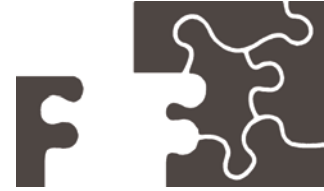


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# Marketing Notes

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## *Notes on Brand Name Development*

Business-to-business marketers, start-up companies, and even technology-based companies are more and more realizing what consumer packaged goods companies have known since 1900: brand names are important; so important they are often a company's most valuable intellectual asset. However, many companies do not have the resident brand name development expertise required to do a good job on this important strategic issue. All too often, companies "name" their products based on internal schemes (such as numbering systems) or on acronyms that shorthand some company jargon. Here are a few guidelines to use when conceptualizing and naming new products and services:

1. Ultimately every product gets a name . . . a number, a code, something, so why not give it a good name: a name that helps get and keep customers.
  2. Do not use the product or service category as the brand name. For example, "high resolution television" or "low-cal ice cream" are not brand names; they are modifiers of a brand name.
  3. Don't name the product with an acronym, especially an acronym that is an abbreviation for internal jargon.
  4. Whether you "like" or dislike the brand name is not a criteria for choosing the name. Brand naming is not a popularity contest among managers.
  5. Brand names don't have to mean something. Examples: Kodak, Advil, Exxon.
  6. The primary criteria for a brand name is the product's positioning. Positioning is, in itself, an intellectual marketing exercise of the highest order. Many marketing industry companies, particularly advertising agencies, do not really understand the concept of positioning. Beware of descriptions of product features masquerading as positioning statements. Positioning starts with an understanding of your target segment; and knowing your customer's perception of competitive substitutes.
  7. Consequently, when judging whether a proposed brand name is "on or off strategy" you are really judging the name against a very carefully constructed and *customer-tested* positioning statement.
  8. Brand names that link the product to a product category or benefit set are good. Examples: Pampers, Loctite, Reflexite, Sealed Air, Timex, Bufferin.
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9. Brand names should be memorable, pronounceable, legally available and readable.
  10. Sometimes a brand name that is non-traditional for a product category or industry will stand out and reduce the cost of creating awareness. Examples: Apple Computer, Boone's Farm Wine, Yahoo!.
  11. A good brand name will not sell a bad product. But a good product with lots of marketing support can build a so-so brand name into a franchise.
  12. Always test a brand name for negatives. Certain words trigger unexpected customer negatives. The wrong word could trigger confusion, distaste, or anti-use sentiments. For example, a proposed brand name, "Stick-it", for a glue pencil caused some prospective customers to think of needles, stabbing, and less-than-polite street talk. The proposed brand name, "Pop Tails", for a soda flavored alcoholic beverage confused customers. They didn't know if the product was a soda pop or a mixed cocktail.