



MCOMD2EBS

Web Report – JM1179

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E-Business initiative

The global market value of men's grooming products has steadily increased over the last decade reaching a value of \$57.7 Billion in 2017, with \$78.6 Billion estimated for 2023 (Researchandmarkets.com, 2018). Additionally, the strong consumer demand for subscription boxes has followed the upward market trends of male grooming products, with an estimated 27.4% of the UK population signed up to a subscription service (Royalmailgroup.com, 2018). The popular fashion of keeping a beard has seen trending searches on Google increase steadily over a five-year period (see appendix)

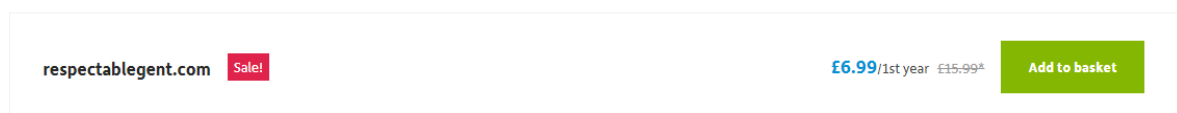
Respectable Gent (RG) is a small start-up offering subscription-based beard and face care packages. A package, known to RG as a "Kit Box" contains a customisable selection of male grooming products and is delivered to the customer on a quarterly basis. The website acts as the main purchasing portal for subscriptions, support and offers a small range of products for immediate purchase. Good web usability will be paramount in the design of the website to allow for a clean and smooth checkout process while allowing the user to easily customise their subscription package. Though the products available are mostly men's oriented, the website will be advertised towards the seasonal market to all ages and demographics with the content pushing towards purchasing subscriptions and sales as gifts and so the website design must be accessible to all and feel natural for the user to engage with.

HCI/Graphic design considerations

With the intended product recipient expected to be males of 14 and above, Respectable Gent's logo, branding and website has been designed with the intention to invoke a premium, adventurous, antiquated and masculine feel. Text content is written with a cheeky, tongue in cheek but direct format to help build on the image of the brand.

The website is designed primarily for mobile use, although it is fully responsive and equally useable by tablet or desktop.

URL



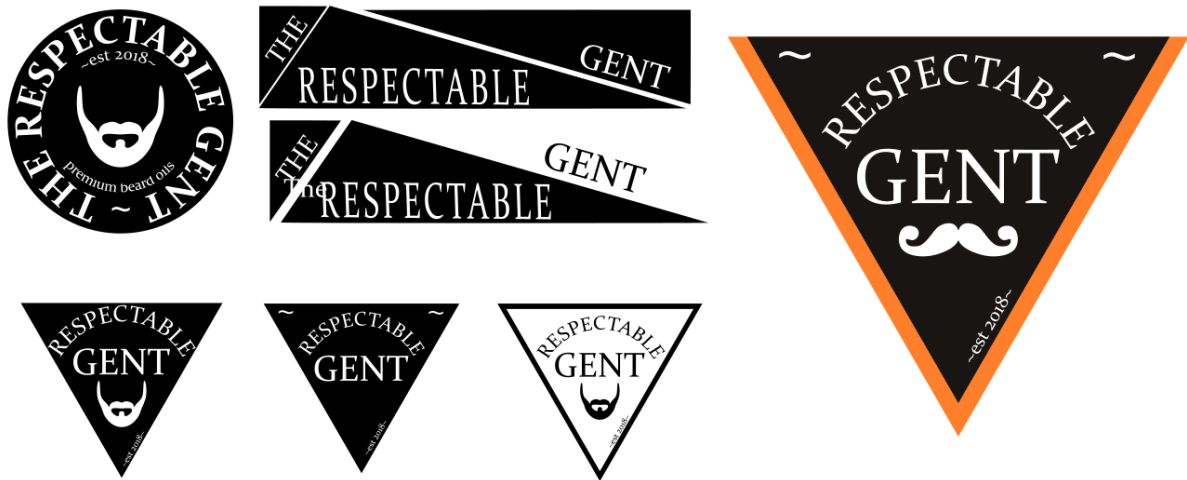
The URL www.respectablegent.com is available and Google does not return any businesses of the same name or similar.

For the assignment the website is hosted at <http://ebusiness.skru.webfactional.com/>

Logo

The logo is the result of a few iterations on similar themes, starting with a circular design and ending with the final triangle. The original circle design was inspired by early twentieth century British motor cycle clubs, using a capitalised serif font arranged in a shape that could be a badge or emblem. This perpetuated through to the final design where a triangle is used to represent a more durable product than a softer circle (Jiang et al., 2015). The association of "riskiness" or "edginess"

of the downward triangle enforces a rebellious streak, with the orange blade edge enforcing this further. The moustache graphic helps to help associate the brand with beard care and male grooming and adds to the “cheeky-ness” of Respectable Gent.








Favicon



The moustache vector graphic used for the logo was also re-purposed to create a favicon for the website.

Colour scheme

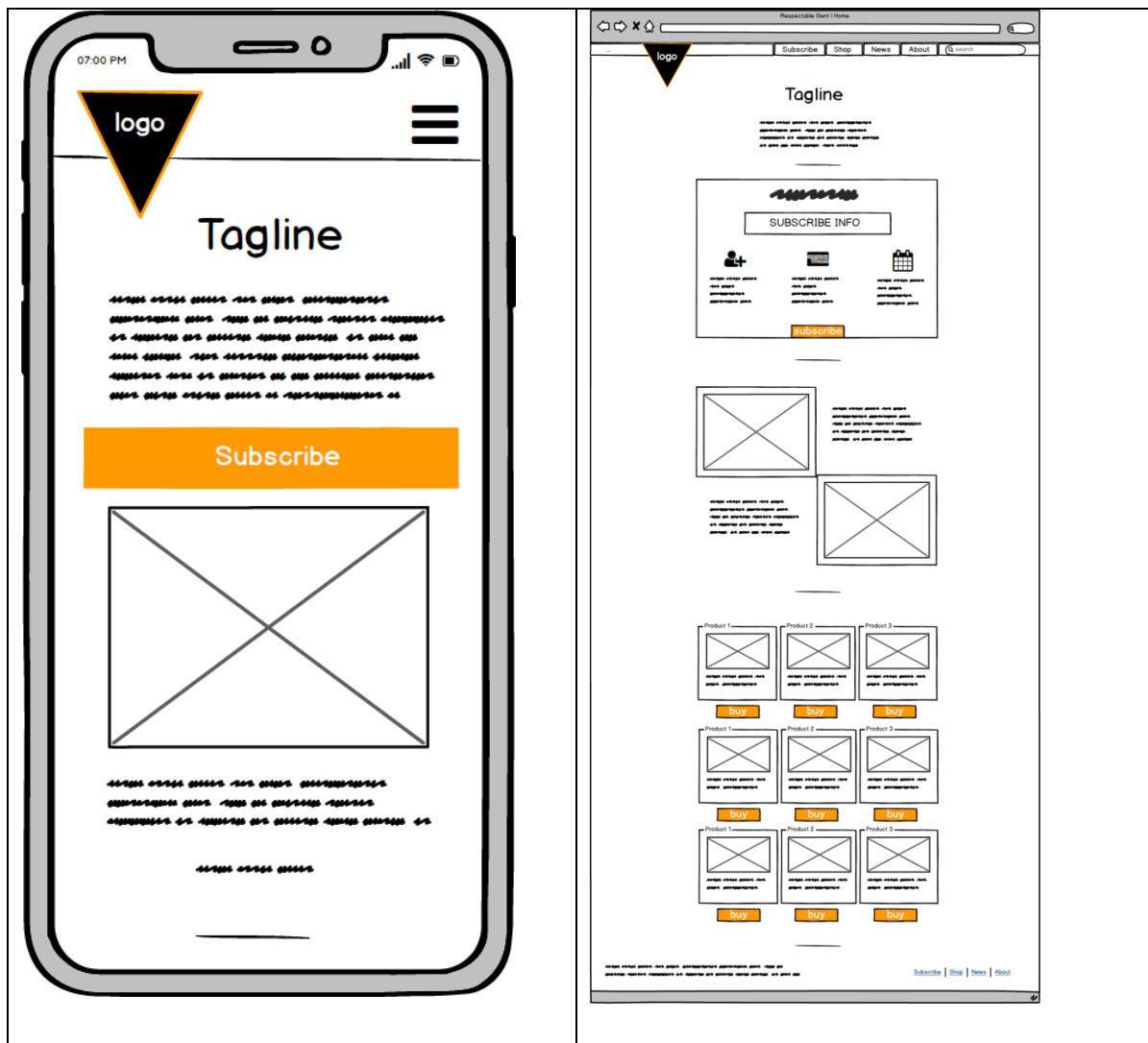
The logo and website both use a monochromatic colour scheme to communicate opulence and simplicity with orange highlights to add an imaginative and energetic flair (Hynes, 2009). The website's black header, footer and sections give the impression of strength and seriousness while the white background a clean and functional feel. The orange highlights and accents are used to help in directing the user to points of action. Care has been taken to ensure that neither black or white parts of the website are overwhelming and instead are complimented by the each other.

	#121212 rgb(18,18,18)
	#FF7F2A rgb(255,127,42)
	#B1B3C0 rgb(177,179,192)
	#FFFFFF rgb(255,255,255)
	#FBFBFB rgb(251,251,251)

Overall layout

The website layout is minimal in design, enabling ease of use to the user while still offering a suitable amount of rich content that enforces the brand identity. A heavy focus has been put on directing the user through to payment seamlessly by removing any clutter or superfluous content and keeping consistency throughout the checkout. This is helped by the sparse colour scheme and adherence to gestalt theory principles. Wireframe mock-ups were created to aid in development of the final website which although do ultimately reflect the final design, are not an exact match. Due to the limited scope in customisation of the content management system used, the design is a compromise of what can easily be modified in the CMS with additional CSS to further tweak the website's look.

Wireframes



Website home page

Screen shots taken on an iPhone using the Chrome we browser

The home page is designed to be a direct call to action, the bright orange subscribe button drawing attention by being juxtaposed on the white background.

I had the idea of the triangle logo protruding below the top navigation bar while designing and prototyping but was not sure I would be able to accomplish this when using WordPress. With additional CSS I was able to get the logo correctly positioned both for mobile and desktop.

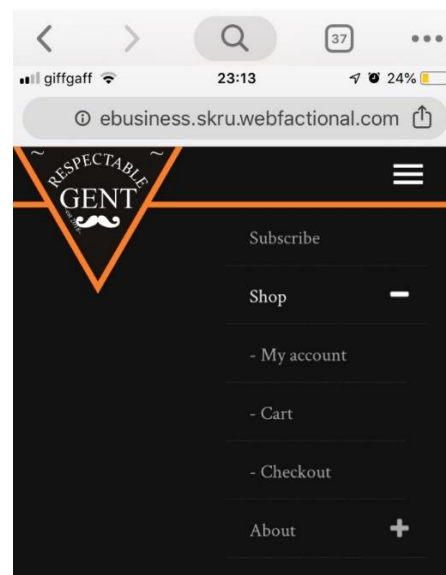


Premium beard and face care for the Respectable Gent, Spiffing!

We source and manufacture the finest beard oils, balms, face creams and shaving accessories.

Subscribe and receive a Kit Box of your own every three months.

SUBSCRIBE

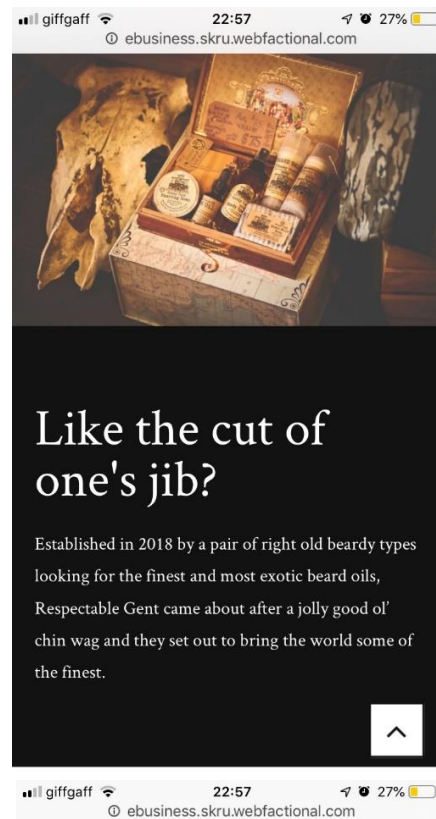


When viewing on a mobile device the main menu is very basic with some minor style adjustments to the original template to make it more user friendly. Gestalt theory was considered in the choice of pages to display via the menu so to keep the count of menu items low. In this image the Shop tab has been selected.

Premium beard and face care for the Respectable



The next section displays the company story on a black background below the fold of the landing page, the image chosen is that of the main subscription item for sale on the website which was specifically chosen due to its overall colour, matching the dark shades and orange of the design specifications.



The product section of the home page displays a selection of featured items like many e-commerce websites. The Product sections have been designed to be simple, taking the user to the product detail page on click rather than placing the item in the users shopping cart. All stock and date information has been removed to reduce clutter.



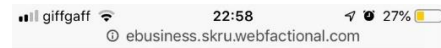
Beard oil pack (large)

The finest oils, minerals and herbs are used to create this fine beard care oil.

£29.99

[Read more](#)

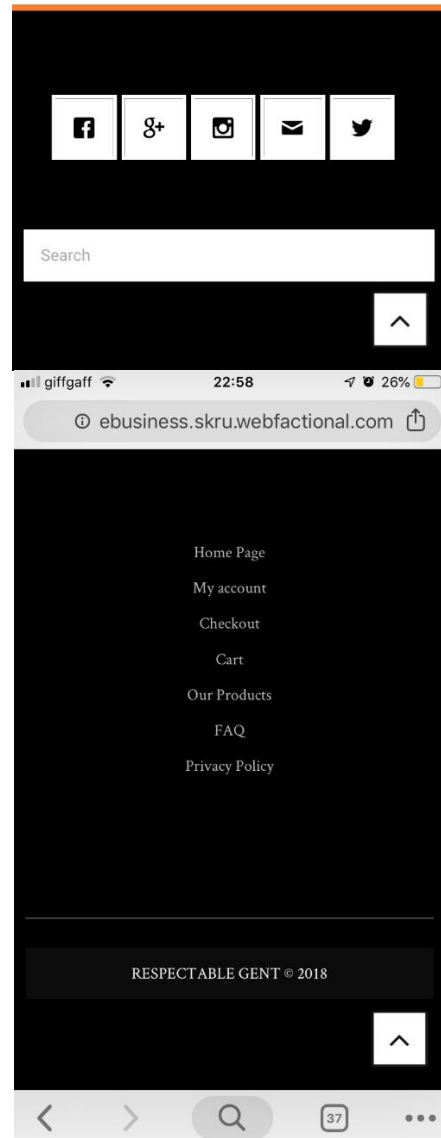




Premium beard and face
care for the Respectable
Gent, Spiffing!

SUBSCRIBE

As the home page reaches the footer, the tagline and subscribe section is displayed again. The footer's top border matches that of the navigation bar and helps to segment the page.





The footer menu contains social links as well as a website search form and menu. Once again, the menu items are minimal in size.

Software tools selected to design and build website

Inkscape <https://inkscape.org/>

Having never created an SVG from scratch and wanting to get the benefits of scalable vectors, I used Inkscape for all logo design and prototyping. I initially found the program relatively easy to use but did run into difficulties when exporting to an SVG. Cross browser differences cause the logo to render slightly different, something I hope to solve in the future:

Chrome (Windows Desktop)	Chrome (IOS) "est 2018" displayed incorrectly
	

Balsamiq <https://balsamiq.com/givingback/free/>

A great tool for quickly creating mock ups. I did not want to re-invent the wheel in website design, instead the design should feel comfortable to all demographics especially within the checkout process. I also knew I would be using WordPress and WooCommerce and understand the limits of what I will be able to achieve when implementing the website in the future in terms of design and customisation, and so the mock ups follow a popular format seen in many e-commerce web applications.

GIMP <https://www.gimp.org/>

All image cropping, resizing and editing performed in GIMP (apart from logo)

WebFaction <https://www.webfaction.com/>

To host the website, I used a company that I am familiar with having used many times beforehand. SSH and SFTP is used to gain access to the server but WebFaction also have a one-click installer for WordPress, which was used to automate the installation and integration with a MySQL database.

WordPress <https://wordpress.com/>

The business logistics of subscription box delivery will require technologies that integrate with the website to facilitate features such as:

- Payment, invoicing, order processing

- Shipping, returns, refunds
- Advertising
- Email, email marketing
- Support

WordPress offers a simple way to integrate all the above without need for an experienced developer to administer the backend and instead allows a way to implement a fully featured e-commerce website with content management within a few days of minor development. This is very suitable for a small start-up due to the low cost and can be customised to a surprising amount, although I found it frustrating at times not always having total control of the design but with the correct plugins most of the features I tried to implement were possible. I used a selection of plugins and widgets to help with customisation of the content management system:

1. **Code Snippets:** Allows editing of functions.php file so future updates of theme do not overwrite customisations
2. **Elementor:** Drag and drop front-end editor to allow for quick editing of pages
3. **SVG Support:** Allows SVG's to be used
4. **WooCommerce:** Payment gateway with user accounts, PayPal and Stripe integration

Target hardware selected for the website

A marketing campaign will launch alongside the website which will target mostly smartphone users of social media, additionally market research signifies most new signups to subscription box services do so over the Christmas holiday season and so it is expected the website will see heavy use by mobile and tablet users and therefore is designed to be mobile-first. The choice of mobile being the target hardware I find makes it harder to design aspects that are extraordinary and instead a safer more app like design would be best to keep users engaged on the website. I was worried about extra time being added to page loading due to excessive requests from the CMS and the impact this might have on user experience, but the website seems to operate smoothly. All images are compressed and resized to optimise load times as much as possible and the built-in caching that comes free with WordPress seems to work very well.

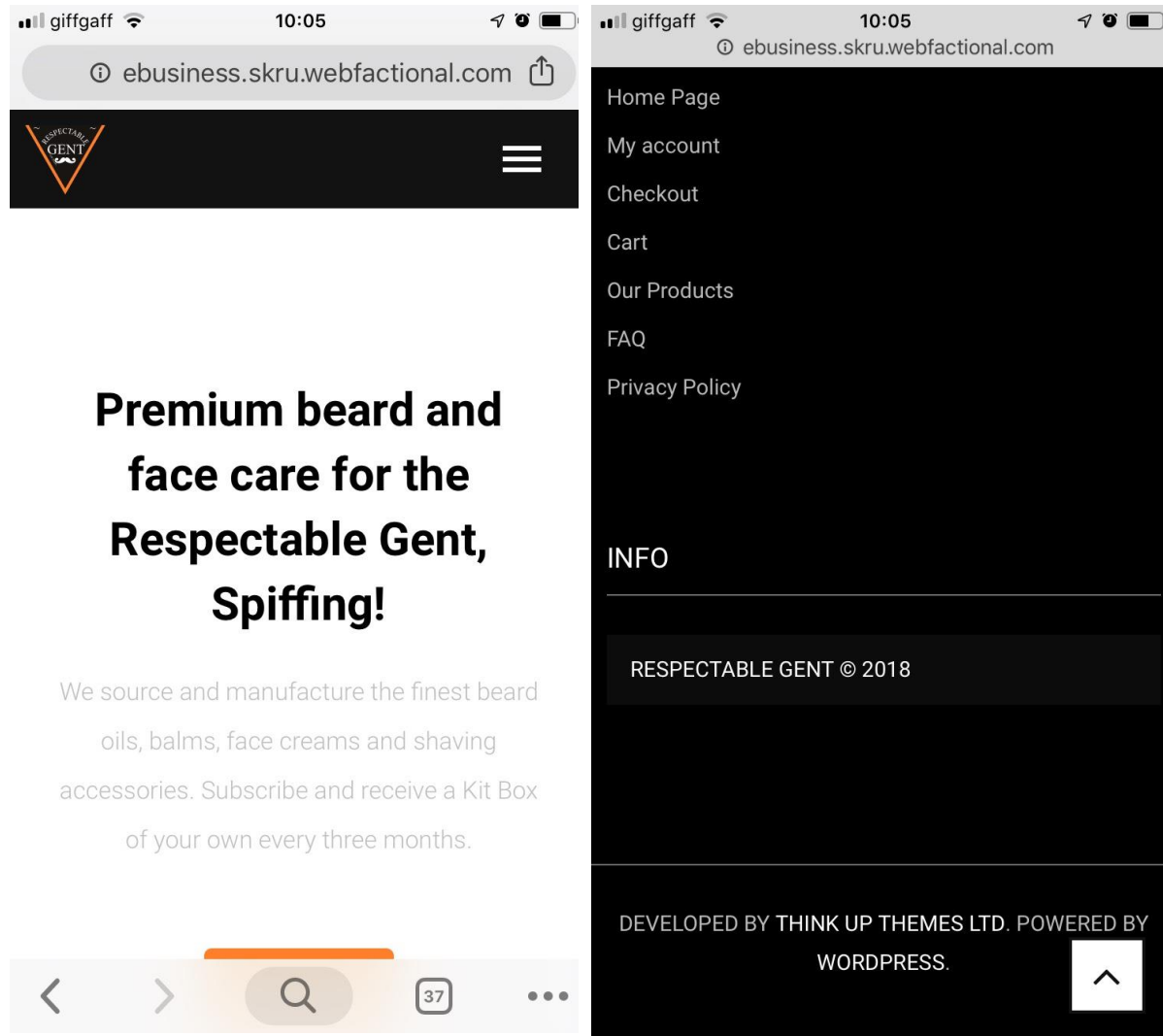
Technical customisations of the website

For this business initiative, a content management system such as WordPress is appropriate for a start-up, but as the business scales a more bespoke system might be an advantage. Adding every feature required for the site to operate in a production environment would require a more complex subscription form and possibly the purchase of third-party plugins to facilitate the subscription process. I'm not too familiar with WordPress and spent most of the development time trying to remove or hide page elements rather than style them. I used a very simple template and removed all the built-in home page features to get a clean template to start with and then added the features I required. By editing the CSS, I was able to style the site to the wireframe specification and enhance the HCI element of the design.

To begin with SVG support had to be enabled by installing a third-party plugin, this was not enough to allow the use of an SVG logo and the WordPress functions.php file was edited to allow the plugin to work. This was simple for me to do with File transfer access to the server but might have been harder for someone with less technical ability.

Once SVG images were enabled for use I could upload the logo and begin to modify the navigation bar to accommodate the triangular shape of the logo design, to accomplish this CSS media queries had to be written to allow for different styles across all device sizes.

Home page menus without custom CSS:



Google Font “[Crimson Text](#)” was used for its antiquated serif style and added using a CSS import. Css file “rg-style.css” included in report.

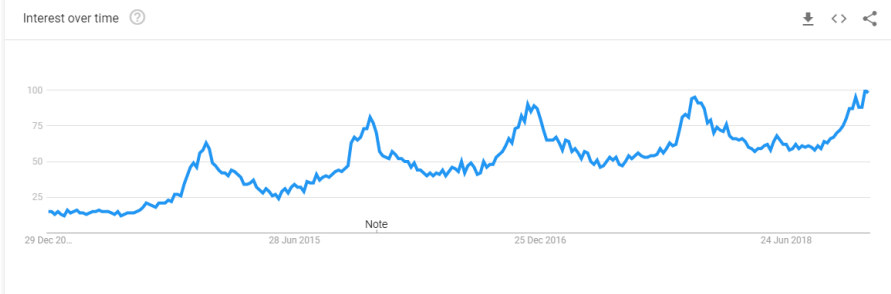
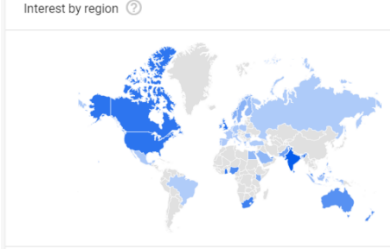
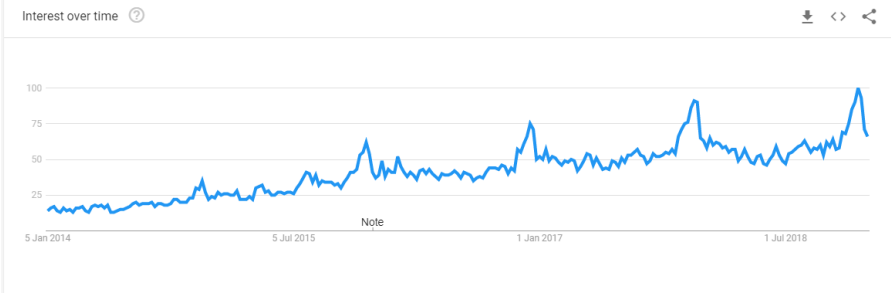

Appendices as deemed necessary.

References

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- Royalmailgroup.com. (2018). *Boom boxes: UK subscription box market to be worth £1 billion by 2022*. [online] Available at: <https://www.royalmailgroup.com/en/insights-innovation/insight/boom-boxes-uk-subscription-box-market-to-be-worth-1-billion-by-2022/> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].
- Jiang, Y., Gorn, G., Galli, M. and Chattopadhyay, A. (2015). Does Your Company Have the Right Logo? How and Why Circular- and Angular-Logo Shapes Influence Brand Attribute Judgments. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 42(5), pp.709-726.
- Hynes, N. (2009). Colour and meaning in corporate logos: An empirical study. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(8), pp.545-555.

Appendix

1.a Interest over time

	<p>Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. A score of 0 means that there was not enough data for this term.</p>												
Beard Oil	<p>Interest over time ⓘ</p>  <p>Note</p> <p>29 Dec 20... 28 Jun 2015 25 Dec 2016 24 Jun 2018</p>												
	<p>Interest by region ⓘ</p>  <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Region</th> <th>Interest</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Sri Lanka</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 India</td> <td>97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 United Arab Emirates</td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 United Kingdom</td> <td>82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Qatar</td> <td>78</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Include low search volume regions</p> <p>< Showing 1–5 of 43 regions ></p>	Region	Interest	1 Sri Lanka	100	2 India	97	3 United Arab Emirates	96	4 United Kingdom	82	5 Qatar	78
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Subscription box	<p>Interest over time ⓘ</p>  <p>Note</p> <p>5 Jan 2014 5 Jul 2015 1 Jan 2017 1 Jul 2018</p>												
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