

How to Name a Product

Over the years, we've heard a lot of stories about how various products got their names.

Some products were named during a moment of revelation on the part of the designer while others were tediously developed by adding a number or two to an abbreviation.

Perhaps the most effective method we've heard about was a benefit-based process. The idea is to develop a name that reflects the unique benefits of your product and creates interest in the mind of the buyer.

If you are not interested in spending excessive amounts of brand advertising dollars so that your customers can remember your product's name, this is the next best thing. Here is the general flow for this process:

Step 1: Gather your design team together and brainstorm a list of features that your product has. For each feature listed, write down a few words about the benefit that this provides to your target customer.

Step 2: After one or two days have passed, regroup and review the benefits you wrote down in the earlier session. Delete the least important ones, or those that your competitors share with you. The ones that remain should be the ones that uniquely identify your product's benefits and are the ones that your target customer find most desirable.

Step 3: After one or two more days have passed, regroup again and review the remaining benefits to select key words and phrases that best summarize your product and its benefits. These should be single words or short sentence fragments.

The frequent time away from the team allows the creative juices to flow more freely and not get stuck in thought patterns developed during the previous steps.

Step 4: Before leaving step three, give each of your team members a copy of the list you've generated. Their assignment, and yours, is to jumble these words and phrases around into a list of five names for your product. They should be allowed two to three days for this development.

Step 5: Regroup and review the lists of names with everyone. Select the top five from best to worst. Send these five names out to a lawyer for a trademark search and your products name will be in the results!

If more than one name clears, select the one that ended up highest on your priority list. If none clear, revisit step four and select the next five best names for step five.

From within this process will emerge a benefit-based name for your product that conveys the essence of the product and its unique advantage for the customer.

*Software recommended for names: IDEAFISHER from Fisher Idea Systems.
714 474 8111.*