



MARKET

Imperial Leather is a leading personal wash brand renowned across the globe. A truly international success, Imperial Leather is now sold in over 100 countries worldwide including countries such as New Zealand, Malaysia, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand and Indonesia. In the Gulf Imperial Leather is the only brand to cover all segments of the personal wash sector with the Shower Gel ranked within the top three products. Imperial Leather continues to be the innovative driving force behind market growth and development, revolutionising the way we wash today.

Since its first introduction in the 1930s, with the UK launch of the Imperial Leather Soap Bar, the red, gold and black logo livery has gone on to become a style classic. It is a key signature of a brand which has stood the test of time, maintaining brand integrity and generating heavyweight loyalty among consumers over the years.

Although this 'tried and trusted brand' has stayed true to its key proposition, 'Luxury', ensuring an enjoyable washing experience through delivery of creamy, luxury lather - it has not solely relied upon its strong brand heritage.

Consistently up against an increasingly competitive and growing personal

wash market Imperial Leather has embraced technological advances to create new-generation products.

Today's popularity of Imperial Leather is testament to the brand's non-stop commitment and flair for innovation, combined with traditional cleansing and caring values.

Evident in the revolutionary products of the Imperial Leather personal wash range it is this that has propelled the brand to 'Superbrand' status, becoming an icon of the 21st century.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Since the 20th century launch of the Soap Bar, Imperial Leather has continued to flourish through the creation of new, innovative market-leading formats as well as the extension and renewal of tried and tested products. The new additions to the award-winning product portfolio have given longevity to the brand helping it to remain at the market forefront in spite of harsh economic downturns and the advent of aggressive competitor campaigns.

In the Gulf, Imperial Leather was the first brand to offer shower gels with a buff as a

starter pack introducing consumers to shower gels. By using a buff with shower gel it increases the performance by producing mountains of lather! Due to the success of this product offering it has now become a permanent item within the shower gel category and many competitors have followed suit.

Imperial Leather Foamburst Shower Gel is a technological first in the personal wash market and has received universal praise from both industry and consumers since its launch in 1998 in the UK and the Gulf. Imperial Leather products always meet consumer's needs and, with the launch of Foamburst, have offered the consumer a step up from shower gel with its contemporary fragranced foaming products to offer a luxurious experience with each showering occasion.

HISTORY

Soap, in some form or another, has been with us since pre-650BC when a combination of oil and potash were used to clean the body. Imperial Leather, however, was not brought to the UK market until the 1930s, by Messrs Cussons, Sons & Co.

Imperial Leather still offers users luxurious creamy lather and carries the distinctive fragrance created by perfumers Bayley's for a member of the Russian court, Count Orloff, in 1760. The Count was so enamoured by the perfume, "redolent of the leather worn and favoured by the Russian nobility", that he presented it to Empress Catherine the Great on his return to his homeland.

Production of the new soap bar was carried out at the Cussons UK factory throughout the 1930s. It was here that the manufacturing operation managed a significant expansion, with the workforce catapulting in size. Despite the soap rationing of World War II interest in Imperial Leather remained high. Expansion of production continued with the addition of other manufacturing sites during the 1950s and 1960s.

Marjorie Cussons, daughter of the company's founder, was responsible for re-energising interest in the brand in the 1930s with the introduction of gift sets at key purchasing periods. Brand extensions were later included, featuring the product's famous fragrance, such as talcum powder and bath foam.

Shower Gel was introduced to the product range in the late 1970s but was revolutionised with the launch of Imperial Leather Foamburst Shower Gel range in 1998. With an innovative delivery system and packaged in a can and not a bottle, the gel incited a quantum leap in the world of showering.





When Cussons sought to develop the brand's global and local presence in the Gulf, a representative office was opened in Dubai in the 1980s. Although Imperial Leather had been sold in the Gulf for over 50 years sales had always been handled from the UK. In 1998 production of Imperial Leather soap for the region began in the UAE.



PRODUCT

Imperial Leather is continually researching and developing innovative products within the personal wash category. They ensure a close dialogue with customers and consumers to understand their needs - time and time again they surprise them with products offering the ultimate washing experience. Each product has been created to give its consumers a moment of luxury every day with its caring skin conditioners and innovative fragrances.

Now in its eighth decade Imperial Leather Bar Soap has evolved into eight Imperial Leather ranges to allow everyone to enjoy the perfect wash experience including:-

- Imperial Leather Bar Soap
- Imperial Leather Shower Gel
- Imperial Leather Liquid Handwash
- Imperial Leather Foamburst
- Imperial Leather Crème Bath
- Imperial Leather Talcum Powder
- Imperial Leather Roll-on and Aerosol Deodorant.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

With the various varieties of soaps, shower gels and hand washes, in the Middle East alone, shower gels and hand washes have gained popularity rapidly. However the soap market is soaring as well with the increase in population, especially in the UAE.

In a recent market research study conducted in Saudi Arabia it revealed that a large consumer segment of soap were predominantly Arab and Asian males. With high awareness of Imperial Leather Soap among Asian males Imperial Leather decided to launch a soap specifically targeting Arab males and, in December 2007, it will be launching

its latest and most appealing addition to the soap range available in the UAE. 'Imperial Leather Gold' – made with a rich Arabian fragrance. The fragrance used in the soap was researched among a male target audience and received good ratings; it was also tested among Arab Females and also scored top marks. The soap is uniquely shaped, like all Imperial Leather soaps, when compared to its competition and is presented in a black and gold packaging that has been specifically designed to appeal to the Arab Male. The black and gold design symbolises luxuriousness and richness.

PROMOTION

Imperial Leather was one of the first brands to recognise the potential and power of advertising and by 1946 Cussons was spending £100,000 a year in above the line support for the brand – a massive sum in those days. Initially using women's magazines as the selected media Imperial Leather's

advertising campaigns used a series of specially commissioned paintings featuring orchids, tropical fish, miniature gardens and roses while, during the 1950s, the growth medium of cinema was used to convey the brand's "everyday luxury" credentials.

The brand was one of the first committed to television advertising, with the first commercial screened in 1959. This featured a mother and daughter using Imperial Leather to create the link between high quality soap and soft clean skin.

The famous Imperial Leather "family" campaign was launched in the 1970s and still has high residual awareness among brand loyalists even now – whether travelling across the Russian Steppes in the Imperial Train or flying high in their airship the family always found time to luxuriate in their in-transport bathroom!

Whatever your bathing preference Imperial Leather has been, and still is, promoted as bringing lots of luxurious lather into your life with products perfect for bathing, showering and hand washing. With excellent distribution in the Gulf the entire range is now widely available from all good supermarkets, self-service stores and groceries.



BRAND VALUES

A tried and trusted brand, Imperial Leather prides itself on offering the ultimate washing and bathing experience that leaves you looking and feeling great. This is guaranteed by introducing masses of transformational lather into your bathroom with a full range of products giving you an experience of 'A little luxury everyday'.

www.cussons.com



Things you didn't know about IMPERIAL LEATHER

Imperial Leather is the first western brand to begin soap production in Iran since the revolution.

Contrary to popular belief the metallicised label, featuring the Cussons Imperial Leather logo on each soap bar, should face downwards to prevent it from becoming sodden and waterlogged in the soap dish.

Her Majesty Queen Mary visited the Cussons stand at the British Industries Fair in 1933 when it was reported: "Her Majesty graciously admired all the newest lines, many of which she purchased." Products are now regularly supplied to the Royal household.

The shape of the Imperial Leather bar has not changed since its inception – its unique shape was developed to mirror that of saddle soap used by the Russian Imperial household to clean its riding tack.

