

The Brand naming Workshop, Framework and Tips.

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Coming up with a good brand name for your small business can be really challenging. We have been in your shoes as entrepreneurs. We have also observed many business leaders struggle with this problem. At awezzom we have developed a framework that helps principals of the company to generate a handful of good options and figure out how to identify a great one among them.

Prior to going into details let us acknowledge the differences in naming a company, a brand and a product or service. A company is a legal entity registered under specific business name. A brand name can belong to that legal entity. Products and services can be brands themselves or part of the main brand.

Large corporations are a good example of differences in naming. Procter & Gamble for instance is a brand name of the “*The Procter & Gamble Company*” which is a legal name of the entity. Under this umbrella they have products with distinct product brand names, such as: *Tide, Always, Pampers*.

A small business can have just one name that stands both for the company, the brand and the product or service. Having a variety of names isn't a prerequisite for small companies.

This distinction is important. Before we dive into the [brand naming workshop](#) we need to identify the subject of our efforts. In our experience the naming process of a business entity (legal name of the company) doesn't have to be as rigorous as the **brand naming process**.

The name of the brand is what people will be in contact with. Therefore it is essential to analyze the impact it might or might not have on the business in general.

What is a brand naming workshop?

In short, brand naming workshop is a series of exercises, questions and discussions based on the **naming framework**. It encourages key decision makers, business owners and managers to work together with a sole purpose in mind – to generate a handful of meaningful options.



It's not a random ask — “All right, colleagues, please come up with a name.” Crickets . . . crickets . . . That kind of approach never delivers decent results.

The whole point of having a workshop with team members is to go through the steps defined by the framework. Going from theory to examples to simple exercises to more challenging creative tasks is the way to generate good results.

We run the naming workshop as part of our awezzom [brand strategy workshop for small businesses](#) when a company needs to reinvent, restructure or rename itself.

What is the typical approach for company naming?

Typically business owners and managers go down the following path. They sit down with a pencil and a piece of paper in front of them. They write down a few simple words that come to mind and iterate on the variations.

The words that usually come to mind depend on the industry the company is in. Principals of the company tend to look at the brand names of their competitors. They observe the **patterns in naming**, select the ones that they personally prefer and try to come up with similar names.

If most of the competitors have their last names (like law firms usually have) in their company names, principals tend to emulate that approach. If major competitors have their company names abbreviated, principals are more likely to follow that path.

Once the principals of the company have exhausted their creative abilities, they go online. They search for a free name generator. The real fun begins here. They get so many results that they feel overwhelmed. The problem explodes in its complexity due to the amount of infinite choice.

From here the principals either assemble their teams to have **weekly meetings about the naming** or occasionally keep coming back to this problem themselves. Either of these approaches hardly ever works. This does produce one thing for sure — frustration. And don't forget the loss of productive hours. But unfortunately a rare principal pays attention to that.

A few tips for naming a company.

Keep the company name short, distinct, memorable, easy to pronounce and easy to spell. Try to avoid confusion with your competitors' names. Don't focus on the trendiness. Don't copy well-established competitors. Don't try to search for the “**perfect name**” — it doesn't exist.



Assemble the team of key decision makers from your company ranks. Hire a **brand naming agency** or a naming consultant to run a naming workshop. This will produce great results.

How to name your small business?

To create a good name for your small business you need to assemble your core stakeholders and run a naming workshop. There are only two ways to arrive at a **great brand name** for your company: a framework and luck.

The framework will save you time, money and soothe your neurons. It will cost you money – yes. But it will produce better results and save those otherwise flushed productive man-hours.

Your other option is endless frustration and – unless you are very, very lucky – a terrible company name.

Are you feeling lucky or do you think research is the way to go? It's up to the principals of the company to make that call and accept the consequences.

How do you create a unique brand name?

You don't need to have a **unique business name**. There are plenty of examples when very similar names co-exist in the market. Consider – *Domino Sugar* and *Domino's Pizza*, *Finlandia* cheese and *Finlandia* vodka, *Dove* soap and *Dove* chocolate, *Bounty* paper towels and *Bounty* chocolate bar – these are very similar names of well-known brands.

Can two companies have the same brand name? There is absolutely no problem in having a name that is similar to another company as long as these companies are in different categories. If your small business is in the law firm's vertical, for example, and there is a company with a similar name in heavy machinery vertical, it's not a big deal. Your prospects probably wouldn't even know the other name exists.

Creating a **unique brand name** we want to be absolutely sure it is distinct from your direct competition and adjacent industries. This takes a bit of research on naming consultant's part.



Are there any brand naming guidelines?

It's not like the name of the brand has to adhere to strict rules. But it's a good idea to know what constitutes a **bad brand name**.

In our brand naming workshop we want to make sure — first and foremost — that the company or brand name has been created by the team itself. Company and brand names that were created outside of the small businesses' *guts* tend to be rejected.

When key stakeholders are in accord, the name gets adopted seamlessly. There is little to no resistance. Team members feel proud. We have seen the eyes light up. The boost in moral is tangible. Teammates will defend and protect that which is held dear. Their own creations are always dear to their hearts.

When naming a brand, a company, a product or a service you want to make sure the name is appropriate, easy to spell, pleasant to pronounce, euphonious, available, unique and different from competition.

What are the most common mistakes in brand naming?

We have an article about the [most common naming mistakes](#) here. The four mistakes mentioned in the article are:

1. Abbreviation naming mistake
2. Efficiency naming mistake
3. Trendiness naming mistake
4. Generic naming mistake

Read the article if you want to learn more about these **most common naming mistakes** entrepreneurs and small business owners make.

How long does it take to create a great company name?

We have heard it from multiple business leaders — how hard it is to come up with a really **good company name**. Team members meet, talk, argue and never come to a decision. You can imagine how frustrating that is. Think about all the productive time wasted as well.



The power of the **company naming workshop** lies with the framework. Knowing what to do first, what information to provide, what questions to ask and what to do next, unlocks the potential for great names. It is actually the case that your team members can generate really good company names themselves. They just haven't been exposed to a proper framework that facilitates this process.

While the *framework-less* naming process takes weeks or even months – sometimes without any results – the naming framework allows us to speed things up significantly. Teams exposed to **awezzom brand naming workshop** were able to generate solid company names in 30 to 60 minutes.

In the upcoming two to three weeks we conduct a rigorous research on the generated names. We want to make sure the brand names are available, distinct, make sense within the industry, aren't too creative and not too generic. When budget allows, we look into trademarks as well. We always back our suggestions with the research.

The last stage of the process is when we present two to four options to the key stakeholders of the company. It takes a couple of days to choose and accept a brand name.

How can a naming consultant help?

First of all, **who is a naming consultant?** The brand or company or product naming consultant is either a person or a firm that specializes in naming services. This type of work requires individuals providing the service to know both the naming theory and have a real world practise.

The person involved should either be a **brand naming expert** – read will cost you more – or have some hands-on experience with company naming, workshops and research. The most experience comes from actual work in the field naming and renaming companies, brands, services and products.

Having experience in just one vertical isn't necessarily a good thing. The new name has to be different from competition. While knowing every single competitor and their names from one industry might be beneficial, having experience with other verticals broadens the opportunities for the creative work.

All in all, the **naming consultant brings** her/his experience and framework to the table. This way, businesses can save a lot of productive time and get better results while avoiding common mistakes.



How much does naming a company cost?

The typical price for a brand naming workshop is 5 000 USD. The larger the industry your small business is in, the more research has to be done, including the trademark research, the higher the cost of the **brand naming services**.

The naming workshop consists of **naming exercises**, questions and discussions facilitated by awezzom with your team taking active part in the process. The next stage is research – we carry out this part based on a handful of generated company names. And the last stage is where we finalize the last two to four options together with key decision makers.

What are the benefits of a brand naming workshop?

Hiring a naming consultant to run a naming session with your team is a great way to create a **good brand name for your small business**.

You will be able to save a lot of productive time for yourself and your key employees. You will prevent and get rid of frustrations that deteriorate your team's morale. You will avoid the most common naming mistakes every single entrepreneur makes.

You will get unstuck, feel good about moving forward and experience positive emotions in the process. You will get a meaningful name for your business that will help you stand out from the competition.

Your employees will take ownership of the name they had created themselves. They will assemble under one banner and will be honoured to proudly carry that flag into the marketplace.

Consider investing in [brand naming workshop](#) to get the best name for your small business.

The awezzom question of the day:

How many productive man-hours a naming consultant can save us and how many have we already lost?

