

HOW TO:

DEVELOP A GREAT BRAND NAME

BACKGROUND

A great brand name can't be underestimated. It begins your story, is the foundation for all your marketing efforts and can set your business on the road to prosperity. On the other hand, a bad name will provoke little, if any, positive interest among your audience and may even mislead about the nature of your offering.

But naming is one of the toughest parts of a branding project. Here are eight characteristics of great brand names that should be considered when vetting them for prime time:

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT BRAND NAMES:

- **BEGIN WITH A BRIEF**
The importance of a naming strategy brief can't be stressed enough. It's the only way to ensure that everyone who is part of the process is being guided by the same criteria and strategy.
- **DISTINGUISH VS. DESCRIBE**
To be effective, a name must have brand-building potential. A name that is narrow or too descriptive doesn't have the depth or dimension to help tell your brand's story (not only today, but years into the future).
- **RESONATE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE**
It doesn't matter if a name candidate speaks to the CEO for some personal reason. What matters most is how the name resonates with your target audience.
- **BE CONCISE**
As a general rule, three syllables or less and 13 characters or less. If not, the consumer will take control of your brand – shortening it to either an acronym or simply an abbreviated version.
- **MEMORABLE**
If your name blends in, it won't stand out. And it won't be top of mind when you need it to be.
- **EASY TO READ, PRONOUNCE AND PHONETICALLY APPEALING**
Without all three, the mind passes over it.
- **OWNABLE**
Before you narrow to a final name, make sure it can be easily protected, able to be trademarked and associated with its own URL.
- **TRANSLATES**
If your brand name is traveling overseas, a global linguistic analysis should consider ease of pronunciation, meanings evoked, brand fit, and existing brand names that are similar to your name candidates.