

Brand naming







A company or product's name is one of its most important attributes. It is the main way of identifying a brand and differentiating it from its competitors.

A strong name will align with the brand's positioning and will inform the development of a logo and brand identity. It is a powerful part of the business's DNA.

This resource provides an overview of some of the necessary elements to consider when creating a name; and outlines the crucial checks that must be undertaken before taking a name to market.

Types of names

There are three main types of names for a business. When considering a new name, think about a theme which most aligns with the organisation's service, personality and purpose.

Descriptive	Associative	Abstract
		
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Attributes or benefits of the product or service is inherent in the name▶ More literal, specific and self explanatory▶ Needs less support▶ May not be very distinctive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Eludes to a benefit or attribute, but is more obtuse▶ May be compound names where two attributes or benefits are brought together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Are more unique and distinctive▶ Need more communication and support to make a connection with what they represent

Ensuring availability

Any naming must include the appropriate due diligence to ensure that the name is available and that the business can legally proceed with the name.

- ▶ The name should be available as a useful URL
- ▶ The name should be available for business name registration in the countries where your business is registered
- ▶ The name should be available for trademarking in the countries where your business operates
- ▶ The name shouldn't carry any negative associations when typed into a search engine.

Remember – always consult with your legal representatives before moving forward with a new name.

What makes a strong name?

Once you have chosen and built a shortlist of names it's important to ensure that any names under consideration adhere to the following criteria:

- ✓ Is the name aligned to the strategy, values, positioning and personality of the brand?
- ✓ Does the name differentiate the business from its competitors?
- ✓ Does it evoke the right image?
- ✓ Does it reflect the desired brand identity?
- ✓ Is the name credible and appealing to the business's target audiences?
- ✓ Is it easy to remember?
- ✓ Is it easy to pronounce and spell?
- ✓ Is it short and simple and therefore unlikely to be turned into an acronym?
- ✓ Does the name have long term appeal?
- ✓ Does it have no negative associations?
- ✓ Is it able to be protected legally?

A few tips

The naming process can seem lengthy and challenging at times, it's also fundamental and should not be left to chance. Below are a few tips to assist you on the journey:

- ▶ **It's about strategy, not personal preferences.** Naming is an emotionally charged decision, so it is important to align your name to your strategy to help remove subjectivity; and encourage stakeholders to leave personal feelings aside.
- ▶ **Keep it brief and avoid acronyms.** When people abbreviate your name, you lose control over your brand.
- ▶ **Involve senior stakeholders.** Engage the most senior personnel from the outset, keep them engaged, and build a strong rationale to underpin your recommendation to ensure buy-in.
- ▶ **Avoid employee competitions.** While involving staff is important, a competition rarely results in a strategically aligned name.
- ▶ **Manage confidentiality.** It is very difficult to keep a new name a secret, but nonetheless critically important. Confirm your name registration, trademark and URLs early and in confidence to avoid competitors registering your name before you do.
- ▶ **Don't expect unanimous agreement.** Change can be a difficult process. As people become more familiar with the new name, they will become more comfortable with it.