



HZ University of
Applied Science

RESEARCH Justification

The possibilities of Google Shopping ranking for
online marketplaces at Mister Sandman GmbH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following research justification shows the possibilities of Google-Shopping and organic ranking through Google Shopping in the company Mister Sandman on the international marketplaces Bol.com, Cdiscount, Darty & Conforama. Two tests have been done & 5 information gaps have been identified as basis of this research.

- (1) The first information gap is that marketplaces do not want to explain how to get an increase in ranking at Google Shopping and how they choose the products they want to promote through Google Shopping.
- (2) the fact that there are around 4000 offers for all international marketplaces that need to be researched, a way to crawl the data to get a fundamental idea of what the tests will do to the offers needed to be found.
- (3) A way to follow the data on a weekly basis to see if the tests had any results needed to be found. A template had to be made to track this data.
- (4) A way to test Google-Shopping ranking need to be found and two test cases need to be found & made.
- (5) When these tests are done, a way to implement the results of the tests in which the high-ranking offers are not negatively affected needed to be identified.

To answer these information gaps, data collection & test creation have been done. Two specific tests have been made 1 picture test for all platforms stated above which ran for 4 calendar weeks (changed pictures from logo to no logo) and 1 title test on Bol.com which ran for 1 calendar week (changed titles from short title to long title with maximum digits). After these tests were done results needed to be analysed and information gap 5 could be answered.

Results show that some marketplaces respond better than others to changes in pictures. Bol.com & Cdiscount responded badly on the changes and did not show good improvement. Darty and Conforama however, responded significantly better than the previous weeks and got good results. Next to that, the title test on Bol.com got good results as well. The recommendations are as follows:

Bol.com Picture test: Stop testing and change pictures back as it has bad results on the Google Shopping visibility.

Cdiscount Picture test: Stop testing and keep pictures as results are stable with previous weeks but the effort is too much for the results shown.

Conforama Picture test: Keep testing on this platform as the first results have been good.

Darty Picture test: Change Darty to a full Google Shopping platform as results are really good and as Darty is a small platform, the risk is not as big and tests with pictures can be done.

Bol.com Title test: Keep testing, next to only small offers test bigger offers as well. Change top selling offers to the new long titles.

Taking these recommendations into account, Mister Sandman will increase their visibility on Google Shopping on these marketplaces & will increase their knowledge for the future & growth of Mister Sandman.



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FOREWORD

This research justification was written for my bachelor's degree international business management at the HZ University of Applied Science in Vlissingen, The Netherlands. The subject of this research justification is related to Google Shopping in connection to international marketplaces. This is a very interesting research topic as there is a lot of sales potential at different international marketplaces and the connection to Google Shopping through these marketplaces is a broad new world without lots of previous research done.

I would like to thank my colleagues who helped me a lot during the process of the research, especially Clement L'Hommelet who helped me with some of the technical implementation and my manager Anastassia Konikova for the trust in me.



1 PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

1.1 COMPANY/PRODUCT ANALYSIS & DEVELOPMENTS

Mister Sandman GmbH, in the following, referred to Mister Sandman, is a young e-commerce start-up selling sleeping products on German, French, Dutch, Belgium, and Hungarian marketplaces.

Mister Sandman was founded in 2016 by Tobias Steffen in reaction to the growth of online mattress sales. This together in collaboration with Boening and Summer GmbH which is a mattress producer got everything into place to set up the company. At this time, 47 people are employed at Mister Sandman. There are around 17 nationalities. The office is in the heart of Berlin in the lively district Lichtenberg.

Mister Sandman sells over 6000 sleeping products per week including 60% mattresses, 20% toppers, and 30% smaller products. (See appendix 1). Mister Sandman focuses on a low-cost strategy as they want to compete with the cheapest mattresses and other sleeping products in the European market. Some direct competitors of Mister Sandman are Emma mattresses, Ikea mattresses, and Meradiso.

Mister Sandman mainly focuses their time on online Business to Consumer marketplaces. The platforms they serve are The Mister Sandman Webshop, Kaufland Germany, Hood Germany, Rakuten Germany, eBay Germany, Groupon Germany, Amazon Germany, Otto Germany, Wayfair Germany, Check24 Germany, Conforama France, Cdiscount France, FNAC France, Darty France, Bol.com Netherlands, Bol.com Belgium, and eMag Hungary.

Customers of Mister sandman differ a lot per marketplace and per country. Most of Mister sandman's customers are looking for mattresses in the lower price range. Mainly people who do not have or do not want to spend a lot of money on a mattress. These customers are mostly students, unemployed or looking for a cheap second mattress in a guest bedroom.

Mister Sandman's Finances fluctuate per month as there are many pricing tests going on. *"Mister Sandman's best week revenue of 2021 was €350.670,59 and sold 8443 products. In the worst week of 2021, the revenue was 67,584,17 with 1881 products sold."* (Bart Kiewiet, personal communication, 14 January 2022) The structures and teams in the company are as follows, at Mister Sandman, there are 5 main departments which are, Business analytics, Customer service, Business Development, People & Culture, and Inventory & BI. For a bigger overview (see appendix 2). The mission and the vision of Mister Sandman are *"to deliver quality sleeping products at a fair price easy and fast, our self-made sustainable growth is based on our team's courage to innovate and together we bring dreams to our customers all over the world."* (Tobias Steffen, 2016).



1.2 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

During the last years at Mister Sandman there were lots of problems that needed to be addressed. One of these problems is that there are never enough sales at Mister Sandman. There are of course many ways to increase sales. However, Mister Sandman has tried almost everything from price decreases to sustainable labels and from sponsored products to discounts via email. This all slightly works but did not give Mister Sandman the organic growth that they are looking for which is *“30% in 2022 in comparison to 2021.”* (Richard Modes, June 17th, 2022, personal communication). That is why Mister Sandman wants to partly focus on organic growth through Google and especially Google Shopping to increase sales through higher ranking.

Mister Sandman needs more sales to keep growing and to keep competing on the sleep product market. As said above, almost all potential sales increase methods have been tested already. The problem has been observed on all international platforms that Mister Sandman is operating on. Especially on the platform Bol.com. Because the goal of Mister Sandman is to make as much sales as possible, the whole company is impacted by this problem especially the business development team as they are responsible for the growth of Mister Sandman. The problem has been observed a lot of times during a time span of 3 years as Mister Sandman is always working on developing their business further. This problem, however, did not have priority during the last years. Now the priority changed and there is time to research the problem further.

1.3 INFORMATION GAPS

In order to understand how Mister Sandman should increase their ranking through Google Shopping, there were 5 information gaps that needed to be addressed. (1) The first information gap was that the marketplaces that are being researched, Bol.com, Conforama, Cdiscount & Darty do not want to explain how to get an increase in Google Shopping and how they choose the products they want to promote through Google Shopping. *“The marketplaces do this because they do not want to give some companies a benefit when they ask the marketplace and they want to create a fair competitive field where everyone has the same knowledge about the marketplace”* (Shamila Roks, June 18th 2022, personal communication). Next to that, Google mainly decides the algorithm, so the marketplaces do not know all the answers exactly. This, of course, is the main reason for the research. (2) Another information gap is the fact that there are around 4000 offers for all international marketplaces that need to be researched. These products needed to be researched to see if they had a picture with logo or without logo, for Bol.com to see what title they had and for all offers to see what their ranking was. A way had to be found to crawl the data to get a fundamental idea of this information. (3) A way to test Google Shopping ranking needed to be found and Two test cases needed to be found & made. (4) A way had to be found to follow the data on a weekly basis to see if the tests had any results. A template had to be made to track this data to see if the Google Shopping ranking increased or decreased. (5) When these tests were done, a way to implement the results of the tests in which the high-ranking offers are not negatively affected needed to be identified.



1.4 CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

In order to understand the research, some concepts & definitions need to be clarified. Firstly, Google Shopping. According to Broos & Marcos, 2015 *“Google Shopping is part of Google Search which is a two-sided platform and provides links to consumers. Organic links are provided for free and sponsored links are paid for by advertisers. The sponsored links will be investigated in this research as this is Google Shopping. Advertisers pay google to get shown in Google Shopping. Online marketplaces or other advertisers bid for a keyword and the advertiser who bids the most gets the sponsored link. This however, is a simplification of the concept as Google has an algorithm that decides the strength of the advertiser which influences the ranking. The strength is decided on countless KPI’s.”* During this research the KPI’s picture with or without logo & long or short titles will be investigated. Secondly, online marketplace. This term will be used a lot during the research. “An online marketplace is an e-commerce site that connects sellers with buyers. It’s often known as an electronic marketplace and all transactions are managed by the website owner” (Sana, 2022).

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question

Through what ways can Mister Sandman positively influence the Google Shopping ranking of its products on the international marketplaces, Bol.com, Cdiscount Darty & Conforama by the end of May?

Sub questions;

- 1- How does Mister Sandman crawl the data needed so that it allows them to react appropriately to changes in ranking & sales?
- 2-How does Mister Sandman follow the data that is being tracked in a way that allows them to do something?
- 3-How can the collected data become a useful tool for Mister Sandman's online selling strategy?

1.6 PROJECT AIM

The aim of this project was to research the possibilities of Google-Shopping through the international marketplaces Bol.com, Cdiscount, Darty & Conforama. With this information, the aim was to implement this into the full company of Mister Sandman by changing pictures & titles in the way Google wants it. Next to that, the project’s aim was to prove the PLOs of working and management (Sijben, Stoelinga, Molenaar, Ubachs , 2018). The main aimed at PLO’s were WT1, critical thinking, the process of the process of thought full evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion was used. WT2 innovation and creativity, by doing this research creativity had to be used. WW4, business messages had to be communicated effectively by discussing the project with the marketing manager *Clement L’Hommelet* at Mister Sandman. WW5, two languages which were German and English for this project had to be used. WW6 collaboration had to be used to set up the tests and to crawl the results in the right way. WW7, management information had to be produced by doing this research WM21, operations processes had to be managed within and between Mister Sandman and Google Shopping. TWM23, the impact of change in the organization had to be assessed when doing this research and lastly, in TWM24 complex business problem in an international business setting with the use of adequate research design had to be analyzed resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution by doing this project. These goals have been achieved before the end of May, it has been reached when the research is done and when the results are analyzed and recommendations for further testing have been made.

2 RESEARCH APPROACH

2.1 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

To address the main research question, this research question is the base of the research and was investigated by the means of quantitative research with a focus on testing of the online marketplaces Bol.com, Cdiscount, Conforama & Darty and, data collection through crawling of Google Shopping on a consistent basis to follow the results of the tests accurately. Next to that, desk research has been done to back up the data that has been collected. According to the CEO of Mister Sandman *“Google Shopping research is such a broad complex topic that qualitative research by the means of interviews would not make sense and it should be tested by the use of numbers and data with our own products”* (Tobias Steffen, personal communication, 7th April 2022). A similar methodology as this research was followed in a research paper done by The Department of Computer Science and Engineering Brac University, 2021.

The testing that has been done had a focus on 2 main test topics. Topic number one was the “picture test”, this test has run for 1 month from Calendar week 10, 2022 to Calendar week 14 2022. In this test, the pictures on the marketplaces Bol.com, Cdiscount Darty & Conforama have been changed from pictures with Logo to pictures without logos (See Appendix 3). Topic number two was the “Title test”, this test has run for 1 week from Calendar week 17, 2022 to Calendar week 18, 2022. In this test, the titles on the marketplace Bol.com had been changed from titles with all basic information to titles with more information (See Appendix 4).

To address sub questions 1 & 2, the data that has been crawled, had to be set up in a way that we can use it at any time procedure. This has been experimented with based on try and error & based on my professional experience in the company. Lastly, we needed to address question 4, The data has been implemented based on the results from the previous questions. This has also been done by experimenting and based on my professional experience in the company. Next to that, the tests were analyzed and based on the results the recommendations and conclusions were made.

2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH INFORMATION GAP

Information gap is 1 how to get an increase in ranking in Google Shopping on the international marketplaces Bol, Cdiscount, Conforama & Darty. This research question has been answered by the use of quantitative research (tests on the marketplaces by crawling google shopping data and implementing this data to get usable results) together with desk-research and the personal experiences I gained during my internship. These helped me get to a level of understanding which is sufficient to answer the first information gap. The second information gap was how to crawl the data that was needed to answer the main research question. This has been done by two tests, a picture and a title test as they were the most interesting at the time according to Tobias Steffen. Next to that, there is a full business analytics team who are specialized in crawling data. The third and fourth information gap were how to track and follow the data to see what the results are during the test and to see if everything is going right this for this sub-question, experiments & try and error were the main approaches of research. A template needed to be created to crawl this data. The fifth information gap is implementing the data gathered. For this sub-question all above stated questions needed to be answered and after that, the data could be implemented based on my professional experience in the company and based on the results of the data.



2.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

During the span of this research, the data was collected in two different ways which will be discussed in detail below. Number one was the data collection of the picture test and number two was the data collection of the title test. These different ways have been chosen because of efficiency and research done by The Department of Computer Science and Engineering Brac University in 2022.

Picture test

The data collection of the picture test has been done by a daily crawl with a VPN and a specific data crawl function on Google Chrome (See Annex 1). A template has been made where the crawled data can easily be found, and the test can easily be analyzed. (See Appendix 5 or Annex 2).

The data was crawled by using specific keywords on the Google Shopping platform. The keywords for Dutch marketplaces were (*Bol.com*) : *Matrasbeschermer, Matrasbeschermer 80x200, Matrasbeschermer 120x200, Matrasbeschermer 140x200, Matrasbeschermer 160x200, Matrasbeschermer 180x200, Lattenbodem, Lattenbodem 80x200, Lattenbodem 90x200, Lattenbodem 120x200, Lattenbodem 140x200, Lattenbodem 160x200, Kussen, Kussen 40x80, Kussen 80x80, Aloë Vera Kussen.*

These keywords were chosen based on previous experience and based on the fact that only “small products” were chosen to be crawled for the research.

The keywords that were used for the French marketplaces were (*Darty, Conforama, Cdiscount*) : *Matelas, Matelas 120x190, Matelas 70x200, Matelas 90x200, Matelas 100x200, Matelas 80x190, Matelas 80x200, Matelas 140x200, Matelas 180x200, Matelas 200x200, Matelas 140x190, Matelas 160x200, Matelas 90x190, Matelas 100x190, Matelas 60x120.*

These keywords were chosen based on previous experience and based on the fact that only “Mattress products” were chosen to be crawled for the research.

Title test

The data collection of the title test has been done by a crawl before the titles have been implemented, a crawl on the third day of the test and a crawl 1 week after the new titles had been implemented. This crawl has been done by the Business Analytics team of Mister Sandman who did this with the help of the program Python as this was more efficient than the picture test crawling that was done 2 months prior.

The data that had been crawled was crawled on the marketplace where the titles had been changed. This marketplace was Bol.com. 130 products titles had been changed with only the needed information in them to titles with the maximum number of digits (250) (see Appendix 6). The titles that had been chosen were chosen out by our content manager who used a title tool based on the search volume on Bol.com. (See Appendix 7 or Annex 3)



2.4 OPERATIONALIZATION

How is the data collected? Picture test

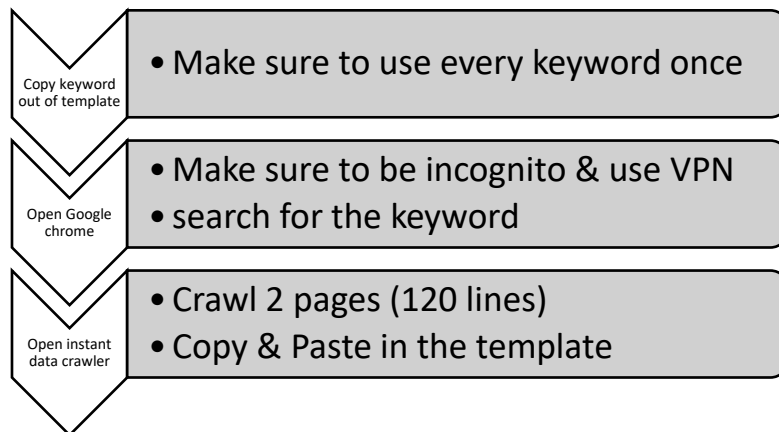


Figure 1. Data collection Picture test

For the data collection of the Picture test the data was crawled as shown above. First the keyword needed to be copied out of the template, then open google chrome in incognito mode, use the VPN of the country you want to crawl and search for the keyword you copied. After that the tool instant data crawler should be opened and 2 pages (120 lines) should be crawled. When this is done copy the crawled results into the template.

How is the data collected? Title test

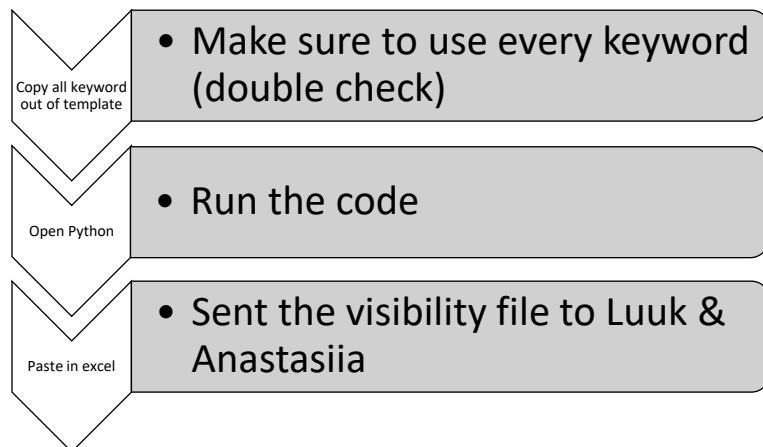


Figure 2. Data collection Titel test

For the data collection of the Title test the data was crawled as shown above, first copy all keywords out of the template, after that open python & run the code that has been made by the Business Analytics team. After that paste the results in Excel & sent the results to the people who are interested in them.



2.5 RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

The data collection was consistent with the testing as we crawled the data for one month each working day for the picture test and for 3 times in 1 week for the title test. The weeks where crawling was started were chosen out because they were stable weeks without promotions, as Kings Day in The Netherlands and summer sales in France. Next to that, there were no price changes of the Mister Sandman products during this period. Mister Sandman does have consistent sales over these weeks without big fluctuations. "Pay day has little to none impact on sales of the Mister Sandman products." (Tobias Steffen, 17th June 2022, personal communication). The influence of external factors can of course never fully be eliminated as Mister Sandman did not have influence on the competitors of the marketplaces, and we cannot influence the algorithm changes of Google and the marketplaces.

2.6 LIMITATIONS

Last but not least, it is important to mention that this research has some limitations.

First of all, it is necessary to mention as discussed above, the fact that Mister Sandman is not able to influence the Google Shopping algorithm fully as Mister Sandman does not have influence on the competitor & on the Google Shopping algorithm.

Next to that, there was a limited period for analysis (4 calendar weeks for the picture test & 1 calendar week for the title test) as Mister Sandman had 2 issues during the span of the research.

Issue number one was a foam issue out of eastern Europe. Because Mister Sandman's foam was mainly bought in eastern Europe, especially out of Ukraine and Belarus this was more expensive and harder to get to because of the war in Ukraine. Mister Sandman has since then, changed their foam suppliers to countries that are not involved in the war. This issue took 3 weeks out of the planning.

Issue number two was a competitor issue on Bol.com. Bol.com has rules that branded products need to be brand protected otherwise, other companies can "steal" the product and sell the same product you are selling under the same listing. This was happening to Mister Sandman and €35000,- revenue per week was being lost because of this. Because this was not fixed for a long time, the title test on Bol.com could not start yet and took 4 weeks out of the planned research.

Picture test

As shown in the table below, pictures have been uploaded differently per marketplace. There were some issues in the beginning, and it was uploaded gradually as the Account manager of Conforama did not accept everything at first, Cdiscount had almost everything uploaded in the first week except some outliers. Darty was the platform with the most issues as it takes a long time to upload products here. Bol.com had everything uploaded relatively quick within 1 working day. This table also shows the sampling size of the picture test. All the offers that were possible to change at this time without limitations were changed to get the best results possible.

Upload status	Conforama	Cdiscount	Darty	Bol.com
Date upload	11/03/2022	15/03/2022	30/03/2022	11/03/2022
Offers upload	103	68	51	35
Changes online (W11)	35	61	/	35
Changes online (W12)	51	65	/	35
Changes online (W13)	57	67	/	35
Changes online (W14)	92	68	38	35

Table 1. Upload status international marketplaces



Title test

There were at first also some issues with the title test as the Bol.com platform did A/B tests at the same time as we were doing the title test. “With an A/B test, an expectation is tested, based on 2 different versions. Half of the customers will see version A, the other half will see version B.”

(Bol.com, 2022)

Because of the fact there was a A/B test going on, Mister Sandman had to wait with the analysis until the test was over and Mister Sandman did not have as much time to crawl the results as wanted in the beginning.

2.7 GENERALIZATION

As the test has been run on all international marketplaces and products were used that did not have any limitations at this time. It can be said that this research can be used to analyze all the marketplaces tested. The other marketplaces at Mister Sandman should have their own test as each marketplace has different algorithms and ways of working with Google Shopping.



3 RESULTS

In this part of the report, the results of the research & data collection are presented. For the picture test, all marketplaces will be discussed individually in terms of Google Shopping ranking & Sales development. For the title test only, Bol.com will be presented.

3.1 BOL.COM PICTURE TEST

Top100 GS (offers upload)	Bol.com
Number of offers (09.03)	17
Number of offers (Week 11)	17
Number of offers (Week 12)	15
Number of offers (Week 13)	16
Number of offers (Week 14)	15

Table 2. Top 100 GS Bol.com

The results of Bol.com of the top 100 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (35 small offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 17 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 17 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 15 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 16 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 15 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping.



Top10 GS (offers upload)	Bol.com
Number of offers (09.03)	6
Number of offers (Week 11)	5
Number of offers (Week 12)	2
Number of offers (Week 13)	3
Number of offers (Week 14)	2

Table 3. Top 10 GS Bol.com

The results of Bol.com of the top 10 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (35 small offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 6 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 5 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 2 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 3 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 2 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping.

Sales (offers upload)	Bol.com
Sales (Week 8)	12
Sales (Week 9)	12
Sales (Week 10)	21
Sales (Week 11)	4
Sales (Week 12)	14
Sales (Week 13)	11
Sales (Week 14)	18

Table 4. Sales Bol.com

The results of Bol.com sales showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (35 small offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 21 sales were made. In the second week of the change (W11) 4 sales were made. In the third week of the change (W12) 14 sales were made. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 11 sales were made. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 18 sales were made.



3.2 CDISCOUNT PICTURE TEST

Top100 GS (offers upload)	Cdiscount
Number of offers (09.03)	3
Number of offers (Week 11)	8
Number of offers (Week 12)	15
Number of offers (Week 13)	9
Number of offers (Week 14)	6

Table 5. Top 100 GS Cdiscount

The results of Cdiscount of the top 100 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (68 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 3 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 8 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 15 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 9 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 6 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping.

Top10 GS (offers upload)	Cdiscount
Number of offers (09.03)	0
Number of offers (Week 11)	1
Number of offers (Week 12)	0
Number of offers (Week 13)	1
Number of offers (Week 14)	0

Table 6. Top 10 GS Cdiscount

The results of Cdiscount of the top 10 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (68 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 0 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 1 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 0 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 1 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 0 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping.



Sales (offers upload)	Cdiscount
Sales (Week 08)	23
Sales (Week 09)	54
Sales (Week 10)	24
Sales (Week 11)	36
Sales (Week 12)	26
Sales (Week 13)	35
Sales (Week 14)	35

Table 7. Sales Cdiscount

The results of Cdiscount sales showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (68 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 24 sales were made. In the second week of the change (W11) 36 sales were made. In the third week of the change (W12) 26 sales were made. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 35 sales were made. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 35 sales were made.

3.3 CONFORAMA PICTURE TEST

Top100 GS (offers upload)	Conforama
Number of offers (09.03)	7
Number of offers (Week 11)	17
Number of offers (Week 12)	15
Number of offers (Week 13)	17
Number of offers (Week 14)	21

Table 8. Top 100 GS Conforama

The results of Conforama of the top 100 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (103 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 7 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 17 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 15 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 17 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 21 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping.



Top10 GS (offers upload)	Conforama
Number of offers (09.03)	1
Number of offers (Week 11)	3
Number of offers (Week 12)	0
Number of offers (Week 13)	1
Number of offers (Week 14)	1

Table 9. Top 10 GS Conforama

The results of Conforama of the top 10 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (103 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 1 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 3 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 0 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 1 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 1 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping.

Sales (offers upload)	Conforama
Sales (Week 08)	103
Sales (Week 09)	88
Sales (Week 10)	159
Sales (Week 11)	179
Sales (Week 12)	136
Sales (Week 13)	222
Sales (Week 14)	202

Table 10. Sales Conforama

The results of sales Conforama showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (103 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 159 sales were made. In the second week of the change (W11) 179 sales were made. In the third week of the change (W12) 136 sales were made. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 222 sales were made. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 202 sales were made.



3.4 DARTY PICTURE TEST

Top100 GS (offers upload)	Darty
Number of offers (09.03)	6
Number of offers (Week 11)	10
Number of offers (Week 12)	10
Number of offers (Week 13)	14
Number of offers (Week 14)	16

Table 11. Top100 GS Darty

The results of Darty of the top 100 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (51 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 6 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 10 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 10 offers were online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 14 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 16 offers where online in the top 100 of Google Shopping.

Top10 GS (offers upload)	Darty
Number of offers (09.03)	6
Number of offers (Week 11)	4
Number of offers (Week 12)	4
Number of offers (Week 13)	6
Number of offers (Week 14)	6

Table 12. Top10 GS Darty

The results of Darty of the top 10 Google Shopping offers showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (51 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 6 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the second week of the change (W11) 4 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the third week of the change (W12) 4 offers were online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 6 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 6 offers where online in the top 10 of Google Shopping.



Sales (offers upload)	Darty
Sales (Week 08)	14
Sales (Week 09)	25
Sales (Week 10)	14
Sales (Week 11)	12
Sales (Week 12)	16
Sales (Week 13)	33
Sales (Week 14)	24

Table 13. Sales Darty

The results of sales Darty showed in the table above & in the Annex file for the raw results were as followed. According to the data and to the tests done (51 offers that were changed from pictures with logo to pictures without logo) in the first week of the change (W10) 14 sales were made. In the second week of the change (W11) 12 sales were made. In the third week of the change (W12) 16 sales were made. In the fourth week of the change (W13) 33 sales were made. In the fifth week of the change (W14) 24 sales were made.

3.5 TITLE TEST

Offers		Rank Development			
Keyword	Product ID	Average Rank W17	Average Rank Mid Week	Average Rank W18	Average WoW W 17-18
Kussen 80x80	9300000094066485	48	15	5	43
Kussen 80x40	9300000060852396	31	20	2	29
Baselatt 160x200	9300000060757014	35	9	10	25
Baselatt 180x200	9300000062510878	38	29	13	25
Baselatt 140x200	9200000125523570	26	22	5	21
Baselatt 90x200	9200000116792475	42	21	21	21
Baselatt 120x200	9300000094066284	37	20	16	21
Duvet 220x240	9200000116792439	30	19	11	19
Duvet 200x200	9300000094066485	22	29	5	17
Duvet 160x220	9300000060757015	33	20	17	16
Duvet 155x220	9300000060852396	5	3	2	3
Protector 200x200	9300000060757014	11	11	10	1
Protector 90x200	9300000062510878	14	11	13	1
Protector 140x200	9200000125523570	2	2	5	-3
Protector 120x200	9200000116792475	18	19	21	-3
Protector 180x200	9200000116792439	6	6	11	-5
Protector 180x200	9300000094066284	11	13	16	-5
Protector 160x200	9300000060757015	9	14	17	-8

Table 14. Title test rank development



The results of the title test on Bol.com and the ranking of Google Shopping is as followed: out of 18 variants, 15 have improved ranking. 10 of them have improved significantly more than 15 ranks. 5 offers show some decrease in ranking from between -3 to -8. And 2 of them stayed stable with only an increase of 1.

Offers		Sales Dev		
Keyword	Product ID	Sales W17	Sales W18	WoW
Kussen 80x80	9300000094066485	4	7	3
Kussen 80x40	9300000060852396	0	2	2
Baselatt 160x200	9300000060757014	11	14	3
Baselatt 180x200	9300000062510878	7	13	6
Baselatt 140x200	9200000125523570	5	5	0
Baselatt 90x200	9200000116792475	4	15	11
Baselatt 120x200	9300000094066284	3	8	5
Duvet 220x240	9200000116792439	2	6	4
Duvet 200x200	9300000094066485	2	1	-1
Duvet 160x220	9300000060757015	1	0	-1
Duvet 155x220	9300000060852396	3	2	-1
Protector 200x200	9300000060757014	4	10	6
Protector 90x200	9300000062510878	3	3	0
Protector 140x200	9200000125523570	12	5	-7
Protector 120x200	9200000116792475	21	17	-4
Protector 180x200	9200000116792439	12	11	-1
Protector 180x200	9300000094066284	17	16	-1
Protector 160x200	9300000060757015	11	9	-2
Total		122	144	22

Table 15. Title test sales development

The sales development of the title test is as follows: in comparison with the week before, there were 22 more sales. 8 offers had less sales than the week before. 8 offers had more sales than the week before. 2 offers had the same sales than the week before.



3.6 DESK RESEARCH PICTURE TEST

When looking at Google shopping and Searching for a keyword, you see that every picture does not have a logo and has a white background. (see appendix 7) Next to that Bol.com states the following “Images do not contain Discount labels, watermarks, company names or company logos as stated in the terms and conditions” (Bol.com, 2022) According to Shamila Roks from Bol.com “Bol.com does this to get the highest possible ranking on search engines” (Shamila Roks, personal communication, June 18th 2022)

3.7 DESK RESEARCH TITLE TEST

The recommendations for Bol.com titles are the following. According to Shamila Roks from Bol.com “Bol.com recommends these titles to get the highest possible ranking on search engines” (Shamila Roks, personal communication, June 18th, 2022)

[Brand] [Series] [Product group] – [Size] – [Quantity of pieces / reference]

Dos:

- Mention the brand (if applicable)
- State the model or type number
- Mention the product group
- Use a hyphen to separate different parts:
- Mention one or two distinguishing features

don'ts:

- Complete words in capital letters
- English words
- Different spellings or synonyms
- Many adjectives
- **Use of more than 70 characters** (including spaces)
- Use of symbols



4 CONCLUSION

In this part of the report the conclusion will be presented per test done. Remarkable results will be pointed out and the fact if a test was satisfactory or dissatisfactory will be shown.

4.1 BOL.COM PICTURE TEST

As shown in the result section of this report, the Google Shopping ranking of the top 100 offers decreased with 2 offers. The Google Shopping ranking of the top 10 offers decreased with 3 offers and the sales in week 11 just after the changes have been made, plummeted with 67% from 12 to 4. With these results all together the conclusion of the Google Shopping picture test on Bol.com is that it was dissatisfactory. Bol.com together with the Google Shopping algorithm does not respond well to picture changes from logo to no logo.

4.2 CDISCOUNT PICTURE TEST

As shown in the results section of this report, the Google Shopping ranking of top 100 offers increased with 3 offers. Next to that there was a big increase in week 12 of offers in the top 100. The Google Shopping ranking of the top 10 offers did not increase. For 2 of the weeks there was 1 offers in the top 10 but in the end of the test it was 0 again. The sales were stable and had a small decrease in week 12. With these results all together the conclusion of the Google Shopping picture test on Cdiscount is that it was dissatisfactory. Cdiscount together with the Google Shopping algorithm does respond slightly to changes in pictures. The amount of effort to change these pictures, however, does not make this a satisfactory outcome.

4.3 CONFORAMA PICTURE TEST

As shown in the result section of this report, the Google Shopping ranking of top 100 offers increased with 14 offers. The Google Shopping ranking of the top 10 offers did not increase and stayed stable. The sales of the offers fluctuated a lot during the test and had a drop in week 11 from week 12 with 43 sales. However, the sales bounced back up to 222 in week 13 which was a good sign. With these results all together the conclusion of the Google Shopping picture test on Conforama is that it was satisfactory. Conforama together with the Google Shopping algorithm does respond well to the changes in pictures.

4.4 DARTY PICTURE TEST

As shown in the result section of this report, the Google Shopping ranking of top 100 offers increased from with 10 offers. The Google Shopping ranking of the top 10 offers increased steadily with 2 offers. The sales of the offers went from 12 in the first week to 24 in the last week and had a big increase in week 12 (16 sales) to week 13 (33 sales). The upload however took a long time as Darty does not accept all changes immediately. With these results all together the conclusion of the Google Shopping picture test on Darty is that it was very satisfactory. Darty together with the Google Shopping algorithm does respond well to the changes in pictures.



4.5 BOL.COM TITLE TEST

As shown in the result section of this report, it can be said that for the time being the results are good. Apart from the 5 offers that decreased in ranking, the ranking increased. For the sales the same thing can be stated. There were 22 more sales than the previous week which is a good first result of this test. With these results all together the conclusion of the google shopping title test on Bol is that it was very satisfactory. Bol together with the google shopping algorithm does respond well to changes in titles.

4.6 HOW ARE THE INFORMATION GAPS FILLED?

Information gap 1 is filled per marketplace, it has been discovered that every marketplace reacts differently to the Google Shopping algorithm and to the changes made. That is why some marketplaces are better suited for Google Shopping (Conforama & Darty) because they had promising, and satisfactory results and the offers were often more chosen for Google Shopping then before the changes. Some marketplaces are worse suited for Google Shopping (Bol.com & Cdiscount) because they had less promising and dissatisfactory results. The second information gap is filled by using our Business Analytics teams help who did the crawling of all the offers on the international marketplaces. The third information gap is filled by the tests that have been created and made. A title test and a picture test have been done during the span of this research. The fourth information gap has been filled in by the template that has been made (Annex 2). This template tracked the crawled data and made it easy to follow the Google Shopping ranking and to see if this ranking decreased or increased. The fifth information gap is filled by implementing new tests and deciding on what marketplaces Google Shopping is a good option and on which it is not a good option.

4.7 ANSWER ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question

Through what ways can Mister Sandman positively influence the Google Shopping ranking of its products on the international marketplaces, Bol.com, Cdiscount Darty & Conforama by the end of May?

Mister Sandman can positively influence the Google Shopping ranking of its product on two main international marketplaces which are Conforama & Darty. This can be positively influenced by changing pictures from logo to no logo. For Bol.com changing pictures was not successful but changing the titles was. This can positively influence the Google Shopping ranking as well. For Cdiscount the picture test did not positively influence the Google Shopping ranking and changing pictures or other attributes on this platform take too much time.

Sub questions

1- How does Mister Sandman crawl the data needed so that it allows them to react appropriately to changes in ranking & sales? Mister Sandman has crawled this data by 2 different ways explained in the data collection & operationalization part of this report.

2-How does Mister Sandman follow the data that is being tracked in a way that allows them to do something? A template has been made that tracks the data that has been crawled. (Annex 2)

3-How can the collected data become a useful tool for Mister Sandman's online selling strategy? The collected data has become a useful tool for Mister Sandman's online strategy as the information gathered can be used to improve the marketplaces Google Shopping ranking and the sales of the marketplaces.



5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 BOL.COM PICTURE TEST

The recommendations for the Bol.com picture test, everything considered is to stop testing on this platform and to not change pictures from logo to no logo. There were no good results and there are a lot of price tests, competitor issues and other external factors that can influence the Google Shopping ranking and our sales at this time. So further testing would not make sense.

5.2 CDISCOUNT PICTURE TEST

The recommendations for the Cdiscount picture test, everything considered is to stop testing on this platform and to not change pictures from logo to no logo. The results on the Cdiscount platform were minimum and the effort that went into changing these pictures were too much. Changing the pictures to no logo and further testing on pictures without logos would not make sense at this time.

5.3 CONFORAMA PICTURE TEST

The recommendations for the Conforama picture test, everything considered is to keep on testing on this platform and to change pictures from logo to no logo even more. During further testing, Use 1 or 2 top selling offers for the test to see if the ranking on Google Shopping can increase for these offers. Next to that, gradually change our pictures from logo to no logo.

5.4 DARTY PICTURE TEST

The recommendations for the Darty picture test, everything considered is to make Darty a full Google Shopping platform and change all pictures to no logo immediately to see how the platform develops. Darty is still a small platform, so it is possible to take risks on Darty. The data should be crawled every other working day to see if the visibility is improving and the sales should be monitored closely to see if nothing is going wrong.

5.5 BOL.COM TITLE TEST

The recommendations for the Bol.com title test, everything considered is to keep on testing on Bol.com and change titles even more. As the test only have run for small products, it would be good to test them on the more top selling offers like mattresses & toppers. These offers of course, should be monitored closely & should be chosen out carefully to offers that are not already high ranking on Google Shopping.

5.6 HOW WOULD I DO IT AGAIN?

The results of the tests in general were satisfactory as there was a lot of information gathered about Google Shopping and about the different marketplaces. The things I would do differently is to change less offers as the crawling of results for the picture test took a long time each day. I would request help of the Business Analytics team to help with an automated crawl for the picture test and I would request the help of account managers so that the pictures were uploaded quicker than during this test. For the title test I would check if there were no other tests of Bol.com itself going on and I would test titles for better selling products as the small products are not as successful as our bigger products.

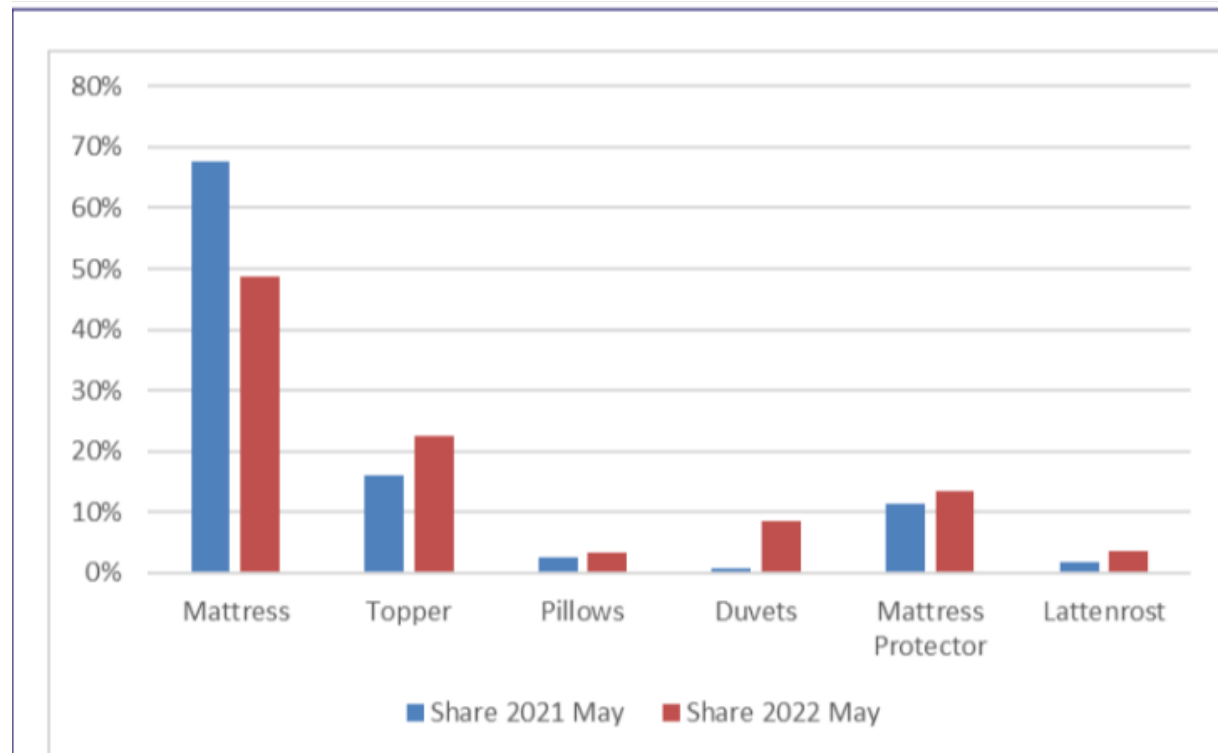
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- Product information tips & usage of pictures. (n.d) Bol.com. <https://partnerplatform.bol.com/nl/hulp-nodig/productinformatie/tips-gebruik-afbeelding/>
- Product information write a good title. (n.d) Bol.com. <https://partnerplatform.bol.com/nl/hulp-nodig/productinformatie/schrijf-een-goede-titel/>

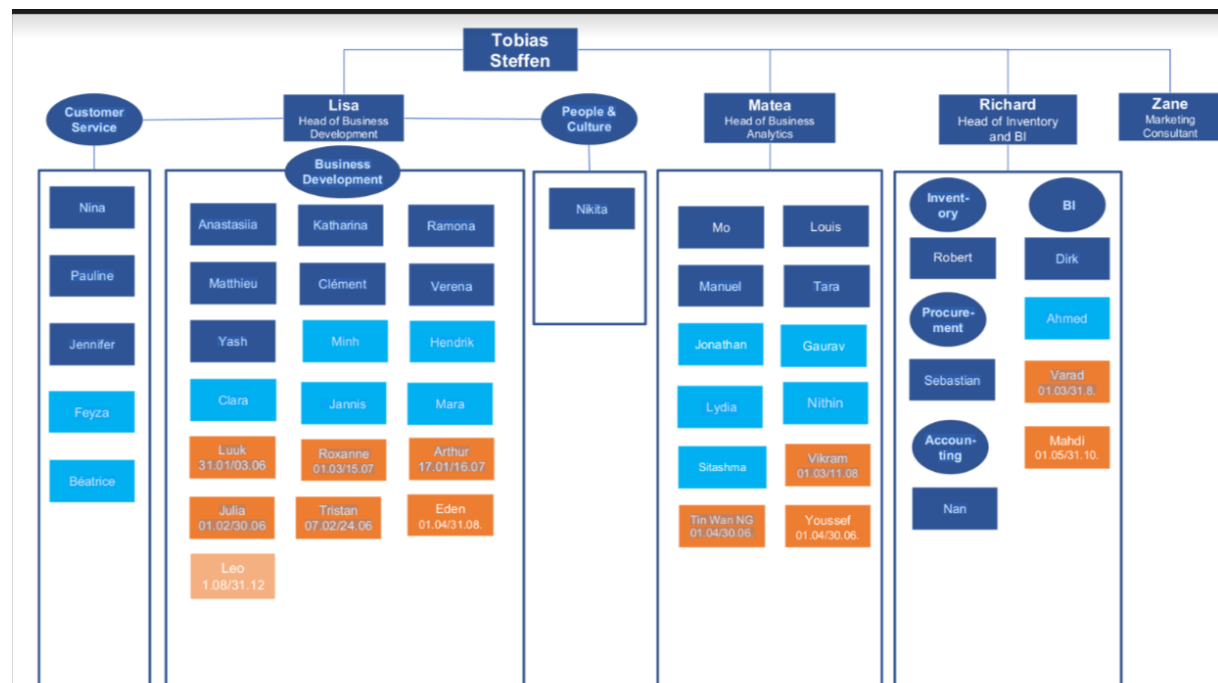


APPENDICES

Appendix 1







Appendix 2





Appendix 5

Marketplace	EAN	SKU platform	New visuel 1 picture	Changes mat	Online?	NL 14.03	NL 15.03	NL 16.04	NL 17.04	NL 18.05
Bol	4063585959121	ID9300000071157720		changed	Yes	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND
Bol	4063585959053	ID9300000071157722		changed	Yes	NOT FOUND	4	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND
Bol	4063585959084	ID9300000071157723		changed	Yes	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND
Bol	4063585959145	ID9300000071157721		changed	Yes	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND	NOT FOUND

Appendix 6

Productnaam ⓘ

Matras 90x200 - Koudschuim - Kindermatras - 15 cm Hoog - Premium Tijd - Stevig

Logische titelopbouw: [Merknaam] [Serie] - [Productgroep] - [Kenmerk 1] - [Kenmerk 2] - [Kenmerk 3]

250 / 250

Appendix 7

The screenshot displays a search results page for 'kussen' (pillows) on the Bol.com website. The page features a grid of eight product listings, each with a thumbnail image, title, price, and delivery information. At the top, there are navigation elements including a search bar with the term 'kussen', a filter icon, and a language selector set to 'Nederlands'. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'Free Shipping' and 'Free shipping'. A banner at the top right indicates 'About these results'. The products listed include:

- Swiss Boxkussen - Hoofdkussen**: Price €19.99, Free delivery.
- Hoofdkussen - Kussen**: Price €21.95, Free delivery.
- HEMA gevuld Kussen 45x45 Abstract**: Price €17.50, In stock, Compare prices from 2 shops.
- KÄRLEKSGRÅS kussen, grijs**: Price €2.99, Free 365-day returns.
- DORMIPUR Memovita Kussen met Traagschuim**: Price €28.02, Free delivery, Compare prices from 2 shops.
- Kussen Alette - Groen**: Price €27.40, Free delivery.
- HEMA Bagagedragerkussen**: Price €16.00, In stock, Compare prices from 2 shops.
- Blokker Kussen Idaho Groen**: Price €19.99, Free delivery.



6 ANNEX



Attachment 1 -
Annex 1: Profesional product 1



Attachment 2 -
Annex 2: Template & Raw data



Attachment 3 -
Annex 3: Titles.xlsx