

## Choosing your company's name

You will want a name that can grow as your business grows. A name that has a decent '.com' or alternative Internet name available. A name that does not violate the intellectual property rights of another business or organization with the name you choose, which could put your ability to use the name in jeopardy.

A great name will catch your customers' attention. They will remember it. And, will be motivated to get to know you. A poor name will be quickly forgotten. Worse, it can turn customers off and drive them to your competitors.

A few tips for naming your company or product.

➤ **Ask Yourself Questions.**

1. Who exactly are my target customers?
2. Should my name describe what we do?
3. What words or phrases appeal to my customers?
4. What are the three to five most attractive benefits my business brings to customers?
5. What are my competitors' names? What kind of name would differentiate me in the marketplace?

By answering these questions on paper, you begin creating a framework that will help you generate names.

➤ **Devise A Strategy.**

Decide what you want your name to do. This will make it easier to generate names and judge the names you develop.

Your strategy might be to create a name that reflects your company's mission or defines what you do.

➤ **Namestorm.**

Once you've asked yourself questions and you've devised a strategy, you're ready to brainstorm company names.

1. Look at the answers to your questions and jot down words that come to mind and describe your company. Look at those words, play with them. Combine words to create compound words or even create words. Use the thesaurus to find underutilized words similar to the ones you've written.
2. Invite friends or colleagues to help you.
3. Creative brainstorming means putting aside your internal editor while you create. That means writing down every name while turning off the voice that says, 'That name doesn't work.' The idea here is quantity, not quality.

➤ **Evaluate**

Once you have a long list of potential names, compare them to your strategy. A "score sheet" based on the criteria you've developed will allow you to quickly eliminate any name that does not meet your criteria.

- **Confirm Availability**  
Once you've narrowed your list down, check the Companies House list for registered names: [check company name](#). Also learn about [sensitive names](#)
- **Go Global**  
The moment you put your business online, your business goes global. That means that a name that might sound and mean great things to a British audience, might get you in trouble elsewhere. A quick check using any foreign dictionaries online will help.
- **Listen.**  
Say your remaining names aloud. Does a name sound as good as it looks? Do you feel comfortable saying the name when someone calls you? Can a caller understand the name when you answer the phone? Would they be able to spell it easily? Are the names meeting the criteria?
- **Choose your finalists.**  
Look at the remaining company names. Does the name tell your story? Does the name sufficiently distinguish you from the competition? In the end, you alone will be the judge of your name's success or failure.

Finally, a great name takes risks and is appropriate to its unique audience, not to everyone everywhere.