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Convert Clothing Store Pulls Fashion Vendors Over to the Green Side

How one smart store owner is changing the rules of the fashion game.

By Jaymi Heimbuch

San Francisco, CA | Fri Mar 12, 2010 17:36

Randy Brewer is the owner of [Convert](#), a hip new clothing store in Berkeley, California. But this isn't the typical story about a clothing store that makes only the most sustainable choices for its racks. No, Brewer is taking it a step further. Rather than hunting out only sustainable fashion vendors, he's making the fashion vendors he loves become sustainable.

Turning Typical Fashion Vendors Into Green Businesses

Brewer's initial vision for Convert was simply an all-sustainable apparel store. But he saw a problem - many of his favorite vendors aren't quite on board yet with providing [ethical, sustainable fashions](#). So, rather than sacrificing styles he loves and wants to share, Brewer is acting as catalyst for change.

The strategy is simple - Brewer keeps on carrying the vendors he likes, but only if they incorporate sustainability into their business practices. The vendors need to make improvements if they want to stay on the shelves, such as switching to [organic fabrics](#), sourcing sustainable production, keeping it locally produced, or even just using fair trade. Hence the name "Convert". Eventually, the entire store will be 100% sustainable, and 100% stylish.



Smart and Sustainable - Convert Clothing in Berkeley, California

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VIEW: Best of Green - Fashion and Beauty

Wide-Reaching Benefits of Green Fashion

It's a three pronged benefit - shoppers get ethical clothing, vendors improve their businesses to hit a broader audience and lighten their environmental footprint, and the planet can heave a small sigh of relief as sustainable fashion makes its way mainstream. Clothing might not seem like a big deal at first, but [green fashion has far reaching environmental benefits](#). That's why we love thinkers like Brewer who are willing to prod companies into doing the right thing. *And* when shoppers don't have to sacrifice style for sustainability, he can prod all of us into doing the right thing too.

Familiar Faces in Sustainable Fashion

There is, thankfully, some lines available at the store from already-sustainable vendors. Some of the clothing lines featured at the store are already well known among eco-minded fashionistas, including [Stewart + Brown](#), [Nau](#), [Nudie Jeans](#) and [TOMS Shoes](#). Additionally, there are local, Bay Area-based designers, so Convert is helping to keep things also sustainably local.

Located in the heart of Berkeley's Fourth Street shopping district, it's the first store in the area to carry both organic and local designs. And hopefully, it will be a model for more clothing boutiques across the nation.

More on Green Fashion

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