5 TIPS FOR CONDUCTING NAMING RESEARCH

It is possible to gather feedback about potential brand names yourself, but you need to be careful. Remember that naming research is one data point among many when choosing a brand name. Without the context of packaging, design, and more, the most popular candidates are often the most boring...and no one wants a lowest common denominator name.

1 **Limit the number of names you test** to a small group of serious finalists that has passed legal screening (unless you are doing early-stage concept testing, in which case you can test a broader range of name styles and messages).

2 **Determine whether your research needs to be quantitative** (surveying a lot of people for a short time) **or qualitative** (interviewing a few people for a long time and getting in-depth feedback). Quantitative research is often best when you're only testing a few names and looking for discrete responses from a statistically valid sample.

3 **Present each name in exactly the same way,** rather than customizing each name with its own logo or other distinguishing graphic elements. (Otherwise, the customized elements will influence respondents' feedback in ways that have nothing to do with the name itself.)

4 **Take care to distinguish between relevant and idiosyncratic** responses when evaluating your research. (A professional research or naming firm can be key here.)

5 **Don't ask people which name they like best.** You'll only get a confusing array of personal preferences. Consumers are in no position to gauge how effective a name will be when properly contextualized and marketed. That's your job (with the help of your naming firm, if you have one).

catchword