. Additionally, they should continue to foster the absorbing culture they currently achieve.
Potential

The picture on the right demonstrates what it may look like if Everlane ever ventured into home furnishings. The color scheme is correctly applied, along with the guiding design principles. Transparency would be applied in the sourcing information of the materials at purchase. Humor might be applied through the team providing the furnishings. Urban minimalism & purity are applied through the refined and simple style of the furniture and the space. Finally, humanity is applied through the slight bursts of color in the pillows, art, and magazine basket in the corner.

A note: all images aside from my own are taken from Everlane.com or their respective social media accounts (Twitter, Instagram, and associated blogs).