

Model of Excellence Profile – Boardroom Insiders

Company Name:	GoodGuide Inc.	ICG#	11042
Address:	98 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111		
Product Name:	GoodGuide		
URL:	www.goodguide.com	CEO Name:	Dara O'Rourke

Business and Product Overview

Business Information Framework Classification	<i>Applications Models:</i> Locate – Central Catalog Evaluate – Performance Ratings	<i>Business Model:</i> Advertising & Sponsorships – Piece of the Action Subscription -- Subscription
	<i>Content Models:</i> Original Compilation – Primary Research: Manual	<i>Distribution Model</i> Direct Response – Direct Response
Company Overview	GoodGuide has developed the world's largest database of information on the health, environmental, and social impacts of products used in the home and the companies that make them. Then they put this data together with an easy to use interface and a proprietary rating system.	
Product/Service Description	<p>Putting together a comprehensive resource like this is hard enough under any circumstance, but GoodGuide faces higher hurdles than most. They wanted to create a product that would be easy and attractive for consumers. But they are working in areas where established standards don't exist. Put another way, it's hard to determine what product is "better" when there is no general agreement about what makes a product "better." As a result, GoodGuide is blazing more than a few new trails.</p> <p>Essentially, GoodGuide is a comparative guide to consumer household and food products such as dishwashing liquid, baby food, canned foods and snacks. Within each category, users can easily filter search results based on the product characteristics most important to them, such as: low sugar, low sodium, low cholesterol, level of saturated fat, fragrance-free and environmental friendliness. GoodGuide also looks at social responsibility issues and environmental Impact for each product manufacturer.</p> <p>The depth and richness of this site make it a true central catalogue. Parametric search and in-depth information enable easy discovery of products based on filtered results. Plus, they go one step further by applying an independent rating system that takes into account the three facets of health, social and environmental impact.</p> <p>Developing such a site represents a tremendous amount of work that involves collecting and analyzing mountains of information, especially since GoodGuide now has over 70,000 products in its database. But rather than simply aggregate all this information and build a product that is nothing more than a giant "data dump," GoodGuide has done all the heavy lifting by assessing all this information and turning it into simple, comparable ratings. With GoodGuide, you're only a few clicks from seeing all the products that meet your search criteria, sorted down by a</p>	

GoodGuide rating that makes an informed product selection fast and easy.

What's important to stress is that these ratings are not user-generated content (though users can separately post reviews). These are ratings assigned by GoodGuide based on assessment of objective product characteristics and designed for direct product comparability.

The interface is clean and intuitive. Getting to ranked product recommendations is easy. There's a wealth of information available on each specific product, even including a full FDA nutritional label. They also provide the detail beyond the summary rating number, a nice nod to ratings transparency we don't often see. Not surprisingly, GoodGuide has also deployed versions of its content for mobile devices, allowing consumers to make "point of sale" purchase decisions.

At this point, comparisons to *Consumer Reports* are inevitable, though the range of products covered by GoodGuide is (currently) much narrower, there are differences in methodology, and perhaps most significantly, GoodGuide makes its content available for free.

GoodGuide began its days as a UC Berkeley research project and the site is currently still in beta. So its business model is still evolving, though foreshadowed. Links to third party vendors for purchasing evidence an interest in transactional revenue. Site registration is optional, but sets the stage for a possible move to highly targeted advertising. Further, it seems doubtless that revenue opportunities from licensing will abound. The company is also considering a paid subscription of the database for users interested in advanced searching and access to additional product information.

Our bottom line is that this is a good idea, well executed, high value and built on a flexible platform that can take the organization in any number of directions. We also think it's a great example of how much value you can create when you move past simple data aggregation into data analysis and assessment. Despite an as-yet-unproven business model, we feel this is definitely one to watch as it breaks new ground.

Employees:	24	Main Telephone:	415-732-7722
Profile Date:	4/27/09	Primary Market Served:	Consumer
Ownership:	Private	Funding Source:	Venture Capital-Backed
MofE Class:	2009	MofE Status:	FINALIST

