

2015 was a hairy year

 By Louise Marsland

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From manbuns to nutscaping, political meltdowns and economic downturns, The Donald Trump reality show, global terrorism and war, 2015 was a challenging year, to put it mildly. But it was also the source of much social media merriment and the slaughtering of holy cows. At least we still have bacon. Oh wait...

As we start the New Year full of hope and optimism (try), it's always good to reflect, dear readers, on the year that was (cue Llamas, The Dress, clip-on man buns); and what we don't really want to see again (clip on man buns, colourblind dresses), what we would like to change and what we are looking forward to in 2016...

2015 was a hairy year. Literally. There is nothing that defines the hipster, organic, authentic space more than the beard (apart from these buzzwords). Beards came in all shapes and sizes. And the hairy horrors didn't stop there unfortunately.



All that glitters: Beards came with [Glitter](#) and [Christmas decorations](#) this year, to celebrate Christmas and the holiday season. But it seems to be their last hurrah, as even *The Guardian* predicts that beards will be *hair* today, gone tomorrow, as the trend wanes. But for those of you die hard facial follicle fans, here's a video instruction on how to glitter your beard for special occasions from YouTube stars [The Gay Beards](#), including all their glitter beard faves from this past holiday

season... Sparkle y'all!



Source: Groupon

Mullet of the moment: I like the bearded he-man lumberjack look as much as the next girl, but man buns? No. It's the mullet of this century and as indefensible. And 'clip-on' man buns? That's as cheap as a bad 80s perm. "A grooming trend too far" as *The Telegraph* pegs it.

Big, hairy balls to 2015! So, here's a chance to reflect on the year you would like to have, on the contribution you will make to humanity and a better society. Please let it not be ["nutscaping"](#). That this is a 'thing' doesn't *bare* contemplating for a single second. How is it even possible? There are things one just can't unsee.

Searching for... But apart from this aberration, this is actually what people talked about in 2015: Google's 'Year in Search' is now a regular thing and this [short film](#) was made for 2015 by Los Angeles ad agency 72andSunny and Google's head of brand creative Michael Tabtabai, in a moving collaboration to remind us of some of the important stories of 2015. Stories that dominated 2015 throughout the year included the global refugee crisis; the almost daily mass shootings in America; #BlackLivesMatter campaign against the shooting of unarmed black civilians in the United States; and the American Presidential race.

#Hashtag uprising: The hashtag has really come into its own in the past few years as a rallying point for various movements, social causes and as a way to express solidarity with an issue. Locally of course, South Africa also saw the beginning of our 'hashtag revolutions' #FeesMustFall and #ZumaMustFall. The hashtag will continue to be a rallying cry for many in 2016, as well as humorous interludes, the things that keep us sane when the rest of the world seems to be going insane.



Even the respected [Fast Company](#) magazine writes that we demonstrated our humanity in our googling, rather than just our fascination for the weird, obscure and silly, celebrity world. Yes, LOL Cats featured, but so did social causes.

Best of...

Bringing home the bacon: One of the most discussed pieces of research released in 2015 was the one that said bacon and other processed meats can cause cancer. Social media exploded in uproar: "I'd rather have a short life with bacon, than a long life of misery and lentils," read a lament on [NewsThump](#). I concurred in [my ode](#) to the joy of bacon last year. Viva bacon viva! Long live!



Source: AdWeek

Merry Christmas: What did Santa bring you for Christmas? If it was socks, I hope it was [Netflix socks](#). Boring 'dad gifts' will never be the same again with this invention: Netflix socks that pause the show you are watching if you fall asleep! Given that Netflix has just launched into South Africa this week, it's a gift to get dad for Father's Day this year! Only problem is, there's a bit of knitting and assembly involved.



Source: PixieRah Designs

Best colouring book, like, ever: If like me, swearing is your first language, this will go onto your future gift wish list. I would have liked this for Christmas, to doodle in on 'those' days. This [cursing colouring book](#) by illustrator Sarah Bigwood contains some of the most satisfying curse words to doodle on and colour in. F*cking brilliant indeed.

Top marketing word of the year: As 'snackable' content becomes another marketing category for Boardroom Bingo, 'listicles' will proliferate. We sure do like our lists. For more Google lists on absolutely every subject, [click here](#).

Best social media campaign: [Groupon](#) nailed it with their social media team's response to their rather racy new product, the Banana Bunker. Given its rather obvious shape, the comment section on its daily deals earlier this year went a bit nuts.

But it was the poker-faced response from Groupon's social media team that won the internet in 2015.

Quote of the Year: Half of new Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's cabinet ministers are women. When a reporter asked him why, he said, "Because it's 2015."



Best word of 2015: Adult; adulting. As in "I can't adult today. I am not adulting, I want to be a cat instead."

Tweet of the year: World first successful penis transplant by a South African medical team led to this contender for [tweet of the year](#) in: 'Man gets world's first successful penis transplant after circumcision cock-up'.

Gamechangers

Millennials: Product innovation in 2015 and 2016 is all about wearable tech and ideas that solve problems. Millennials are the influentials of the moment and their consumer habits are having a massive influence on brand strategy.

Sustainability: Purpose-driven marketing and the fact that each brand needs to be sustainable in terms of impact, footprint and renewable, was the thought that went into these [sneakers](#) from these French businessmen.

Virtual reality (VR): Explore Mars in this [virtual reality experiment](#), launched in 2015.

Wearables: From the Apple Watch to various health devices, techno-clothing, [wearables](#) are a trend that will dominate more and more in 2016 and the years to come.

Artificial intelligence is at a tipping point according to [Harvard Business Review](#) and almost ready to be integrated into business.

You can't make this stuff up...

That Dress: There is no doubt 2015 was the year of social media squabbles, none more so over the ridiculous blue/black or gold/white dress debate. Brands wrapped themselves in the controversy outdoing themselves with [witty repartee](#). Kudo's to Ireland Davenport who won global acclaim for their quick turnaround on advertising for the [Salvation Army](#), referencing The Dress in a powerful domestic violence ad.



Source: Ireland Davenport

Llamas on the loose: Then America went Llama loopy on how the internet handled the [Great Llama Escape of 2015](#). It was a day that would go down in 'hysteria', as in "You can lasso our Llamas but you can never take their freedom..."

Worst ad of 2015? Or the best? [Australia's stoner sloth](#) was the perfect ad to end 2015 with, summing up the weird and the insanity that 2015 seemed at times. One tweet asked "How high were the people who made the ad?" It was intended to discourage weed smoking among teens but has become a popular meme instead.

Pissed off: We had that awesome innovation by Grey London for Volvo with [bike paint](#) to make cyclists glow at night, but this [hydrophobic paint project](#) gives public urinators taking a slash outdoors in one German town, an unwelcome surprise - a splash back!



Happy New Year! So, begone 2015 and take all the nuts with you! (Same goes for the '[Scrote n Tote](#)'). Here's to an interesting 2016, may your most important dreams come true!

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