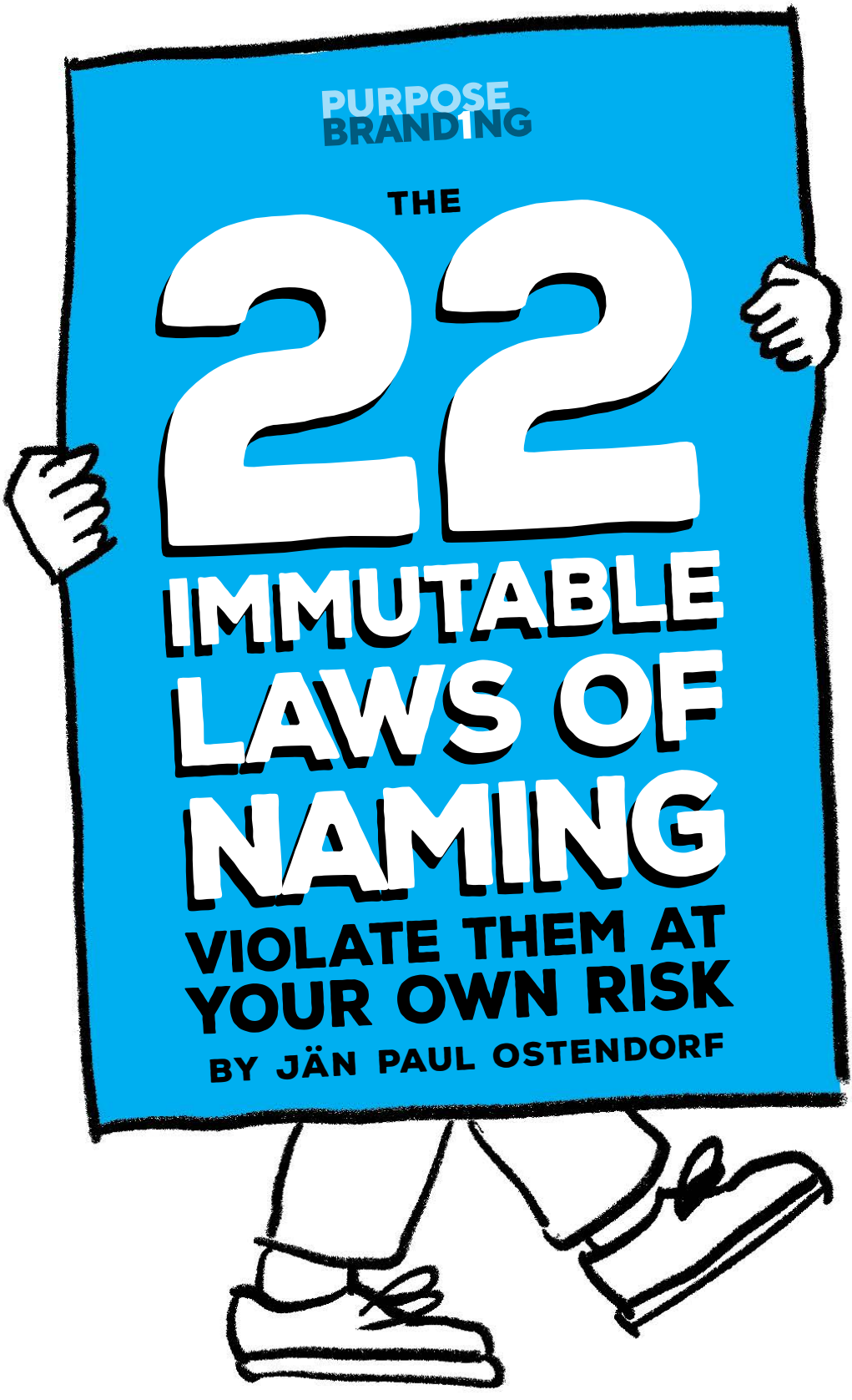
PURPOSE
BRANDING
THE
22
IMMUTABLE
LAWS OF
NAMING
VIOLATE THEM AT
YOUR OWN RISK
BY JÄN PAUL OSTENDORF

The 22 Immutable Laws of Naming: Violate Them at Your Own Risk

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SPECIAL THANKS

To all the business owners who have entrusted me to guide them through the naming process and rename their businesses they love so much.

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FIRST LAW OF NAMING

LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION

The first and most important Law of naming is having the CEO as a participant in the process. The CEO, President, Owner, or Inventor is the advocate of the corporate vision. That doesn't mean they need to attend every session throughout the complete process, but having them participate in the majority group meetings will make it easier to arrive at a solution everyone accepts.

On the flip side, the CEO will receive a multifaceted perspective while hearing from the company's leadership involved in the process. They need to hear about how their customers may perceive the name from the head of sales and how well the name integrates into a marketing message from the director of marketing.

The CEO's job is to create and carry the vision and to assess how well the new name will guide the company for the next five, ten, and twenty years. And, the make-or-break reason, CEO's have the authority to choose the final name. No one likes to be vetoed after two months of work from someone who was not a part of the journey.

The only other choice is to present the CEO with a synopsis presentation of the entire process, including the research findings, all the ideas, the reasons why the team didn't select all the rejects, and the justification for the finalists.

Having the marketing director be the final say and lead the group is the next best option. They are privy to all the C-Suite discussions. They will be responsible for "selling" the final name to the leadership. However, I have more than once had a final name shot down after months of work from a team of six people, for little more than the reasoning that "I want something that implies five bridges because we're headquartered in San Francisco." As if being in San Francisco or having five bridges was a unique selling point for the business.

Whoever has the final say on the name, whether it is a product of the company or the company name itself, needs to be part of the process and see how the sausage was made.

SECOND LAW OF NAMING

COMMIT

The company and its leadership must be committed to the naming process. I've only had a few clients who have started the naming process who were not fully committed. Those who need convincing are unlikely to follow through on their intentions. A name change is not something that can be taken lightly or talked into.

It's very personal and emotional.

The first step (much like making any change) is acknowledging that there is a need for a new name because the old name is a hindrance. If those in

leadership are aware that their existing name has lost them business, caused confusion, or promoted inaccurate expectations, they are more likely to be motivated to find a new name that better represents their company.

Two arguments arise from those who are hesitant about the change. One is a fear of change, and the second is how it will affect your existing client base. Every time a company changes its name and conducts a survey with existing clients afterward, we consistently get the same results. They are excited. They understand the vision and who the company is much more clearly. It is like they are reintroduced to the company and its mission. Customers view the name change as a sign of growth and progress. It demonstrates that the company is not resting on its past successes. They understand that the service and products they receive are not going to change. Usually, the most resistant people are those in the company who have become comfortable. They

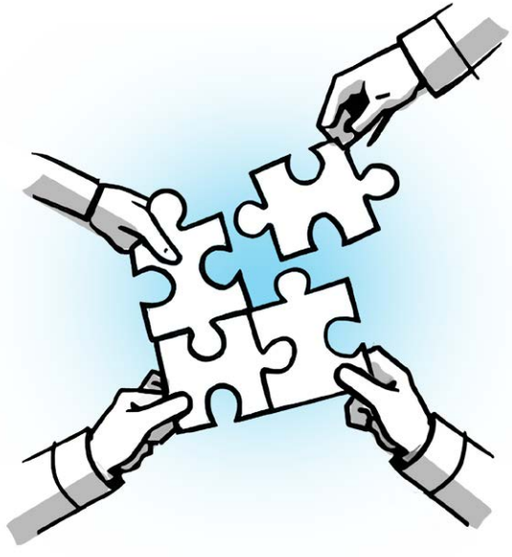
see it as more work and just a nuisance that will disrupt their equilibrium. Don't let fear of change, the worry of upsetting the status quo, or concern about what others will think or the work it will take to implement affect your decision.

It takes perseverance and dedication to get you through the process. After naming, you still have all the work to implement all the changes required to complete the rename and rebrand. You need to own it and be excited about what opportunities the new name will bring.

Here are some other reasons why companies have committed to changing and followed through with the name change:

1. Their industry is changing
2. There is a Trademark dispute
3. The business model has changed
4. Your audience has changed

5. The old name means nothing to someone who doesn't know you
6. Your existing name is confused with another company
7. Your existing clients don't understand the name
8. Their name doesn't represent all your company provides (missing out on a natural cross-selling)
9. Your old name has pigeonholed you as only being known for one thing, e.g., Gatorade (violating Law 19, as the product and company share the same name) was known only for a drink until it rebranded as an internal supplement company with the campaign, "Is it in you?"



THIRD LAW OF NAMING

INTERNAL TEAM

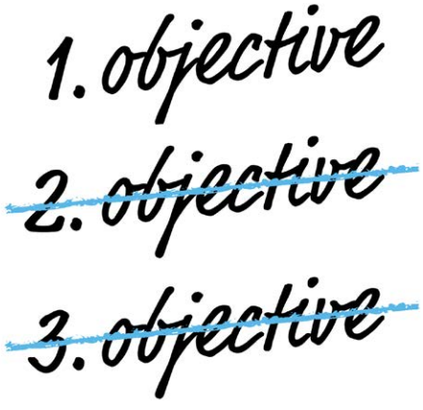
There is a sweet spot for the right number of participants on the internal team. The smallest team consists of two: an owner/CEO and a naming professional. The typical size is around five: owner/CEO, VP, director of marketing, head of sales, and the naming professional.

I had up to twenty-five, and that was extreme, but necessary. They had five lines of business, the complete C-Suite, several heads of sales for different market segments, a few internal

designers, and myself. A size of this magnitude can easily prolong the timeline and complicate the approval by several orders of magnitude.

Sometimes it's necessary when the company is large or has been around for decades. It requires the time and sensitivity to get everyone on board and moving in the same direction.

With all that being said, those in leadership must be allowed to contribute and be part of the process, even if that means just sitting in (and not contributing much) during the brainstorming phase. If they come along for the ride, they can provide informed feedback during the evaluation phase. There is no other way for them to appreciate the journey they have traveled with the group. If they are not a part of the process, you will find yourself justifying every name chosen or not chosen during the evaluation process.



FOURTH LAW OF NAMING

DEFINE YOUR #1 OBJECTIVE

What is your primary objective? Write it down and keep it in front of everyone throughout the process.

Sounds simple and like common sense. It is. If you don't do that, five or six objectives will be declared the reason a name or an idea is not going to work.

What do I mean? Participants in the process will point out that a particular name idea won't work because we sell more than (fill in the blanks), or that the idea doesn't include a portion of our

business. Or “we can’t isolate this audience” or “that doesn’t speak to our custom engineering,” etc.

Yes, resign to the fact that one name is not going to say everything about all the things that make up the entirety of your business. Choose one. Maybe two. You will be lucky to find a new name that answers one primary objective, let alone two. I'm not saying it’s impossible, but it's doubtful. Keep in mind that the name doesn’t exist in a vacuum. See Law 22. A tagline, headlines, photos, and other visual elements will accompany the new name. A name can't tell the whole story; it needs to tell the right one.

What is your number one business objective with the name change? Talk to your sales staff, what is the number one objective new customers have when choosing your company? What is the number one hurdle they are constantly making to get the sale?

Go ahead and write down one to three, but keep your eye on the top one. Keep those at the forefront of every brainstorming meeting. They will provide the guardrails for everyone to focus on exploring the right possibilities and ideas.

FIFTH LAW OF NAMING

PURPOSE ALIGNMENT

The business name should align with your vision, mission, and purpose statement. The mission is how you go about achieving what you provide. The vision is a tangible result—what change will you make? The purpose is the driving force behind why you do what you do.

Everyone wants potential customers to simply "get it" and understand the value we offer. There's one way to do that successfully. Communicate who you are as clearly as possible. That doesn't mean plain and boring, although that does happen, for example, with Toys "R" Us.

Another approach is similar to those of toy companies like The Imaginarium, Giggles, or Kido. Two of these names stand out because you can immediately understand why they exist — they build children's imagination and make kids laugh.

In the book Good to Great, Jim Collins writes, "Companies need to exist for a higher purpose than mere profit generation to transcend the category of merely good." Purpose is the purpose of business. Every company has one. Although it may not be clearly defined or articulated yet, it's there. Purpose doesn't need to be "saving the world" or a philanthropic venture. What pain are you helping to alleviate? What problem are you solving? What joy do you bring to people's lives?

The clearer and more precise the company communicates its purpose (both visually and verbally — internally and externally), the stronger its brand, the greater its growth, and the more desirable its culture. They attract the right employees and the right customers for the right reasons.

SIXTH LAW OF NAMING

ONE THING

It's challenging to be recognized and remembered by your potential customers. Trying to be known for more than one thing can be almost impossible. People are too busy, and they are bombarded with an overwhelming amount of information from everywhere.

As you go through the naming process, you will hear those on your team mention something like, "that name doesn't communicate this other part of your business." That is common. A name can't say everything. You will be lucky if people remember you at all. Your best bet is to choose one thing you want your company to be known for.

Once you establish your name in a market, you can start to own a piece of that market. What piece would that be? Is there one segment that allows you to sell all the other things? — like a gateway drug!

Having your "one thing" that you want to be known for, as well as identifying the area of the market you can own, will go a long way in helping you name, brand, and market your company.

Branding is a lot like bread. It's about ingredients, the recipe, and the passion behind the type of bread. Don't think about bread as being common "White Bread," and you can get them anywhere. Some breads are hard to come by and are high-valued. Their identity includes a family member's name–Aunt Mary's Famous Banana Nut Bread. We have expectations and memories associated with the bread. Their recipe has taken time to perfect; it has become uniquely their own, from ingredients and toppings to the time of baking.

They are a truly authentic brand in and of themselves, appealing to those it appeals to—not trying to create a bread everyone will love. How many brands do you love to have their origin in a family recipe or unique approach to making the best product? Both ways have the end goal of delighting the recipient. Do one thing and do it well.

SEVENTH LAW OF NAMING

KNOW YOUR TRADEMARK CLASS

Knowing what "Class" you would need to obtain a Trademark will make the preliminary search much more effective. Conducting preliminary trademark searches can be done during the naming process to verify availability. Anyone on your team can do this at uspto.gov. If you hired a naming professional, they should be doing this as you go through the brainstorming process.

You wouldn't believe how many stories I've heard about companies paying a significant amount of money for a creative agency to provide them with a list of names that are unavailable and can't be trademarked.

Keep in mind that some trademark classes can be highly competitive due to the large number of consumer products and companies in that industry. You may be in a mature industry with intense competition. Be aware this can slow down the process of finding a unique name. It may cost you more and take a lot longer than average.

NOTE: The uspto.gov database is not up to date in real-time, but it's a great starting point. Your IP Attorney has the ability to conduct a more accurate and up-to-the-minute search. A list of Trademark Classes for Goods and Services can also be found on the uspto.gov website, or consult your IP Attorney before your start the naming process to be sure.

EIGHTH LAW OF NAMING

RESEARCH YOUR BRANDSCAPE

When conducting your competitive analysis, note the names used for competing companies or products and avoid using them. You do not want to be confused with another company.

The main takeaway is that you are looking for open space. Do not get discouraged by the list you find. Analyze what you like and why. Take note of those doing a good job with their name, brand, messaging, etc., and use it as fuel to rise above your competition.

It may sound like busy work to make a list like this. It may even seem unnecessary, "We know who our competitors are." However, there is power in putting all their brands and their names before your eyes. And it can save you heartache from falling in love with a name that is already taken.

Here's the research I complete for every client. I create a spreadsheet with a column for each item: Competitors' names, logos, websites, brand messaging, brand voice, brand story, positioning, how they define themselves, and overall design aesthetics of their brand.

Conducting internal and external surveys may be beneficial if you've been in existence for a while. I usually conduct a quantitative survey—one that allows recipients to express themselves without too many limitations. You gain valuable insight from areas you would have never thought about.

Remember that these results reflect your current world, not where you are heading. Go with your gut. What you want the brand to stand for and where you want the company to go is your vision—not everyone else's.

NINTH LAW OF NAMING

TYPE OF AGENCY

Creative Agencies are confident in their ability to develop a solution to a problem. However, naming is different. Unless they regularly complete naming projects and have a staff member who is experienced and responsible for naming, I would steer clear. If they don't have a process (Law 10) to follow that has been used for years, you will be at a severe disadvantage.

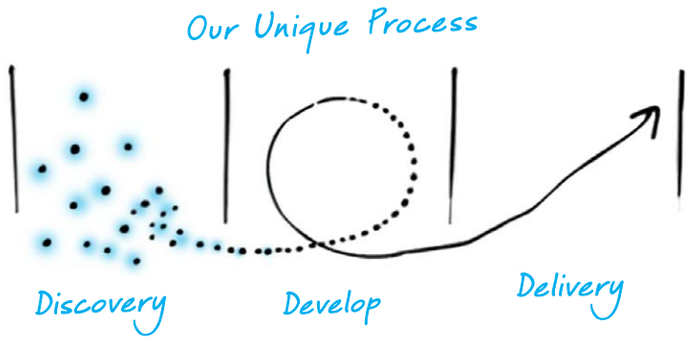
Naming agencies that specialize in naming can also be at a slight disadvantage. If the naming agency is only concerned with a unique name, it may be very difficult to visually brand or creatively market. It's a game-changer to have someone on your naming team who thinks ahead in those disciplines. It will make all the difference in choosing the best name for your product or business.

Signs of a Good Naming Agency

First Sign: Does the naming agency have an exceptional name for their company? If they don't, why not? That is a fair requirement of a naming agency.

Second Sign: Ask about their philosophy guiding the naming process. If they do, does it resonate with you?

Third Sign: What is their process? Is the process collaborative? Will you be able to participate in the process, or is it a black box with a surprise at the end?



TENTH LAW OF NAMING

NEED A PROCESS

The naming company must have a process in place. And not the typical oversimplified process like "Discovery, Develop, and *tada*... Delivery," where some magic happens behind closed doors. The creative industry is notorious for excluding clients from their creative process to the extent that it becomes an adversarial relationship.

Naming someone's company is too personal — it's internalized by those who work there — to be conducted without the visionary and the strategic leaders of the company. You need a process that encourages collaboration and adaptability, which are critical for ownership and acceptance of the new identity.

Without a detailed process with a clear schedule and assigned roles, the team will get lost or frustrated during a naming project. A well-defined process breaks down the complex task of naming into manageable steps, allowing for systematic exploration of ideas, identification of potential obstacles, and evaluation of ideas in real-time.

I've heard stories of creative agencies taking on a naming project, thinking they would schedule a Friday pizza party with the creative staff and come up with a fantastic name in one afternoon. That is highly unlikely.

A significant amount of work needs to be completed before the naming ideation phase can begin. Everyone needs to know what they are aiming at. They need background information on what their competitors have already taken. Also, the ideation phase takes weeks, not hours. It is imperative there be a cadence (Law 14) to the brainstorming meetings.

By grounding decisions in a deliberate framework, a process transforms abstract vision and values into tangible concepts, ensuring that the solution is not only practical but also authentic to the original vision and the people it represents.

NOTE: For more on the naming process, see page 63 for the book titled *Purpose Naming Process*.

ELEVENTH LAW OF NAMING

DISMISS OVERUSED TERMS

Collecting overused terms and names is one of those preparatory tasks that is neither glamorous nor fun. Someone needs to document all those first impressions or names that come to mind quickly. If you hire a naming agency or a naming professional, they should do this as part of a discovery phase.

Doing a quick Google search or using AI to get all those overused, top-of-mind, and common names on a shareable document. Include industry jargon, buzzwords, and acronyms that only your industry understands. These are all the ideas that are usually suggested in the first few brainstorming meetings anyway. Get all these out in the open right from the start to allow the team to start digging deeper more quickly.

Michael Johnson of Johnson Banks, an international branding firm in London, does a Google search for every logo associated with the type of company he is branding. He prints every logo and brandmark from those in the same industry or offering a similar service. He covers the conference room walls with the printouts. He calls his creative team in the room and tells them not to design anything that look like these 100+ logos. Usually, the first top-of-mind designs look very similar to one or those 100 logos. Be like Mike, do the same with names of companies.

TWELFTH LAW OF NAMING

BRAND VOCABULARY LIST

Having a brand vocabulary list as part of the naming process is essential. It guides the brainstorming process by providing guardrails or lanes to stay within when generating ideas. It helps the team avoid going too far down a rabbit hole or creating new ones that don't align with your strategic direction or business goals.

A brand vocabulary list (BVL) is a list of words (a short list of around five words) that have positive semantic associations with your company's purpose, product, or service. One word could be the brand archetype that best describe the company's personality. For each word in the vocabulary list, you generate a list down the column of a shareable spreadsheet. Everyone on your team has 24/7 access to refer back to and jot down thoughts and ideas that come to mind in the middle of the night. And they will.

Example: Naming a Children's Museum

Purpose: Encourage learning through discovery

Archetype: The Creator

Vocabulary List: Engage, Create, Explore, Discover, & Imagine

NOTE: See the "Resources" Section page 63 for the book *Purpose Naming Process* for in-depth information on Brand Archetypes and brand vocabulary lists.

THIRTIETH LAW OF NAMING

BRAND ATTRIBUTES

Deciding on a list of attributes to guide the process can be similar to the brand vocabulary list but more general. It can expand to how you want the brand to be perceived, such as "innovative," or a company value like "honest," but it is not a top priority for generating naming ideas itself. Often, these become deal breakers for a specific name idea — I love that name, but it doesn't fit with an innovative company.

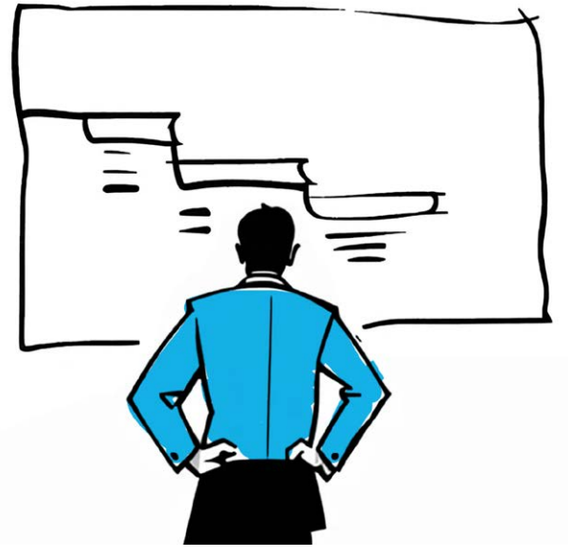
Some attributes are derived from the traits of the Brand Archetype. If your company embodies the archetype of "The Caretaker," then one of its attributes could be "caring" or "safety."

Common brand attributes are bold, direct, humorous, reliable, trustworthy, creative, determined, forward-thinking, and strategic — as if you are describing a person's personality. There's a big difference between modern and classic, formal and casual, fun and serious when it comes to brainstorming for names.

Having everyone in leadership answer the question of how they want the company to be perceived can lead to a great discussion. What word did they choose and why?

It will show how each person's perception of the company compares and contrasts. It can be revealing to see how everyone perceives the company or brand and how strongly they believe it should be associated with that attribute.

I recommend creating one master list of all the team's attributes and categorizing them from most votes to least votes as the most desirable attributes.



FOURTEENTH LAW OF NAMING

KEEPING CADENCE

Keeping cadence during brainstorming is a game-changer. It's a lot like all-wheel drive when things get muddy — it can pull you through the tough times. It helps maintain momentum.

Cadence is mandatory during the ideation or brainstorming phase. The average time spent during this phase is about two to four weeks. There is no predicting exactly how long or how many brainstorming sessions it will take to find a name. How and when you meet is crucial to finding a name.

The cadence is imperative for keeping your sanity. For some reason, your brain can only take so much time looking at words, generating words, and brainstorming name ideas before things start to look crazy, misspelled, and just plain weird. Maybe that's just for those of us who are not left-brained language gurus; I don't know.

Brainstorming Cadence: Meet for 20-40 minutes every other day. Do not skip more than two days between meetings. This every-other-day 30-minute meeting schedule is the key. A certain amount of momentum is needed to keep going and keep the ideas flowing. It usually takes three to four sessions before the group starts coming up with some great names that are still available.

On "Individual" workdays (the days between group brainstorming sessions), everyone can access the online, shareable spreadsheet to write down the ideas that come to them in the off-moments. The person leading the group, preferably a brand professional, can also vet the ideas during those days. The vetting process would involve researching to determine if the name is available, trademarkable, or if any relevant URLs are available.

WARNING: Do not let anyone fall in love (Law 17) with any name in these early stages.

FIFTEENTH LAW OF NAMING

KEEP EVERYTHING

Keep all your ideas, notes, and comments on the shared spreadsheet. There will come a time when you swear you heard an idea, or maybe you dreamed it. Keep it. If it is not on the spreadsheet, add it.

You may later do a brainstorming naming exercise that combines words or parts of words to generate new words. You may need those words or ideas you don't necessarily love during that exercise.

You can feed all your ideas into an LLM or AI language program to see what it generates. This is when one word may not be that exciting or significant by itself, but will create a compound word or an invented word that's cool from two ordinary words. So keep everything. You never know. That's why there is Law 18; Messy to Clear.

EXAMPLE: One naming project shared spreadsheet below.

SIXTEENTH LAW OF NAMING

MORE THAN 50% CHANCE

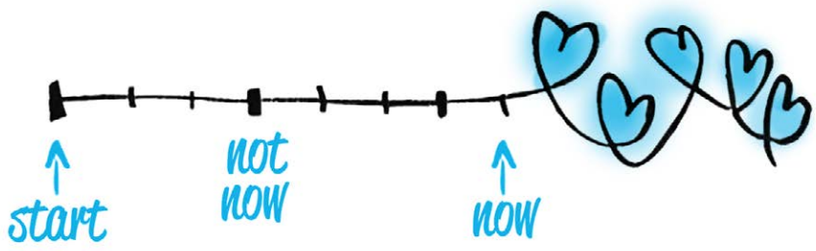
The old "More than 50% Chance" of possibility law.

If there is a name or URL that you like and there is more than a 50% chance you may use it, buy the URL and have someone initiate the trademark filing. You never know when you might reach this point in the process. Lightning could strike early, and you may want to act immediately rather than wait a few weeks after you've exhausted all your avenues.

However, it usually happens toward the end (after a few weeks of brainstorming) when you have a few names you think are real contenders. At that point, you may not have completed all the research, trademark search, or found a URL or tagline that isn't perfect yet. It is worth pulling the trigger and starting the protection and trademark process.

I have had clients drag their feet for months and not spend a few hundred dollars to start the trademark filing. Another company filed one week before they filed. They missed owning the trademark of the name they loved by a week. Months of work and thousands of dollars down the drain. Just buy it. Your future self will thank you.

Oh, and yes, some of the best names make you nervous. They usually take you out of your comfort zone at first. That's why there is Law 20. Protect it while you sit on it for a while, and see if the name has legs



SEVENTEENTH LAW OF NAMING

DON'T FALL IN LOVE

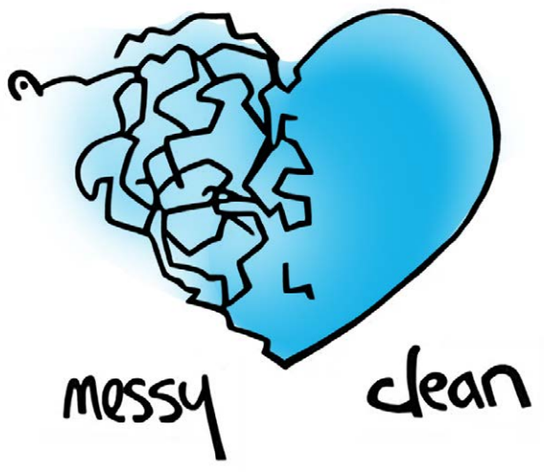
I've had several clients pursue the process with the intent of only renaming if they fell in love with a better name. I think that's entirely logical. It's hard to judge when you have nothing to judge against. Most people are timid at first. Some want the uncertainty to be over and are a little trigger happy about making a decision.

One of the most common errors that contribute to frustration and naming fatigue is falling in love with a name too early. It can slow down creative process or create an unwarranted

sense of victory, only to find that a competitor has already trademarked it. It was just an idea that someone claimed as a victory. That turns it into a defeat unnecessarily when it isn't available to use. Allow it to be an idea or a stepping stone to other ideas.

Then somewhere in the middle, they see a few directions that get them excited about the possibility. Be patient and pace yourself. The ideation phase is a marathon, not a race. Naming is not take-and-bake bread. It is a process that starts from scratch and requires allowing the dough to rise over time. It takes time to bake.

When the right name comes along, there is a light that comes on, and they can see it. I always have them take another week (Law 12) before making any final decisions, but once they see it, they want it immediately.
They can't have it fast enough.



EIGHTEENTH LAW OF NAMING

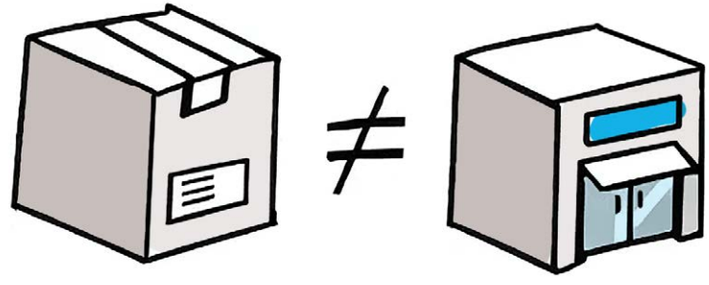
MESSY TO CLEAR

A feeling of disorientation is typical during the naming process. The process has a way of uncovering and rethinking almost everything you do as a business. You have times of messiness before clarity takes place. Knowing that it is going to happen somewhat cures the effects of the momentary chaos. Rest assured, you are not alone, and this is a temporary situation. That's why the Second Law is second: you must be committed and trust the process.

Keep in mind these three principles when considering a name change: One, is our existing name aligned with our purpose? Two, does our identity reflect where we want to take the company? And third, does it hinder the sales process? If the answer is yes to any of those three questions, then keep searching for clarity on those answers.

Need help? If you're trying to rename or name with your internal team only, you can benefit from having someone from the outside participate in the process. Those working for the company can be too close and emotionally attached to provide unbiased reactions. Find someone you trust to deliver unvarnished feedback. You need someone who is considering how the general public might receive the new name. Likewise, run some of your favorite name ideas past a few long-term customers to gauge their thoughts.

Hiring a naming professional who knows what they are doing and has experience in branding, design, and marketing can make the whole process less messy and chaotic.



NINETEENTH LAW OF NAMING

THE BUSINESS IS NOT YOUR PRODUCT

Do not name your company and your first product the same name. All is great until you invent your second product.

I made this mistake when I invented FlexSign and named my company FlexSign Inc. When we developed our second product, which wasn't a sign, wasn't flexible, and didn't relate to the name in any way, we encountered a communication

and marketing problem. Sales became confusing, and misunderstandings were at the beginning of every introduction.

Consider five or ten years from now and how you want to grow or sell the company. You may decide to sell a portion or one product to another company. You may not want to sell the entire company because of that product. Just like any good CPA might recommend, keeping things separate provides more freedom and accurate data to make informed decisions.

My FlexSign Company Product Mistake

FLEXSIGN THE COMPANY

FLEXSIGN THE PRODUCT

TWENTIETH LAW OF NAMING

TAKE A WEEK OFF

When you have decided on a few finalists and chosen one clear winner, always wait one week before making a final decision. Why? During the one week, the new name will either grow on you or you will start to find out reasons why it won't work. Just remember Law 16.

This has never failed. Clients tell me, “Over the past week, I started seeing it and referring to it in my mind.” That’s a great sign. They are starting to own it and feel confident about using it.

On the other hand, I’ve only had one client tell me, “It just doesn’t fit our culture. It doesn’t sound like us.” That is just as important. Analyze why that is. What is it doing and what is it not doing? You don't want to experience buyer's remorse. A company name is not a leather shoe that needs breaking in and will feel better over time.

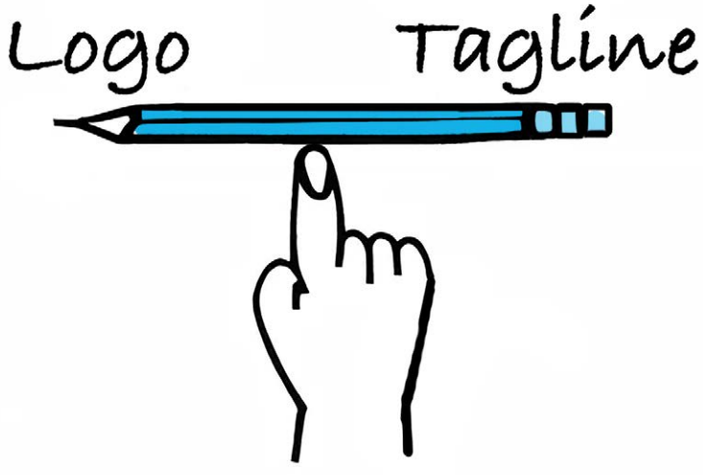
The Wisdom of Waiting a Week

The name Mound Printing didn’t match the direction of the company as a high quality retail POS, POP, direct mail, fulfillment and printing service.

After one week deliberation, the CEO came back with, "I love the name but, Retail Relish is not who we are. It's too flamboyant."

FIRST CHOICE

FINAL CHOICE



TWENTY-FIRST LAW OF NAMING

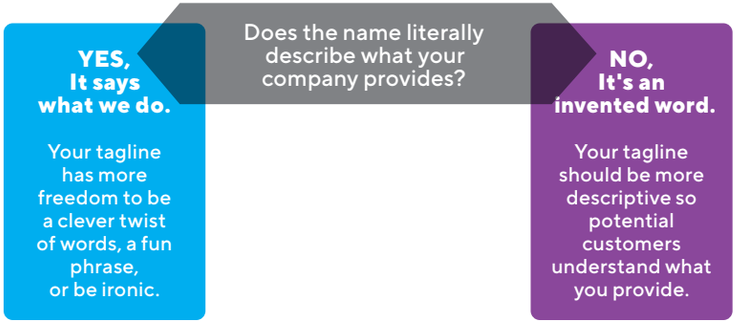
NAME TAGLINE BALANCE

Use the tagline to balance what you want to communicate. If the name is not specific enough, allow the tagline to be more exact. If the name is specific, it will enable the tagline to be more general or witty.

Remember two things: one, a single name will never communicate everything you want about your product or business, and two, the name doesn't exist in a vacuum. A tagline, photos, and headlines will eventually surround the name (Law 22).

Think of your tagline as an extension of your name. It brings people closer to who you are and what you provide. Be crafting ideas for taglines that complement the names, or even a list of taglines you want, regardless of the chosen name. You can later tweak the tagline to match the chosen name if needed.

The Name Tagline Balance



TWENTY-SECOND LAW OF NAMING

BUILD A UNIVERSE

Some call it a brand ecosystem. Others call it a brand image. Perhaps you've heard it said, "They have a look" or a "style."

The Brand Universe encompasses everything that the public sees or reads that represents the company and its symbol, including icons, logos, or brandmarks. It extends to colors, typography, textures, illustrations, and other visual elements, as well as how they are displayed.

Apple is an excellent example because it is so well-known and has many brand touchpoints to refer to. Every product they produce has an Apple brand look, and every advertisement has a similar voice and tone. Every package has the Apple touch. The Apple icon is portrayed similarly in many forms. They don't even have their name on their laptops, except for six-point type in the legal copy on the underside.

Great brands start with great names. They have created a universe that is unique and easy to identify, even when you only see a portion of the object or advertisement. The name should fit within that universe. The brand universe should be on and around the company's name, purpose, vision, and mission. It should support and reinforce the brand's message and personality.

BRAND UNIVERSE: EXAMPLE

EXISTING NAME

Pure Hitting

NEW NAME

RIZER ATHLETICS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- ☑ Trademark Open
- ☑ www.rizerathletics.com
- ☑ State Business Name

BRAND COLOR PALETTE

- Pantone 804
- Black
- 60% Screen Black

NAMING EXAMPLES

CONSULTING COMPANY

Jordan Goldmeier had a desire to build his business right from the start. He was thinking decades into the future and knew he needed a brand that was not tied to his name; Goldmeier Consulting.

CONCERNS

Release the brand from his last name
Communicate his personality
Provide the benefit he brings by challenging the status quo

WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR

Reformer
Challenger
Maverick
Make things better

FIRST ROUND OF FINALISTS

Revealed Path

Solve Factors

Sofos

Cambia Force

NEW NAME & LOGO

CAMBIA FACTOR

Changing the way you think about your data.

NAMING EXAMPLE 2

ONLINE BBQ PRODUCTS COMPANY

JADD BBQ needed a new name because JADD was forgettable and wasn't gaining any brand equity. They were seen as average and just one of many.

BUSINESS CONCERNS

We want to be seen as the best place for every last outdoor kitchen desires.

Can we capture the imagination of our customers that aligns with our vision and mission?

WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR

Premium
Quality
Outdoor Entertaining
BBQ Equipment

FIRST ROUND OF FINALISTS

OpenAir Outlet

Patio Perfect

Baste

Cookairy

NEW NAME & LOGO

GRILLSCAPES
— YOUR OUTDOOR KITCHEN SPECIALISTS —

NAMING EXAMPLE 3

STARTUP APP "END OF LIFE" REQUESTS

After Pamela Comstock experienced a death of a close friend, she was tasked with helping her family take care of her last wishes. She entered a world of choices she had no idea existed and had to best guess what her friend would have wanted.

BUSINESS CONCERNS

I want to create a online repository where you can store your last wishes so no one has to guess what you wanted.

WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR

After death wishes
Eliminating unknowns
Knowing you loved ones last intentions

FIRST ROUND OF FINALISTS

AfterWords

Passing Thoughts

Present Foresight

Last Chapter

NEW NAME & LOGO

After Options
Let them know

NAMING EXAMPLE 4

NON-PROFIT REAL ESTATE CHARITY FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

After months of trying to tackle the renaming of her company by herself, Theresa Custis needed help from the outside.

BUSINESS CONCERNS

Can we find a name that communicates why I do what I do?

I need help with messaging to accommodate the identity.

WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR

Building Wealth
Helping Single Mothers
Caring & Growth
Providing Homes

FIRST ROUND OF FINALISTS

Elevating Moms

Elevated Homes

Haven Investments

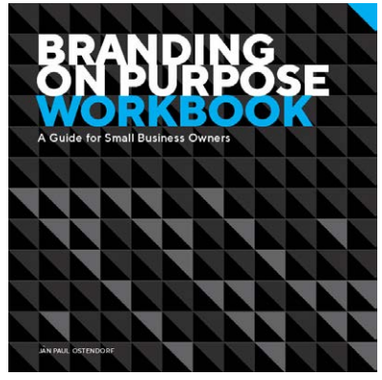
Haven Properties

NEW NAME & LOGO

HAVENRISE

Investing in people, communities, and real estate.

RESOURCES



BRANDING ON PURPOSE WORKBOOK:
A GUIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

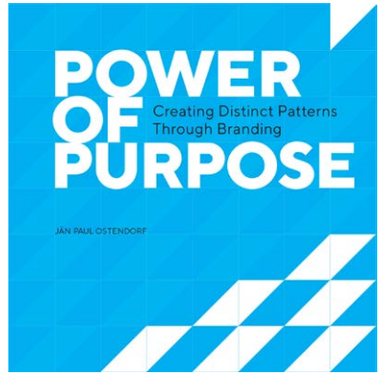
All great brands have learned to tap into the power of branding. This workbook is designed for small business owners (and their leadership team) to harness the power of purpose. It has eight exercises to guide you through the process of defining your purpose so that you can communicate with meaning and motivation—attracting the right customers for the right reasons.

Signs that your company's messaging needs clarified:

- Potential customers misunderstand your company's value
- Your company looks and sounds like your competitors
- Your old business identity doesn't represent who you have become
- Your company's direction is unclear

This workbook will help you develop a clear and solid foundation for all business communications and will positively affect every area of your business from hiring employees to sales messaging. Communicating with purpose has far-reaching implications for determining your vision, mission, culture and core values to help build a company on a unified understanding of why you are on the planet and what you're trying to accomplish as an organization.

This book can be purchased on Amazon.



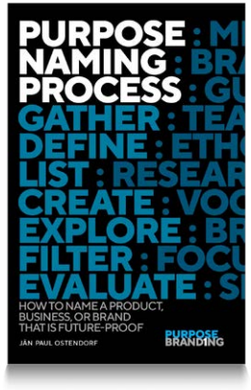
POWER OF PURPOSE:
CREATING DISTINCT PATTERNS THROUGH BRANDING

Written for business owners, start-ups, and entrepreneurs who are looking to remove communication barriers about their products, services, ideas or business.

This quick read sets the foundation for why you want to base all your business strategy and communication (vision, mission, company culture, values, sales, and marketing) on purpose. This book is the precursor to a larger "Building Brands on Purpose Workbook: A Guide for Small Business Owners" that takes you through step by step 8-exercise process of clarifying your purpose as a foundation for all your business messaging, marketing, sales and website copy. If you agree with what you read here, you will be certain the larger and more comprehensive workbook is for you.

All great brands have learned to speak in the motivational language of purpose to attract the right people for the right reasons. It starts by distilling a clear and concise message of purpose. It translates to establishing a captivating vision and mission to defining core values for a unified understanding. Once implemented, the purpose becomes contagious, permeates into the business model and results in a thriving culture of brand loyalty.

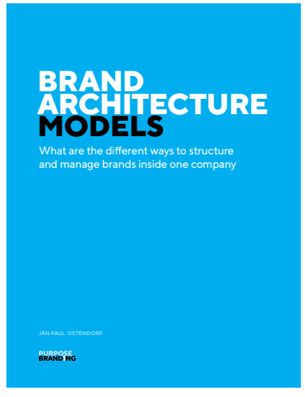
This book can be purchased on Amazon.



PURPOSE NAMING PROCESS: HOW TO NAME A PRODUCT, BUSINESS, OR BRAND THAT IS FUTURE-PROOF

This book is a real honest-to-God "How to" on naming. It details the most neglected part of the process, brainstorming. The book provides guidance on how to implement AI and LLM model tools more effectively, giving you direction on input so you get great output. A chapter is devoted to creating and using a "Common Guidepost" to collaborate with your team throughout the process and provide a way to future-proof your brand so you don't need to tackle this again. This book offers hardcore methodology — not a list of requirements for a cool, trendy, or different name for difference's sake. You already know you need a great name; you need to know how to find it.

This book can be purchased on Amazon.



BRAND ARCHITECTURE MODELS PDF

Do you have questions about your products and services and how they all fit together?

As a company grows, the products and services grow with it. Things start to get messy and complicated. No one can foresee where a company will go when it starts. A lot of companies will create a new brand and brand name and start selling it under the existing company not realizing how confusing it is to new potential consumers.

Good brand architecture is what's needed. There are two main models have developed: the House of Brands and the Branded House. Each model has it's pros and cons.

Built on Purpose
The best way to future-proof your brand is to build your brand on your purpose. Investing the time and effort in defining purpose for your brand will help clarify and provide a foundation for the direction of the business — if you find you have two distinct purposes, you may have two distinct brands. If you have one purpose, then you have one brand with sub-brands. To dig deeper and explore your specific use case, you may need someone outside the company to provide an unencumbered and honest recommendation. I'd love to help.

FREE PDF found on my website at www.brandsonpurpose.com

THE 22 IMMUTABLE LAWS OF NAMING

VIOLATE THEM AT YOUR OWN RISK

This book provides a comprehensive list of Do's and Don'ts for effective naming projects. Gathered over years of experience with naming projects, each Law is filled with keys of insight. If the Laws are violated, it could make or break a naming project. If you want your naming or renaming project to go smoothly and be successful (without going crazy), this is the book for you.

More info at www.namingonpurpose.com

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jän was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio and studied Industrial Design at The Ohio State University. After 30 years of being a designer, inventor, and entrepreneur, he now runs his branding consultancy called Purpose Branding. His purpose is to help small, privately-held business owners clarify and align their purpose—both verbally and visually—allowing his clients to attract the right people for the right reasons.

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PURPOSE BRANDING

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