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Name Search & Selection Checklist

(Search Requirements Apply to Business Names, Tag Lines, Product Names)

**Name Ownership Rules of Intellectual Property**

**(Of Company Name, Product Name, DBA, and Tag Line)**

Intellectual property is a key business asset, adding value to the business. “Business name”, “Product name”, “DBA”, “Assumed Name”, and “Tag line”, and the “brand identity” established around them, are intellectual property (“IP”). One must own the rights to use IP when starting a business or launching a new product.

Confirm that the name you select is ***legally*** available for use, under common law and trademark law, before forming the business. Avoid using a name that is owned by someone else, through doing a proper name search & screening (in the various databases). If the name is owned by someone else, any brand you build around it, would be on shaky foundation, with liability risk & cost to the business (the cost of defending name challenges and changing the name, the website, the halting the brand development.)

The business owner is obligated to determine who owns, and has the legal rights to use, the business name, product name and tag line, before the business owner uses them. Without legal rights to use, the business risks potential lawsuits over name use in the future.

**Name Conflicts With Other Spellings, and Same Spellings in Other States**

Even if the name is available on own your state’s Secretary of State website, a similar name with a slightly different spelling, but sounding the same, might be in use by someone with priority rights in time, under common law or trademark law. Or the exact name might be in use in a different state (in which you might eventually do business).

**Key Words, Root Words**

Search the “key words” or “root words” to screen for prior use. Then search the secondary words around the root word(s). Sometimes the “secondary words” are not enough to distinguish the name from a name already in use, if the root words are already used in the industry, if the user as taken steps to establish brand, including filing federal trademarks.

**Name Clearance First: Formation or Product Build Second**

**The corporation or LLC cannot be formed until name selection is finalized and the name is clear in the industry in which the business will be conducted.**

***Allow sufficient time to research names, and review similar names already in use by others in your industry, or similar industries. Allow time to rethink name selection, because first choice is rarely available***. The time-consumption and delay caused by thinking through multiple name choices, when your first choice is unavailable, is indeed frustrating. (Plan ahead on the corporate formation.)

However, thorough name search and selection ***before*** forming the business is immensely more productive than the alternative of changing the name after forming the business. Post-incorporation name change is costly, time-consuming, inefficient, stalls business momentum and erases brand identity.

**Current Climate for Name Availability and Detection**

* Internet triggers national competition for limited number of names in same industry. We are all doing business in the same space….the internet.
* Many businesses have (or will eventually build) a presence on the Internet, even if they only now have an informational page out there as a start. If they have a webpage for a real business and they have used the page and the business name “in commerce” then they have the right to use. Therefore:
  + You are competing nationally (even internationally), rather than locally, for names in your industry, and
  + Your business name is ***exposed***, nationally (and internationally) on the internet; therefore:
    - Other users of the name, or similar name, in your industry, will find you using the name, through Internet surveillance services, and
    - The 1st user of the name in the industry can sue you as a “name infringer”.
* Name overlaps frequently occur; almost every new business must make additional selections other than first choice.
* Find the overlaps before forming your business entity, avoid costly name change.
* The advice in this document, and each separate search, applies to:
  + Your company name,
  + Any short-cut company name
  + Any DBA or “assumed name”
  + Tag line used for the business, or
  + Any product name (each product name must be searched separately)

**Name Claim Rules – First to Use the Name Wins**

The ***“First to Use (in the same industry, or similar industry) Wins”,*** isthe general common law rule of trademark and name use. This rule applies whether or not you intend to trademark the business name.

* First to use the name “in commerce” (in a business) wins, over the 2nd user, even if :
  + 1st user has not trademarked name,
  + 2nd user has trademarked the name,
  + 1st user has not formed a corporation or LLC,
  + 1st user has not filed the name as a DBA or assumed name, or has not otherwise filed it in a state’s records.

Even an unincorporated sole-proprietorship or “DBA” has 1st rights over your use of the name, if they have used the name “in commerce” before you have. Conduct a thorough search to find any 1st users. Even if you later trademark the name, the first user can come back and force you to stop using the name.

* Therefore, the two similar names cannot occur in the same industry.
* National scope for your industry (perhaps international).
* Local scope (even outside your industry), very close geographic location is relevant, if another business in same close local area, even in a different industry, could cause name confusion.
* ***“Likelihood of Confusion”*** is a test of name availability.
* As a 2nd user, you *may* be able to use the same name, or similar name, as long as your use will not cause “likely confusion”.
* Apply the 8 trademark law factors required to analyze “likelihood of confusion”. I can refer you trademark lawyers to discuss this.
* Sometimes issues arise with using the same name in separate industry for some names (e.g., McDonald’s and Microsoft).
* ***“Dilution” may be a good thing for use, but not for trademark plans:*** If name is diluted by many users, the likelihood of confusion is decreased. You may be able to use the name, but you will not be able to trademark it in future.
* ***Name Selection is one of the hardest, and most time-consuming, issues of starting a business.***Don’t be discouraged if your first choice or first few choices are taken by someone else.
  + Have alternatives in mind.
  + Be prepared to relinquish your first choice, and even your second choice.
  + Sometimes takes weeks or months to think of that second or third name choice!
* ***Law Suit Potential:*** A company using your name (before or after you) can sue you demanding that you stop using the name. The other user could sue you regardless of whether that company has first rights to use the name. (They could be incorrect in filling the lawsuit.) The decision as to who has the rights to use the name is an issue to be determined in the trademark filings, or in a court case, using the 8 factors.

**Establishing Evidence of Use**

Establish evidence of use for your name “in commerce”, or look for evidence of use by others using the name “in commerce”, by taking the following actions, which also act as steps to protect your name. The ultimate step in name protection is filing a federal trademark application and having it granted. However, until then, taking as many of these steps as possible will work toward protecting your name:

* File corporation or LLC entity formation with state,
* File name with county as a d/b/a or “assumed name”, if no corporation or LLC formed,
* Trademark name at the state level (inexpensive),
* Trademark name at the federal level (more expensive),
* Create a website and use it to operate the business,
* Place business ads in publications, such as phone book, internet web page, with proof of dates of publication,
* Sign (and date) contracts with other business parties, proving use in business, and
* Print, and use, stationery and business cards, with proof of dates.

**Professional 3rd Party Search Services**

If you tire of the complexity and tediousness of doing your own manual research steps listed below, you can instead spend the $650 to $1,100 for Corsearch or Thompson’s, which are 3rd party search providers, to do the research for you, in all 50 states, the entire country. Their search provides a list of names used in your industry, and others, and they also tell you what the businesses do, how long they have been doing it, where they are located, whether the name is trademarked. Their results provide the Trademark Goods and Services Category, so that you can pinpoint names already used in your industry.

Otherwise, here is how to do your own search:

**Name Search – How to Search a Name**

The “key words” or “root words” are the words that are the most important to screen for prior use, while the secondary words around the root words are either not relevant, and often do not add enough distinction to distinguish the name from a name already in use. If the root word or words are already used in the industry, be very careful or avoid altogether.

* ***Thoroughly search before forming your business entity.***

Eliminate all possibilities of prior name use, or similar uses. Thorough search – look everywhere! ***Put your “surveillance” hat on, and look for the name as if you were someone looking to sue you over the name use. If you don’t, someone else will.***

* ***Search & Screening techniques:***
* Be aware that **“key words”** in the name are the most relevant to establish name conflict or clearance (not the secondary words or generic words). Therefore, search only the KEY words to determine if the Key words are used by someone else.
* Use of a generic word does not differentiate a name enough to allow you to use it, if already taken. For example “Microsoft Software” and “Microsoft Technologies” would be deemed the same name. i.e., you can’t use “Microsoft” in the technology industry.
* Similarly, “Strong Fund”, “Strong Advisors”, “Strong Capital” and “Strong Equities” would all be deemed the same name, i.e., you can’t use “Strong” in the fund or financial industry if anyone is using “Strong” in Class 035 or 036.
* Avoid the use of words that are used by, or sound like, the 800 pound gorillas like McDonalds, Apple, Microsoft, Excel, Palm, Target, Vanguard, Mobil, BP, and avoid them in ***any*** industry, as those big kahunas will try to stop you even if your business is different from theirs, and they may be able to.

**Data Base Search Tips**

On the Illinois Sec of State, and Delaware Sec of State, as well as other state websites, the search engines are not “smart search engines”, but they are “dumb search engines”. They can’t understand or find combinations of 2 or more words. Therefore, search all single key words in name, separately as individual components of your name. Reverse word combinations.

* Instead of searching “Oak Technology”, first search “Oak” and then “Technology”, or
* Instead of searching “Premier Communications”, first search Premier, the Communications
* Instead of searching “Madison Travel”, search first Madison, then Travel.

**Search All of The Name Permutations.**

For choosing the business name “Men’s Clothes”, you must also search “Man” and “Men” and “Clothes” and “Clothing”.

* After tips on how to search, do the initial searches yourself: Reviewing the results will alert you to other usages of the name, where other word combinations are used and in other types of businesses. Doing some of the “knock out” searches on your own will save you in added legal fees, if additional searches beyond initial search are required.
* *Allow much time, especially for the Google searches, examine all hits. Find out what type of business is behind each hit. Determine if business type is relevant to name conflict.*
* Search the root of the word, for “Tricky Pictures” search “trick”, for “Running Supplies” search “run” so you get “run” and “runner”; or use Boolean
* Search synonyms, same meaning, different words, such as “Space” and “Area”, Including Latin, “Voice” and “Vox”. Though some leeway can be allowed with synonyms in some cases.
* Search Homonyms “Pique”, “Peek”, “Peak”
* Intentional misspelling a name does not solve the problem of a taken name, like “starz” for “stars”. If the name ***sounds*** the same, then it ***is*** the same, for common law name conflict purposes.
* Use Boolean search method so you can find synonyms and reverse word orders, like “Car Gas” and “Gas for Cars”, would probably be deemed in conflict with each other.
* If similar name, though not exactly the same, but similar business – don’t use the name.
* Need to find out what is the business of each hit you find. You must either call them or look it up somehow. If there are a lot of hits, better off paying someone to do the research.

**Search in the Trademark Goods and Services Categories in Which You Will Operate**

Example: Trademark Goods & Services Categories for Social Media & Advertising

If the business is characterized as social media and advertising related, then the Trademark Searches should be done in these goods and services categories.

Other industries may be pulled in as well, depending on the full description of your business idea. A determination of your “Trademark Goods and Services” categories would have to be made and determining ALL of the categories in which you will operate, before the name search is finalized and determined to be clear.

Social Media and Advertising businesses are typically categorized in all of the following categories:

09 (Software Programs);

35 (Advertising);

38 (Communications),

41 (Entertainment);

42 (Scientific and technological services),

45 (Personal or Social Services). Social media may also be classified in other categories as well.

“Facebook” for example, has its trademarks classified in 09, 35, 38, 41, 42, 45.

<http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/notices/international.jsp>

Short cut excerpts by a third party website, Trademark office: <http://www.tmweb.com/trademark_classes.asp>

With a more detailed discussion about what your company will do, now and in the future, I can narrow down the hits search, or you can search on your own at the “Goods and Services” (“GS”) classes. (This will save you some money in legal fees to do an initial pass of this leg work on your own.)

After these initial knockout searches, then you would hire either a trademark lawyer, or the 3rd party name search provider (either Corsearch or Thompson & Thompsons) to do a full name search around the country.

**Name Search Databases, Sources and Service Providers**

If your business will be an internet company, or a product or software or service sold everywhere, then the first place to search is the US Trademark database. Federal trademark trump all state trademarks; if someone else has a federal trademark on your name, or one like it, or even the root/key word of it, in your industry, then you can’t use the name.

* + US Patent & Trademark office, trademark search is a key search, [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov).
    - <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/index.jsp>
    - When searching USPTO, after broad search, to narrow down the search, then search in the Goods and Services category in which your business will operate. A determination of your “Trademark Goods and Services” categories would have to be made (you can search those by Googling it, and determining ALL of the categories in which you will operate.) <http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/notices/international.jsp> or short cut excerpts by non-Trademark office: <http://www.tmweb.com/trademark_classes.asp>
    - <http://www.uspto.gov/products/library/ptdl/services/tmsearch.jsp>
    - The Madrid Express, international trademarks (US residents can be precluded from using names that have been filed in other countries under the Madrid Protocol) <http://www.wipo.int/portal/index.html.en>
  + <http://www.wipo.int/trademarks/en/>
  + <http://www.wipo.int/madrid/en/>

If your business will be local only (which is highly unlikely in these days of the internet), then you can get by with searching only the state corporate database and the state trademark database. However, if someone has federally trademarked the name, it may not likely show up in your own home state searches.

* + State of Incorporation – Secretary of State.
    - In Illinois, [www.sos.state.il.us](http://www.sos.state.il.us), under “Services to Business, check Corporations ***and*** LLCs. Separately search Not-for-Profit Corporations. (Possibly check LPs, depending on type of business and depending on whether the state aggregates the databases.)
    - IL SOS site and search tool is unsophisticated, “dumb”, and not Boolean like Google or USPTO. Use the search tool called “Key word”, but “Key word” only allows you to search one word at a time. Therefore, search each key word separately. Ditto with Delaware and other states.
    - Don’t search using the “Name” tool, as it only gives you names that START with the word, but it skips names that CONTAIN the word. The search feature therefore is very limited, so you must work around it.
  + Delaware Secretary of State – Since many corps and LLCs are formed in Delware, it is a good idea to check Delware before forming or using the name. No matter what state in which you are operating, check Delaware too <https://sos-res.state.de.us/tin/GINameSearch.jsp> , because many entities were formed in Delaware. Therefore, they may not show up in your home state search, even if they are doing business in your home state. A Delaware business could be the first to use your name, and using it nationally. If site is down:
    - Use <http://www.knowx.com/delaware/delaware-corporate-records.jsp>
    - Or call: (302) 739-3073 or (302) 739-4111, or
    - Use incorporation service that can check on line [www.corp-links.com](http://www.corp-links.com) (charges a fee).
    - Call and phone search the county where you want to do business, for any potential d/b/a filings.
  + Illinois (or your home state) Trademark Office, for names that have been trademarked in Illinois, even if they are not formed as corps or LLCs <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/trademark.html>
  + Trademark office of any state in which you will do business. State trademark offices are also important to search, and the name must be searched in every state trademark office where the name will be used, internet or bricks and mortar. The general public does not have access to the state trademark databases in many states (including Illinois), and can only be accessed by a trademark lawyer or someone who subscribes to a paid service. Trademark lawyer can do a “knock-out” search for about $200. CT Corp offers that service as well.
  + Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) online EDGAR search includes public companies and any private company that has ever filed an SEC Form D <http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/companysearch.html>
  + Check the Department of Revenue in State of Incorporation – catches use of Sole Proprietor names who are not required to file with the Secretary of State, and therefore that SOS Corporations search would not catch. Illinois Department of Revenue is (217) 785-3707. (Phone checks only, no internet checks.)
  + **Domain name search** [www.register.com](http://www.register.com), (Critical!) to find other businesses that may be using your selected name. Use of a domain name does not necessarily mean “Use” of a business name has been established, but it’s a pretty good bet if someone has secured the domain name, that they probably have formed a business by that name.
  + [www.google.com](http://www.Google.com) search on internet in general, and/or other search engines such as [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com).
  + Check Dun & Bradstreet <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/company> and other business data bases, and search [www.dnb.com/us](http://www.dnb.com/us) to track reports on certain businesses.
  + Check with the Secretary of State in which the Corporate Office is, or will be, located, as opposed to just formed.
  + Check other state’s name availability now, if you may do business in that state in the future, or if you will do business over the Internet. Use incorporation service [www.corp-links.com](http://www.corp-links.com) (for a fee in each state), or use Thomson’s to search all states at once (see below).
  + Search [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com) search for use in phone directory.
  + Call 411 and ask for your local area, your entire city and other states where you think a company by the same name could be located.
  + Search "infoUSA", formerly American Business Information, at [http://www.infousa.com/fs/business.htm?bas\_fssession={bas\_fssession}&bas\_vendor=190000&bas\_type=FADA&bas\_page=1&bas\_action=search](http://www.infousa.com/fs/business.htm?bas_fssession=%7bbas_fssession%7d&bas_vendor=190000&bas_type=FADA&bas_page=1&bas_action=search), to check for business names.
  + Check [www.knowx.com](http://www.knowx.com) business names, and [www.thomasregister.com](http://www.thomasregister.com), which track down companies that sell goods.
  + Check industry registers for matches or similar names in industry. In trading fund industry:
    - <http://www.advisorregistry.com/listall.asp?state=IL>;
    - <http://www.snl.com/links/investment_advisers_il.asp>
    - <http://directory.google.com/alpha/Top/Business/Investing/MoneyManagers/>
    - [www.marhedge.com](http://www.marhedge.com)

**Purchase a Professional Name Search, by Corsearch or Thompson’s**

If you get tired of doing all the searches in the previous section, you can hire out a third party name search company for $1,100 to $1,300 to do all the leg work for you.

Even if your business does not have a website, your clients, as well as other users of the same name, can find you on the web in other sources and business publications. Other name users of your name can bring action against you if you use their name. Therefore, critical to perform a $1,100 nationwide name check “full search” of entity names (Corporate names, LLCs, LPs, NFPs, trade names, USPTO-filed trade marks, state trademarks, company names (unincorporated), domain names, secretaries of state, and some common law names, and some general publications:

Corsearch (800) 872-6275;

<https://www.ctcorsearch.com/CtcorsearchApps/ctcorsearch/MasterFrame.aspx> <https://www.ctcorsearch.com/ctcorsearchapps/ctcorsearch/Products.aspx>

* “Comprehensive Name Search” $600(3 day), Corporate Name Search is $700, Comprehensive and Corporate both $1,100, include DBAs $1,200
* Thomson & Thomson’s: (800) 692-8833 “Comprehensive and Company Name Search” costs $1,100 (for 4 day turn around), similar pricing as CT for the combinations. [www.thomson-thomson.com](http://www.thomson-thomson.com) or
* Government Services, Inc. Searches <http://www.trademarkinfo.com/>
* Have a trademark lawyer review the search (I will give you referrals); add $900 to $1,200 for legal fees for trademark lawyer search.
* One of the most valuable $2,000 you will spend to start your business, compare with $10,000+ for litigation or $5,000+ for a Cease and Desist letter.

**Actions to Protect an Available Name**

* Use the name “in commerce”, and retain proof of use for filing. Using it is the first step to establishing protective rights. And you can only file, and be issued, a trademark after you have used the name.
* File a trademark at the federal level (the most costly and the most protective)
  + File “Intent to Use” with USPTO
  + Consider trade-marking the name, especially if branding is important to your business concept, product or services. Hire an intellectual property / trademark attorney to file them. If you can’t use your name after you have established brand identity, then you don’t have a business.
  + Trademark with federal USPTO
* File a trademark at the state trademark level (less costly than federal, by a lot, but it only protects your name in the state or states in which you file).
* Form the entity as soon as name is cleared. Upon formation of the LLC or Corp, the name will show up on most search databases, putting the world on notice that you are using the name.
* Reserve a domain name, and all similar / related domains; as many as you can afford, ***and*** put up a working website. The purchase of a domain name alone, does not protect your name, until you use that domain name “in commerce”, by at least getting a working website up and running.
* Be prepared to *buy* a domain name from someone else, if someone else already owns it.
* **File Illinois LLC 5.5, Illinois BCA 2.10**, (or **Delaware Certificate of Incorporation** if Delaware) **or Illinois LP 201, or file articles of formation in your home state.**
* **Qualify foreign LLC** to do Business **in Illinois**, (if non-Illinois corporation, LLC or LP), and in your home states and states where you will do business. File before doing business in IL, opening office in IL, buying or renting real estate in IL, placing assets in IL, or before taking investor checks in IL. The IL qualification filing fee is based on the net capital of the corporation.
* **County** **Recorder Filing** required in which business is located (only if state requires.)
* Illinois **REG-1 Business Taxpayer** registration with Illinois Department of Revenue filing. Required before hiring employees, or making sales from Illinois. File ***early*** if you will be selling goods subject to sales tax. Sales tax reports are due the 15th of the month following the month of sales of the goods.
* **Website Development and Online Branding.** Start sooner than you think. It takes longer, requires more time, attention, thought and revisions than you think. Informational websites are inexpensive and generally fast; however, any type of product or service website or e‑commerce transaction and SEO can be expensive and take long to build.
* **Name Check** On Your Existing Corporation
  + If the corporation is already formed, do name check anyway.
  + May find name infringers, or that ***you are*** a name infringer.
  + May find, for example, a Delaware corporation operating in your home state.
  + If out-of-state corporation is operating in your home state, it has the right to use the name before you do, even in your home state.
  + Consider name change and other options if business name being used by others.

**How to Pick a Good Name - Name Selection & Search Process**

**(For Business Name, Product Name, DBA, or Tag Line)**

* **Avoid “Descriptive Names”.** Descriptive names, or names whose key word/root word of which directly states what the business does, are very often already taken in any given industry. Descriptive names are sometimes non-memorable or boring, and are therefore less effective for branding. They also usually cannot be trademarked if the words are general language words (cannot trademark the word “car”, etc.).

A name can be Descriptive, but add elements that make it unique and catchy: ***CareerBuilder*** (job site), ***Muscle Mechanic*** (massage) ***Red Lobster Seafood, FeedBurner*** ([web feed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_feed) management provider).

* **Use “Arbitrary”, “Suggestive”, or “Fanciful” Name.** “Arbitrary”, “Suggestive”, or “Fanciful” name: Consider being less "descriptive". Be more "suggestive", more “arbitrary”, or more "fanciful". Add a "branding" word to the descriptive words. Suggestive of, or allusion to, the service or product.
* **Arbitrary:** Take a word from another genre, subject area, your hobby, music, art, nature, geographic element …. Anything totally unrelated to your industry. Create a “brand” in your industry using that unexpected word. An “**Amazon**-like” brand name (“arbitrary” word that is completely out of the element or realm of the industry (like Amazon for books), and applying it to your industry.“Amazon” previously meant “River in Jungle”. Now it means “Books/Music/Retail Goods”.  **Apple** was a fruit, now a computer. **Red Hat Software;** ***Dog Pile*** search engine, ***Blue Meteor*** consulting; Smokeball Software, **Target** (retailer).
* Brand the business by using geographic elements, or items from nature (such as rocks, mountains, rivers, jungles, parks), or places (generic or proper names), physical objects, foods, animals, parts of body, possessions: ***Amazon Books, Blackberry, Apple Computers, Monster (job site), Survey Monkey, FeedBurner; Eagle River, Pearl Design***
  + The various oceans and great lakes are all pretty much taken.
  + Avoid overused/tired words, like “American” or “National”, or probably even “Southern”, “Northern” etc., and probably even “Midwest”, and “Southwest” or most directional names are overused, or at least taken
  + Avoid the city name like “Chicago” or “Miami” etc., they will be taken
* Create a **“Suggestive”** word that alludes to the industry, the product or the service, or uses a term of art from the industry, a tool used in the industry, or alludes to the positive result of the service or product, but is not directly Descriptive; or use innuendo or double meaning. ***“Federal Express”, “Triple Toe Skate Shop”,*** ***“Think or Swim”*** (Options Trading Firm), ***LiquidPoint*** (Options Trading Firm), “***Great Wall”*** (Chinese Restaurant) or “***March First”*** Consulting; **Oasis Irrigation** (Sprinkler system business); **Forget Me Not Florist, Slide Rule Engineering**
* Create a “Fanciful” name. Completely made up word that combines words or elements of words into a new word Make up a new word. It may, or may not, have relevance to the business. Use a combination of syllables from other words, or other unique creation. Examples: ***Orbitz*** (online travel site), ***Groupon (***Group Coupon),  ***Kleenex*** tissues***, eBay*** (online auction), ***Google*** (search engine), ***Wikipedia*** (online encyclopedia***), Motorola*** (electronics), ***Scubaquarium*** (indoor scuba diving facility); ***Zoomerang, Razorfish,* *Buzzmetricks, Intelliseek. Photovoltaics; ZyStor Therapeutics;*** Neoglyphics (web design); ***Ganymede, Efoora.***
* Use a name of a street, combined with a word from your industry: Unlimited choices perhaps? Or use a combination of two street names, like ***Black & Essington,*** but avoid an obvious common name like “Main Street Pharmacy”.
* Combine two words that would normally be unrelated, that result in a catchy combination: **March First (consulting), Tap Root Pub, LiquidPoint (options brokerage firm)**
* Color combined with object: **Blue Meteor Design, Red Hat Software, Blue Martini, Green Chilies, Black Dog.** (Though many colors are overused already, search)
* Use words form other languages: ***Melati Home Furnishings, Appana Realty***
* Use animal names, or derivations: ***Razorfish, Dog Pile, Black Dog, Green Cardinal***
* **Avoid** use of acronyms, letters! Especially avoid 3 letter acronyms, as the business name, even your own initials, such as ABC, or JTM. The are 100% non-memorable (no impact on your reader or customers, and they will not remember YOUR three letters.) Almost certainly guaranteed that they will not be available, or they will cause confusion.
* Use of sir names is fine, sounding like a law firm, CPA firm, or ad agency: ***Smith & Jones, Black & Essington.*** But avoid using more than 2 or 3 names.