There exists, between the ages of 22 and 35, a particular kind of aesthetic purgatory. The problem: your paltry post-grad income can’t support the cost of your grown-up desires—mainly, the tasteful (and prohibitively expensive) products you wish to decorate your home with. The result: a too often homogenous mixture of IKEA items and cracked hand-me-downs. Snowe, founded in 2015 by Rachel Cohen and Andrés Modak, aimed to fill the gap in the market. By working directly with international factories and offering products exclusively online, they are able to keep prices down. That means quality essentials for an accessible price. Design snobs on a budget, rejoice!

Cohen and Modak, who met while studying at U Penn’s Wharton School of Business, started thinking about the concept Snowe would eventually become following their own experience moving to New York City after graduation. The pair—a couple as well as co-founders—struggled to populate their apartment with unique, well-priced goods they could be proud of. The Snowe product lineup reflects those core products they were searching for but couldn’t find, hitting all the marks in bed, bath, and table. On their site, you can buy Italian-milled sheet sets for $260, five-piece porcelain table settings for $280, five-piece dishwasher safe wine glasses for $80. The selections are clean and streamlined. The shopping experience is straightforward. It strips everything down to the barest of essentials, saying, “We’ve done the digging for you. This is all you need.”

In a world where options abound, not all of them good, it can be a relief to rely on someone else to separate the wheat from the chaff. Snowe adheres to a tight, concise edit. They build brand trust in their promise to only work with the best factories using the best materials to deliver the best product to you—no ifs, ands, or buts. No more buying things you don’t like, no more treating your purchases like goods built to be thrown away. It’s about conscious, uncompromising consumption during one of life’s certain milestones. Here, we talk to co-founder Rachel Cohen about the first steps in production, supply chain rubrics, and the importance of recognizing your strengths and weaknesses.

Bond Street

What was the problem you were trying to solve with Snowe?
Snowe Home

My partner, Andrés, and I were moving back to New York and trying to furnish our apartment. We went to all of the larger retailers. Things would be in our price range but much more ubiquitous in quality and design—we would go to a friend’s apartment and would know where the couch was from, where the curtains are from. Everyone was shopping at the same places and owned the same things. On the flip side, we would look to the high-end boutiques for design inspiration but products were exorbitantly priced and out of our range. We wanted to be able to set up our home with products we felt really good about that were high-quality but didn’t break the bank.

Bond Street

In your research of the home goods space prior to launch was there something that surprised you about the industry?

Snowe Home

A lot of things. As we started to talk to potential customers and peers who were having the same problems as ourselves was that, over and over again, people were saying how overwhelming the shopping experience for the home was. If you walk into a store, you look online, there are so many products. How do you sort through all of those things? It’s just too much for people to take in. That was a surprise.

Bond Street

What was the first step in researching factories for production?

Snowe Home

It was a little bit word-of-mouth in the sense that we were working with someone to develop the product who had come from the luxury home world. We were able to use some of the suppliers she had worked with in the past. We also had several advisors and mentors in the space who passed along recommendations. It became a giant list of suppliers that we needed to search through. Each factory had to hit certain areas: they had to be the highest quality, they had to have low minimum order quantities, quick replenishment time. All of
those things were the rubric we used for finding the perfect suppliers for each of our categories.

Bond Street

Is it hard to find suppliers that are willing to work with lower order minimums?

Snowe Home

It was definitely challenging–some categories more so than others. It was a lot of selling the dream, the vision, getting them to buy into what we wanted to build at Snowe and partnering with us. They had to believe that we would grow and they would grow with us.

Bond Street

Who would you say your core demographic is?

Snowe Home

I think our core demographic is mid-20s to late-30s, early-40s. Our true core customer is right in their early 30s. So far, we’ve definitely seen a more urban customer, but we’re starting to pick up steam in other parts of the country. We also have a really good balance of female and male customers, which you don’t really see in home. It’s usually skewed very heavily female, 80- or 90-percent. Ours is much more in the 60/40 range. We really wanted to have a gender neutral conversation. There are so many men who are design-conscious now. We didn’t want to exclude them, whether that it be in the voice, the look and feel of the brand, the look and feel of the product.

Bond Street

How do you think modern shoppers approach home differently than, say, their parents?
Snowe Home

I think one of the larger differences is that there’s this convergence between casual and formal. Using dinnerware as an example, our parents’ generation had two or three sets of china that they would take out once or twice a year on special occasions. For us, we believe your nicest products should be used on a daily basis. That glass of wine at the end of the day, that cup of coffee you have in the morning. You want those small moments to feel luxurious.

Bond Street

How do you decide what to bring onboard in terms of new product?

Snowe Home

We’ve been releasing new product pretty much every month for the last few months. For us, it’s been about listening to our customers, speaking to our customers, finding out what they want. But it’s also about that balance of not wanting to expand too quickly. What we’ve gotten such great response from is that tight edit.

Bond Street

Has the way you approached the brand changed over time or have you really stuck to the initial idea you started with?

Snowe Home

Brand is a tricky thing. It’s constantly evolving in small ways. I don’t know if those nuances are visible to everyone. In terms of the brands ethos and vision, we’ve stayed tried and true to when we started. But it’s always evolving.
**Bond Street**

How do you approach content for Snowe Magazine?

**Snowe Home**

We see the magazine as the first stepping stone for content to be a larger piece of the puzzle. We approach it thoughtfully, and we definitely err on the side of quality not quantity. We want content to always go hand-in-hand with different products we were releasing or projects we were working on. It’s also about collaborating, about bringing different experts in to have their voice on the site.

**Bond Street**

Is there a brand you admire in the homegoods space or otherwise?

**Snowe Home**

There are so many brands that we admire. I feel as though we’re constantly looking to see what other people are doing that’s innovative and exciting. One brand we admire is Club Monaco. They’re a brand that has stayed true to their ethos. While it’s not home-related, there are similarities to Snowe in terms of selling staples and essentials, focusing on quality, curation, retail experience. We often look to them. They’ve done a really great job evolving their brand.

**Bond Street**

Do you have any advice looking for someone looking to start their own business?

**Snowe Home**

There’s so much to be said. First thing: do something you’re super passionate about. (Obviously you still need to weigh how viable the business is so it’s not just a passion
project.) People underestimate the amount of time you’ll spend on the business. It’s always on your mind. It’s your baby, growing it, nurturing it. The second thing: surround yourself with people you can trust and who push you to your limits. Beyond your business partner (if you have one), it’s the team you surround yourself with. Know what your strengths are, know where to fill in the gaps, know that you can’t do it alone.

Quick Fire

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Book every entrepreneur should read:

Snowe Home

Peter Thiel’s Zero to One

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Go-to blog for interiors inspiration:

Snowe Home

Sight Unseen

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3 interior/lifestyle Instagrams we should follow:

Snowe Home

1. @home_details
2. @styleandcreate
3. @theresesennerholt
Snowe product we should have in our homes:

Snowe Home

It’s so hard to choose just one! If I had to pick, I’d say our Sheet Set—they’re a 500-thread count Italian-milled percale. There’s no better feeling than slipping into smooth and crisp sheets at the end of a long day.

Bond Street

5 favorite small businesses:

Snowe Home

1. Sincerely, Tommy
2. Bedford Cheese Shop
3. Homenature
4. Catbird
5. Vosges Haut Chocolat