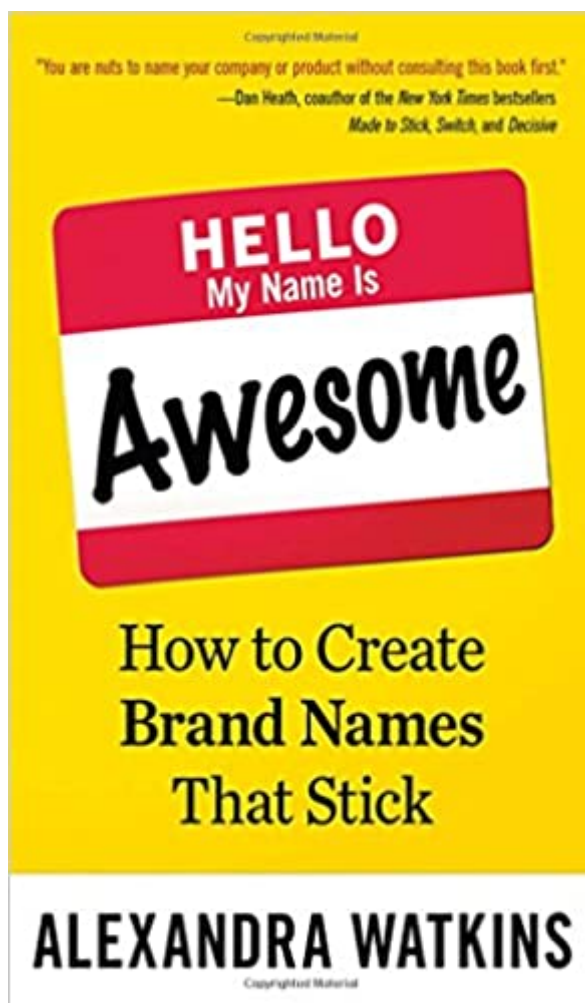


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Hello, My Name Is Awesome: How To Create Brand Names That Stick



Synopsis

Every year, 6 million companies and more than 100,000 products are launched. They all need an awesome name, but many (such as Xobni, Svbtle, and Doostang) look like the results of a drunken Scrabble game. In this entertaining and engaging book, ace naming consultant Alexandra Watkins explains how anyone—even noncreative types—can create memorable and buzz-worthy brand names. No degree in linguistics required. The heart of the book is Watkins's proven SMILE and SCRATCH Test—two acronyms for what makes or breaks a name. She also provides up-to-date advice, like how to make sure that Siri spells your name correctly and how to nab an available domain name. And you'll see dozens of examples—the good, the bad, and the “so bad she gave them an award.” Alexandra Watkins is not afraid to name names.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Top 10 Marketing Book of 2014"—Inc. Magazine"Brand names can make a critical first impression, and naming expert Watkins, founder of the naming firm Eat My Words, attempts with this book to prove that even the "most noncreative person" can conceive of something that will resonate with customers. She examines all aspects of a brand name's commercial value, from how easily it can be pronounced and recognized, to whether or not voice recognition software will be able to spell it correctly. She uses the acronyms SMILE (Suggestive, Meaningful, Imagery, Legs, Emotional) and SCRATCH (Spelling challenged, Copycat, Restrictive, Annoying, Tame, Curse of Knowledge, Hard to pronounce) to describe, respectively, "sticky" and "deadly" qualities. Watkins

also offers examples of companies or products that hit the mark, like Pedigree and Snuggle, and those that missed it, like Eukanuba and Xobni. She provides advice for securing a good domain name and ideas to avoid. Her most potentially valuable recommendation is for would-be brand-name owners to create a "creative brief," a checklist of all the elements that need to present. It defines the core characteristics of an organization from target audience to competition to "brand personality." Watkins also examines brainstorming, "building consensus," and changing a name. Jam-packed with sound advice, this slim volume can be the difference between becoming a Target and becoming a Speesees.

—Publishers Weekly

“Let’s hear it for an author who clearly and succinctly explains how to do a critical business task rather than merely presenting historical examples for the hapless reader to puzzle out. Here, former Ogilvy advertising copywriter Watkins, founder of industry-leading naming company Eat My Words, expands considerably on the company and brand-naming tips posted on her website. In addition to explaining and illustrating her 12-point vetting process for potential names (e.g., cautioning that unpronounceable names will be mangled by Siri and other voice-recognition software), Watkins gives surpassingly solid advice about how to brainstorm potential names, root out probable bad choices, build consensus, and protect chosen brand names and URLs. Her reputation within the industry is apparent from her client list of prominent companies—Adobe, Microsoft, Disney, Marriott, and many more—and nonprofits. In one of the best chapters, the author walks readers through the multilayered processes she followed in generating a memorable name for Spoon Me yogurt.

VERDICT: Useful for readers who are naming anything more important than a household pet.

—Library Journal (Elizabeth Wood, Bowling Green State Univ. Libs., OH)

“This awesome piece of writing is worth bottling, shaking, and stirring into your brand-name strategy either online or offline. I love the way Alexandra weaves her voice and humor into a very clear message to distill what you are about into a business name. It can be applied to your brand name and domain name. Her process is coherent and creative. A brilliant book, I couldn’t put down.

—Jeff Bullas, blogger, strategist, and speaker, Forbes Top 50 Social Media Power Influencer 2013, and Huffington Post Top 100 Business Twitter Account

“I was skeptical about a how-to book on naming products and brands. Alexandra Watkins convinced me otherwise. Her book is a fun read with lots of practical advice.

—Patricia Roller, angel investor and former Co-CEO, Frog Design

“Your company or product probably needs all the help it can get. Watkins helped me name my firm, and I’m constantly told what a great name it is. Don’t pick a name until you’ve read Watkins’s book—you’ll want to have a name that you love forever!

—Charlene

Li, founder of Altimeter Group, author of Open Leadership, and coauthor of

Groundswell “The type of hands-on practical wisdom rarely found (but desperately needed) in the academic community.” • Michael Webber, Dean of the School of Management, University of San Francisco “This is the perfect book for kick-starting entrepreneurs, brand managers, and practicing creatives.” • Pat Hanlon, founder and CEO, Thinktopia, and author of Primal Branding “This book is packed full of practical, real-world advice you would never get from a regular textbook.” • Dale J. Stephens, founder of UnCollege and author of Hacking Your Education “In the current crazy business climate, where standing out and being remembered are critical to success, your name had better be awesome. This is the best book on the subject.” • Nell Merlino, founder and President, Count Me In for Women’s Economic Independence, and creator of Take Our Daughters to Work Day “We’ve got a terrible name. No one can spell it. No one can pronounce it. Don’t make the same mistake we made. Read this book and let Alexandra Watkins guide you away from the ‘we thought we were being clever with our name, but now we just look silly’ syndrome.” • Matt Ruby, founder and CEO, Vooza “I got lucky when I bent all the rules and named my company. If you need help naming yours, Alexandra has some great advice.” • Chip Conley, founder of Joie de Vivre Hospitality “Zappos.com originally started out as ShoeSite.com, but that limited our potential future growth. A company’s name can be vital to its success. Reading the tips in this book can help anyone avoid the pitfalls.” • Tony Hsieh, New York Times bestselling author of Delivering Happiness and CEO, Zappos.com, Inc. “Insightful, irreverent, and eminently practical, Watkins’s Hello, My Name Is Awesome should be required reading for anyone naming a brand.” • S. Christian Wheeler, Professor of Marketing, Stanford Graduate School of Business

Naming a business or product has always been challenging and sometimes costly for entrepreneurs and inventors, but it’s one of the most important decisions they have to make. Alexandra Watkins presents a foolproof model that anyone can use to create and evaluate brand names like a pro.

Wow! And I say this with complete honesty. Some may think I am a bit jaded as my company name appears in the book! I can honestly say, that because as I was mentioned in the book, I read it with closer scrutiny. I read it before it was published and pre-ordered my copy and am glad I did, because not only did the book make the bestseller list in its category, but it may just end up with a

second printing (and I could not wait that long). It is important for people to know immediately how critical this book is to their business. I am happy to be able to write a review on the day it hit the shelves. I received my copy today and began reading it all over again. This book has an index, and even an "Ask Alexandra" section at the end. You do not have to be a large company, (and most of these projects start at \$50,000) to use this book for naming your company or its products. Alexandra offers ways that teach you how to help yourself, through her brand tests in the book that include the "SMILE" and "SCRATCH" that are not only creative, but spot on for steering you in the right direction. This is not a "throw spaghetti at the wall" way to investigate your branding, but a tried-and-proven-to-be-successful way of learning how to brand products and services correctly. The price is right, and at 98 pages, you can get through it quickly. Read it a few times and take notes and do the homework. It will pay off! I can tell you from experience in working with this brilliant woman, everything she writes here is done with nothing but integrity - and humor! It has to be fun! And she makes a task that many are not only afraid of, but have no idea where to start, enjoyable. Seriously. Really enjoyable!

This is a great book! I met Alexandra several years ago at an event near San Francisco (Campbell for those of you who know the Bay Area) and the idea of what she did and the name of her company stuck in my mind. Over the years when I met people who needed a name for a business or a product I remembered Alexandra, referred her, and on a few occasions did a LinkedIn invitation. I now have a startup that needs a new name (the current name is really bad so I won't share it here). I finally bought this book. As strange as this next statement may sound Alexandra details a structured methodological system that encourages creativity. I'm tempted to say it's a big exercise in word association, but it's more like a big exercise in concept association. We're not done yet, but I have (so far) two really solid names in mind that I would have never stumbled across had I not followed her instructions. If you need a new name for a business and/or a product and you're bootstrapping and can't afford her services, buy her book. Her system is conceptually simple. Her descriptions and explanations are easy to follow. While the process does take time and effort, what's most important is that it works.

Alexandra Watkins's *Hello, My Name Is Awesome: How to Create Brand Names That Stick* is a practical guide to picking inventive company names and mastering the art of branding. Mrs. Watkins's marketing handbook provides the reader with the necessary information to successfully name a company or product. Her branding expertise and

humorous writing style make this marketing guide to branding a must read. The name is a huge part of a product and the branding associated with it. Mrs. Watkins attempts to help the everyday entrepreneur avoid the pitfalls of unclear and whacky company names. Keeping in mind the 5 qualities of a super-sticky name and the seven deadly sins, one can arrive at the perfect company name while promoting a desired brand strategy around a product or service. In

Watkins's guide, she determines a tipping point when it comes to company and product naming. Entrepreneurs and business owners must struggle with the difficult task of standing out from the crowd while engineering an understandable and fitting name for a company or product line. Small details must be thought over and the smallest intricacies can make one brand name lasting and effective and another confusing and ineffective. Brand names serve as a first impression between consumers and producers. Watkins believes that a satisfactory company or brand name should turn heads, generate buzz and spark sales. Brand names characterize a company or product in a few simple words or a short phrase. The brand name is the single most important marketing attribute of a company and can doom a company from the start if not given enough attention. Following Mrs. Watkins's tips to creating lasting brand names can make or break a company before its products or service are even produced and released in the consumer market for consumption. Alexandra Watkins does a great job in explaining her criteria and process for generating effective and lasting brand names. Her ideas are well backed up with satisfactory examples and real life instances where her method was implemented to create real brand names used in the market today. Watkins believes that, "the most powerful brand names connect with people and move them to buy because they are based on familiar words and concepts that they understand and appreciate." In fact, Alexandra Watkins mentions Kryptonite locks, Mayday tech support, Obsession perfume, Leap Frog toys and Ninja blenders as companies with brand names that speak volumes. She believes that a brand name tells the story a producer wants to get across to its potential customers. Following her method will ensure a practical brand name that clearly explains the overall aura attached to a product. However, she also cites the many pitfalls associated with brand naming. Some of the companies she identifies as lacking in the brand-naming department include: Sur La Table, Iams, Flickr, Saucony, Eukanuba and Xobni. The author provides many real life examples to back up her argument for successful brand naming, while at the same time citing companies who failed at creating effective brand names. I believe that if followed correctly and analyzed in the correct way, Alexandra Watkins provides a sound method for brand naming. She is very successful in her interpretation of powerful brand names and the importance of an effective brand name. She

provides the reader with the proper tools and prepares them for the difficult task of brand naming. Though her system isn't foolproof by any sense of the imagination, it can give someone struggling to find a suitable company name a push in the right direction. I would recommend this book to any entrepreneur or future business owner who may one day struggle with the task of engineering a suitable brand name. If the task of brand naming is something you'll ever have to deal with, reading Watkins' guide for anything more than entertainment would be a waste of time. However her writing style and interjected humor make it an easy read and gives flair to what seems to be a pretty bland topic. All in all, I would recommend this book to any company or entrepreneur making or slated to make a decision in brand or product naming.

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