

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

HOW CAN THE PORTUGUESE LUXURY MADE-TO-MEASURE MENSWEAR
BRAND LABRADOR INTERNATIONALIZE USING PREMIUM AND LUXURY
FASHION E-RETAILERS?

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ABSTRACT

Labrador is a Portuguese luxury made-to-measure menswear brand that sells classic and casualwear for men. The market for formal attire has recently decreased and Labrador has felt the repercussions. This project aims to explore approaches for Labrador to increase its penetration in the market and internationalize. The strategy is based on selling formalwear through fashion e-retailers. To decide on the international target, the best go-to market to implement the strategy and full-price e-retailers to follow, a narrowing down process was developed. We recommend Labrador to focus on phase 1, managers/executives, e-retailers The Rake and/or Baltzar, and make Paris its priority.

- ❖ Made-To-Measure Menswear Market
- ❖ Internationalization Strategy
- ❖ Premium and Luxury Fashion E-retailers
- ❖ International Targets

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TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION..... 3

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND 4

 2.1. History of the brand and intended next steps 4

 2.2. Labrador’s brand identity 5

 2.3. Insights on menswear fashion market and trends..... 6

 2.4. Full-price e-retailers – general analysis..... 9

3. ADDRESSING THE WORK PROJECT TOPIC..... 11

 3.1. Strategy for positioning Labrador online 11

 3.2. Methodology 13

 3.3. Research Insights – International Targets 13

 3.4. Research Insights - Full price e-retailers and fashion online channels 20

4. IMPLICATIONS..... 24

5. WORK PROJECT MAIN LIMITATIONS..... 25

6. REFERENCES 26

7. APPENDICES 28

1. INTRODUCTION

I am currently working as a Marketing & Sales Intern at Labrador, a Portuguese menswear luxury brand. In accordance with João Monteiro, Labrador's Marketing Manager, I am investigating for my Work Project the brand's internationalization through premium and luxury fashion e-retailers.

The aim is to explore approaches that would allow Labrador to sell internationally and increase its distribution worldwide. This Work Project addresses specifically the following questions: why this challenge?, what are the possible scenarios?, who are the potential international targets?, and how can Labrador achieve this objective?.

Labrador is an established menswear luxury brand with a strong brand name and loyal client base in the Portuguese market. The core product of the brand and its main differentiation point is its made-to-measure suit that provides the opportunity for each man to have a suit made exclusively for him.

However, in the last few years, consumers' demand has changed. Suits are no longer mandatory in most workplaces, media portray men wearing casual outfits in their daily activities, and Covid-19 turned working from home the new normal. The current global context has intensified men's aspiration for more relaxed clothing.

Due to the male target wearing less suits, and because the pandemic's repercussions are progressing, Labrador's turnover in Portugal is decreasing. The brand needs to expand internationally. However, Labrador experienced in the past unsuccessful international expansion initiatives (to be explained below). The option currently considered is to internationalize via luxury fashion multi-brand e-retailers such as Mytheresa and Farfetch. The main challenge of this option is to convey the heritage and culture of Labrador's tailoring service online, without having a professional taking the measures in person.

Summing up, the main goals of this Work Project are to explore a strategy to overcome this challenge and to develop an entering strategy that enables Labrador to express its authenticity and uniqueness worldwide through e-retailers.

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1. History of the brand and intended next steps

Labrador is a 30-year-old Portuguese brand of clothes and accessories for men. Founded in 1991 by two managing partners, the brand is known for its tradition, timeless appeal, and the close relationship it maintains with clients.

The brand became an instant success in Portugal and stores began scattering the country from North to South. Then, Labrador decided to “think bigger” and to expand overseas. Unfortunately, this moment coincided with the 2008 crisis. After going to London and Madrid, where poor investments were made, Labrador’s solvency was on the line. The brand went bankrupt and was put on sale in the market. At that time, The Edge Group, an investment and venture capital holdings group with its core business being real estate, was invited to bid on the brand. The proposal moved forward and the company acquired Labrador for 80.000€ in 2012. The Edge Group revived the brand, relaunching it in 2013. A store was opened in the Amoreiras Shopping Center (Marcela 2016).

As a result, José Luís Pinto Basto, CEO of the company that today owns Labrador, became its new leader. His first task was to keep the core DNA of the brand untouched. Since he believed Labrador already had what was necessary to succeed, no drastic changes in the brand’s concept or product portfolio were made (Têxtil 2016). The financial impact was significant, with a return of 1.1 million euros in 2014, and 1.5 million euros in 2015 (Têxtil 2016). Labrador was able to cope with its past of insolvency and register positive growth, but without reaching the levels before the crisis.

At the end of 2018, Labrador's leadership passed on from José Luís Pinto Basto to his son, José Luís Pinto Basto, and daughter in law, Mónica Pinto Basto. Once José Luís became the newer CEO, he felt renovation was missing. Labrador lacked presence online, on social media, and the store concept had to change. Thus, the launch of the brand's website and the opening of a new flagship store were the paths to follow towards modernization. The website was launched in April of 2019 and the new Lisbon flagship store was opened in Espaço Amoreiras in December of that same year.

In terms of physical distribution, Labrador is currently present in Portugal with three locations – Espaço Amoreiras in Lisbon, Cascais Shopping in Cascais, and Peninsula Boutique Center in Porto – and digitally through its brand website. As for the production process, this is mostly done nationwide with garments and textiles coming from the world's leading manufacturers.

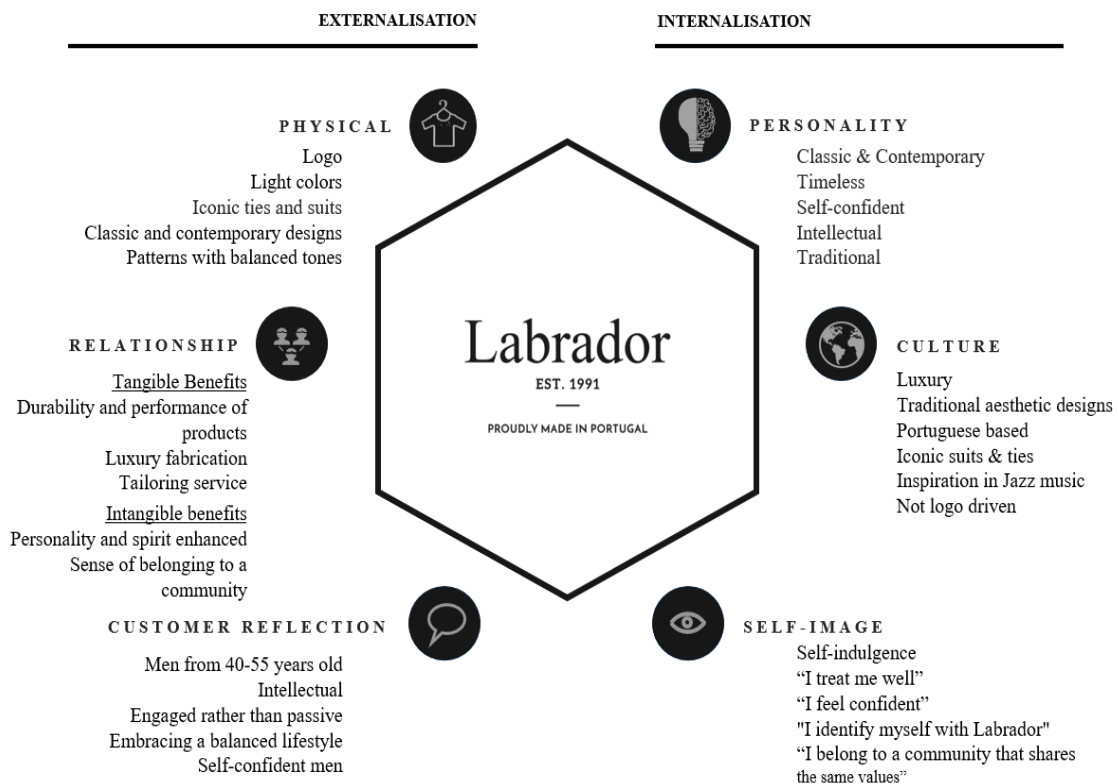
In what the future is concerned, Labrador is considering to develop in three main fields: 1) physical distribution in Portugal, 2) identity of the brand, and 3) international expansion. 1) Regarding the distribution, Labrador aspires to be present in all important points of purchase of sales that clients go to. 2) Identity improvement is detailed in the following section. 3) International expansion is what the thesis focuses on.

2.2.Labrador's brand identity

Brand identity indicates what brand managers would like the brand to be, what the brand stands for and what makes it unique (da Silveira (a) 2019). This relates to the *Ethos* of the brand – set of traits and ways of behaving that make up the identity of an individual or a collective (Robertson 2018). In companies, this concept portrays the values behind the brand that express its uniqueness. At Labrador, these values are tradition, high-quality, made-in Portugal, classic style, and community spirit (Monteiro 2020).

Labrador provides tangible benefits (durability, performance of products, tailoring service) and emotional ones (status, belonging to a community). In addition, the brand has a unique style – designs with natural colours, patterns using balanced tones, and iconic products such as suits and ties, - that makes it recognizable in the market. The objective of the managers is to maintain Labrador’s stylistic identity while following market trends. To better understand the identity of Labrador, the Kapferer’s Identity Prism was applied, as shown in Figure 1 (see Appendix 1 for information on the Kapferer’s Identity model).

Figure 1: Labrador’s Brand Identity



Source: WP Author, based on Kapferer’s Identity Prism

2.3. Insights on menswear fashion market and trends

Traditional menswear items such as suits have long been responsible for the wardrobe of well-dressed men, and a way for men to convey their social status. However, cultural shifts have led to the emergence of casual essentials to join the traditional ones. Workplaces not requesting employees to wear suits at all times, entertainment icons

portraying casual styles, and now Covid-19 are some of the reasons behind this shift. The demand for casual clothing and streetwear has been increasing, and the menswear market is expected to outpace the women's one (BOFa 2014). Since luxury brands accompany trends, they are progressively moving towards casual and streetwear in the male sector.

Millennials require a greater variety of casual outfits and give more importance to their look. This is partially due to the pressure they are exposed to on social media (BOFb 2018). With streetwear growing exponentially worldwide, tailoring and suits have been suffering a setback, and are now left on the side-lines.

Studies confirm that this change in behaviour is reflected by the ideas and attitudes of society that have been slowly moving from conservative perspectives to wider and less restricted opinions (Militano 2020). Whereas womenswear once dominated the fashion industry, today the younger male generation considers itself as being more sophisticated than its older peers (BOFc, 2014). Main factors include the impact of television series, collaborations between artists and fashion brands, and the increasingly hyper connected world (BOFc, 2014). Indeed, the rise of the internet has made men's style more transversal. Now, what a man wears in China can be seen on one who lives in Spain. Thus, geographical boundaries in terms of fashion have become meaningless.

Other relevant trend is the emergence of new successful casual items in the luxury sector such as sneakers, sweatshirts, and sweatpants. Luxury sneakers, sweatshirts and accessories have gained their place in the bigger picture. The market for sneakers has developed exponentially and brands like Christian Louboutin, Balenciaga and Valentino are now offering successful collections (BOFa, 2014).

As for accessories, bags are "probably the biggest category that has shifted over" (BOFa, 2014). Also, it is said that men now purchase more from accessories, while the search for suits and jackets has decreased.

Regarding e-commerce, reports show that even before Covid-19, around 40% of men aged between 18-34 years old would prefer shopping online, whereas only 33% of women agreed with the statement (Schlossberg 2016). The majority still prefers brick-and-mortar stores because of the human interaction, physical contact with the product, and the immediate acquisition of the item. Nevertheless, the pandemic has intensified online purchases.

Euromonitor International demonstrates that the American market has felt the decrease in demand for formalwear, since in 2005 suits were worth \$2.7 billion whereas in 2019 the value was of \$1.9 billion (BOFd, 2020). The pandemic only came to worsen what was already happening: change in wardrobe social requirements, and men dressing differently than they did a decade ago. While male customers with high purchasing power may continue to buy high-quality suits and keep the same habits, others may just buy suits when needed, from less premium brands, or rent one in case a special occasion arises.

With this shift taking place, how can Labrador, a brand with its Ethos focused on suits and made-to-measure clothes address the challenge of the formalwear decrease?

What many other brands with the same Ethos as Labrador are doing to overcome the mentioned obstacles is to reinforce their offer of more casual products and introduce accessories into their portfolios. These brands also promote and improve their online distribution. Another solution that research foresees to be promising is the entrance in the Asian market where the opposite trend is developing – the demand for suits is rising without having reached its apex yet (BOFd, 2020). However, this remains the hardest path to follow. In China, Facebook and Google are substituted by Xiao Hong Shu, Douyin and WeChat, while companies face cultural differences and language barriers. Lastly, the protection laws and legal issues are specific and different from the ones used in Europe and the United States. As the China Business Review reported, brands can easily fail in

the Chinese market if they do not comprehend how different the mindsets and motivations from its consumers are (Sheen 2019).

Hence, a workable strategy for tailoring and traditional menswear brands to survive in the long-term seems to be the improvement of online distribution and integration of an omnichannel approach, while progressively offering more casual pieces.

Still, it is relevant to look at national competitors for Labrador to set them as examples of what can be done differently. Important to point out that none of these players has expanded internationally through premium or luxury fashion e-retailers. An analysis on local competitors is shown on Table 1.

Table 1: Labrador’s Main Competitors in Portugal

	MAIN CHALLENGES	STRATEGY DEVELOPED	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
WESLEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge to recruit younger male consumers. • Premium brands with expensive prices. • Decrease of formalwear demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ended the tailoring service. • Bet on casual collections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competes more directly with Labrador, in terms of product range and store positioning.
WICKETT JONES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong in casual collections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More younger consumers (+30 years old).
DIELMAR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High discounts during sales periods. • "Value for money" in the formalwear: lower quality but much more accessible prices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite having a weaker image, many of Labrador's potential clients shop there.

Source: WP Author, based on Labrador’s own insights (Monteiro 2020)

2.4.Full-price e-retailers – general analysis

The decrease in demand for suits and ties made Labrador’s management consider internationalizing to meet its niche market. The premium and luxury fashion full-price e-retailers seemed the best approach to develop this strategy.

For the past few years, luxury fashion has earned its place in digital platforms. This led to an online luxury shopping growth of 22%, pre corona virus (Bain & Company, 2019), which englobes official brand websites, multi-brand full-price/off-price e-retailers

and department stores e-commerce platforms. Additionally, even though the luxury experience is normally associated with physical engagement in-store, it is confirmed that at least half of consumers’ purchasing decisions of luxury goods are influenced by what they see online (McKinsey & Company 2015). Multi-brand e-retailers were noted as the most preferred source for online research. (Dauriz, Remy & Sandri 2014). Multi-brand e-retailing occurs when an online platform sells more than one brand. It allows consumers to purchase online from different brands, providing them with a wider range of choice.

Multi-brand e-retailers get their pick of brands’ particular styles and quantities to stock. By displaying a variety of choices in their product categories, these channels do not guarantee exclusivity to brands. Also, because they target different shopping occasions, hence different types of consumers, they are expected to “capture a greater portion of the online luxury fashion, as single-brand websites have more limited growth potential.” (McKinsey & Company 2015). At the same time, these channels allow luxury fashion brands to gain the advantage of reaching consumers who do not have the time to shop on different mono-brand websites, and those who do not live close by to urban centres, hence not able to visit physical boutiques. However, this greater visibility also has its downside – risk of over-exposure and dilution of the brand’s identity.

The e-retailers we pursued were organized by retailers selling men/womenswear with high or medium/low awareness and by those with core business being menswear.

Table 2 – Full-price premium and luxury fashion e-retailers

	Multi-brand e-retailers	URL Link
High Brand Awareness	Net-a-Porter (Mr. Porter) *	https://www.mrporter.com
	Yoox	https://www.yoox.com
	Farfetch	https://www.farfetch.com
	Mytheresa	https://www.mytheresa.com
	Matches Fashion	https://www.matchesfashion.com

Medium/Low Brand Awareness	Gilt	https://www.gilt.com
	Stylebop	https://www.stylebop.com
	The Corner	https://www.thecorner.com
	Rue Lala	https://www.ruelala.com
	Lyst	https://www.lyst.com
Menswear as Core Business	The Rake	https://therake.com
	Baltzar	https://baltzar.com

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided in column 3 of Table 2

* Mr. Porter from Net-a-Porter could also be considered in the third category

3. ADDRESSING THE WORK PROJECT TOPIC

3.1.Strategy for positioning Labrador online

Summing up the previous sections, Labrador is facing the downsides of the formalwear market decrease caused by the decline in men's needs for suits and the repercussions from the Corona virus.

Labrador's wish is to be known as being a gentlemen's outfitter: a brand that dresses men for any occasion, from weddings to a weekend out in the countryside, but it still keeps its identity anchored on made-to-measure suits. The objective is to expand the brand outside Portugal to reach men who still value classical outfits. The market segment still exists but is smaller. Achieving a bigger share of this smaller segment might be more rewarding than stretching the identity to the very crowded category of casualwear.

A strategy divided in two phases is being considered by Labrador's management when entering premium and luxury fashion e-retailers. While expanding internationally, the goal is for Labrador to search for an approach to develop the brand's casualwear.

The first phase is centred in positioning Labrador in the *métier*. Being projected for the medium run, this phase aims to make Labrador enter the international market by offering products where it has the strongest differentiating advantage. The portfolio

would include items from the classic range: suits, shirts, ties, jackets, and blazers (Appendix 2). Alongside its made-to-measure feature, Labrador would be able to create the differentiation point it needs. The brand is considering this option because this is an opportunity to present itself in the made-to-measure market at an international level. Since Portuguese men are already familiar with the high-quality and reputation of Labrador's classical wear, this first setting is meant for non-national targets, as these are the ones who are unaware of its existence. So, this would expand the customer base the brand already has. An obstacle brands face when entering online retailers is the large and diverse product portfolio they carry. In the beginning, offering items from different ranges can cause confusion in men's minds about the core identity of the brand. Thus, by focusing only on formalwear, Labrador can convey a clear positioning to these new customers.

The second phase is one to be accomplished in the long run. It focuses on the casual range for it to be fully developed according to Labrador's signature and specificities. Afterwards, the causal range joins the classical's offer with greater focus on the second one. The proposal consists on offering the same staples in the formalwear as phase 1 suggests, while simultaneously having more casual products - casual trousers, shirts, knitwear, and polo shirts (Appendix 3). This projection is considered because it allows Labrador to position more broadly as a gentlemen's outfitter, which satisfies the brand's goal of enabling a man to be fully dressed for any event wearing only Labrador.

Although market trends point out to a decrease in demand for suits, Labrador is willing to take up the challenge of offering formalwear. The brand is not yet ready to go for a wider portfolio and the menswear traditional market still exists. It is better for the brand to focus in what it does best and find the niche market, instead of going casual and lose its legitimacy and identity in the process.

This thesis focuses on the first short-term phase of the strategy.

3.2.Methodology

In order to develop the implementation of the first scenario, an exploratory study on 1) the international targets and 2) premium/luxury fashion multi-brand platforms was conducted. The information was obtained through secondary data analysis, translated into structured matrixes developed for each of the two above mentioned topics. Both were based on external sources such as blogs, reports, premium and luxury e-retailers' websites, and online magazines. Secondary data was considered the best method of research due to the impossibility to reach out for interviews men who still wear suits in different countries. Regarding the non-Portuguese consumers, the decision was to focus the data collection on consumer segments that deposit effort on grooming and value formalwear. For the fashion e-retailers, the research was grounded on major and smaller players that best fit the purpose of offering classic items. In the process of developing the matrixes, we narrowed down the search to reach insights relevant for Labrador.

3.3.Research Insights – International Targets

Getting it right in multi-channel retail requires first understanding what luxury consumers want from their digital multi-brand experience and where they search for. To this effect, it was completed an analysis on the international target of Labrador, while considering phase 1. By identifying distinct groups of homogenous consumers who have similar needs and types of behaviour, one can learn the platforms they visit online to shop their clothes. For this reason, market segmentation is used to reach the target.

We developed a demographic and psychographic segmentation. This is consumer-oriented and it relates to the age and gender of consumers, personality traits, beliefs, values, activities, and the lifestyle shared between them (da Silveira (a), 2019).

Hence, there are distinctive characteristics that make up the desired target. In what demographics are concerned, they should be men from 30 to 60 years old. In terms of

their interests and everyday life they should care for their personal grooming, be outgoing, digital-savvy, and identify themselves with the values of Labrador - elegance, timeless appeal, craftsmanship, tradition and heritage. They should also have a relatively significant purchasing power through a stable professional career.

Therefore, a few categories of consumers were considered. Being either high/medium/low users of suits, these men are: dandies, managers and executives, politicians, TV anchors, and celebrities. Either because of their clothing preferences or professional requirements, these are male figures who wear suits on a regular basis, hence eligible to be considered for the international target.

The *dandy gentleman* is someone who does not dress down. He is rarely caught up dressing casual, thus the relevancy he gives to classic items like blazers, scarves, coats and most important of all, tailored pieces. The trademark of dandyism is tailoring, as research shows that “(...) clothes are an expression of his self (...) and, by extension, his own person. He has confidence and accordingly his garments should be spot-on to match.” (Burrows 2019). Particularly, dandyism style can follow two paths. An eccentric and accessorized approach, or a modern and minimal one. Today’s dandy fashion is associated with coloured patterns and mix and match styling. But, if a dandy prefers using neutral colours, he welcomes more simplistic pieces. There is always a strong focus on cleanliness, tailoring, fine material and impeccable garments (Appendix 4).

The male *managers and executives* at law firms, banks or consultancy firms are most of the times requested to wear suits as part of the company’s dress code (StudioSuits 2018). As men with a significant purchasing power who travel for work, they are high-users who want to look well-groomed, committed and confident in their jobs.

As for the *politicians*, these are strong users of formalwear. From being avid attendees to social and formal events to appearing on TV, this profession requires

seriousness and responsibility. So, to transmit a visual image of professionalism and leadership, suits and ties can be a powerful tool (Appendix 5). On the same note, *TV anchors* are also looking to transmit respect. Their dress code is thought-out in order not to be too distracting for viewers. Also, by having a pre-defined formal styling, an anchor reflects trust, which helps them better engage with the audience (Holder 2005). However, since they are influenced on what to wear on air in terms of patterns and colours, and because some may have a personal stylist, this group did not go into further deliberation.

Finally, *celebrities* were initially considered due to their participation in award shows, red carpets and important ceremonies. To heighten the formality of these events, a stricter attire is suggested. Thus, male celebrities wear suits from some of the most prestigious *Maisons* in order to make an impeccable impression (Appendix 6). However, these are low-users who get their outfits borrowed by designers and suggested by personal stylists, hence not purchasing. So, they were not included in the research that follows.

In order to gather insights on the desired non-Portuguese target, a secondary research was conducted on multiple markets. Looking at the groups of eligible consumers (dandies, managers/executives and politicians), data was retrieved across 3 cities, all from different countries. For the information to be specific and detailed, the decision was to pursue cosmopolitan areas. Countries are too general to study, so we focused on urban centres only. The end goal is to conduct research on markets where marketing Labrador is culturally easy, even though multi-brand platforms distribute worldwide. The focus lied in places willing to accept products made in Portugal, and where tradition and heritage are valued. Furthermore, the price-quality ratio needed to be attractive in these markets, hence, the chosen cities being: London (UK), Paris (France), and New York (USA).

More specifically about the UK, this is a country where full-price e-retailers are more relevant than in the U.S. for example. We referred two main reasons to study the

city of London: 1) “British consumers are more likely than Americans to use search engines to find specific products providing greater access opportunities for new players” (McKinsey & Company 2015), 2) dress code rules in the British Parliament stipulates an attire that must be respectful for the Chamber (Pilote & Montreuil 2019), which influences London wealthy customers’ choice of clothing. The initial analysis on the considered set of consumers in the British market is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: International Targets – London, UK

Geography (city)	LONDON (UK)		
Types Of Target	Dandies	Executives and managers at law firms, banks, consultancy firms	Politicians
Sources	https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk	https://www.researchgate.net/Propensity_Online_Shopping https://www.rollsandrolex.co https://www.fashionbeans.com	https://savilerow-style.com/politicians-dress-rule/ https://www.ft.com
Where Do They Buy Suits?	Tailoring shops; Thrift stores.	Premium and luxury fashion brands; Tailoring shops.	Made-to-measure menswear brands; Premium/luxury brands.
Offline Distribution Channels Used	Brick-and-mortar stores: Savile Row street in Mayfair, Central London - known for the bespoke tailoring stores; Jermyn street known for gentleman's clothing retailer.		
Would They Be Likely To Buy Suits Online?	Likely to. Dandies are historically known for having their clothes made exclusively for them, so they are more willing to take their measures up and go to through the effort of doing the tailoring process online if they have to.	Men are outperforming women when it comes to purchasing online; According to studies, the higher the income and education, the greater a person's propensity to purchase online (ResearchGate, 2015). Since these are professionals who require looking sharp and respectful, buying suits online might be within the product categories these men consider when purchasing online.	Information not available.
Online Distribution Channels, If Used	Brand's own websites; Fashion E-retailers - Reiss; Mr Porter; Marks & Spencer.		
Made-to-Measure / Menswear Brands Used	Cad & The Dandy; Hardie Amies; Gucci.	Henry Poole & Co; Savile Row Company; Alexander McQueen; Lanvin; Hawes & Curtis; Turnbull & Asser (for custom shirts); Harvie & Hudson (for bespoke suits); Crockett & Jones (shoes); Norton & Sons.	
Would They Be Open To Buy From a PT Luxury Brand?	Perhaps not, because a 'Modern Dandy' wants to liberate himself without caring for what anyone else thinks. This choice may lead to coloured patterns, extravagant mixing of clothes, which in the end is not compatible with the offering of formalwear from Labrador.	Historically, British and Portuguese have had a good relationship. Despite English men enjoying purchasing products made in their own country, Labrador would have a chance by differentiating itself from what is already being offered there - the British Style. The price-quality ratio when compared to all the other brands will be the brand's biggest asset online. The UK is a country that values tradition and heritage, and many British families are very familiar with Portugal and what it has to offer, leading to "Proudly Made-in Portugal" carrying a meaning to them.	

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided in sources section of Table 3

After analysing Table 3, only the dandies were considered not eligible to focus the research on. Their particularity in brands and styling is unique and most of the times too extravagant for Labrador’s classical and contemporary range of products. Nevertheless, managers are educated and digital savvy, and their dress code for work needs to be formal, thus a consumer group willing to purchase classical items online. The same applies to British politicians who were also defined as a target that matches Labrador’s strategy and values. They wear a suit on a daily basis and have a considerable purchasing power.

Concerning the USA, an example of jackets and ties’ importance can be given, as these are highly recommended for males to use in the Congress (Pilote & Montreuil 2019), which reflects the strong role of formalwear in some consumers groups. According to studies, when purchasing luxury items online, most American customers (60%) responded they go directly to a website they already know about, whether a mono-brand or multi-brand (McKinsey & Company 2015). In addition, online channels are progressively perceived as being legitimate sources for luxury purchases.

Below is the research conducted on the American market, in New York:

Table 4: International Targets – New York, USA

Geography (city)	NEW YORK (USA)		
Types Of Target	Dandies	Executives and managers at law firms, banks, consultancy firms	Politicians
Sources	https://www.timeout.com/newyork/best-places-to-get-custom-suits	https://divante.com/blog/top-fashion-sites-in-the-us	https://www.businessinsider.com/best-places-to-find-tailored-suits-nyc
	https://newyork.cbslocal.com/buy-a-tailored-suit-in-new-york	https://www.statista.com/sales-of-apparel-retailers-in-the-us/	https://gothamist.com/best-places-to-buy-a-suit-in-nyc
	https://fineanddandyshop.com	https://www.gq.com/story/best-place-to-buy-suits	https://www.dmarge.com/dress-like-new-yorker
	https://www.nytimes.com/fashion/haquarters	https://www.businessinsider.com/what-to-wear-to-work	https://www.gearpatrol.com/best-shops-new-york-city/ https://www.statista.com/top-online-stores-fashion-united-states
Where Do They Buy Suits?	Tailoring shops; Thrift stores; Luxury brands.	Premium and luxury fashion brands; Tailoring shops; Retailers.	Premium and luxury fashion brands; Designer brands; Tailoring shops; Retailers.
Offline Distribution Channels Used	Brick-and-mortar stores: at Madison Avenue, retailers like Saks 5th Avenue, The Armoury, Brooklyn Tailors; Department stores: Macy's, Neiman Marcus; Bergdorf Goodman.		

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Would They Be Likely To Buy Suits Online?	No direct information communicated, but likely to. They are strong supporters for the made-to-measure market. Covid-19 has intensified shopping online, so if tailored suits are dandies' daily outfit, then getting them online is a different way for them to do it.	Likely to because as an educated, digital savvy group of consumers, these men are more used to buying online. New York is the land of possibilities, and purchasing tailored suits from an e-retailer might be an option, as the need for them is strong.	No direct information communicated, but not likely to. Politicians in the U.S. have a much wider coverage and their public appearance has a greater importance next to the public. What they wear is influenced by a team of experts. Thus, purchasing online would not make sense for this group.
Online Distribution Channels, If Used	Brand's own websites; Department stores e-commerce platforms.		
Made-to-Measure / Menswear Brands They Buy From	Fine and Dandy; Gucci.	Brooks Brothers; Martin Greenfield Clothiers; Carson Street Clothiers; Lanvin (an entire floor dedicated to made-to-measure and bespoke suiting at Madison Avenue store); Brioni; Canali; Armani; Polo Ralph Lauren.	
Would They Be Open To Buy From a PT Luxury Brand?	Keeping it chic, a New York dandy carries a clean waist coat under super structured outerwear in only the best wool to capture the retro look. This plus a brimmed hat under barber-ed slick hair and a dandy is officially part of the Manhattan mod squad. The New York dandy is more for the retro look than coloured patterns like in the UK. So, these would be compatible with the offering of formalwear from Labrador. Dandies care for quality, excellency and tailoring. Also, New York is the city where all important companies from all over the world are, which makes New Yorkers used to buying products form foreign brands.	New York is the city where all important companies from all over the world are, which makes New Yorkers used to buying products form foreign brands. So, their openness to different cultures is an advantage for them to buy products from a Portuguese brand. However, this needs to be able to differentiate itself from the rest so that "Proudly Made In Portugal" can gain its meaning.	American politicians are very much into wearing clothes from American brands and designers to show support for the Made In USA. So, this group would be less likely to purchase from a Portuguese brand.

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided in sources section of Table 4

Studying a cosmopolitan city like New York means looking at a market that is used to different cultures and at open-minded consumers. Dandies, managers and executives were defined as eligible. The first because New York dandies follow a more contemporary and retro styling which matches Labrador’s offer of formalwear, plus the fact they are avid supporters of tailoring, hence a loyal customer group of bespoke suits. The second because they are the ones who purchase the most online, hence likely to do it for formalwear, which is part of their business attire. As for politicians, these are not eligible because they are either influenced by a team of experts on what their dress code should follow, or on what the origin of the suit should be (made in USA is highly valued).

In what France is concerned, Paris was the chosen city to focus on. Parisians value the Portuguese culture and consider the country as one of the best places to reside and visit in Europe (House 2019). On a cultural level, a formal business attire is important as

dressings for the occasion is valued in this city. Paris is the capital of fashion in Europe, and when it comes to tailoring, this is where some of the best artisans reside.

Table 5: International Targets – Paris, France

Geography (city)	PARIS (FRANCE)		
Types Of Target	Dandies	Executives and managers at law firms, banks, consultancy firms	Politicians
Sources	https://www.amarantebeaumann.com/our-hotel/location/luxury-shopping-in-paris/	https://theculturetrip.com/paris-top-tailors/	https://theconversation.com/proper-way-for-politicians-to-dress
	https://ofrench.com/business-france/business-dress-code	https://www.davidplusworld.com/french-portuguese-people/	https://wwd.com/emmanuel-macron-suits
		https://ibstours.com/blog/business-attire-in-france	https://www.patricknco.com/best-dressed-politicians
	https://www.sciencedirect.com		
Where Do They Buy Suits?	Tailoring shops; Premium brands.	Premium and luxury fashion brands; Tailoring shops; Department stores.	Premium and luxury fashion brands; Designer brands; Tailoring shops.
Offline Distribution Channels Used	Brick-and-mortar stores: at Avenue Montaigne; Boutiques; Designer stores; Department Stores: Printemps and Galeries Lafayette at Boulevard Haussmann.		
Would They Be Likely To Buy Suits Online?	No specific information communicated. But being an educated and a digital savvy group of individuals, purchasing online is no strange thing. Besides, French people know how to dress and they try to look good at all times. So, suits, ties and formal shirts are part of the everyday life of French businessmen or dandies. If the need arises, and the occasion of going to a physical store is not possible or desired, going through the process of a tailoring service online that is well designed might be a way for them to have their suits made exclusively for them whenever they need.		Perhaps, but no specific information communicated. French politicians are strong users of bespoke tailoring, and there are many brands doing it physically in Paris. However, necessities with Covid-19 have changed and they still need to look sharp at all times.
Online Distribution Channels, If Used	Brands' own websites; Department stores e-commerce platforms.		
Made-to-Measure / Menswear Brands They Buy From	Les Dandys.	Camps de Luca; Artling; Cifonelli; The French Tailor; Dormeuil; Maison Rambure; L'Atelier Hoche; Scavini; Charvet; Samson; Brioni; Givenchy; SuitsSupply.	Arnys bespoke tailoring under the Berluti's ownership; Jonas & Cie.
Would They Be Open To Buy From a PT Luxury Brand?	Likely to, because French people are very aware of the Portuguese culture. In fact, an increasing trend in all tourism regions of Portugal is observed within the French market. The fact that many French are visiting more our country, it only reflects the improved perception Portugal is having abroad.		

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided in sources section of Table 5

Dandies were not considered to further research because the information available online regarding this group of consumers was not sufficient to draw conclusions. Managers are eligible because they are men who value dressing well for all occasions, and because they choose to wear formal staples on their working days. Also, this is a group of men who is aware of the Portuguese culture. French politicians are seen as valuable to research as well. For them, tailoring suits are a consistent product category.

3.4 Research Insights - Full price e-retailers and fashion online channels

An initial set of e-retailers in the luxury fashion scene was considered to conduct the research on. Looking at Table 2, the list is organized by potential benefits the e-retailer would bring to Labrador – high brand awareness, medium/low brand awareness, or core business of the e-retailer being menswear. In order to develop the matrix of analysis, further relevant questions were included – does the e-retailer sell suits?, how does the e-retailer sell suits?, is it possible to customize or personalize the offer?, capacity of the e-retailer to promote Labrador? and does it sell mostly/only high-end luxury brands? The method used was based on a first narrowing down process. The criteria to exclude an online player is: 1) e-retailer does not offer suits; 2) e-retailer mostly/only offers high-end luxury brands, hence less likely to negotiate with a niche brand, and 3) inability of e-retailer to promote the history, culture and values of Labrador. Matrix is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Initial Matrix of Full-Price Premium and Luxury Fashion E-retailers

Full-price Premium and Luxury Fashion E-retailers	Does It Sell Suits?	How Do They Sell Suits? (brief description)	Is It Possible to Customize or Personalize the Offer?	Capacity Of E-retailer to Promote Labrador	Does It Sell Mostly/Only High-End Luxury Brands?	Potential Synergies with Labrador
NET-A-PORTER (MR PORTER)	Yes.	Journal with: "How To Buy A Suit Online?"; Filter items by designer, colour of the product, department (casualwear, contemporary, designer, luxury), and size; Info on the brand, item, size and fit guide; Suggestions of other products from the same brand to combine the suit with.	No, only size selection.	"Editor's Note": 1 short sentence about brand's quality, and a few more lines describing the item with details on product's materials.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration to further research, because it offers mostly high-end luxury brands and designer brands, hence not likely to be open to negotiate with niche brands.
YOOX	Yes.	Filter by designers, price range, size, colours, print, materials; Info on suit's composition, details, measurements and made-in; Size guide; Suggestions of products from the same brand as the suit, and of suits from other brands.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only on the "made in" and details on the item in question.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration for further research, because it offers luxury brands on promotion. Besides, it does not help promote the values and culture of the brands, and what each one stands for.

FARFETCH	Yes.	Filter by category (Double/Single Breasted Suits, Suits Jackets, Tuxedos & Dinner Suits), designer, size, colour, price and sustainability; Size guide; Info on suit, size, fit, composition, washing instructions, made-in, and what the model is wearing; Suggestion of products from classic range to combine the suit with and other suits.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only on the "made in" and details on the item in question.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not considered for further research, because besides the high-end luxury brands it offers, the e-retailer also offers designer brands that are more out of the box and not so traditional. Also, it does not allow each brand to share its values on the platform.
MYTHERESA	Yes.	Filter by size, colours and patterns; Info on shipping, style details, materials, made-in, size & fit; Size chart; Recommendations of other suits; Suggestions of other products to combine the suit with.	No, only size selection.	"See more Brand X": directs the client to a page where it talks more about the brand and its clothings; Short text of around 10 lines.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not considered for further research, because its high-end luxury brands make up the majority of the offer and consumers can buy the products at a reduced price.
MATCHES FASHION	Yes.	Filter by category (Casual Suits/Formal Suits/Tuxedos), designers, colours and size; Offers a size guide; Specific info on suit's description, materials, made-in, size & fit; Options "You Might Like", "Match It With", "Recently Viewed".	No, only size selection.	"View All Brand X": directs the client to a page where it talks more about the brand and its clothings; Short text of around 5 lines; Option to sign up for updates on the brand.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration for further research, because its offer includes high-end luxury brands that have high awareness and other that are not as traditional as Labrador is.
GILT	Yes.	Filter by size, brand, colour and price; Offer of size chart; Specific info on suit's details, measurements, washing instructions, materials; Recommendations of similar styles.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only details on the item in question.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration for further research, because suits are sold at a discounted price and the stock available is shared with consumers. The offer is based on brands with high awareness in the market. Also, it does not promote the values and culture of the brands it offers.
STYLEBOP	No.	-	-	-	-	This e-retailer was not considered for further research, because it does not offer suits - the main product category Labrador's strategy lies on.
THE CORNER	Yes.	Filter by size, brand, colour; offers a size guide; Info on suit's details, size & fit, and shipping.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only details on the item in question.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration for further research. On the one hand, it offers very few brands, each with a limited stock of products available. On the other hand, it does not make the identity of each brand available for the consumer to learn more about.

RUE LALA	Yes.	Filter by size, brand, colour and price; specific info on suit's details, materials, measurements, washing instructions, shipping & returns; recommendation of similar styles; offer of size chart.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only details on the item in question.	No.	This e-retailer was not considered because from the website's initial page, one understands it is more directed towards female consumers. It also does not show the identity of the brands.
THE RAKE	Yes.	Filter by category (Single-breasted Suits/Double-breasted Suit), brands, size, colour; Shares brief history of a brand; Specific info on suit's materials, care notes, delivery, returns, size, and product notes.	No, only size selection.	"The Story": section shown below the product, where a brief summary of the brand's history and culture is shown.	No.	This e-retailer was considered because it is directed towards male consumers and it offers both traditional and more niche. In addition, it can promote Labrador through the section "The Story", which increases the awareness around the brand.
LYST	Yes.	Filter by category (Tuxedos and evening suits/Three-piece suits/Two-piece suits/Pre-owned suits), price, colour, gender, material, brand, and store; Size guide; Info on suit's shipping, sizing, materials, washing instructions, and details; Recommendation of other suits.	No, only size selection.	Nothing specific about the brand, only details on the item in question.	Yes.	This e-retailer was not taken into consideration, because it offers luxury brands at a 70% discount off or more, and also sells less traditional brands. It does not promote the values and culture of the brands it offers.
BALTZAR	Yes.	Filter by category (Suit Jackets/ Trousers/ Waistcoats/Suits/Tuxedo); Brief history of the brand; Suggestion of similar suits from the same brand; Description of suit and info on features, composition, size & fit, colour; Size guide.	No, only size selection.	Short summary about the brand's history and values is shown below the product; Text with 10 lines approximately.	No.	This e-retailer was considered, because besides menswear being its core business, it shows the importance of men owning suits. It offers niche and more traditional made-to-measure brands. Also, it can promote Labrador by sharing a brief description of the brand.

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided by URL link section from Table 2

After collecting the necessary information, insights were drawn. From Table 6, one notices the absence of customization and personalization services. To provide the possibility to customize a formal shirt or a suit for each available brand is a complex task. Each brand has its own specificities, and ways of measuring, which makes it difficult to synchronize on a multi-brand online platform.

2 out of the 12-initial full-price e-retailers were defined as eligible – The Rake and Baltzar. These are currently offering suits and more niche brands than the others, and are capable of showing the history and culture of brands. Accordingly, a detailed analysis on the remaining was conducted to understand how they can be suited for Labrador to position itself in the niche market of made-to-measure formal menswear.

Table 7: Final Matrix of Full-Price Premium and Luxury Fashion E-retailers

Full-price Premium and Luxury Fashion E-retailers	THE RAKE	BALTZAR
Sources	https://therake.com	https://baltzar.com
	https://www.websiteiq.com	https://www.websiteiq.com
	https://www.similarweb.com/pt	https://www.similarweb.com/pt
Sign Up for An Account to Purchase	Not required	Not required
Average Time Of Delivery	DHL Express Courier - free of charge or not depending on the location of destination.	Express Shipping - 2-5 business days.
Shipping Charges	It varies depending on location of destination.	Express Shipping - 16,70€
Types Of Packaging	Not discriminated.	Not discriminated.
Payment Methods	Visa, Mastercard, Discover Network, American Express, PayPal, Bank Transfer, JCB Cards, Maestro.	Visa, American Express, Mastercard, PayPal.
#Currencies	11	Not defined.
Headquarters Location	UK (London)	Sweden (Malmö)
#Countries Served	203	>150
Social Media Presence	Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, Facebook.	Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr.
Website Traffic (monthly visits, on avg)	141.491	<50.000
Top 3 Countries With Highest % Of Traffic	USA (37%) - UK (15,66%) - France (5,09%)	Information not available.
Pages Per Visit, On Avg	1.9	Information not available.
Men's Categories	Clothing, Footwear, Accessories, Watches.	Clothing, Accessories, Footwear, Lifestyle.
#Men's Clothing Categories	18	15
Menswear Brands in Formalwear	9 in suits, 14 in formal shirts.	8 in suits, 9 in formal trousers.
#Menswear Brands in Casualwear	10 in t-shirts, 13 in jeans.	1 in t-shirts, 9 in casual trousers.

Source: WP Author, based on sources provided by sources section of Table 7

Looking at Table 7, it is clear that both The Rake and Baltzar are niche-focused, as their business is centred in menswear only. The first online player is based in London (UK) and the second in Malmö (Sweden). In what traffic per country (% of total) is concerned, the USA, the UK and France are the top 3 of the first e-retailer. As for the

number of menswear brands in formalwear, the indicator states that The Rake carries 9 in suits and 14 in formal shirts, while Baltzar carries 8 in suits and 9 in formal trousers.

Although these e-retailers have a lower awareness than Net-a-Porter for example, The Rake and Baltzar can promote Labrador's goal of increasing its name's recognition in the traditional menswear market within a relevant group of male consumers.

4. IMPLICATIONS

The aim that was initially presented for Labrador's internationalization through fashion e-retailers was the increase in sales and distribution worldwide. However, after conducting the research, we understood that the rise in sales coming from these multi-brand online platforms might not be significant for Labrador to generate profits. So, an outcome the management team at Labrador should expect for is the promotion of the brand's awareness at an international level. By expanding through selected fashion e-retailers, Labrador can expect a small expansion in sales but more importantly to generate traffic on the brand's website. Thus, Labrador's online platform needs to be fully developed to welcome the new visitors. By seeing the brand available in the e-retailer's offer, curiosity might arise and consumers may gain the incentive to visit Labrador's website, where they would discover the tailoring service - its main differentiation point. So, the internationalization strategy through fashion e-retailers can only occur once the website is prepared with a complete tailoring service online and in English.

The structured matrixes and the consequent narrowing down process were fundamental to define and organize the secondary data and present our recommendations for both topics - international targets and full-price e-retailers - to develop phase 1. Regarding the international target, two main conclusions were drawn. The first concerns the categories of consumers that were considered eligible to study – dandies, managers/executives and politicians. Across the studied cities, the managers/executives

appear as the most relevant target to move forward with the strategy. Managers/executives have a greater propensity to purchase online due to their higher education and income (Saleh 2015). These factors also influence their level of culture and openness to foreign products, which in this case are made in Portugal. As for the second conclusion on the non-Portuguese target, it addresses the city that Labrador should prioritize. After taking the familiarity with the Portuguese culture and the traditional market into account, Paris was considered a priority. London is saturated with numerous tailoring menswear brands and New York is a global market where competition comes from all over the world. In addition, Paris is a city where men enjoy dressing up and made in Portugal is well understood. In what regards to multi-brand online platforms, the narrowing down method led to The Rake and Baltzar being the final two recommendations to pursue.

Summing up, the recommended approach for Labrador to internationalize via premium and luxury fashion e-retailers is to develop phase 1 of the strategy and focus on managers and top executives through full-price e-retailer(s) The Rake and/or Baltzar. Paris could be a market to prioritize, and therefore, Labrador's website should incorporate French as a third language.

5. WORK PROJECT MAIN LIMITATIONS

The main limitations when developing the thesis were time, as this WP was conducted within the context of a four-month internship, and the impossibility to reach out the international target of men who still wear suits across different countries. The fact that no primary research was conducted made conclusions difficult to draw. The material used to obtain secondary data created bias for the study and it might not have been verified. In what concerns data collection, the main limitation was the lack of information available online regarding certain subjects, such as the openness of British politicians to buy suits online and Baltzar's top 3 countries with highest percentage of traffic.

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Kapferer’s Identity Model

Externalization	Internalization
<u>Physical</u> : Labrador’s most salient features.	<u>Personality</u> : if Labrador was a person, who would it be?
<u>Relationship</u> : Labrador’s counterpart given to users.	<u>Culture</u> : core values of Labrador.
<u>Customer Reflection</u> : Labrador’s desired consumer type.	<u>Self-image</u> : what managers expect consumers to feel when purchasing Labrador

Source: WP Author, based on insights from Brand Management Course (da Silveira (b) 2019).

Appendix 2 – Labrador’s Formalwear

Suits



Source: Brand’s website

Source: Kapferer’s Identity Prism, based on (da Silveira (b), 2019)

Formal Shirts



Source: Brand’s website

Ties



Source: Brand's website

Jackets



Source: Brand's website

Blazers



Source: Brand's website

Appendix 3 – Labrador’s Casualwear

Casual Trousers



Source: Brand’s website

Casual Shirts



Source: Brand’s website

Knitwear



Source: Brand’s website

Polo Shirts



Source: Brand's website

Appendix 4 – Dandyism Style

Harry Styles



Shuhei Nishiguchi



Steve Calder



Source: Google Images

Appendix 5 – British Parliament



Source: Google Images

Appendix 6 – Celebrities

Leonardo DiCaprio wearing Giorgio Armani



Source: Google Images

Eddie Redmayne wearing Tom Ford



Source: GQ Magazine - <https://www.gq.com/eddie-redmayne>