



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

We all understand the importance of a first impression. Whether we are meeting a new supplier, a new investor or even our future in-laws - we all want to make a good impression straight away. But what about the first impression that people might have of your business? | BY ERIN FRANCIS

A business name can tell a customer what you sell. It can tell them what kind of business to expect. Or, it can also downright confuse your customer. How do you select the business name that is right for you? Something that tells your customer who you are and what you do in a way that is catchy and appealing. It's certainly no small task. *MyStore* magazine spoke with six independent retailers to learn about the story behind their business names. Here are the highlights from our conversations. To see all of their responses, visit the RCC Facebook page and view the photo album "What's in a Name?"

"THE NAMESAKE"

Crumpler

Owners: Jason Wood, David Roper, Will Miller and Stuart Crumpler

Business Type: Bags, Luggage and Accessories

Year Founded: 1995

Where did the name come from, How did you select it?

Crumpler was founded in Melbourne, Australia in 1995 by David Roper and Will Miller, who owned a bike messenger business. One of their employees/mates from Minuteman Messengers, Stuart Crumpler, designed the first Crumpler bag and its distinctive logo. Seeing an opportunity, the three of them decided to ditch the messenger business and start making bags.

How does your business name represent you or your products?

Our business name actually doesn't particularly represent our products at all. Occasionally we encounter customers expecting that they can "Crumple" our products. But our bags are unusually heavy-duty and definitely not crumpleable! The name comes from the designer's surname.

What interesting marketing or advertising have you been able to do because of your name?

We do a lot of unique and creative marketing and advertising (like our Beer-4-Bags sale, where we only accepted beer as payment for a week). But we haven't yet done anything specifically because of the business name. We'll surely be on board as a sponsor with any competitive crumpling competition (beer can crumpling perhaps?).



Lovers atWork Office Furniture

Owner: Rodney Lover

Location: London, Ontario

Business Type: Full -Service Office Furniture

Founded: 1983

Where did the name come from - How did you select it?

The founding family's name is "Lover" and we belong to an Ontario-wide office dealer group called atWork Office Furniture.

How does your business name differentiate you from your competition?

Our name "Lovers atWork Office Furniture" has a long standing reputation for service and quality. And who else can say they are really a "Lover" of office furniture?



Ella's Clothes Closet

Owners: Ella Little and Carla Oberg
Location: Langley, British Columbia
Business Type: Ladies Apparel
Founded: 1976

Where did the name come from – How did you select it?

Ella is my first name and the idea of shopping in someone's clothes closet had a lot of appeal to me.

How do customers react to your business name?

It is a fun and whimsical reaction – who doesn't dream of playing in someone else's huge clothes closet.

What interesting marketing or advertising have you been able to do because of your name?

Our early marketing played on the idea of coming and playing in Ella's Clothes Closet. It told our customers that shopping with us would be an enjoyable experience.

“THE LANDMARK NAME”

Big Apple Fashions

Owner: Margaret Ann Kerr
Location: Halifax, Nova Scotia
Business Type: Ladies Apparel & Accessories
Founded: 2003

Where did the name come from – How did you select it?

I [owner Margaret Ann] owned another boutique, 7th Avenue, for 11 years. It was named after the garment district in New York. In keeping with that theme, I named the new store Big Apple. It seemed fitting since most of our fashions come from Montreal and New York.

How does your business name differentiate you from your competition?

The name, Big Apple, instantly tells customers that we carry lines from New York. They are going to find something different without having to travel out of the country!



“THE CHEEKY NAME”

Love Nest

Owner: Linda Zuzanski
Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba
Business Type: Love Boutique
Founded: 1988

What makes your business unique?

We are a classy love boutique that sells adult-oriented products in an environment that strives to make our customers feel comfortable. We focus on creating intimacy for loving couples.

Where did the name come from – How did you select it?

I purchased the rights for the name from a Vancouver-based company that operated in-home parties named Love Nest. When they ceased operating in January, 1988 I saw the opportunity for my own business.





Beauty Safari

Owners: Ruth and Alex Johnson
Location: Jordan Station, Ontario
Business Type: Bath, Beauty and Giftware Boutique
Founded: 2008

Where did the name come from – How did you select it?

We were pondering a store name when we were reminded of our safari experiences in Africa, enjoying sumptuous views and wonderful service. The concept of a “journey” that would enable our customers to discover beautiful products sourced from around the world was what we had in mind. After all, Safari in Swahili means ‘long journey. We put the two words together and Beauty Safari was born!

What interesting marketing or advertising have you been able to do because of your name?

We came up with a campaign which features the phrase ‘A taste of Europe... in Jordan Village’ which wonderfully captures the feel of our store. It features chic French ladies including Marie Antoinette, which represents the French and beauty elements.

“THE PRODUCT NAME”

Cards and Presents Ltd.

Owner: Lisa Fen
Location: Toronto, Ontario
Business Type: Giftware and Accessories boutique
Year Founded: 1989

Where did the name come from – How did you select it?

The name started out as a general descriptor of the products that we carry. It is accurate in that we do sell both cards and presents. We like that our name is at once straightforward and a bit ambiguous. A lot of things fall under the “present” umbrella.

How do your employees react to your business name?

They love it! It does provide a lot of freedom in what we sell. When a store has been around as long as we have, you do go through periods of growth and change. Being on Queen Street West in Toronto also demands flexibility. Our name allows us the ability to experiment, which makes it fun for everyone who works here.



something2wear

Owners: Melanie LeBlanc & Debbie Patrick
Location: Calgary, Alberta
Business Type: Ladies apparel & Accessories
Founded: 2010

Where did your name come from – How did you select it?

In deciding on a name it was very important to us that the name project what the business is and what customers would find. Being in clothing retail for years we would hear from customers on a daily basis “I need something to wear to work, on holiday, tonight!” The numeral 2 represents the two of us.

How do customers react to your business name?

It makes them smile! When they first hear the name they have an “ah ha” moment – and walk in with a cheeky comment like, “Hi I need something to wear – what do you have for me?” And away we go!

“THE MYSTERY NAME”

One Tooth Activewear

Owner: Brenda Rubes
Location: Collingwood, Ontario
Business Type: Activewear
Year Founded: 2010

Where did the name come from, How did you select it?

The name means Good Fortune or Good Faith and owner Roy Tan believes you need good fortune and good faith to survive in business today.

How do customers react to your business name?

They want to know what it means and it gives us a chance to open up a conversation with them.

What interesting marketing or advertising have you been able to do because of your name?

For Christmas we will give away custom Fortune Cookies with either a good fortune inside or a special offer which can be applied to the customer’s purchase.

BRANDING AND YOUR BUSINESS

Whether you are naming your business, greeting a customer or picking a new paint colour each aspect is a part of your overall brand. Here are some tips from Matthew Diamond, Partner and Managing Director at Hunter Straker – Canada’s only purchase design agency, concerning ways you can make your store stand out from the rest.

“I started my career as a brand manager for JELL-O. While there, I learned some invaluable lessons that I think anyone can apply to their business. Sure, I was part of a large, global brand marketing machine – but what I took away was the importance of becoming an absolute ambassador for your brand.”

Think about it: you are in a world that is all about branding, standing out, influencing someone to take action, and buy the products or services you sell. So, what can you do to establish your brand, in your store, without a lot of money? Matthew shared four key principles to consider as you embark on your journey towards marketing success:

Have a Vision

It’s about knowing what you want your business to be about. What kind of people do you want to work with? Who is going to buy your products or services? And what goals do you want to achieve?

Stand for Something

Ask yourself, what are your personal values? Don’t hide them. Are you a thought leader? A social responsibility guru? An organic tree hugger? A sports nut? Find your core value and stick with it.

Identify your Strengths

Make a list of all the attributes that make you and your business unique. They are what make you stand out, and can help to define your store.

Find your ‘One Thing’

That thing that, above all, customers will remember after leaving your. Are you all about great service? A personal connection with shoppers? The best quality? Find your ‘One Thing’ and stick to it.

Write it Down

Get it on paper. Something that anyone can read and get a glimpse of what you and your business are all about. This will act as a guide for your business.

According to Matthew, “The one brand that you should know the most about is yours.” Share that knowledge with the people in your store and your brand will flourish.

Get professional advice from an RCC supplier. Visit the RCC Supplier’s Directory:

<http://rcc.officialbuyersguide.net/SearchResult.asp?cid=19>

Naming and registering your business in Canada:

<http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/125/139/>

If you are really stuck and need some inspiration, check out the BizNameWiz name generator:

<http://www.businessnamegenerator.com/>

What about naming your domain? Additional Tips:

<http://technology.inc.com/2008/06/01/is-your-domain-name-killing-your-business/>