

**OZK00**

**Intellectual Property Rights for New Ventures**

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Student	Student number
Baselmans, T.M.J.	1237238
Welten, M.	1238253
Geurts, J.D.	1248723
Decates, M.J.	0957870
Leliveld, E.M.L.	0959301

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# 1. The Startup: EasyPillow

In this chapter the startup EasyPillow will be introduced by means of the startup composition, an introduction to the product EasyPillow and the business model.

## 1.1 Introduction to the name of the startup

EasyPillow is a startup that offers a lightweight, comfortable alternative for inflatable camping pillows. EasyPillow is easy to travel with, easy to unfold and also easy to fold back into a compact item after using it.

## 1.2 Composition

The startup 'EasyPillow' consists of five members. Mick Decates and Eva-Britt Leliveld will be in charge of the technical design and production process of the pillow. Thijs Baselmans will be in charge of the design of the pillow, the design of the website and the advertisements. Jana Geurts will take charge of the trademark and industrial design protection and is also the general manager. Mirjam Welten will be the head of sales.

## 1.3 Introduction of EasyPillow

Camping is often regarded as a challenging form of vacation when it comes to packing: every gram in your backpack counts and every item has to be lightweight and small. Luxurious items, such as your complete kitchen utility set and electronic toothbrush stay at home, as well as your comfy chair and pillow. These last two items are often left at home with regret. One experiences quickly the discomfort of having an inflatable camping pillow, or no pillow at all: neck pain and an exhausted feeling wake you up in the early hours of the morning. A good pillow would have made your night more comfortable and you would have woken up well rested for another day of activities during your vacation.

Besides having long and good nights of sleep, relaxing on a small chair enjoying the beautiful scenery or reading a book, is the ultimate vacation feeling. However, during a camping trip, taking a chair with you is often not possible. Instead, one sits on the ground when eating a meal, reading a book and so on, eventually leading to discomfort and dirty clothes.

Since no one wants to have back and neck pain and sleepless nights during their vacation, the EasyPillow was invented. The EasyPillow's ingenious framework allows for comfortable use as both a chair and a pillow, all the while being easily collapsible to a compact size for on the road. Simply removing the cover and letting go will cause the pillow to expand. The framework that holds the pillow up is covered in a layer of compressible foam, ensuring that neither comfort nor structure are sacrificed. If you want to sit up instead, the pillow can be folded into a small bench to sit on. Then, when you're done sleeping and sitting in comfort, the pillow folds back into a compact size to not be a bother when on the road.

## 1.4 EasyPillow Design

The frame features flexible rods, strong enough to support a person when loaded from the top, yet easy to compress with minimal effort required when folding it away. Since the rods are covered in an unbroken layer of foam, spanned to become a cushioning surface when unfolded, some spacing is needed between them to be able to fold flat. This frame, which folds both rods and foam together at once into a compact roll, forms the design on which the product name is built. It is a frame which folds into a compact size while still leaving space for an unbroken rectangle of material to fit in between, and unfolds into a rectangle of said material, spanned in all directions by the frame within.

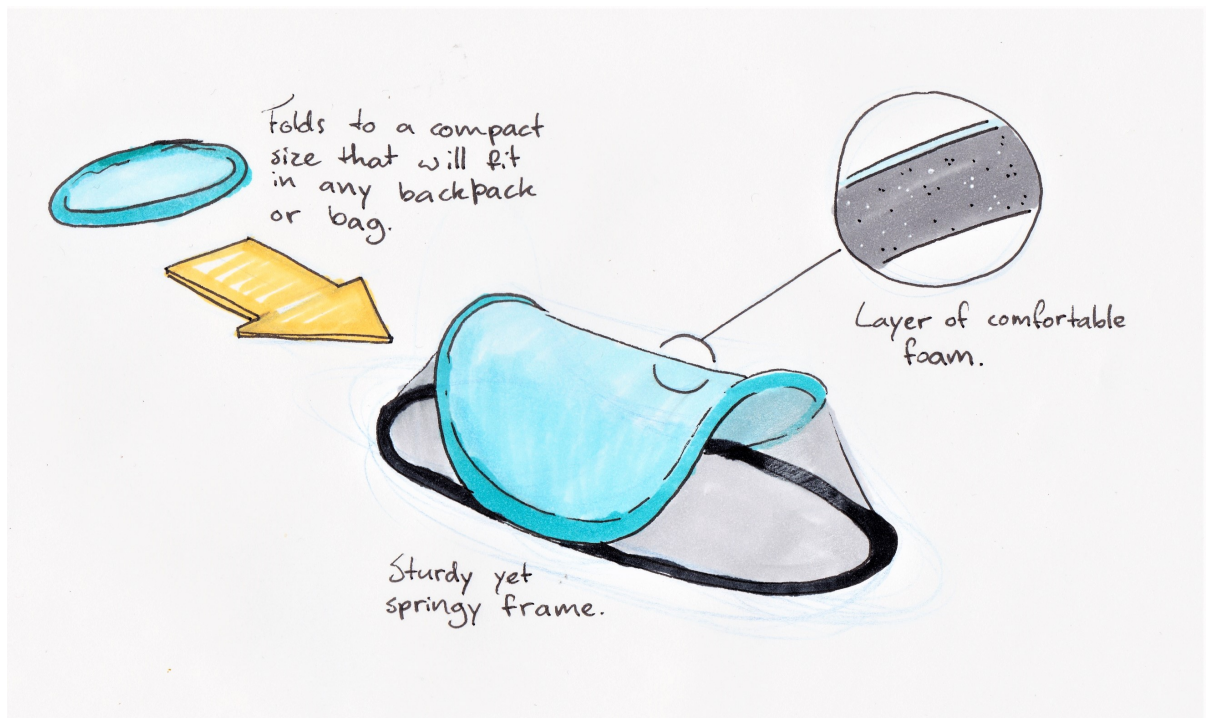


Figure 1.1: Design EasyPillow

## 1.5 Potential business model of EasyPillow

Presented in Figure 1.2 is the business model canvas of the EasyPillow. Throughout this report, the different sections of the business model canvas will be elaborated upon.

<p><b>Key partners</b> Initially, the product will be sold through webstore services, such as Kickstarter.</p> <p>Additionally, EasyPillow will seek for local specialised camping stores in order to sell its products there.</p>	<p><b>Key activities</b> Key activities after developing the product are marketing and small scale production.</p>	<p><b>Value propositions</b> EasyPillow offers a lightweight pillow that is able to contract into a fraction of its size and back at will. This helps dealing with the lack of space travelers inevitably encounter when going on hiking or cycling trips. It offers a comfortable and smaller alternative to inflatable pillows.</p>	<p><b>Customer relationships</b> To customers, EasyPillow mainly poses as a sales platform. Through offering guarantees and asking for reviews on social media, EasyPillow keeps itself in the picture.</p>	<p><b>Customer segments</b> EasyPillow's customer segments are twofold. Initially, the EasyPillow is sold to individual travelers. These include youth, but also experienced travelers who are often willing to pay larger sums of money for high-end camping gear.</p> <p>After gaining some brand recognition, EasyPillow can sell to a larger company.</p>
<p><b>Cost structure</b> The greatest cost is production and distribution of the EasyPillow. Furthermore, marketing imposes significant costs.</p>		<p><b>Revenue streams</b> Sell products + guarantee. Currently, customers pay approximately €10,- for an inflatable pillow. However, EasyPillow expects to sell its pillows at a higher price, since inflatable pillows are larger and less comfortable than the EasyPillow.</p>		

Figure 1.2: The business model for EasyPillow

## 2. Prior art and patent search

Before patents for an invention can be filed, one should conduct a prior art and patent search. With this search, prior existing knowledge about the invention can be found, indicating that there is prior art for the invention. Moreover, with this search one also gains insight into the already existing patents in the field of the invention.

So, before patents for the EasyPillow can be filed, first a prior art and patent search is conducted. The search is conducted in the Derwent Innovations Index (offices EPO and USPTO) [1], the Espacenet worldwide database [2], and Google Patents (offices EPO and USPTO) [3]. The approach and results are explained in this chapter.

### 2.1 Prior art and patent search in Derwent Innovations Index

In order to find out what database was the best to use, Espacenet, Derwent Innovations Index and Google Patents were used. After trying several search terms and calculating their recall and precision, Derwent Innovations Index came out the best. Espacenet tended to yield only Chinese and Korean results, and Google Patents tended to yield too diverse results with little relevance and little option to specify.

#### **1st set of keywords: “Pillow” AND “Foldable” AND “Lightweight”**

This gives a very low recall (2 hits), but a notable precision: one hit represents a patent for a “Collapsible outdoor pillow structure” used in e.g. camping. It has an inflatable bag which, when inflated, forms “arcuate contours of different height as well as recessed sections in the said curved surface along the two antipodal exterior surfaces of the said inflatable bag” (patent number: US6708355-B1). Since the EasyPillow is not inflatable but works with a spring system, this is not a similar product as described in the patent, however, it describes the working principle of a pillow, so it is a relevant hit.

The used keywords give already a good insight in the existing patents for pillows/chairs. However, the technique used in the EasyPillow (expandable due to folding springs) has not been found in any patents so far. Therefore the keyword “Springs” is used in the 2nd search query.

#### **2nd set of keywords: “Pillow” AND “Foldable” AND “Lightweight” AND “Springs”**

This search query gives no results, this could indicate that the technique is not patented yet. However, to be sure, the search query will be adjusted: the word “Springs” is removed and the word “Expandable” is added, since the pillow can expand from a small item to a comfortable pillow.

#### **3rd set of keywords: “Pillow” AND “Foldable” AND “Lightweight” AND “Expandable”**

This search query gives no results, this again could indicate that the technique is not patented yet. However, when the keyword “Foldable” and “Lightweight” is removed, one retrieves a high recall, see the next search query.

#### **4th set of keywords: “Pillow” AND “Expandable”**

This search query gives a high recall (48 hits), but at first glance seems to have a low precision. Although the hits represent expandable pillows, no hit seems to represent the mechanism the EasyPillow is based on: expandable due to a mechanical structure of springs. Most results are patents for pillows which can expand due to a chemical reaction of a substance, or due to pumping air into the pillow.

There is one hit which is quite similar to the mechanism of the EasyPillow. This is the patent for a "Self-inflating nursing pillow" (patent number: US2007056111-A1). The description says: "Nursing pillow for use by mother during e.g. breast feeding newborn infant, has expandable core biased to expand from compressed state to expanded state, when closure mechanism such as strap, is released". This patent is filed for a pillow which is expandable by use of the strap mechanism. The pillow can be compressed with the same mechanism. In the patent description, it is vaguely stated that this pillow is an inflatable pillow, meaning this is not the same technique as used in the EasyPillow. However, due to the use of the strap mechanism, it shows some similarities with its design.

To be sure that none of the other hits is relevant, a Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) search is conducted. The CPC system is a hierarchical system and therefore enables one to search in more detail. First, a check for patents filed for a camping pillow/chair was done by conducting the following search query:

*"Pillow" AND "Expandable" AND IP = (A45F-003/00)*

This CPC search consists of the following hierarchical structure:

- Section: A - Human necessities
- Subclass: A45 - Hand or travelling articles
- Group: A45F - Travelling or camp equipment
- Subgroup: A45F-003/00 Travelling or camp articles

This search query gives no results. Therefore the following search is done with another subgroup: "A45F-004/00 Travelling or camp articles which may be converted into articles for other use":

*"Pillow" AND "Expandable" AND IP = (A45F-004/00)*

This search gives also no results. Since the pillow does not have to be a camping article, another search is conducted in the subgroup "A47 - Furniture".

*"Pillow" AND "Expandable" AND IP=(A47C-020/00)*

- Section: A - Human necessities
- Subclass: A47 - Furniture
- Group: A47C - Chairs; Sofas; Beds
- Subgroup: A47C-020/00 - Head-, foot- or like rests for beds, sofas or the like

This search also does not give any results. From this, it was concluded that the number of relevant hits (48 hits) for the 4th set of keywords: "Pillow" AND "Expandable", is not enough to conduct a very detailed CPC search on. Therefore, it was concluded that there is no patent filed for the EasyPillow mechanism.

Lastly, to confirm this, the search query was expanded with the keyword "Chair".

**5th set of keywords: "Pillow" AND "Expandable" AND "Chair"**

This search gives a recall of 3 hits, but no precision, since no hit represents the technique of the EasyPillow.

### 2.1.1 Conclusion

After this thorough patent search, in multiple databases and using keywords as well as CPC searches, one can conclude that the mechanism used within the EasyPillow is not patented yet.

## 2.2 Prior art search beyond databases

Since a search for prior art and patents within a database could exclude certain already existing inventions, a search beyond the Derwent Innovations Index is done. This way there is no doubt that there are no similar products like the EasyPillow on the market.

### **Inflatable camping pillow by air [4]**

This camping pillow of Trekology is fully inflated in three to five breaths and deflates by simply pressing it down. When inflated, the pillow size is 40 x 30 x 10 cm. When pressed down, the pillow can be folded down to approximately 13 x 5 cm and weighs 78 grams. It is made out of 80 % polyester and 20% TPU. TPU stands for Thermoplastic Polyurethane, which is a rubber-like material. The retail price is \$15.47.

### **Compressible foam camping pillow [5]**

Coop Home Goods designed a camping pillow made out of memory foam. The pillow consists out of 40% Viscose Rayon and 60% polyester, which makes the pillow temperature regulating. Moreover, the pillow is also hypoallergenic and dust mite resistant. When uncompressed the pillow is 48 x 35 cm and when compressed, the pillow is approximately 26 x 16 cm and weighs 1020 grams. Advantages of this pillow is that it is made without mercury, lead and other heavy metals. On top of that it is also made without formaldehyde, which is known as methangas and causes an unpleasant smell. The pillow comes with a stuff sack and a 5 year warranty. The retail price is \$29.90.

### **Self inflating camping pillow [6]**

Another pillow from Trekology, but it uses a self inflating technique instead. The pillow can be inflated by simply twisting open the air valve, which will give it a size of 43 x 25 x 10 cm. In order to deflate the pillow, open the valve and roll the pillow towards the valve opening. The pillow comes with a travel sack and when fully deflated, it will have measurements of approximately 69 x 26 cm and a weight of 294 grams. It is made out of 100% polyester and therefore easy to clean and water resistant. The retail price is \$9.99.

### **Pillow and chair in one [7]**

The inflatable pillow from Bol.com can also function as a lounge pillow, similar to a chair. When inflated, the pillow measurements are 69 x 45 x 45 cm and it weighs 500 grams. The retail price is \$25.95.

### 2.2.1 Conclusion

To conclude, there are several camping pillows on the market but none of them use the same technology as the EasyPillow. All the pillows found are inflatable or self inflatable. The EasyPillow instead, uses a frame with flexible rods and a layer of foam which can be folded up. Therefore the technology of the EasyPillow is patentable.



## 3. Patentability of the technological idea

As concluded in Chapter 2, the EasyPillow is patentable, since the mechanism used within the EasyPillow is not patented yet. However, to fully confirm this, the 5 criteria for patentability will be evaluated in this chapter. These criteria are patentable subject matter, industrial applicability/utility, novelty, the inventive step and the disclosure of the invention.

### 3.1 Patentable subject matter

To assess the patentability of the EasyPillow, the very first thing that needs to be investigated is what subject matter is patentable. The general rule is that patents are available for inventions in all technological fields, excluding some. It has been determined in Chapter 2 that the EasyPillow is a novel technology in the field of camping pillows. The excluded categories are as follows:

- Discoveries of materials or substances already existing in nature.
- Scientific theories or mathematical methods.
- Plants and animals other than microorganisms, and essentially biological processes for the production of plants and animals, other than non-biological and microbiological processes.
- Schemes, rules or methods, such as those for doing business, performing purely mental acts or playing games
- Methods of treatment for humans or animals, or diagnostic methods practiced on humans or animals

The EasyPillow does not fall into any of these categories. As such, the EasyPillow is not explicitly excluded from being patentable subject matter.

### 3.2 Industrial applicability/utility

The EasyPillow certainly has industrial applicability. The relevant technology is a flexible frame which can fold and unfold, which is a physical product that can be applied for practical purposes. The travel pillow for which this frame was designed is a useful object to many different sorts of travelers. Due to its short list of relatively simple components, the EasyPillow can easily be produced, even in large numbers.

### 3.3 Novelty

Novelty addresses the possibility of filing a patent, and therefore it is a very important aspect to look into before patents are filed. Almost any idea has some form of related prior art. The question is: is the idea still novel in comparison to this prior art? This prior art search is conducted in Chapter 2 by means of a thorough patent search and CPC search in the Derwent Innovation Index. Moreover, a search beyond databases is conducted, which can be regarded as a market search: the various pillows already on the market are investigated if they have any similarities with the EasyPillow. The results of the search in Chapter 2 will be evaluated here.

When evaluating the results of the patent search conducted in Chapter 2, one can conclude that the technological idea of the pillow/chair is based on prior art, but also consists of new technological aspects. Quite some prior knowledge about expandable pillows exists, and there is also prior art known for foldable and lightweight pillows. However, the technique used in the EasyPillow (an expandable, lightweight and foldable combination between a pillow and a chair) is not patented yet. This ensures that the novelty of the idea is sufficient enough to file patents for the invention.

### **3.4 Inventive step**

The idea of a pop-up tent is well-known. Likewise, many other pop-up items are known, such as pop-up books, pop-up cabinets, and pop-up chairs. In the same vein, many types of travel pillows exist, most being small neck supports or air-inflatable cushions. The concept of a pop-up pillow should be a fairly obvious concept to anyone, expert or not. A pop-up travel pillow, however, is not what is being patented. The inventive step lies in the frame contained within the EasyPillow. Since this frame needed to be one-piece, flexible, and able to fold to a small size whilst covered by an unbroken layer of soft foam, it was designed for different design criteria. As a result, it has a design quite dissimilar to both other pop-up items and other travel pillows. This construction of beams is not obvious, requiring significant spatial insight and design effort to develop.

## 4. Other Intellectual Property Rights

Besides patents, there exist other intellectual property rights which can be used for protection of the invention. These IPRs are trade secrets, copyright, industrial design and trademark. Within this chapter these IPRs will be evaluated on the EasyPillow.

### 4.1 Trade secrets

It is fairly obvious that trade secrets cannot be used to protect the EasyPillow from launch onwards. The core technology then becomes openly available to anyone at the price of disassembling a single product. The EasyPillow might benefit from secrecy before launch, so that no competitor can recreate the EasyPillow, and to maximize the benefit of a head start on the market. This secrecy can be obtained by non-disclosure agreements with employees. If a competitor would recreate the EasyPillow, there would already be prior art, namely the original EasyPillow. However, the protection a trade secret before sales would offer is drastically less than the protection offered by other IPR strategies. Furthermore, it would hamper any efforts of pre-release marketing.

There are no secondary aspects to the EasyPillow that need trade secret protection. There are no complex production processes, no unconventional materials, and no dedicated distribution methods that warrant the effort of secrecy.

### 4.2 Copyright

Given that the EasyPillow is a product with a very clear and dedicated purpose, it is likely not eligible for copyright protection. Copyright only applies to specific types of works. A case would need to be made that the EasyPillow's frame is either an artistic expression or a scientific one. Both claims are likely not to be successful if tried in court. Furthermore, territories can specifically exclude technical elements from copyright protection [8].

Several secondary aspects to the EasyPillow automatically gain copyright protection. These include any motifs or prints that might be found on the pillow, as well as all marketing used to advertise the product. However, there is minimal danger of these copyrights being infringed upon, and thus they offer very little protection. A third party that wishes to imitate the EasyPillow can easily avoid these copyrights and still create a functionally identical product.

In conclusion, although several copyrights do apply to the product and the process that surrounds it, they offer little protection. The copyrights that do exist will most likely never need defending.

### 4.3 Industrial Design

In order to see if EasyPillow did not infringe with any industrial designs, the EUIPO database and WIPO have been used. When using EUIPO[9], the first search try was "inflatable pillow" which resulted in a few outputs, of which the one in Figure 4.1 looks the most like EasyPillow.

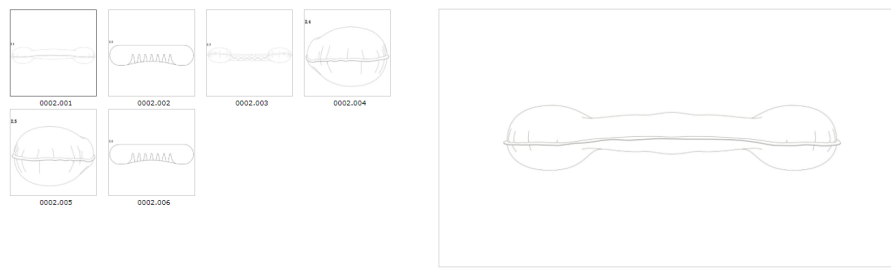


Figure 4.1: Search result for search term "inflatable pillow", retrieved from Designview [9]

However, this pillow shown in Figure 4.1 looks more like a neck-pillow than a camping pillow and therefore it will not prove an issue for the EasyPillow. The comment that was shown in the patent on EUIPO: "Inflatable tubes for neck pillows which are shapeable even in inflated state between an extended straight position and at least one bent position; they have concave shaped longitudinal sides with several indentations; the indentations are symmetric to a midpoint of the tubes" registration/application number: D095897

When looking for "pillow chair", no results were found that looked similar to EasyPillow. With "camping chair" there was an industrial design that came very close to the EasyPillow, as shown in figure 2. However, this patent is in Danish. Comment on the website of EUIPO: "This design registration (processed through the law on design patterns) may include multiple designs in the same registration. The single designs are not shown alone, but will be shown as multiple designs in the same registration. Some design registrations, registered before 2001, are not available in DesignView, since the images have not been scanned yet. Continuously, the database will be updated as these registrations expire. In connection herewith the views will be published in DesignView." Registration number: MR 1991 01385

Even though the description of this chair cannot be read, the differences between Easypillow and this design can be easily described. The combination chair and pillow is similar, but the solution is different. This design works with straps that hold the pillow in a chair position, while the Easypillow works more like a bench and does not have to be adjusted in order to work as a chair.

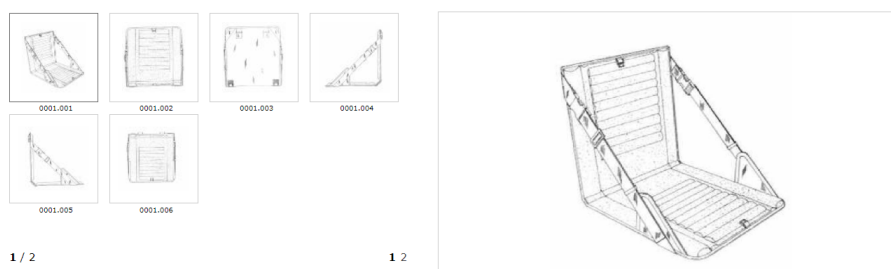


Figure 4.2: Search result for search term "pillow chair", retrieved from Designview [9]

When looking in WIPO [10] for "chair" "pillow", there are only two industrial designs that come close to EasyPillow, but both are not similar enough to be an issue.



Figure 4.3: Search results for search term "chair" "pillow", retrieved from Global Design Database [10]

When looking in WIPO for "pillow" "inflatable" this was the only thing that related to the EasyPillow. However, this pillow differs from the easypillow as it does not have a pop-up frame. The frame-like looking part of the pillow is actually velcro, which is totally different from a pop-up system. The velcro is meant for attaching the pillow to a chair. Registration number: D0612187

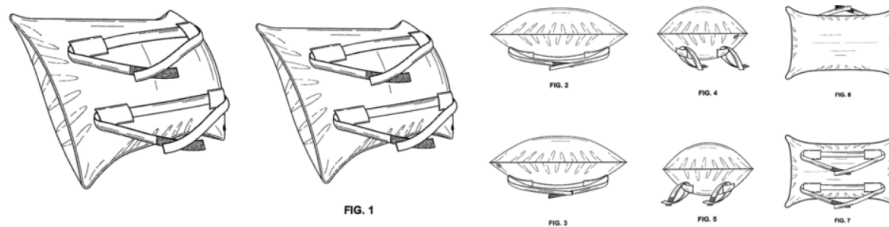


Figure 4.4: Search result for search term "pillow" "inflatable", retrieved from Global Design Database [10]

When searching for "inflatable" "chair" the only designs shown were bean bag chairs.

## 4.4 Trademark

In order for customers to recognize the camping pillow, a trademark is crucial. This will also result in customer loyalty and brand recognition. To find out what names were already taken, the databases WIPO and EUIPO TMview were used. Originally, the name EasySleep was considered instead of EasyPillow. However, since this name is quite generic and can apply to a lot of products, it was unsurprisingly taken. An interesting thing noticeable when looking for a trademark, was the fact that there were multiple brands with very similar names, but written differently. For example; Easy Sleep, EZ sleep, EZY sleep, easy-sleep, easy-sleep24 and E-Z sleep. EasyPillow was not taken yet. EZpillow is trademarked, but the status is inactive.

When marketing the EasyPillow, care should be taken to refer to the product as a pop-up pillow named EasyPillow, and not just as "an EasyPillow". Should the EasyPillow become a very famous product, it might become a generic term for pop-up pillows, thus invalidating the trademark. Creating a clear distinction between the nature of the product (a pop-up pillow) and its name (EasyPillow) should counteract this.



Figure 4.5: Logo

## 5. IPR strategy

The IPR strategy for the EasyPillow will be discussed in this chapter, where the general IPR strategy will be as follows:

- No patent will be filed.
- No relevant copyright will be acquired.
- Trademarks will be filed for the EasyPillow name and the EasyPillow logo.
- Industrial design rights will be filed for the entire pillow.

Furthermore, the Freedom to Operate, how value is captured for the EasyPillow and the funding strategy will be discussed.

### 5.1 Patent

As determined in preceding chapters: the EasyPillow technology is patentable. It was also determined that it would be hard to keep the idea of the EasyPillow a trade secret due to how easy it is to reverse engineer: take the product apart and any secrets are revealed. Disclosing the workings of the EasyPillow is thus not a problem. It is worthwhile, however, to mention that the startup is a very young one. Funds are limited, and even though the invention could be patented, the question remains whether it should be.

A patent could be used to prevent imitation and exercise market power. As the only ones selling this product, the EasyPillow startup would be the only ones making money from it. Furthermore, it could be used to signal reputation and attract funding. While getting the product out there and better known, having a patent, or at least a "patent pending", could help credibility and status.

Nonetheless, the decision was made that since the EasyPillow startup has limited funds, the money is best spent elsewhere than on patents. It would be relatively easy to invent around the patent, and by bringing the EasyPillow to market, prior art is generated so that other parties cannot acquire a patent on its technology.

Since no patent is used, an outline on how the product will generate value and be protected instead is presented below.

### 5.2 Other IPRs

#### 5.2.1 Trademarks

The EasyPillow brand name and the associated logo both benefit from trademark protection. Since the EasyPillow will not be protected by any patent, alternative methods of protection are necessary. Trademarks are of vital importance for retaining market share.

If the product gains sufficient traction, imitations will inevitably appear. A start-up cannot compete with large established businesses in cheaply mass-producing product. Since offering a lower price is not an option, offering better quality becomes a necessity for the company to survive beyond an initial success.

Trademarks are of vital importance in offering this quality. The brand name and logo, which should

have gained some renown by the time imitations appear on the market, will signal quality and a familiar product to customers.

### **5.2.2 Industrial Designs**

Easypillow consists of a material that assures a comfortable, but still compressible and lightweight pillow. The material itself will not be patented, but the industrial design will be protected. Otherwise other companies will make a similar looking pillow with the same material. This might confuse customers into buying the cheaper similar looking pillow. Other companies can use the same material for the inside of the pillow, but the design by which Easypillow is recognized by the customer cannot be copied. The combination of trademark and industrial design protection will strengthen Easypillow's exclusivity.

## **5.3 Freedom to Operate**

The EasyPillow startup has relatively limited freedom to operate. With no patent to protect it, it is exposed to the risk of larger, more resourceful companies trying to imitate it. It also has to differentiate itself in a market that already features a lot of products, with customers that might already have brand loyalty to another brand. A number of factors, however, contribute to giving EasyPillow the required freedom to operate.

### **5.3.1 First mover advantage**

Simply by acting first, some freedom is gained. If a third party wishes to imitate the EasyPillow, they will have to invest time and resources in developing this product. During this time, EasyPillow is the only product of its kind on the market. Furthermore, companies will not start imitating the EasyPillow the moment it enters the market: as long as it can "fly under the radar", no imitators need to be feared.

### **5.3.2 Few patents in market**

The EasyPillow framework is not patented because such a patent would be easy to invent around. The fact that patenting in this market is very difficult can also work to the advantage of the start-up. Since there are few active patents regarding pillows and pop-up frames, the chances of being troubled by competitors' patents is very low. On top of that, the EasyPillow would already be known to the public, so a competitor cannot apply for a patent.

### **5.3.3 Licensing**

If the start-up is successful, new versions of the EasyPillow design can be developed. For these, lightweight materials can be licensed to give additional legitimacy to the product and to make cheap imitating difficult.



### **5.3.4 Marketing**

Marketing plays an important role in differentiating the EasyPillow from other travel pillows on the market. Experienced travelers will carefully consider the weight, size and ease of use of every item they bring. Marketing the EasyPillow as lighter, smaller and easier than alternatives on the market should help with piercing existing brand loyalty to other brands and swaying potential customers to the EasyPillow.

## **5.4 How to capture value?**

### **5.4.1 Target market and jurisdiction**

Easypillow intends to focus on two different target groups: young student-campers and experienced campers.

The first group are students aged 18-25, with a lower income that value cheap, adventurous vacations. Easypillow wants to provide students that go on a cycling or hiking vacation with a comfortable sleeping pillow. Easypillow targets students that do not own a car and therefore have to travel lightweight. As the students Easypillow targets cannot afford sleeping in hotels, but still value some degree of comfort as it is their vacation, they will invest in a lightweight pillow-chair combination.

The second group Easypillow will target are middle aged (45-65) professional campers that like to go on adventurous hiking or cycling vacations. This group may have a higher income and own a car but prefers to go on adventurous nature vacations. This group is middle aged, but still very active and fit. This group cannot carry a lot of weight because of the often more remote landscape they travel through. Still, especially at this age, they know the importance of investing in a high quality pillow. Therefore, Easypillow can provide this group of campers with a comfortable low weight sleeping pillow.

Easypillow will target the student-campers mainly online via advertisements on social media directing them to the online webshops on which the pillows are sold. The second target group, the middle aged campers, will be targeted mainly in physical specialized camping stores. This group, with camping as a hobby, likes to go to the local camping store for high quality advice on camping products and directly being able to judge the quality of the product.

The European and American markets will be targeted. Easypillow will file its patent in Europe and extend it to America. This includes most of western civilization, those who like camping. Easypillow expects that if an Asian or African company goes to market with the same type of product, people will mostly stay faithful to the original. To guaranty this, investments will be made into building the brand through its logo and name (trademark) and through commercials (protected by copyright).

## **5.5 Funding strategy**

For a startup it is very important to set up a funding strategy. As a new entrant on the market, funding is quickly needed, since this enables the company to kickstart their invention. However, funding is actually already needed before a company enters the market with their product: the inventions can be protected by patents and other IPRs, but these come at a price.

For the startup EasyPillow, the five persons who founded this startup will make their savings available to be able to request the needed IPRs. When the invention is then protected by IPRs, it can be brought to the market. To be able to do this, funding is needed as well, since the product has to be fabricated. Therefore, the product will be launched at [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com), in order to raise funding for the fabrication of the product. The working principle of [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) is as follows: the product is presented on the website, and people can pre-order the product, enabling the offering party to fabricate it with the funded money. Since a lot of startup companies are struggling with surviving on the market, the use of [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) is a strategic move: if EasyPillow is a success, a lot of people pre-order it, which makes fabrication possible and creates brand recognition. If EasyPillow however seems not to be an interesting product to the investors, no money is lost on fabricating it, since the product can only be fabricated when people pre-order it.

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