

Brand Name Basics

Good business names are:

Descriptive

Descriptive business names are usually a good idea because they help your clients come to an immediate understanding of your business's products and services. Without a descriptive name, you need time and money to invest in educating your clients and you face the risk that they may misinterpret what you do.

Short

Short business names are usually easier to remember, are easier to use (for instance in email addresses and domain names) and give you more flexibility for incorporating into logos.

Unique

From a legal perspective, a business name must be unique in that it does not infringe on another business's rights. From a practical perspective, a business name needs to be unique so that you can create and control your business's image without interference from or confusion with another business. A unique name also helps to secure the domain name and email addresses that you need!

Furthermore, a distinctive business name is useful as it stands out and grabs people's attention. This is why somewhat silly business names like Yahoo! work.

Easy to remember

Most businesses don't have the resources or the money to repetitively build brand awareness with clients. Client will see or hear your name once, maybe twice, so it has to stick.

To do this, make your name descriptive, short and unique, and use your business name to remind clients of something pleasant or positive. Create an association with something that they know and desire. Try to create a sense of adventure, romance, security or excitement – whatever is appropriate to your clients.



Easy to spell and pronounce

A good business name is easy to spell and pronounce. You want people to be confident in saying your business name (especially if you want referrals). Furthermore, if your business name is difficult to spell, consider the difficulty in sending you an email, finding your website, finding you in the telephone directory or even writing you a letter.

Avoid numbers and unusual formatting. Those names might sound interesting, but they complicate the client's path to you. If they're not sure if they should type "Site7" or "SiteSeven", they might skip both and simply type your competitor's business name. At the very least, an unusual name like that will mean you need to secure both domain names.

Catchy/ Trendy

Depending on your profile customer, you could choose a business name that creates an association with a catchy or trendy word. But make sure your business name doesn't go out of fashion after you've spent a year promoting it.

For professional organizations, you probably want to avoid this because of the immature impression it leaves. You also want to avoid using cute puns or phrases in your name, which may be confusing to clients if they don't understand what you mean.

Appealing

The business name needs to make sense and create a positive, appealing impression to your target clients.

Flexible

A good business name gives you room to expand, grow and even change. A name needs to be relevant if the business offering diversifies in future, or if the business expands into other territories.

What You Like

You must be proud and enthusiastic about the business name, enough that you beam with pride when you talk about your business. Prospects will notice your enthusiasm and want to do business with you.