



NEW BUSINESS NAMES: NAMING WITH A STORY

Sometimes a company name communicates a message on its own, and sometimes the story underlying the name adds depth and distinction to that message.

Isis Group International, for instance, uses the name of an Egyptian goddess in a word combination that comes across well to the ear and looks great in an artfully designed arrangement of fonts, shapes and colors. (See the logo at www.isisgroupinternational.com.)

The tag line clarifies what the firm does: Training and Consulting for a World of Difference. The firm's three experienced consultants conduct cross-cultural training, coach international executives, help smooth the process of cross-border mergers, and more.

With the story behind the name, an even deeper level of meaning unfolds. I wrote it this way for the opening section of the firm's brochure:

"Isis: Insightful Guidance for Global Success

"In ancient Egypt, the goddess Isis possessed a well-earned reputation for exceptional tenacity, intelligence, healing, resourcefulness and creativity. Isis Group International follows in her footsteps with customized consulting, training and coaching for today's smaller than ever, diverse world."

In explaining what the name means, the firm reveals some of its values and implies that it has certain qualities that matter to clients. Ideally, testimonials, other marketing copy and the firm's work itself all complement this story. The whole package then becomes unusually appealing and memorable.

For this naming strategy to work, you need a name that at least hints at the story and a story that contains something not generally known that fits how you wish the company to be perceived. Most adults who don't recall that Isis was an Egyptian goddess or her specialty as a goddess would still vaguely sense the international flavor in the name. With more familiar mythological figures like Hercules or Midas, however, the story would run the risk of belaboring the obvious.

Enlist the aid of a top-notch graphic designer and marketing writer to enhance the association with the story, and include a brief version of the story when you introduce the company.

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