

An overhead view of a group of six people sitting around a white circular table in a meeting room. They are engaged in a discussion, with some looking at papers and others at each other. The room has a grey tiled floor and red chairs.

HOW TO DEVELOP THE PERFECT NAME FOR JUST ABOUT ANYTHING

*8 Essential Steps to Overcome Creative Block
and Confidently Choose the Right Name*

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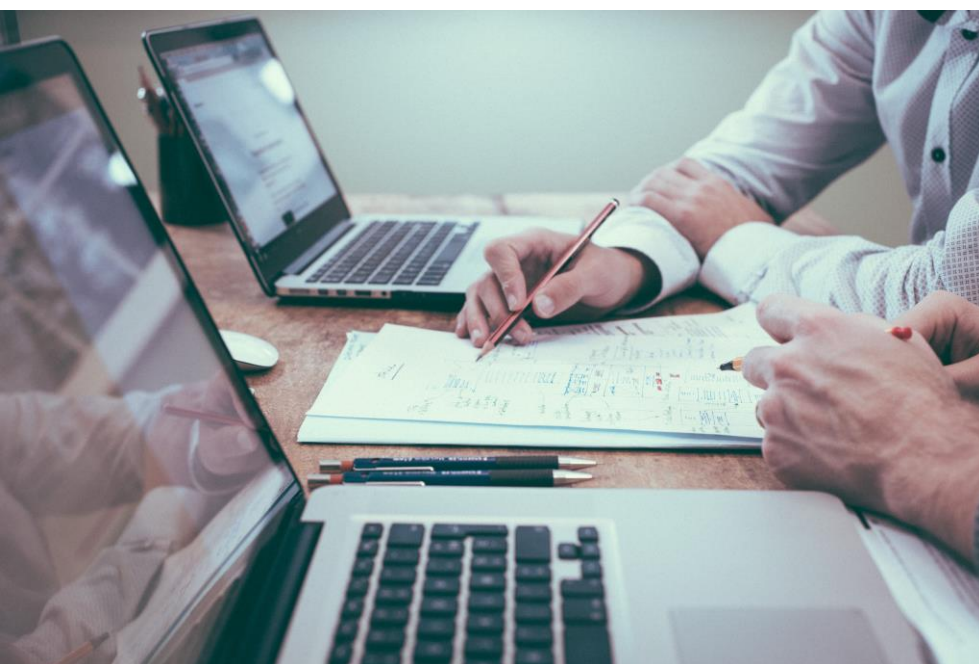
You've got the best idea since sliced bread...or chocolate. Now you need the perfect name for your business, product, website, or whatever it is that is now nameless. In other words, you need a truly spectacular name that will sum up your emerging brand perfectly, catapulting it firmly towards the success you know it deserves.

- You're nervous because you simply don't know where to begin and you don't have a process to follow.
- You're not that creative, and you don't like any of the names you've come up with so far.
- You've been "close" to finding the perfect name for days, weeks...even months.
- You've created some cool ideas only to find matching URL's are not available or that the names are considered high-risk by your Trademark attorney.
- Maybe the USPTO has already rejected them!
- You like some of the names you've thought up, but you're concerned they won't excite your target audience.
- Or perhaps you're a serial entrepreneur. You've done this whole naming thing before; and this time, you don't want to spend hours and hours brainstorming, researching, begging your friends to help, paying your employees to chip in, and starting over every time there's a snag in the process

If you nodded your head to any of the above or if you're even a tiny bit unsure of what the perfect name you need actually is, then you're bound to benefit from the 8 Steps outlined in the following pages.

"Thank you for taking the time to read our ebook. We're grateful for the opportunity to help you get your project off the ground...to help you make your idea a reality!"

~ Darpan Munjal, Founder, Squadhelp



In this short, interactive ebook we'll share with you the Squadhelp Agency-Level Naming Process, one we've used to deliver more than 8000 names. For the last six years we've been honing this process, and we'd like to share it with you so you can confidently name your business, product, website, book, or just about anything else.

Let's get started!

Why naming is so important?

A name can make or break a new business. While an awesome name won't guarantee the success of a new clothing label, mobile app, florist, plumbing service, tech website or novel, there's no denying that first impressions do count – big time.

This means coming up with a great name is essential. It is the “face” of your brand. It is what potential customers see or hear first. A name must represent you well – perfectly in fact - if you're to stand a fighting chance in today's competitive marketplace.

Remember, consumers are bombarded with a ridiculously high number of advertising messages every single day. When confronted with a business or product name we've never heard before, we all make swift (if subconscious) judgements. It's like that moment when you very first meet someone, and you immediately register their clothes, posture, smile (or lack thereof), and first words. You may not like it, but you are biologically wired to make momentary assessments and judgments; and don't ever think that your brand will be immune.

While first impressions can be changed over time, it's easier and cheap just to do it right in the first place. This is one way a great name (tagline and logo) provides a huge advantage. Never assume that just because you have a great concept, it is going to gain the traction needed to survive and profit. Branding is all-important. And successful branding starts with a great name.

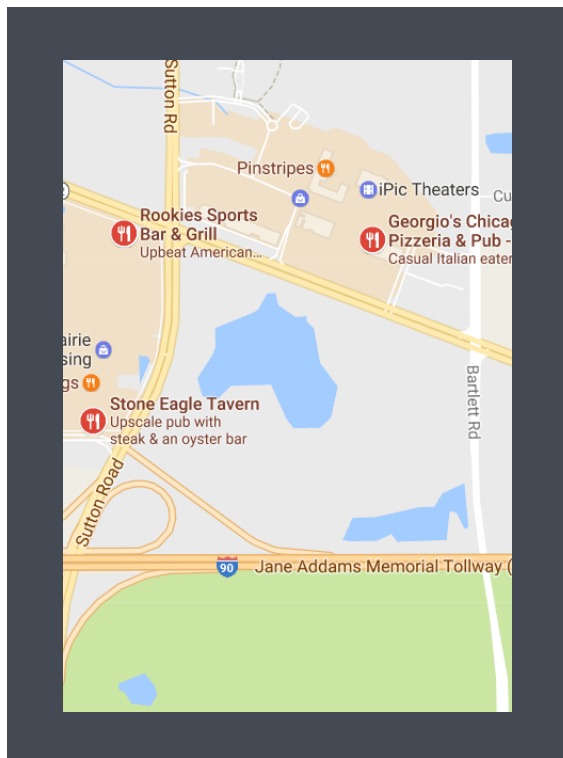
**“What's in a Name?”
~ Shakespeare**

**“Pretty much everything”
~ Squadhelp**





Hot, or Not?



Imagine you're searching for a local pizza joint - or in anything else for that matter. Don't you agree that a catchy, unique name has the power to make you decide to take a chance and click on that random link...

Great names are like magnets that people gravitate towards. And if your name is not so hot, and it doesn't align with your audience's tastes and preferences, then it could be precisely what turns them off and makes them keep on scrolling! A name's got to have a certain 'wow' factor. Standing out from the crowd and creating instant connections is invaluable – a name should be memorable, above all else.



12 of Squadhelp's 8000+ Winning Names

EyeQ - Security Camera Kit
Pooch Box - Subscription box service for dogs
Zero Gravity - Indoor Trampoline Park
Good Fillas - Mobile Food Truck
NutriBowl - Healthy Lunch Bowl product
Freshy - Grocery Super Market Chain
Jolt - For a Power Tool Brand
Pixie Crush - Stylish Cute Little Girl Fashion Store
LoveBites - Brand of Chocolates
Seasoned With Love - name of a cookbook
Kinetic Sweat - Cardio Focused Fitness School
Ground Theory - Coffee Roasting Company

Got your (brand) ID?

You have a chance to carve out a unique brand identity when you choose a suitably great name. And brand identity is essential if you want to succeed. Don't forget, potential customers adopt certain expectations upon hearing your name. If their expectations don't align with reality, they will quickly get the sense that something is awry. That's why it's so crucial to come up with the very best name possible, one that reflects who you are and ideally, what you do. A name should inform your market and give away some of the character and personality of your company. The tone of your name needs to be bang on, if it's to appeal to the right sort of potential customer.

Your name will have a myriad of real-world branding, web and marketing implications. It's vital to get your name right. A name tends to stick with you, after all. Whilst almost everything else can be modified – a name, once established, is tricky and costly to change.

How to create a great name?

When you're lost in a complicated naming maze, unsure of how to come up with something that's gonna make 'em go "wow," you need some guidance. Name creation is not as easy as some of you may think.

How do you know if the name you're leaning towards is any good? Here's a handy checklist that will help you ensure you're onto a winner. Keep it in mind as you absorb all the rest of the useful information you'll find contained within this Squadhelp e-book.

"How can I tell if any of these name ideas I've slaved over are any good, anyway?"

- Stressed out entrepreneur

"Choose a great name if you want people to CARE, gloss over the naming process if you DON'T!"

- Squadhelp team

Use this check-list if you want people to CARE

Contextual	name makes sense for your brand, positioning, and the likes
Appealing	name is pleasant to say and hear
Remarkable	name sticks in the mind and gets people talking
Evocative	name is emotional, intriguing, experiential, or impressively clever

Use this one if you DON'T

Difficult	to spell or pronounce
Obscure	only a few people „get it"
Neutral	too safe, too boring, doesn't excite to your audience
Taken	the legal implications aren't good and the domain isn't available



Part I

Who Do You Want to be When You Grow Up?

Everything has a name, a word we attach to it to give it some sort of meaning.

Words and names are terms of reference for us when we communicate.

They are powerful.

**So, what do you want your new...business, website, or whatever else...to mean to others?
What does it mean to you?**

Here at Squadhelp, we've found that concrete, clear and well-defined ideas are much easier to name than hazy, vague ones. In Steps 1 - 3, we'll share concepts and provide activities to help you define your idea, stripping it down to it's most essential elements and making it easier to communicate and much easier to name. Whether you choose to take our advice and elicit help from others when naming (see Step 5), or not, making sure your concept is well-defined from the start makes discovering the perfect moniker a whole bunch easier.

Here's the naming process we've been honing for more than five years, broken down into clear, easy-to-follow steps. *Good luck!*



Step 1: Your “Statement of Purpose”

Your idea is your pride and joy – you think about it all the time. You've spent countless hours determining all sorts of different stuff related to your business-to-be, from funding options to the launch event, even the color of your office drapes! You think you know your concept inside out and yet when asked, it can be difficult to sum it up succinctly in a way that demonstrates its benefits. You're left scrambling for the right words, ones that correctly portray the original “eureka” moment that started you on this amazing journey.

For instance, it may be that your dream is to serve high quality pizzas in an upmarket restaurant setting, with a hip wine bar attached. Your pizzas are going to be topped with unusual flavor combinations as well as your own, homemade special sauces. The food will be priced high compared to the standard takeout, yet a meal-for-2 will cost less than in a fine dining restaurant. Service will be exquisite, surroundings posh. Making your pizza restaurant an affordable, excellent-value-for-money experience and a great night out!

Now let's say you've been thinking all day about the twelve batches of test sauces you made last night, pondering over which top-secret ingredients will be the key to your success, when you're asked by a stranger what your new business is all about. Your mind frantically flips through thousands of internal dialogs and you get all sorts of images popping up in your brain but you realize you haven't replied. When the silence starts to become a little awkward, you blurt out, almost apologetically, “Well, I'm thinking about opening a pizza place.”



Don't let this happen to you! Invest time and effort into defining your idea and what you're all about in a way others can easily understand, a way that points out the benefits of your idea. Put pen to paper or fingertips to keyboard and challenge yourself to sum up your business effectively, in as few words as possible. Your Statement of Purpose is not as broad as a mission statement, which details what the business aims to do now and in the future. Instead, when writing your Statement of Purpose think of what your venture offers customers, and how you plan to impact their lives.

There are many formulas and even elaborate strategies for developing your Statement of Purpose (sometimes also known as Value Proposition or Unique Selling Proposition).

*"Hot, fresh pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less or it's free."
~ Dominos Pizza*

Here's a simple formula, in case you're new to the concept:
[Great Business Name] helps [audience] [core benefits].

Now it's your turn! What's your purpose?

Step Two: The Imaginary Friend You'll Never Be Too Old For



Demographics:

20s and 30s
Male or Female
Living within 5 miles of storefront
Some disposable income

Characteristics:

Foodies, who love eating in high quality restaurants
Likes getting good value for money
Likes to try new things
Enjoys wine

Wants and Desires:

Hungry
Doesn't want to cook
Wants an affordable dining option

Now that you have a clear Statement of Purpose, you need to step back and ask - who cares? The second step to finding a great name is envisioning the type of people who will be most interested in your idea (and in most cases, you want to think of someone who is willing and able to pay for it, too). This is called Persona or Avatar creation, and it's an essential part of the naming process.

In this step, you're really asking yourself, "Who am I naming this for?" and "Who should this name appeal to?".

If you like crafts, now is the time to get out your scissors and glue - otherwise your favorite presentation software will do just fine. Here's an example of a simple Persona for our friend who's trying to launch a Pizza Shop.

Overachieve Much?

You can reassure yourself everything's on track by taking the time to validate your newly coined Statement of Purpose. Do this by:

1

Talking to real people who fit the descriptors you came up with during Step 2.

2

Undertaking some basic market research

3

Making any required adjustments to your Statement of Purpose



Step 3: Digging Deep – Find Your Uniqueness, Your Personality

If you've gotten this far, you've already made tremendous progress toward finding a name that you love. To ensure you end up with the right sort of name ideas on your shortlist, Squadhelp recommends you consider the following:

Emotions

decide how you want people to feel when they hear your company name. Are you (A) serious and professional, (B) fun and quirky, (C) modern and hip?

Story

Take a stab at writing your company story. (While perfecting your company story is an ongoing challenge, we recommend starting on it early and honing it often).

Customer Benefits

Create a list of short statements about why your ideal persona (from Step 2) will buy from you – i.e. your “Selling Highlights”. Dig deep. Write down 100 statements if you can. Some you'll cross off the list right away, others will make you exclaim, “Wow! Why didn't I think of that sooner?”

Models

Fire up your computer and get back on the internet for a little more research. Your goal here is to make a list of names and brands that you love and even some that you despise (we call these negative models). Of course, you never want to copy a name! However, modelling can provide much-needed inspiration.

Choosing a name is a long-term commitment. As you continue your journey, you can change many things: your business plan, the UX of your app, paint colors and ambiance, product mix, etc. But, for the most part, your name stays with you. A name change later on can be extremely costly, to your brand itself, as well as your wallet. Remember, choosing a name is a crucial decision that can make or break your awesome idea or new business.

Putting It All Together - Your Naming Brief Document

You've asked yourself all the right questions, searched your soul for answers and brainstormed your butt off. Now, it's time to get your thoughts in order and summarize all the great information you've discovered about your business project and those who will hopefully engage with it, so that you can keep moving forward in your journey to come up with the perfect name.

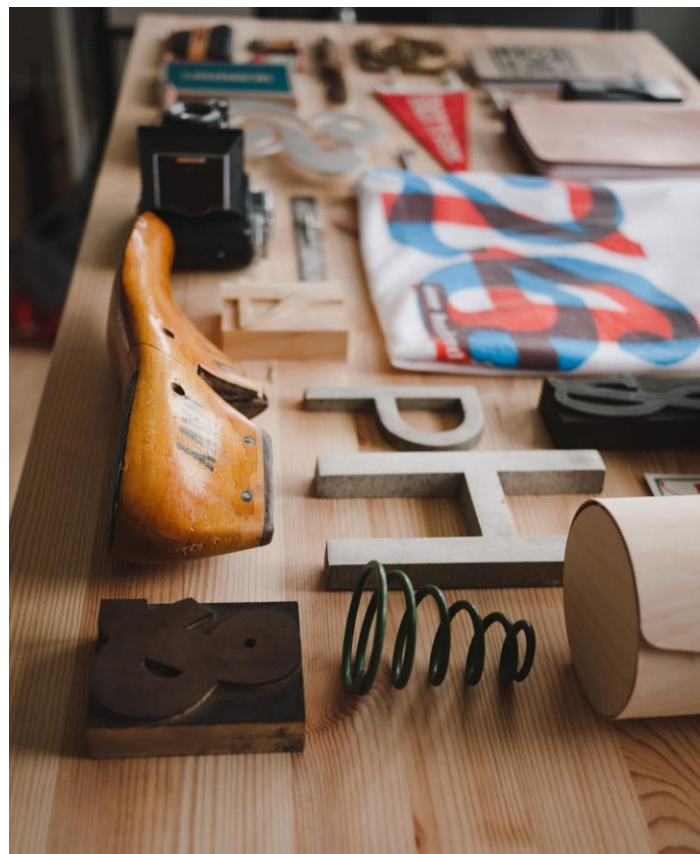
Steps 1-3 saw you complete important groundwork as you answered questions about your brand and ideal customer. You now need to pick out all the best, most relevant bits from your brainstorming sessions and consolidate them into a 1- or 2-page, simple, yet clear document that provides all the key information you need as you go forward!

Your Naming Brief should begin with your Statement of Purpose. Next, include a paragraph that briefly outlines your vision and story, as well as the emotions you want your brand to elicit, what's unique about your idea and anything else about it that you deem particularly exciting or important.

Follow that up with a section that summarizes the persona you created and the key selling highlights of your brand. Next briefly mention the types of names you like and don't like, mentioning specific examples found when you undertook the "modelling" task. Get expressive with the insights you developed through Steps 1-3. Don't forget to mention the sort of personality you want your name to portray – for instance should it be fun/quirky, serious/professional or modern/"techie".

Once completed, your document should allow anyone tasked with coming up with naming suggestions from this point on – whether that's your colleagues and family members or creative professionals – both a place to start and a way to ensure they keep on track when coming up with awesome names.

Don't overcomplicate things. Putting a Naming Brief together shouldn't be overly taxing. Yet do take care to summarize the work you've put in so far thoroughly and accurately, as this document is essential for.



"I have already made this paper too long, for which I must crave pardon, not having now time to make it shorter."

Benjamin Franklin

Naming Categories

As you create your Naming Brief, and move on to the real business of actually coming up with great name ideas, it pays to be aware of the different naming categories that entrepreneurs and small business owners usually gravitate towards the most. You may be able to identify and disregard a category of name you flat out don't like, or that you know probably won't work for your brand. You'll also find yourself more clued up on the wide range of possibilities you've got to choose from when selecting a name, and the pro's and con's of different name types.



Made up: A word you've invented. Coining entirely new words has become increasingly popular in the naming game. Examples include Bebo, Simpy and Zimbra. PROS: Made up names, usually short, can be extremely successful as they're distinctive. They are also relatively easy to Trademark. CONS: Be aware that it takes considerably more advertising resources to get the name "out there" and known in the public domain.

Real words: Repurposed words. As names, these generally work in a metaphorical sort of sense – Apple and Fox, for instance. PROS: usually short and sweet, a real word name comes ready-made with (sometimes multiple) associations. CONS: You will likely have to pay through the nose for an appropriate URL. Trademarking can also be tricky.

Descriptive: Name describes what it is you do in a straightforward, no-nonsense manner. Examples: Paycheck Loans, Holiday Inn, Two Men and a Truck. PROS: potential customers are in no doubt of what it is you're about. CONS: the wrong choice of descriptive name can come across as dull.

Mash ups: These names have two distinct parts. At least one part of the name is made up of a portion of a word, rather than the whole word being used. Examples: Netscape (net + landscape), Skype (sky + peer-to-peer). PROS: can be clever and very appealing. CONS: often hard to spell or remember.

Misspelled: Names made up of words spelt wrong on purpose to make them more distinctive. Examples include Lyft (lift) and Topix (topics). PROS: addresses URL issues. CONS: does not guarantee running into trouble, Trademark-wise.

Tweaked: mes made up of words slightly changed in spelling and/or pronunciation. Examples: Attensa (attention), Zvents (events). PROS: distinctive and unique. CONS: people may not recognize the original word, making it meaningless. If the wrong choice is made, these names can come across as cheesy or too gimmicky.

Compounds: Two words put together. May be read as one word, or as two (i.e. second word in the name has a capital letter). Examples: YouTube, Facebook, Photobucket, Techmeme. PROS: Unique names are easy to create, while overall meanings of both words put together can also be interesting. CONS: No major drawbacks. Sometimes they can be a bit long.



Part II

Let the Naming Begin

Step 4 - Enlist Help

Coming up with a really great name on your own is frustrating for most people – sadly, for some, it may even be impossible. When you consult with others, you are much more likely to find the perfect name and (importantly) feel more confident in your decision. After all, the more brains you have working for you, generating ideas, the more fantastic options you'll have to consider.

If, however, you think you've got access to enough creative brainpower already, ensure you do the following to get the best ideas out of your naming team:

Assemble Your Team: recruit your naming team and decide how you will communicate (e.g. email/ a collaboration tool like Basecamp/ in person)

Share Your Naming Brief: provide a copy of key information about your idea, i.e. all the hard work you undertook during Steps 1 through 3, to your team

Keep a Running List: take note of all name suggestions as they come in, with notes about each one

Consider every idea: one by one, go through EVERY name submitted carefully

Provide Feedback: respond to ideas with your opinion and any ideas of your own about how the focus or style of the name could be modified to better fit your aims

Psst ... at Squadhelp, we have 60,000 creative minds from around the globe helping people like you name just about anything.

Not only is the above great for the creative process, you will also learn a lot about your business and what sort of naming ideas you like. The problem with this method is finding people willing to participate. We hate to break it to you, but your friends don't really want to spend all that time brainstorming names with you!



When you launch a naming contest with Squadhelp, we autocheck URLs for availability. You won't see any names that don't have a URL that matches your predetermined criteria among the entries to your contest.

Step 5: Throw out a bunch of names

By now, all that preparation and brainstorming should have resulted in a long list of potential names for your awesome project. Now it's time to whittle the list down, until you have only the most appealing, catchy, suitable, and of course, available names to choose from.

At this stage, you're bound to conclude that URL availability is probably the most frustrating part of naming. You finally find a perfect name, or even several great options, but (oops!) you can't have them – as the URLs have already been registered.



Part III

Validate

There are two major problems people have with naming. The first, of course, is coming up with a suitable, appealing, unique, catchy and available name. The second is feeling the utmost confidence in the name eventually chosen.

After following the first five steps of our process to Overcome Creative Block And Confidently Choose the Right Name, you should by now have found at least one, and perhaps even two or three names you really love.

It's tempting to stop at this point, ecstatic that you've got results. But whatever you do, don't drop out now! Take the final three steps. Then you can be sure it's not only you that loves your choice of name, but your target audience, too.

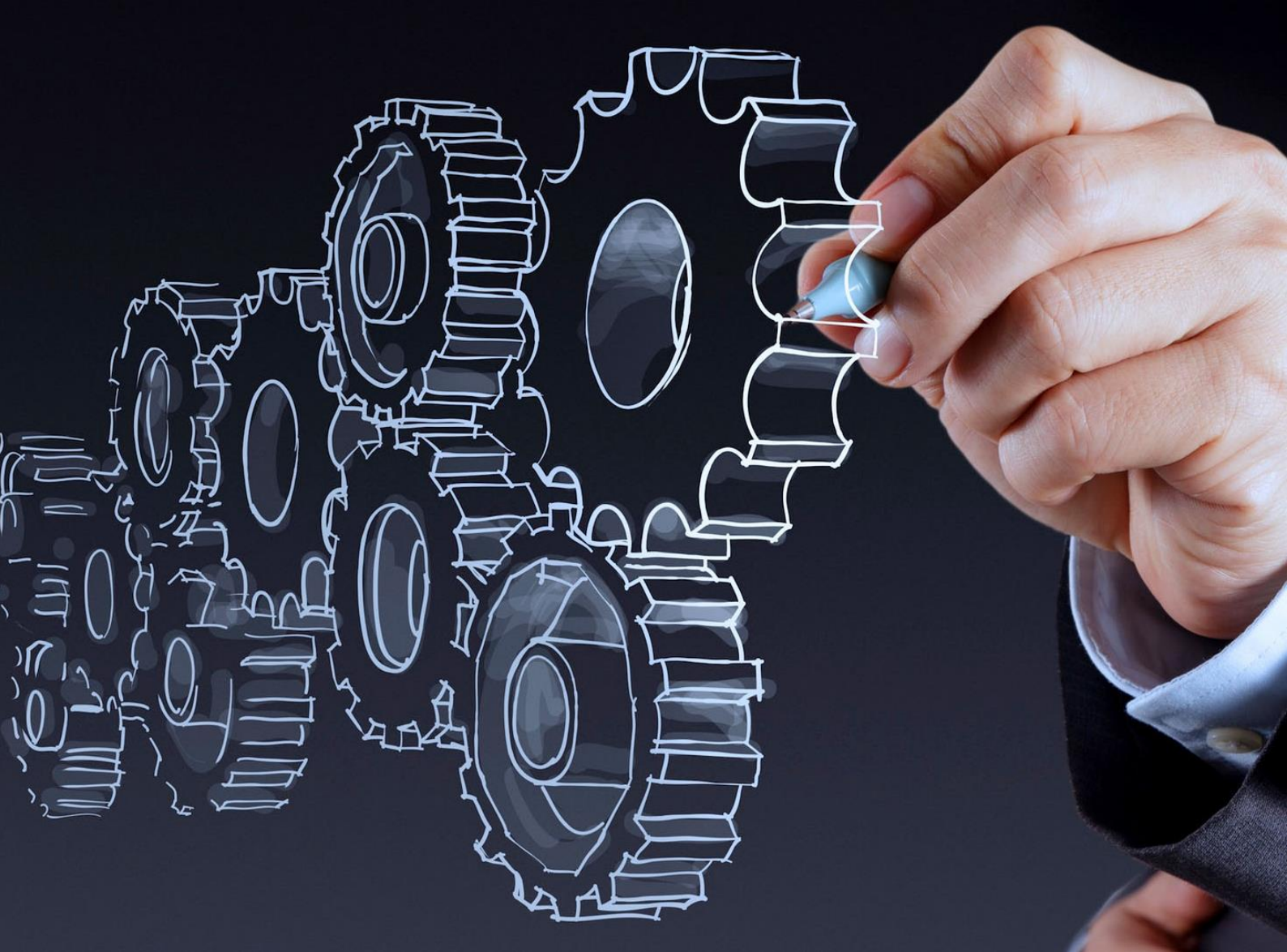
Steps 6-8 will give you that added confidence you need to know for sure you've made a smart choice that won't backfire on you down the road.



Purchase a Trademark Report from Squadhelp and you'll have the option to get advanced linguistics analysis done. Our Linguistics Analysis report allows you to know what your name means beyond your native tongue.

Step 6: Linguistics Analysis

Imagine this...just as you're ready for international expansion that you find out your name means something terribly offensive in another language. Even manufacturing giants like Nokia have messed up majorly in this department, their Lumia brand of cell phone a term for a, ahem, "lady of the night" in Spanish. Another rather unfortunate name belongs to the Ghanaian brand of cola, "Pee Cola". It translates to "very good cola" in Ghana – but, quite obviously, has a rather less appetizing meaning elsewhere. In today's global, online society, you want the peace of mind that comes from knowing your precious new name means nothing surprising or inappropriate in another language.



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Squadhelp has a team of Trademark attorneys ready to help you.

Step 7: Avoid Legal Issues

Just like other aspects of your business, naming has legal implications you must consider. This is why coming up with a unique name is so important. Many of our clients, prior to deciding to use Squadhelp's simple, effective platform went through legal nightmares when trying to name projects. We feel the need to warn you in particular about Trademark issues. Just about every word in the dictionary is trademarked to a certain degree. Before you decide a name, do your due diligence and get it checked out by legal professionals. If it's high-risk, change it. A cease-and-desist letter can be a real show stopper.

For those in the U.S., remember, it's important to complete a name search with the appropriate state agency, generally the office of the Secretary of State. In cases where the name you've chosen is NOT in use, you can reserve it for 120 days with the Secretary of State's office.

Make sure to undertake the right sort of due diligence so as to comply with local laws in your country of operation. (And please note that this is not legal advice.)



Step 8 - Audience Validation

Now, for the final step! Get some audience validation. Make sure your target audience - real people who aren't in your inner circle – react well to the name. Over the years, we've discovered that for those starting a new venture, getting audience validation is satisfying and encouraging. Once you know it's not just you who likes your choice of name, you'll be able to truly relax, knowing you've picked the perfect moniker, one that will help your brand grow and prosper.

At the end of the day, a great name must align with your target audience. Naming is relative in this way. There are really no universally great names, because people's preferences are subjective. After ensuring your right to use a name, Audience Validation may be the most important -- and often overlooked -- step in the naming process. Only when your name choice is backed by the right potential customers can you deem your naming hunt over.



Here at Squadhelp, we employ a digital survey firm, able to compare a list of up to six of your shortlisted names if required.

We can provide you with an excellent indication of how your target audience feels about a name.



Conclusion: Naming Demystified

Cease and Desist Letters. Brands that flop. Lost revenue. Wasted time and missed opportunities. “Namers remorse” (which feels like buyers remorse and can nag at you for years and years).

These are the real-world consequences of misinformed name choices, and we’ve written this book to help you avoid all of them and realize the long-term benefits of building your brand upon a great name.

You should now have everything that need to successfully overcome creative block and choose the perfect name – with confidence!

Still, naming can be very difficult and time consuming, whether you have a formula or not. We’ve built this entire process into our Naming Contests--so you may want to consider enlisting our creative community of more than 60,000 naming experts to find the perfect name in 3-5 days (or less).



Your awesome concept deserves the best chance of success with the perfect moniker to match. But how do you know for sure if you've picked the right name? Considering how crucial a great name is, it's obviously worth investing in its creation. If only branding agency fees weren't so darn expensive, right?

If you're stuck for ideas, are lost in the naming maze or are at all unsure about what name best suits your new venture or project, you need Squadhelp, now.

Squadhelp allows you to simultaneously pick the brains of a network of thousands of talented creatives from around the globe. Join more than 8000 other entrepreneurs, and launch one of our popular naming contests in minutes, using the unique, cutting-edge platform that is Squadhelp. You'll likely get hundreds of great name suggestions to choose from within just 24 hours.

Here at Squadhelp, we've worked hard over the past six years to build and maintain the best creative naming community in the world. For as little as \$199, you can not only launch a targeted naming contest aimed at producing only the best results for your type of business. You're also able to interact with naming experts throughout the process, working together to refine options and ensure all bases are covered.

If you choose to crowdsource with Squadhelp, you'll be confident know that all 8 Steps for developing the perfect name are built right into the platform. You won't have to worry about domain names. Every single idea you'll receive is automatically checked for URL availability. Our access to highly advanced databases means you've also got the option to have ideas pre-screened for Trademark issues and potential linguistic pitfalls as well. Name Validation Research ensure the name you chose will resonate with your target demographic.

If you believe in your idea, and you want a great name at an affordable price without all the hassle...

Launch a Contest Today at Squadhelp.com

