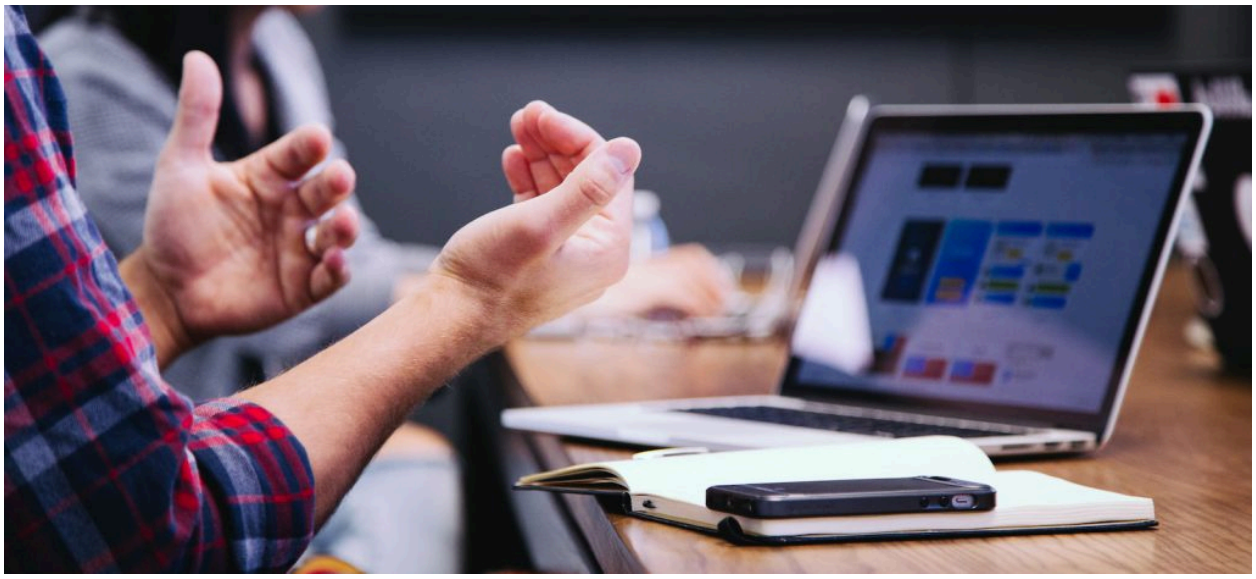
Choosing a Business Name: The Only Guide You'll Ever Need



Are you thinking about starting a new business? Congratulations! Starting a business is a challenging but exciting process. You're going to be spending your time and money on something that hopefully turns out to be rewarding. But before you make all those important decisions, you need to have a name — a great name.

A business name is very important, but even more so if you're just starting out. You want something that will stand out from the crowd and one that people will remember when they look at your website and see what you do. A good business name also gives a good first impression of your brand or product.

Things to Consider When Coming Up With A Name

That being said, here are things you should consider when you're brainstorming for your business name:

1. Keep in mind the 3 Cs:

A. Make It Catchy

When making your business name catchy, keep it simple but easy to remember. If you look at popular companies like Google or Netflix, their names only consist of a few syllables but their brand name is distinct and mutually exclusive to them.

B. Try To Combine

Speaking of mutual exclusivity, you can combine words that are associated with your business. to come up with a potential name. This allows you to provide your customers with an idea of what your business is all about. A few examples of many companies with combined words include DoorDash, Upwork, and Microsoft.

C. Get Creative

Your business name doesn't necessarily have to adhere to strict grammatical guidelines. For example, Kodak is a well-established photography company yet the word "Kodak" isn't an actual word.

Additionally, you can have a go at acronyms. If your business name is a bit longer than you think it should be, you also have the option to abbreviate it. Organizations like WHO, UNICEF, and PETA have encapsulated what they do and who they are in their name while keeping it short and easy to remember.

2. Optimize your business name for social media and SEO

Your business name is one of your most important assets. Try looking up your potential business name on Google and see what pops up. You'll notice the more unique it is, the less competition you have in the search results.

You'll also see that the more generic your name sounds, the more it has to compete with other similar search results. As such, you want to avoid making your name sound too general to ensure that your company gets the most visibility possible from web search results and social media.

3. Check if your potential name has already been used or not

While a quick search on Google might seem like enough for you to check if a business has the same name as yours, you should definitely make sure by checking the registry of the state that you're in to avoid any legal shenanigans.

Say, if you're from the US, you can use the online database of state websites to search for state records to see if the name is available and to see if your name follows the naming guidelines for businesses if you plan on registering your business name. Alternatively, you can use other search tools that function similarly like Incfile's Business Name Search Tool.

4. Trademark protection

After you've surmised that no other business has your name, you should doubly make sure that your business name does not conflict with other trademark names. You'd be surprised by how much legalities are involved when it comes to trademarks so it'd be in your best interest to make sure.

Depending on where you're from, there are different websites to double-check. In the US, the Trademark Electronic Search System is one example of a way to check for trademarks when registering your business name.

The Importance of Choosing Your Business Name

If you've already made up your mind on a name, that's great. If not, keep these things in mind when brainstorming on potential business names. A lot of it may seem obvious or tedious, but remember that the first impression you make is usually the most important — and you never get second chances to make a first impression.

In the end, finding the best name for your business begins with understanding your brand. You need to dig deep and envision how your company will grow, what kind of message it will send to its customers and more. It's a lot of work—but it's certainly worth it in the end.