

# E-Commerce Underwear Label With a Mission

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Pact's sustainable underwear.

Photo By Courtesy Photo

Industrial designer Yves Behar is banking on the idea that “change starts with your underwear.”

That's the motto of Pact, an e-commerce ([Wearpact.com](#)) underwear label that pledges sustainability and will benefit social and environmental causes. It is also a call to action for shoppers who most likely have never given much thought to buying underwear. Through a new partnership, Béhar and his San Francisco-based Fuseproject design studio have helped develop Pact's manufacturing, shipping and shopping experience.

Everything for the product — the raw cotton, manufacturing and compostable bags used in shipping — is made in Turkey within a 100-mile radius. Each pair of underwear is enclosed in a reusable, coordinating cloth bag made from material scraps. Convinced most people are tired of trekking to the upper floors of department stores to get to the underwear departments and then sorting through merchandise to find the right size, Béhar and Pact executives wanted to come up with a more enticing way to shop.

“It would have been easy to buy some organic cotton, put a tag on it [saying so] and make it oatmeal, but this has to be absolutely unusual and fully integrated,” Béhar said. “It's exciting to be contrary to every way the business is being done. In general, we designed every little experience. When you get this bright green bag in the mail, you will know exactly what it is. We wanted everything about the brand to be authentic.”

Each season, nonprofits that strive for social and environmental change will benefit from sales of Pact underwear. The inaugural collection features styles geared for the Dave Eggers-backed 826 National, ForestEthics and Oceana. Béhar whipped up playful prints reminiscent of each group's cause, and down the road, internationally recognized artists and designers will do the honors for other groups. Ten percent of each purchase will support the organizations and each pair of

underwear is imprinted with a water-based transfer detailing information about each cause.

Three styles are available for women and men, with retail prices ranging from \$20 to \$28. Consumers can shop by cause, fit or print design. First-year projected volume is about 65,000 units, said chief executive officer Jason Kibbey, who cofounded Pact with chief creative officer Jeff Denby. They first shared their prototypes with Béhar when he spoke at the University of California at Berkeley in fall 2007. After graduation, they contacted him about doing something on a more formal level. T-shirts and socks may be added to the collection.

“This is as much about creating a long-lasting business as it is about creating a unique and different category,” Béhar said. “What people really want today is to feel good about themselves and what they do. Design has the ability to do these things.”