

catchword



BRAND NAME OWNER'S MANUAL

FOREWORD

At Catchword, we understand that your brand name is one of the most important marketing vehicles you will ever own, and the right one can take you far on the road to success. And so we've created this Brand Name Owner's Manual to help you with naming-related issues as they arise during the course of your brand's life.

Inside, you'll find information on numerous subjects related to brand naming, including the parts of your brand name, how to change a flat name, tricks for successful naming, the difference between a preliminary and comprehensive availability screen, and other important information that all brand name owners should know. If you have a question that can't be answered with this Manual, please call one of our service centers during normal business hours. Someone will be happy to assist you.

Now climb in, buckle up, and enjoy the ride!

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ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

Should your name breakdown, or if you find yourself lost and without a name, don't panic. Help is usually just a phone call away. Operators are on call from 8:30am to 5:30pm, five days/week, and will dispatch a team of naming technicians to you immediately. In the event of an East-coast based naming emergency, simply call (212) 472-8936. West-coast based drivers should call (510) 628-0080.

**NOTE**

Depending on your contract with us, Roadside Assistance may be available 24 long, caffeinated hours/day.

WHILE OWNING A BRAND NAME CAN BE FUN, THERE ARE IMPORTANT THINGS TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT DEVELOPING AND OWNING THIS ESSENTIAL MARKETING VEHICLE. PLEASE READ BELOW BEFORE EMBARKING ON ANY NAME DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BRAND NAMES

YOU DON'T NEED A LICENSE TO NAME BUT...

It's just a name, right?
I've got a dictionary.
He's got a thesaurus.
How hard can this be?

Truth is, everyone thinks they can name. But most states probably should require a license to name, because naming is a dangerous activity, and not everyone should be doing it, especially those nerdy guys in engineering (no offense intended).

If you're going to embark on a naming exercise, make sure you familiarize yourself with the naming basics covered in this Manual, and be judicious in selecting your brand name development team. Of course the safest road... the one with the fewest hazards... is the one that leads to your friendly name development specialists.



FOR BEST PERFORMANCE, ONLY FILL WITH PREMIUM CREATIVITY

It's important that you only use premium creativity when developing and driving your name. Filling your name with thin or unoriginal ideas may affect its performance and potentially compromise the health of your brand vehicle. A brand name running on thoughtful, high-octane creativity will provide for a much smoother ride.

REMEMBER

You only get out of your brand vehicles what you put in. Hi-grade creativity leads to hi-grade brands.



YOUR BRAND NAME IS JUST ONE VEHICLE FOR MARKETING SUCCESS

A name may be your most important and powerful brand element, but it's not your only one.

In order for a name to be successful as a marketing vehicle, it will need to be supported by other brand communications such as smart graphic design, a complementary tagline, and unified brand messaging. Combining your name with the proper hardware will optimize your brand's performance and ensure you get the most out of your brand name.

(see "Optional Hardware" for more information on name accoutrements).

STEER CLEAR OF LEGAL OBSTACLES

It's important that every naming steward understand and appreciate the distinction between domain names and trademarks. Registering your brand name as a URL does not provide you with legal rights to the trademark.

A domain name is an internet address; a trademark is a protectable legal asset. And, while driving a name without a trademark may provide you with some rights, you could be headed for a naming accident. To be safe, have a qualified intellectual property attorney evaluate your name for *trademark* availability.

REMEMBER

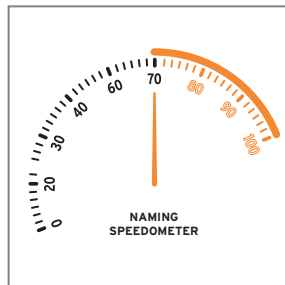
You're developing a brand, not an internet address. You can always modify the domain to resolve URL availability issues.

CAUTION/WARNING

Unless the internet is crucial to your business, don't overemphasize the need for an exact .com URL. Doing so only limits the creative directions in which you can go.

And remember...

SPEEDING IS DANGEROUS



Everyone wants to get to their destination as quickly as possible. Many people get waylaid in product development or misadventures in internal naming contests and find themselves behind in their brand development schedules. But speeding is a surefire way to get into a terrible naming accident. Only naming while intoxicated is responsible for more brand fatalities.

Whether you're developing a name yourself, or collaborating with a trained naming specialist, always allow enough time to complete your naming assignment: At a minimum, six weeks from initial concepting to trademark clearance. If you're planning on driving your vehicle in other countries, you should allow a minimum of 10 weeks.

NAMING WHILE INTOXICATED

NUI

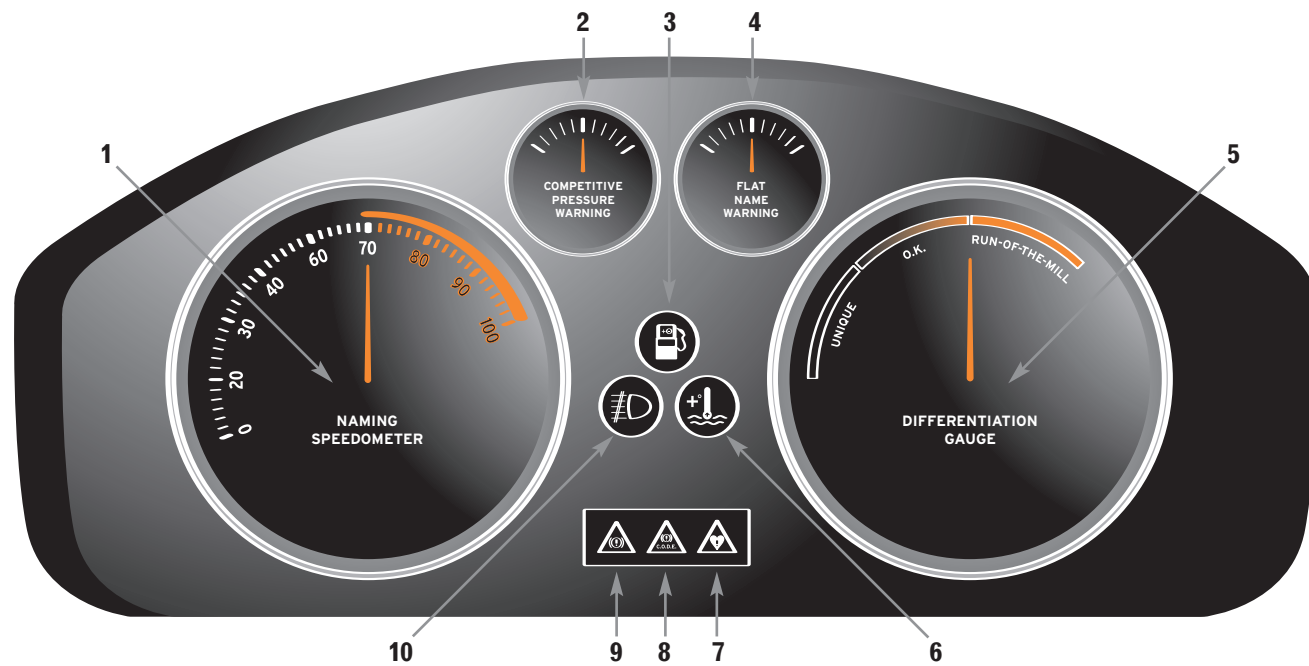
Naming while intoxicated is a serious offense, and can lead to major injuries. When you get behind the wheel of a name development assignment, you're taking responsibility not just for yourself, but for the careers of others. Accidents that result from drinking and naming impact not just you and your colleagues, but your customers and your business partners as well.

Just a few notable naming fatalities that likely involved alcohol include: Pontiac Banshee, Chevy Citation, and the Honda Life Dunk (frighteningly close to "Life Drunk").

If you're going to name, please name responsibly.



INDICATOR SYMBOLS

**Naming Speedometer**

You may be exceeding the speed limit for safe naming. Slow it down, partner. Great names can't be rushed.

**High Competitive Pressure Warning Gauge**

Competition is heating up. Time to assess your marketing vehicle for relevance and differentiation.

**Low Creative Fuel Warning Light**

Indicates low creative fuel. Consider bringing in a professional naming firm.

**Flat Name Indicator Gauge**

You have a flat name. Pull your marketing vehicle over and replace immediately.

**Differentiation Warning Gauge**

Your name may no longer be unique. Adjust your side and rear-view mirrors and assess the competition.

**Losing Your Cool-Ant Warning Light**

You're becoming frustrated by the lack of exciting, available names. Could be a faulty Creative fuel-injection system. It may be time to call in a naming expert.

**Premature Infatuation Warning Light**

One or more of your team is prematurely falling in love with a new name. You may need to apply your brakes and slow down.

**Codename Momentum Warning Light**

Your project codename is gaining too much momentum. Replace with something completely irrelevant or generic.

**Cease & Desist Warning Light**

Indicates an unfavorable name availability profile. Usually accompanied by a Premature infatuation warning light. Don't get too attached to this name.

**Creative Malfunction Warning Light**

Someone on your creative team is tapped out. Find a replacement bulb, or hire a naming firm.

FAMILIARIZING YOURSELF WITH THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF YOUR BRAND NAME WILL HELP YOU TO BECOME A MORE INFORMED, CAPABLE NAMING STEWARD, AND PROVIDE YOU WITH HEIGHTENED TROUBLESHOOTING ABILITIES.

THE PARTS OF YOUR BRAND NAME

CONSTRUCTION

The Construction is the body of your brand name, the shape it takes during manufacturing, including length and ease of pronunciation. While not quite as fortunate as our design brethren, name developers do have several Constructions to work with, including the real-word (e.g. Legend), the coined word (e.g. Camry), the composite word (e.g. Land Cruiser), and even alpha-numerics (e.g. A6). Domestic namers may also consider the non-English word a recognized construction (e.g. Paseo).

METAPHOR (AVAILABLE ONLY ON SELECT MODELS)

Not all brand names come equipped with a Metaphor, but many of the best vehicles possess one. The Metaphor is a symbolic representation of the Messaging, and it can be a real head-turner. It's not always engineered into the vehicle because it does require a little more thought and naming expertise, but names equipped with Metaphor are often the most sophisticated and sturdy names on the road. Just some examples of names that come equipped with Metaphor are the Ford Mustang, the Honda Prelude, and the Chevy Corvette.

MESSAGING

The core idea or ideas communicated by your name. Not to be confused with the Metaphor (available on select models), the Messaging is usually the most important concept that your brand name conveys. Fast, Comfortable, Luxurious, Adventurous, Environmentally-Friendly, Quiet. These are all examples of Messaging communicated by numerous car brand names. Some brand names come equipped with very overt Messaging, such as the Toyota Comfort (interestingly, 90% of all taxis in Hong Kong are Toyota Comforts) while others boast more suggestive Messaging, such as the Honda Passport. Still others come standard with more abstract Messaging, such as the Volkswagen Touareg.

TONALITY (OFTENTIMES REFERRED TO AS PERSONALITY)

Of all the brand name parts, the Tonality is the hardest to locate, and it's often the cause of brand name breakdowns. Identifying the brand name Tonality and knowing how to fix it will save you considerable time and expense in the event of a naming emergency. In order to locate the Tonality, first pinpoint the essence of your brand name (note: the essence is another relatively elusive part of your name, and you may get a little dirty looking for it). After you've put your finger on the essence, you should feel the Tonality. If you're in the right place it should spring from the essence fairly effortlessly. Note that not all Tonalitys will sound the same. Some will be very sophisticated (e.g. LeSabre), and some will be less so (e.g. Gremlin).

HOW TO CHANGE A FLAT NAME

Your vehicle is very sophisticated, and comes equipped with numerous devices for changing a flat name and creating a new one. Generally speaking, you will need to use all the following devices in order to safely remove and replace your flat name:

- 1 Onboard naming navigator (to help you find relevance)
- 2 Rear & Side-view mirrors (to spot and avoid your competition)
- 3 Creative fuel-injection system (to inspire truly great name ideas)
- 4 Anti-lock naming system (to avoid pigeonholing your new name)
- 5 Name exhaust system (for distilling out/expelling undesirable new names)
- 6 Theft prevention system (to protect your new name)

NAMING TIP

Involve all key stakeholders from beginning to end. If some senior decision makers can't participate, arrange to have periodic meetings with them to update them on your short-lists, names you plan to screen, and final candidates.

ONBOARD NAMING NAVIGATOR

A brand name should be destined for your customers' hearts and minds. To make sure you reach your destination, activate your Onboard Naming Navigator before embarking and set a course for relevance.

REAR & SIDE-VIEW MIRRORS

With ever-increasing competition, the naming roads have become incredibly congested in recent years. Fortunately, your marketing vehicle comes equipped with both Rear & Side-view mirrors for spotting and avoiding competitive brand names on the commercial roads. Feel free to glance in your mirrors as often as you like, but avoid changing lanes until you've activated your Onboard Naming Navigator and arrived at relevance.

CREATIVE FUEL-INJECTION SYSTEM (CFI)

Your Creative Fuel-Injection System supplies creative inspiration to the name development process. It is your creative workhorse, and the generator of all brainstorming exercises. CFIs are usually more powerful than carbureted systems, though it's not necessary to monitor output since more creative is always better than less.

ANTI-LOCK NAMING SYSTEM

Anti-lock Naming is a system of sensors that alerts you to pigeonholing – the propensity for a name to limit itself to only one brand feature or benefit. To ensure that your new brand name has the flexibility to venture into new brand territories and to explore new brand roads, always make sure that you've activated your Anti-lock Naming System.

CAUTION/WARNING

Don't expect your names to immediately sound as awesome as existing brand names that have benefitted from millions of ad/marketing dollars.

NAME EXHAUST SYSTEM

Your Name Exhaust System is responsible for expelling new name ideas that fail to meet all the criteria for a desirable new name. The System works by evaluating new name ideas for appropriateness, uniqueness, and other new name criteria.

THEFT PREVENTION SYSTEM

You've put a lot of time, energy and love into the development of your new brand name. It only makes sense that you ensure it's available for your use, and that you'll be able to prevent others from using it. Brand name theft is not uncommon, and if you live in an urban center it behooves you to take precautions, and do your own due diligence. To assist you, we've equipped your vehicle with a Theft Prevention System.

CREATE YOUR NEW NAME

Creating your new name is both the most difficult and most exciting step of changing your flat name. To begin, locate your various naming devices, including your Onboard Naming Navigator, your Rear & Side-view Mirrors, your Creative Fuel-Injection System, your Anti-lock Naming System, and your Theft Prevention System.

Now, in exactly this order, here are the steps you should follow:

Step 1 Locating Relevance

Step 2 Avoiding Competition

Step 3 Developing Names

Step 4 Avoiding Pigeonholing

Step 5 Distilling Names

Step 6 Screening Names

Step 7 Installing Name

NAMING TIP

Be clear about what makes you unique. Choose a single point of distinction – not a laundry list.

STEP 1 LOCATING RELEVANCE

Use your Onboard Naming Navigator to locate relevance. Finding relevance may not be simple, and will require a deep understanding of your customers and what's important to them. If you haven't done so already, speak with your customers and have them answer the following questions:

- What is important to you about this product or service?
- Why would you choose one product or service over another in this space?
- In what ways are existing products or services deficient?
- How would you describe the ideal product or service?
- What product or service in this space best fits your needs and why?

Once you have answers to these questions, and a solid understanding of what is relevant to your customers, advance to the next step and use your Side & Rear-view Mirrors to locate and avoid your competitors.

STEP 2 AVOIDING COMPETITION

Use your Side & Rear-view Mirrors to spot and avoid competitors. Make sure to use all available mirrors and be mindful of your blind spot – competitors have a tendency to get lost in heavy traffic conditions. Knowing where your competitors are and what sort of names they're driving is imperative, not only to finding an available lane but hopefully to blazing your own trail and creating a truly distinctive brand name. Position your mirrors to answer the following questions:

- Which name constructs are your competitors using?
- What messages are being communicated by your competitors' names?
- Is there an opportunity to communicate an altogether new message?
- Who's got the flashiest name on the road? Is it getting any attention? Why?
- What names have already arrived at your customers' hearts and minds?

Once you have located your competitors and understand their names you can begin to identify places to steer your name that competitors don't occupy. While open lanes are often opportunities for immediate distinction, the clearest and most enduring path to customers' hearts and minds is the trail you blaze yourself.

CAUTION/WARNING

To overtake your competition, you need to distinguish your brand from theirs. Don't be afraid to be different.

STEP 3 DEVELOPING NAMES

Now that you've found relevance and determined how to distinguish your name on the road, you can begin the process of actual name creation! To do so, start up your Creative Fuel Injection System (CFI). If your system is working properly you will begin to feel inspired. Creative ideas should start to flow and possible new names should begin to emerge. If new names don't immediately emerge, make sure that your CFI is properly calibrated and running on the following creative pumps:

- Brainstorming sessions
- Free-association exercises
- Metaphor explorations
- Creative relay exercises
- Foreign language exploration
- Out-of-category inspirations
- Visual stimulants

Brainstorming Sessions

Focus on ideas, not names. Group name-creation sessions are rarely productive. Instead, collaboratively identify 10 conceptual areas for exploration and divide them among your team. Assigning a limited number of conceptual areas to each person will allow everyone to dig deep instead of merely scratch the surface, resulting in a richer and more diverse name list.

Free-Association Exercises

Control leads to people in control leads to air-traffic control leads to planes leads to pilots leads to flying leads to things in flight leads to birds leads to birds with control leads to hummingbirds leads to Hillstar, a species of hummingbird. Ah, interesting name!

Metaphor Explorations

Virgin. Safari. Amazon. Naked Juices. These are all good examples of effective use of metaphor in naming. Each marketer found a unique, indirect and memorable way to communicate their core messaging. These names were immediately distinctive and provided richer brand-building opportunities. Plus, they were more likely to be available as trademarks.

NAMING TIP

Don't be afraid to be bold. Distinguish yourself from your competitors. Don't imitate them. You think everyone felt comfortable with Virgin?

NAMING TIP

Embrace the dark side. Most juicy words have lots of connotations – positive, negative, neutral – depending on the context. Just because a good name has a dark side isn't a reason to kill it. Its edginess might work in your favor and help you get noticed – as long as the name's darker associations don't overshadow its relevant ones.

Creative Relay Exercise

It's a simple idea but incredibly effective. Have everyone on your name development team share a short list of their names with each other. Then, in piggyback fashion, use each other's ideas to create altogether new names. Make sure you're buckled in because your creative list is about to take off.

NAMING TIP

See past your prejudices. Just because a name reminds you of your nerdy Uncle Ted doesn't mean it's a bad name. Many a great name has bitten the dust because someone couldn't see past their personal preconceptions and idiosyncratic experiences.

Out-of-category Inspirations

"Chocolate" for a cell phone? "Juicy" for clothing? "Apple" for a computer? Some of the most unexpected and effective names may come from out-of-category inspirations. Pick an industry other than your own and consider words specific to that industry. Now, try to imagine those words as names for your product or service. For instance, naming a new high-energy health bar? Check out the language in a motocross magazine. Racer Bars? Hurricane Bars? Flyaway Bars? Why not?

Foreign Language Exploration

Don't just limit yourself to the Romance languages! Consider a language like Swahili, which is rich in words with an alternating consonant-vowel construction that is very easy to pronounce. There are many excellent translation resources online, including www.yourdictionary.com.

NAMING TIP

Try to take a break of at least 1-2 days between when you generate creative and when you identify a shortlist. You'll be able to see your work with fresher eyes.

Generate a long creative list; the more the merrier. Much of what you come up with won't be available, so you'll need considerable quantity.

CAUTION/WARNING

While you may experience epiphany in naming, it's pretty unusual. Like a well-tuned automobile, names need a bit of time to "warm up." Expecting epiphany upon first glance would be akin to expecting your car to jump into the fast lane when you first turn the ignition.

Don't rush to judgement: give a name a few hours (or even a few days) to get into gear.

Visual Stimulants

Those unsolicited catalogs that keep piling up in your mailbox, your wife's Vogue, your husband's GQ, your children's artwork, and of course the world around you! Some of the best creative name ideas come from visual stimulants, including magazines of all sorts. Supplement your text-based name development with lots of visual triggers.

You'll want to keep your CFI running for at least one week, or until such time as you have several hundred possible names to consider. That may sound like a lot, but it will help ensure that you choose the right brand name for your marketing vehicle. And note: after employing your remaining name development tools (see below) and narrowing down your list of names to only the most exciting and viable ideas, it may be necessary to restart your CFI.

NAMING TIP

To get a sense for your naming style, think about existing names in the marketplace you like and dislike: including, but not limited to those of your competitors.

STEP 4 AVOIDING PIGEONHOLING

After you have successfully run your CFI and generated a long list of names you'll need to check the names for pigeonholing. Pigeonholing is the propensity for a name to limit the brand to only one brand feature or benefit, and it can be detected by activating your Anti-lock Naming System. To activate the system, ask the same simple question for each name:

- Does this name limit the directions in which my brand may go?

If the answer is "yes" that name should be removed from your list of name ideas. Your Anti-lock Naming System should do a good job of narrowing down your list of name ideas to a more manageable number. You'll then need to evaluate the remaining names further, against a variety of criteria. To do so, turn on your Name Exhaust System and proceed to the next step.

STEP 5 DISTILLING NAMES

Your Name Exhaust System is responsible for expelling new name ideas that fail to meet all the criteria for a desirable new name. The System works by evaluating new name ideas for appropriateness and fit, ease of pronunciation and spelling, uniqueness, depth, identity design potential, and, if applicable, linguistic and cultural viability. If your exhaust system expels more than 90% of your names you should consider reactivating your Creative Fuel Injection System and developing more names.

NAMING TIP

Use style to convey substance. If you want to be seen as friendly and casual, don't use a four-syllable Latin word. If you want to position yourselves as pioneers, try a tone or naming construction that's unusual – better yet unheard of – in your industry. Do you think that ComputerPlanet would have made the splash that Apple did?

CAUTION/WARNING

Don't decide by committee. Limit the number of stakeholders involved in name selection, and be willing to let the most marketing-savvy participants drive the decision. When you insist on total agreement from everyone, what usually survives is the lowest common denominator. Sure, it doesn't offend anybody – but will it actually engage people?

CAUTION/WARNING

Choose names that are relevant to your target audience, not just names that you like or that have meaning to you alone.

STEP 6 SCREENING NAMES

You're almost there! Now, you need to ensure that no one else has created the same brand name for their vehicle. To do so, activate your Theft Prevention System (TPS). It is *extremely* important that your TPS is operating properly. A malfunctioning TPS can cause an unexpected and even fatal name crash.

To activate your TPS, either:

Submit your preferred names to a qualified Intellectual Property attorney and have them perform a "preliminary screen" on all your preferred candidates. It's important that you work with an Intellectual Property attorney (as opposed to a corporate, contract or other attorney), as trademark law is a specialized area of law requiring specific legal knowledge and experience with Intellectual Property.

Or:

Visit the United States Patent & Trademark Office website (www.uspto.gov) and use the Trademark Electronic Search System (TESS) to conduct a trademark search on all your preferred names. If you're unfamiliar with TESS you should first review the "Help" section on the website and gain at least a basic understanding of the trademark classes and search strategies.

After you have completed the preliminary screening process you will need to conduct a more rigorous, “Comprehensive” evaluation of your final names (see below for an explanation of the different levels of screening). In order to do so, you must work with a qualified Intellectual Property attorney. Only after this more rigorous evaluation has been completed should you feel safe driving your new marketing vehicle.

The three levels of availability screening are:

Preliminary

Preliminary screening, also called a “knock-out search” will reveal exact and near-exact hits on your names. It is a cursory screen intended to eliminate only the most obvious conflicts.

Stepped-up

Stepped-up screening involves the evaluation of more permutations of a name, and a closer review of the trademark abstract, including, and in particular, the description of “Goods & Services”.

NAMING TIP

Don’t underestimate the difficulties of finding an available trademark. Trademark classes are more crowded than ever, and clearing a name is more challenging than ever.

NOTE

You should expect preliminary evaluations to eliminate approximately 50% or more of your preferred name ideas.

Comprehensive

A Comprehensive screen (also called a “Full Legal” or “Common Law” screen) involves an evaluation of both registered and non-registered names. Comprehensive screens cannot be conducted using TESS and should only be carried out by qualified Intellectual Property attorneys. Because of the breadth of results, and the expertise required to evaluate them, this top-level evaluation is very expensive (\$1,500/name and up depending on the scope of the screen).

NAMING TIP

Unless you instruct it to return only “Live” marks, TESS will return both “Live” and “Dead” trademarks. Limit your search to only “Live” marks to greatly reduce the number of retrieved names and provide for more efficient screening.

NAMING TIP

Conducting Google searches on preferred name candidates is a cheap and effective way to uncover possible “Common Law” uses of the names. Simply conduct a search on each one of your names paired with a business descriptor such as “automotive” to identify other products or businesses with the same name.

NAMING TIP

The United States is a “first use” country. That means you can obtain legal rights to a name simply by using the name in commerce (even if you haven’t registered the name as a trademark). These rights are called “Common Law” rights.

STEP 7 INSTALLING NAMES

Congratulations! You've created a new name and you're ready to put it on your new marketing vehicle. To do so, inflate your new name with hot air and carefully place it on the brand. At first, you may feel that your new name isn't "pretty" enough. It may seem underdressed. This is because you have not yet applied a new brand identity. To do so, see your Manual's section on "Optional Hardware".

If you're driving a new company name

Owning and driving a company name can be more complicated than driving a product name. To ensure that you've complied with all state and federal laws, and will make a smooth transition from your old name to your new one, we've created a checklist of items for you to complete before driving your new company name.

- Submit your trademark registration to the USPTO
- Create a plan and timetable for phasing-in the new name
- Update bank accounts, checks, other financial paperwork
- File a name change with the city/cities and/or counties where you plan to drive your new company name
- Update the name with the Secretary of State's office
- Register your company domain name
- Register spelling variants and alternative top-level domains (e.g. .net) as needed

- Have your old domain name and any new variants direct traffic to your new site
- Update email addresses to new domain; update email signatures
- Forward old email addresses to new ones
- Check with a tax attorney for any dependencies/issues in filing under your new name
- Determine the best way to announce the name internally
 - e.g. email from the president, employee gathering, outside party, etc.
- Plan ways to acclimate employees to the new name and rally support
- Create an "early" name announcement for valued partners and contacts
- Create a press release to announce the name to the media and the world
- Update business cards, letterhead, envelopes and other collateral
- Update brochures, pamphlets, other marketing materials
- Contact your closest customers and industry analysts and inform them of the name change (but only *after* you've made the announcement internally!)
- Create a letter to customers explaining how the change is relevant to them, including answers to likely customer questions (e.g. will service contract be affected?)

NAMING TIP

When evaluating names, trust your instincts and don't ask for a lot of outside opinions (unless, of course, you're a masochist).

IF YOU PLAN TO DRIVE YOUR NAME IN OTHER COUNTRIES YOU WILL NEED TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE COMPLIED WITH LOCAL NAMING LAWS.

OPERATION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Doing so requires registering your name in every country in which you plan to drive it. You will again need to activate your Theft Prevention System and almost certainly hire either a name development firm or an Intellectual Property attorney to conduct the necessary trademark evaluations on your new name.

In addition, you will want to ensure that your foreign customers can pronounce and spell your new name, and that your new name is appealing to them in their language. While a domestic translation service can be helpful, the most insightful feedback comes from customers actually living in the countries in which you plan to drive your new name. The easiest way to reach these people is through the use of a specialized name development firm with an established linguistics network around the world. If the firm has experience with linguistic and cultural research of this sort they will know to ask the following questions:

- Is this name easy to pronounce?
- Is this name easy to spell?
- What does this name make you think of?
- Do you get positive or negative associations with this name? What are they?
- Does this name remind you of any existing brands in your country?

CAUTION/WARNING

If you're driving your name in other countries make sure to conduct a linguistic and cultural analysis of the name. It'll ensure that your name doesn't have negative connotations or meanings in other languages, and help you sleep better at night.

OPTIONAL HARDWARE

CAUTION/WARNING

Let your customers tell you what's relevant to them, but don't let them tell you what name to use for your brand. If you do you'll end up with CompuWorld instead of Apple, books.com instead of Amazon, and Coffee Connection instead of Starbucks.

Make sure you've got your horse and cart in the right order. Always begin name development before identity design.

There are various marketing devices you can purchase in order to optimize your name's performance, including:

- Taglines
- Descriptors
- Brand identities
- Linguistic/cultural research
- Name validation research

To learn more about optional hardware contact a Catchword office in your neighborhood. One of our name technicians will be happy to explain the different types of hardware available for your name model and send you a price list.

GENERAL NAME MAINTENANCE

Good brand names are built to last. If you've created a relevant, distinctive name, it should require minimal care over the years. Occasionally creating a new slogan, or refreshing the identity will help to keep your vehicle looking and driving its best. Unless your name goes flat or begins to lose traction, you shouldn't need to change it.

IS YOUR CAR AS FAST AS A MUSTANG? AS LUXURIOUS AS EL DORADO? DOES IT MOVE LIKE A ZEPHYR WIND? ANIMALS, LUXURY AND NATURE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE THEMES CAR MANUFACTURERS HAVE USED TO COMMUNICATE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OR BENEFITS OF THEIR VEHICLES. READ ON TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER THEMES AND DISCOVER THE MEANINGS OF SOME CAR NAMES YOU PROBABLY NEVER KNEW.

CAR NAME THEMES

Of all consumer brand names, car names are perhaps the most recognizable. Online, TV and print advertising make it hard to ignore the most exciting new “rides,” and daily commutes ensure real-life interactions with these brands. Who hasn’t heard of a Camaro? Responsibly considered an Accord? Dreamed of owning a Miata?

So, what are the most common car name “Themes”— i.e, the concepts, messages or constructions used most frequently? For the fun of it, we did a bit of research (actually, a whole lot of research) and provide below the results of our investigation – the nine most commonly used messaging themes and constructions used by car manufacturers.

These lists aren’t intended to be exhaustive – for example, we haven’t included the rather large category of alphanumerics, since they don’t have inherent meaning. And of course, the same name can fall into multiple categories. In addition, many of the names exist only in foreign markets, or are old car brands, and might not be immediately recognizable. Lastly, some of the name derivations are a product of guesswork, as necessary.

THEME ANIMALS

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME MUSTANG

One of the most popular car name themes, Animals convey everything from speed and strength (e.g. Mercury Bobcat, Dodge Ram) to grace and innovative design (e.g. Nissan Gazelle, Volkswagen Beetle). Sure, everyone knows what a Mustang is, what a Cougar is, what a Pinto is. But did you know that Corcel is Spanish for “steed,” that a Thunderbird is actually a mythical bird, that an Impala is a type of antelope, or that a Tamaraw is a small water-buffalo found only in the Phillipines?

PREDICTION: with the ever-growing awareness and development of “greener” cars, expect to see fewer fast, strong, predatory animal names, and more intelligent, wise, innovative animal names. The Toyota Dolphin anyone?

Volkswagen	Beetle	Car looks like a little bug	Ford	Mustang	A wild horse typically small and light
Chevy	Bison	A humpbacked, shaggy-haired wild ox	Ford	Pinto	The combination of white and another color on any breed of horse
Nissan	Bluebird	A songbird	Ford	Puma	Another term for cougar
Mercury	Bobcat	A small, North American wild cat	Volkswagen	Rabbit	Cute, little furry mammals
Chevy	Bruin	A bear, especially in children's fables	Dodge	Ram	A male sheep
Ford	Corcel	Means steed in Spanish	Buick	Skylark	A lark known for its prolonged song during flight
Mercury	Cougar	A large wild cat	Alfa Romeo	Spider	The eight-legged arachnid
Ford	Falcon	A bird of prey	Pontiac	Sunbird	A small, brightly colored songbird
Pontiac	Firefly	A luminescent beetle	Toyota	Tamaraw	A small water-buffalo found only in the Phillipines
Volkswagen	Fox	Proverbially cunning animal	Ford	Thunderbird	Mythical bird
Nissan	Gazelle	A small, slender, horned antelope	Hyundai	Tiburon	From the Spanish word for “shark”; also a CA town
Chevy	Impala	A type of antelope	Volkswagen	Tiguan	A coining of tiger and <i>leguan</i> (German for “iguana”) – due out Spring of 2008
Chevy	Kodiak	A bear found on the islands south of Alaska	Dodge	Viper	A venomous snake
Nissan	Leopard	A large wild cat also known as a panther	Buick	Wildcat	A small wild cat noted for its ferocity
Mercury	Lynx	A wild cat; also a northern constellation			

THEME CELESTIAL

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME SATURN (YEAH, WE KNOW, IT'S A COMPANY, NOT A CAR)

It's no surprise that many cars have been named for the heavens and its myriad creations. Speed, innovation, exploration, inclusiveness, reliability, movement and timelessness are just a few associations one can have with the sky and all its celestial inhabitants.

And, even though the Celestial theme has been used less frequently than the Luxury, Performance or Placenames themes, just about every name construct has been applied to this theme. Consider that there are real-word celestial names (e.g. Taurus), coined celestial names (e.g. Telstar), composite celestial names (e.g. Star Chief), and non-English celestial names (e.g. Comète – French for Comet)!

Perhaps our favorite coined celestial name is Celica. Supposedly coined from the Latin *Coelica* meaning "heavenly or celestial", the name is both otherworldly sounding and at the same time highly communicative of acceleration and speed. It's abstract enough to allow for flexibility in meaning and identity, but suggestive enough of a key benefit of the vehicle. Smart naming, Toyota!

Pontiac	Firebird	Probably a reference to the Phoenix	Ford	Meteor	A celestial object that becomes incandescent upon entering our atmosphere
Toyota	Alphard	Brightest star in Hydra	Chevy	Nova	A star
Buick	Apollo	Son of Zeus and the American space program	Ford	Orion	A giant hunter who changed into a constellation upon his death
Saturn	Astra	Latin for "star"	Nissan	Pulsar	Derived from "pulsating star" – a star that emits regular pulses of radio waves
Pontiac	Astre	French for "heavenly body"	Saturn	Saturn	6th planet of our solar system
Chevy	Astro	Latin for "star"	Ford	Scorpio	The eighth sign of the zodiac
Toyota	Celica	Derived from the Latin word <i>coelica</i> meaning "heavenly" or "celestial"	Pontiac	Star Chief	Composite name suggesting a commanding star
Mercury	Comet	Celestial object with a tail of gas	Ford	Taurus	The bull constellation
Ford	Comète	French for "comet"	Ford	Telstar	The first of the active communications satellite launched in 1962
Toyota	Cressida	Woman of troy who left her Trojan lover	Nissan	Titan	Any of the older Gods who preceded the Olympians
Buick	Electra	Vengeful daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra	Chevy	Vega	The fifth brightest star in the sky
Volkswagen	Eos	Greek goddess of the dawn	Toyota	Yaris	Derived from "Charis" a Greek goddess of beauty and elegance
Ford	Galaxie	French for "galaxy"	Ford	Zodiac	The belt of the heavens comprised of the 12 different divisions or signs
Toyota	Isis	After the Goddess of fertility	Pontiac	Phoenix	The bird that rises from its ashes with renewed youth
Buick	LeSabre	French for "the sword"			

THEME COINED/ABSTRACT

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME TOUAREG

While many of the names in this category have meaningful origins, most are pretty obscure. The Sanskrit word for “precious jewel” (Opala), the Indonesian word for “hairpin” (Kijang), a neologism meaning “pleasure” (Lanos) – these are just a few examples of the often rich but seemingly arbitrary names that comprise the Coined/Abstract category.

Of course, there are many benefits to adopting a coined or abstract name, and this is true for all industries. Abstract names, in particular, are usually among the most distinctive names in any business sector, and they're often the easiest to secure as trademarks. And, because they don't usually describe or suggest specific aspects of a product, they allow marketers to build meaning into the brand. What's a “Camry”? A “Tarago”? A “Catera”? Pretty much whatever their manufacturers want us to believe about the brand, usually conveyed through other marketing communications. Of course, tonality and construction can be effective tools for building meaning into otherwise abstract names. For instance, while Azera may have no recognizable origin, it sure does sound fast and agile to us!

Toyota	Allion	Derived from the phrase “all-in-one”	Ford	Mondeo	Derived from <i>Mundus</i> , meaning “World” in Latin
Toyota	Avanza	Taken from the Italian word <i>Avanzato</i> which means “advance”	Dodge	Nitro	Abbreviation for nitroglycerine. Sounds fast, exciting
Toyota	Aygo	Supposedly derived from I-go	Chevy	Opala	Sanskrit word for “precious jewel, justice or hope”
Hyundai	Azera	Possibly from A-to-Z, and a new “era”	Ford	Pampa	An extensive, grass-covered plain
Pontiac	Aztek	Play on Aztec	Toyota	Ractis	Supposedly derived from “run, activity, and space”
Chevy	Camaro	French slang for “warm friend”	Buick	Reatta	Perhaps a variation of the Spanish word <i>reata</i> for “lasso”
Toyota	Camry	From the Japanese transcribed word <i>Kanmuri</i> for “crown”	Buick	Rendezvous	Suggests getting out, a destination, and some intrigue
Cadillac	Catera	Modern English for “blessed or pure”	Nissan	Sentra	Perhaps a coining of Sentry, suggesting controlling access
Honda	Civic	A responsible, social vehicle	Hyundai	Sonata	Solo musical composition
Hyundai	Elantra	Coining of “elan”	Nissan	Stanza	A verse in poetry or music
Honda	Element	Elemental, essential, small, compact	Toyota	Tarago	Australian aboriginal word meaning “country”
Ford	Fiesta	Spanish festival, celebration	Buick	Terraza	From the Italian <i>Terrazza</i> , meaning “Terrace”
Volkswagen	Golf	The name is short for <i>Golf-Strom</i> , German for “Gulf Stream”	Volkswagen	Touareg	The Touareg name is derived from the French moniker for the nomadic Tuareg tribe
Buick	LaCrosse	For the sport, thought to appeal to a younger, more active demographic	Volkswagen	Touran	Derived from the words “touring” and “sedan”
Acura	Legend	The thing that legends are made of	Mazda	Tribute	To honor. Speaks to an admirable ride
Toyota	Matrix	Where things and ideas are born	Pontiac	Vibe	Giving off a good vibe

THEME INNOVATION

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME FUSION

A few car names are explicit in referencing an innovative new technology (e.g. Quattro), but most speak to innovation in a more subtle and general way (e.g. Lumina). Because let's face it: very few technologies are groundbreaking enough to name the whole car after them. And even when the technologies are truly revolutionary, the strategy usually doesn't make sense because the car will almost certainly outlive the novelty of the innovation.

Consider "hybrid" technologies – perhaps the most exciting automotive innovation in years. While the innovation has inspired the adoption of some strongly suggestive "hybrid" names (e.g. Versa), most hybrid car names have a relatively loose association to the technology (e.g. Prius, Vue, and Yaris). Calling a hybrid car "Hybro" today might be cool, but when ALL cars are hybrid (or utilize an even better technology), that name could be an anchor.

Whether the car name is closely tied to the technology or more general in nature, communicating innovation serves the same purpose: to imply a modern, cutting-edge driving experience.

These aren't your father's car names.

Ford	Aspire	Direct your hopes toward achieving something	Dodge	Neon	From the Greek meaning "new"
Ford	Crusader	To lead	Toyota	Porte	French for "door"
Honda	Domani	Italian word for "tomorrow"	Honda	Prelude	To come before
Mitsubishi	Endeavor	Attempting to achieve a goal, an undertaking	Lincoln	Premiere	First in importance or order
Chevy	Equinox	When the sun crosses the celestial equator – sounds innovative	Toyota	Previa	Probably suggests previous, as in before others
Cadillac	Escalade	Meaning "scaling fort walls with ladders as in a military attack"	Toyota	Prius	Latin for "to go before"
Ford	Flex	Speaks to a versatile crossover SUV	Toyota	Progres	French for "progress"
Ford	Fusion	The coming together of something	Toyota	Revo	Short for revolutionary
Hyundai	Genesis	The beginning of something new	Nissan	Rogue	Perhaps to suggest free-thinking, independent
Toyota	Innova	Derived from innovation	Toyota	Vanguard	At the front, the most forward-thinking
Honda	Insight	The insight to innovate	Pontiac	Ventura	Italian for "good fortune"
Acura	Integra	Coining of "integration" and "integrity"	Toyota	Vios	Greek for "life"
Toyota	Kluger	German word for "intelligent"	Chevy	Viva	Meaning "long live!"
Chevy	Lumina	Plural for "lumen"	Saturn	Vue	A thing to behold, a great view of the road, etc.
Ford	Maverick	Independent-minded			

THEME LUXURY (INCLUDING PRESTIGE, QUALITY, COMFORT) THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME CROWN VICTORIA

Have you ever shaken hands with a Grand Marquis? Do you aspire to the Monarchy? Maybe you've never been to Brookwood, or Kingswood, or Parkwood, or Bonneville. That would probably explain it. Let's face it, few things say luxury like nobility, and many cars have adopted both real and real-sounding English (and French) locations and icons to communicate a sense of quality and sophistication.

And that's the beauty of this theme, and of these names: most don't scream luxury, they allude to it. Case in point: Fleetwood. It's an old English word meaning "stream in the woods". What does a stream in the woods have to do with 4 wheels and a chassis? Good question. Probably not much. But it certainly sounds sophisticated, luxurious, and probably out of our price range. And that's the point, to project an air of comfort, richness and quality to which everyone aspires.

Of course, not all names in the category have relied on tonality alone to suggest luxury. Some names have highly appropriate Latin origins, such as the *Corolla*, which is Latin for "small crown". Some are transcribed or coined from other languages, such as Camry, derived from the Japanese word *Kanmuri*, also meaning "crown", and Royaum, taken from the French *Royaume* meaning "kingdom". Still others have used simple English words to loosely suggest a comfortable, agreeable ride, such as the Honda Accord.

Toyota	Altezza	Italian for "prestige"	Toyota	Granvia	Derived from "grand" and "via", suggesting a great ride
Toyota	Auris	"Gold" in Latin	Mitsubishi	Galant	Denotes a light and elegant style of 18th century music
Toyota	Avalon	Place where King Arthur went after his death	Ford	Grand Marquis	A European nobleman
Pontiac	Bonneville	From the french <i>bonne</i> meaning "good" and <i>ville</i> meaning "settlement"	Hyundai	Grandeur	Very impressive in appearance or style
Ford	Capri	The island	Chevy	Kingwood	English placename – sounds regal, sophisticated, rich
Ford	Contour	Fine lines	Mercury	Marquis	A European nobleman
Toyota	Corolla	Latin for "small crown"	Mercury	Monarch	Kingly, leading, in charge
Toyota	Corona	Latin for "crown"	Toyota	Belta	From the Italian <i>Belta</i> , meaning "beauty"
Ford	Crown Victoria	Implies the most important vehicle in the lineup	Volkswagen	Phaeton	A light, horsedrawn carriage. A touring carriage
Cadillac	Eldorado	Lost city of Gold	Volkswagen	Polo	A civilized ride
Hyundai	Entourage	important, and luxurious enough to accommodate an entourage	Toyota	Premio	Italian for "prize"
Toyota	Estima	From "estime", suggesting respect and admiration	Nissan	Primera	Spanish for "first"
Cadillac	Fleetwood	Of old English origin meaning "stream in the woods"	Toyota	Qualis	Latin for "of quality"
Ford	Super Deluxe	Outfitted with all the latest 1940s equipment	Buick	Regal	Magnificent or dignified
Pontiac	Grand Parisienne	A magnificent, sophisticated vehicle	Buick	Royaum	Derived from the French word <i>royaume</i> for "kingdom"
Toyota	Raum	German word for "room, space, expanse"	Volkswagen	Sharan	Derived from the Persian word meaning "carrier of kings"

THEME MOVEMENT/NAVIGATION

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME CARAVAN

Getting you from point A to point B. Is there a more obvious and appropriate message to communicate about a car? Probably not. Which is why so many car manufacturers have chosen car names that speak to transportation, exploration and navigation. And while the message may be straightforward, the names themselves are often very exciting, and even aspirational (couldn't find "Transporta" anywhere, and we looked pretty hard!). Trailblazer, Pilot, Pathfinder, Voyager, Paseo, Airwave – these are just a few examples of the highly communicative yet creative names that comprise this category.

For the record, Caravan is one of our all-time favorite car names, and a perfect example of smart naming. It's a car. It's a van. It's a caravan. It's a CARAVAN. We'd let you steer a naming project anytime, Dodge.

Toyota	4Runner	Combination of 4-wheel drive and off road runner	Mercury	Mariner	Explorer of new realms
Honda	Airwave	Quick and pervasive as the airwaves	Lincoln	Navigator	Guiding you toward your destination
Lincoln	Aviator	A pilot – in control	Chevy	Nomad	Always moving, exploring, independent-minded
Chevy	Blazer	Blazing a trail, going new places	Honda	Odyssey	A long and eventful journey
Dodge	Caravan	A car, a van, a caravan	Mitsubishi	Outlander	Outland is remote or distant territory
Lincoln	Continental	From coast to coast	Toyota	Paseo	A path; literally "a step" in spanish
Ford	Corsair	A fast pirate ship	Honda	Passport	Your ticket to ride
Ford	Courier	Delivering you to your destination	Nissan	Pathfinder	Exploring new territories, reliable vehicle
Toyota	Echo	Enduring, travels great distances	Honda	Pilot	Suggests in control, fast, navigational
Chevy	El Camino	Spanish for "the road"	Nissan	Quest	Pursuit of excellence
Ford	Escape	Getting out, getting away, experiencing something different	Land Rover	Range Rover	Constant travel over large areas of land
Ford	Escort	Keeping you safe, accompanying you in life	Ford	Ranger	A person or thing that wanders over a particular area; a highly skilled soldier
Ford	Expedition	A journey or voyage taken by a group of people	Ford	Tempo	For reliable movement and keeping up with life
Nissan	Frontier	Exploring new territories	Ford	Tourneo	A coining of "tour" and "neo"
Dodge	Journey	Travelling from one place to another	Chevy	Trailblazer	Exploring new territories, independent
Toyota	Land Cruiser	Speed and comfort over any land	Mercury	Voyager	For any journey, no matter how long

THEME NATURE

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME SEQUOIA

Fast-moving rivers (Cimarron), rugged mountains (Sierra), strong winds (Zephyr); nature is filled with apt metaphors for car features and experiential branding possibilities. Consider the Buick Rainier. Not only does it suggest the summit or “peak” of engineering, as well as ruggedness and toughness (all appropriate associations for a V8-powered SUV), it evokes the outdoors, exploration, adventure, and natural wonder. It summons you to take the road less traveled, to reach new heights, to see the world from a different perspective. Sure, it implies a strong, sturdy sport-utility-vehicle, but it conveys so much more.

Relatively speaking, and in comparison to “Luxury”, “Performance” and “Placenames”, the use of nature as a car name theme is fairly limited. However, as our world continues to become more environmentally-conscious and appreciative of alternative fuel sources, we expect to see an increase in the number of nature-inspired car names on the road.

Chevy	Apache	American Indian tribe	Saturn	Sky	Openness, possibilities
Toyota	Aurion	Transliterated Greek word for “breeze”	Toyota	Solara	Referencing the sun
Chevy	Avalanche	Implies a strong force, great momentum	Pontiac	Solstice	Peak of Summer and Winter
Cadillac	Cimarron	River in New Mexico	Dodge	Stratus	A type of cloud – we have you covered
Chevy	Cobalt	Element	Pontiac	Sunburst	Explosive energy
Mercury	Cyclone	Strong tropical storm	Pontiac	Sunfire	A coining suggesting a hot, fast new car
Mitsubishi	Eclipse	Sun and moon, but also eclipsing the competition	Nissan	Sunny	A reason to smile, a positive driving experience
Pontiac	Grand Safari	Large enough take on an African adventure	Pontiac	Sunrunner	Fictional people who could use the sun and moon for communicating
Pontiac	Laurentian	“Of or relating to the St. Laurence River”	Ford	Taunus	German mountain range
Buick	Rainier	Mt. Rainier national park, rugged terrain, peaks	Pontiac	Tempest	A strong, windy storm
Ford	Ranchero	A person who works on a ranch	Hyundai	Terracan	Coining of “terra”
Honda	Ridgeline	A long, narrow range of hills	Mercury	Topaz	A precious stone and a tropical hummingbird
Toyota	Sequoia	The giant redwood tree	Nissan	Violet	Beautifully colored plant
Toyota	Sienna	Earthen color	Pontiac	Wave	Natural movement, strong natural force
Ford	Sierra	Mountain chain	Mercury	Zephyr	A gentle breeze
Chevy	Silverado	Possibly a cowboy reference	Toyota	Tundra	Suggests impervious to the elements or any terrain

THEME PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING SPEED, STRENGTH, SIZE, DURABILITY, HANDLING) THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME MAXIMA

Whether it's speed (Laser), strength (Titan), handling (Grand Prix) or an innovative four-wheel-drive system (Quattro), car manufacturers love to tout the performance capabilities of their vehicles. Some have used very overt names to suggest some aspect of performance (e.g. Sprinter, RoadMaster), while others have opted for more abstract or metaphoric names (e.g. Invicta, Grand Prix). In any case, and generally speaking, the goal is the same: to convey faster, stronger, more agile or all of the above (e.g. our quintessential name: Maxima).

It should be noted that while performance-suggesting names can be wonderfully exciting and effective memory hooks for core car functions, they also need to be credible, appropriate for the vehicle they represent, grounded in reality. Suggesting a performance trait that doesn't actually exist in a vehicle (or is only partially true) is taking the road to brand suicide. This is a basic rule of naming and applicable to all industries.

Buick	Centurion	Roman army commander	Pontiac	LeMans	For the French sports car endurance race
Toyota	Highlander	A soldier in a scottish regimen from the highlands	Dodge	Magnum	Speaks to size, strength
Honda	Accord	It agrees with you	Nissan	Maxima	Maximum performance
Cadillac	Allanté	Likely from the French <i>allant</i> meaning "dynamic"	Mercury	Mountaineer	Able to scale mountains, tough terrain
Nissan	Armada	Implies strength, well-equipped	Volkswagen	Passat	German term for trade wind
Dodge	Avenger	Sounds aggressive, in pursuit	Ford	Pronto	Speed, immediacy
Volkswagen	Caravelle	Light sailing ship	Audi	Quattro	Refers to "four wheel drive"
Dodge	Charger	Energized, strong forward movement	Buick	Skyhawk	Borrowing from the fighter aircraft that goes by the same name
Hyundai	Click	Fast, simple, easy, and everything just clicks	Toyota	Supra	Latin for "above"
Chevy	Corvair	A lightweight corvette, and recalls corsair, a fast pirate ship	Toyota	Tercel	From the Latin meaning "one third" because it was smaller than the Corolla
Pontiac	Fiero	Spanish for "wild"	Pontiac	Torrent	Speaks to speed, strength
Ford	Focus	Heightened capabilities, intensity	Mercury	Tracer	In the sense of a bullet tracer – something that leaves a streak moving so fast
Hyundai	Galopper	Fast, strong	Pontiac	Trans Am	For the Trans American Sedan Competition of muscle cars
Pontiac	Grand Am	For the American road race – high performance vehicles	Nissan	Versa	"Versa" is a participle form of the Latin verb <i>vertere</i> , meaning "to turn"
Volkswagen	Jetta	Jetting around, sounds fast	Acura	Vigor	Strength, energy and enthusiasm
Mitsubishi	Lancer	A soldier armed with lances	Nissan	Xterra	Extreme all-terrain vehicle
Ford	Laser	Pinpoint accuracy and speed			

THEME PLACENAMES

THE QUINTESSENTIAL NAME SANTA FE

Whether a specific reference to a town in Italy (Torino), a state in Mexico (Veracruz), or a term to describe an urban center (Cosmopolitan), Placenames are used to evoke associations with locations, cultures, and mindsets. Want to sound international to an American consumer? Call your car Murano. Want to evoke all things stylish and beautiful? Name it Malibu. Exotic? How about Capri? Sophisticated? What about Versaille? Placenames make for wonderful brand names because they tap into immediate and often universal associations. They utilize existing perceptions to evoke vivid, visceral, and emotive brand identities and experiences.

Makes one wonder why certain placenames have never been adopted. Would the Alaska not be evocative enough? How about the Vienna? And what about our corporate home: SanFran? With all its natural beauty and urban sophistication it's a wonderful metaphor for a comfortable, stylish vehicle!

Pontiac	Acadian	Chevy	Monte Carlo
Chevy	Biscayne	Mercury	Montego
Volkswagen	California	Mercury	Monterey
Mercury	Capri	Nissan	Murano
Honda	City	Buick	Park Avenue
Chevy	Colorado	Buick	Riviera
Chevy	Corsica	Hyundai	Sante Fe
Lincoln	Cosmopolitan	Cadillac	Seville
Dodge	Dakota	Buick	Somerset
Ford	Del Rey	Chevy	Suburban
Dodge	Durango	Toyota	Tacoma
Ford	Köln	Chevy	Tahoe
Buick	Lucerne	Ford	Torino
Chevy	Malibu	Hyundai	Tucson
Chevy	Metro	Hyundai	Veracruz
Mercury	Milan	Lincoln	Versaille
Chevy	Montana		

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