

CREATING A BRAND

What you'll learn

Amazon customers begin their online shopping by searching for a brand name. As a brand in the Amazon.com marketplace, choosing your brand name and brand identity is an important step that is often overlooked. Creating a brand requires careful consideration of a name and logo that resonate with customers to help build brand awareness and contribute to the popularity of your brand on Amazon.

What is a brand?

Brands can help your products stand out. Having a brand can help communicate the value of your company and products, including attributes like credibility, quality, and satisfaction.

- **A brand name** represents your products. It is a word, design, symbol, or other feature that distinguishes your product from others.
- **A logo** is a graphic mark, emblem, or symbol commonly used to promote instant recognition by customers.

When customers prefer a particular product from a certain brand, they may be more likely to purchase other products from the same brand and recommend the product and brand to others.

When you have a brand name and logo, you can display them in multiple places like product detail pages, tags, packaging, poly bags, and on the product itself. This helps customers recognize and remember the brand. The more places you display your brand name, the more brand awareness you can generate.

Tip

- o For example, “Amazon” is the brand name of our company, and this is our company logo: 
- o Products can also have brand names and logos. For example, “echo” represents the brand name of one of our products, and this is the logo: 

What

is a good brand name?

Having a brand name that is memorable, simple, meaningful and descriptive is best.

Brands with bad names may be considered culturally inappropriate or ‘uncool’ and may discourage customers from purchasing products from that brand. Seeking professional expertise can be helpful for developing a great brand name and logo.

The most important element of a good brand name is that it represents your products. The first thing you will want to consider is what kinds of products you sell. Some characteristics of good brand names include:

Memorable and distinct:

Customers can recall them afterward. The name is different from competitors’ names.

Example: Ferrari

Meaningful:

Customers associate relevant ideas and sentiments with the name.

For example, Costco is an American membership-only warehouse club. A key part of its value proposition is providing low cost products to its customers. The company name references this by including the word “cost”.

Simple:

Short, easy to say, and write.

Example: Apple

Descriptive:

The name helps customers to understand more about the company and product.

For example, Netflix is an American company that provides streaming video, including movies, via the internet. Its name references this using “Net” which is short for “internet” and “Flix” which is a play on the word “flicks,” which is a colloquial word meaning “movie.”

Types of brand names

There are several common kinds of brand names

Descriptive:

'Gorgeous Cellphone Covers,' General Motors, Toys R Us, E*Trade.

Descriptive brand names convey the kind of product being offered.

- o Pros: Functional. Many shoppers on Amazon.com discover products through search, so a descriptive brand name can help customers understand your product right away when it shows up in search results.
- o Cons: Often less creative.

Evocative:

'Gorgeous Girl,' Amazon, Virgin, Sprite, Bling.

An evocative brand name suggests an emotion, experience, or positioning of a brand. For example, Amazon takes its name from a large South American river, which suggests something large or deep.

- o Pros: Easier to differentiate from other brands.
- o Cons: Difficult to do. Creating an effective evocative name is often culturally-specific and is best done by someone with deep cultural understanding of the target customer base.

Invented:

'Gorbo,' Kodak, Xerox, Exxon.

An invented brand name is a made-up word, often made up of a combination of other words and different language root words.

- o Pros: Creative, distinct, easier to trademark.
- o Cons: Requires more work to establish the meaning of the brand through advertising and promotion.

Lexical:

'Gorge-Cell,' Dunkin' Donuts, Krazy Glue, Daily-Vita.

Lexical names involve clever wordplay, including compound words, intentional misspellings, and alliteration.

- o Pros: Good lexical names can be memorable and likable
- o Cons: Bad lexical names can evoke a strong negative response from customers as being salesy or cheesy.

Types

of brand names (cont.)

Initialism:

'GCC,' IBM, KFC, DHL.

Initialisms are an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words and read letter-by-letter. For example, 'KFC' is the initialism of 'Kentucky Fried Chicken' and is pronounced "K, F, C."

- o Pros: Simple and easy to say.
- o Cons: Tend to be unmemorable and difficult to trademark.

Geographic:

'New York Cellphone Covers,' California Pizza Kitchen, Shanghai Dumplings, Miami Sunglasses.

- o Pros: Geographic names reference historical and cultural associations of a place that customers may then associate with the brand.
- o Cons: Depending on the place, the name may limit the relevance of the brand.

Person's Name:

'Jane Smith's'

These can be either the founder's name like Ford, McDonald's, Kellogg's, or a randomly chosen name like Warby Parker, Frank & Oak.

- o Pros: Using your own or another name to brand your product may make it distinct.
- o Cons: It may not be very meaningful to customers.

How

to create a good brand name

Here are some tips for creating a brand name that supports your business goals:

1. Hire an expert:

Consider consulting a brand agency or third party provider when creating a brand and branded content.

2. Understand your target audience:

Get input through surveys or reviews. Some questions to consider are, why do they use your product, what emotions or goals does your product help them to realize. Additionally, make sure you understand the cultural norms of your audience to avoid creating an offensive brand name.

3. Create a prioritized list of criteria:

List out the qualities that you want for your brand name. For example, some qualities might be that you want the name to be memorable, short, easy to say in different languages, descriptive. Prioritize the qualities.

4. Generate a list of potential names and evaluate them:

Brainstorm. Don't limit yourself at this stage. Be creative! Ask friends and family for advice. Research brand names in your category and how they appear to resonate with target customers.

How

to create a good brand name (cont.)

5. Test with your target audience:

Create a list of your three to five top names and share them with customers and ask for their feedback. Do any of the names elicit strongly negative responses? If so, eliminate those names.

6. Decide:

Choose the name that best seems like it is going to get the best response from your customers to align with your business goals and brand vision.

7. Protect your name:

Register your brand with Amazon Brand Registry program. We also recommend that you copyright or trademark your brand name in the United States and other geographic regions where you want to sell your products.

Tip

We do not recommend asking your audience to rank or suggest names for you. Limit your questions to general product questions like “What emotions or words come to mind when you think of my product?” or reactions like “What comes to mind when you hear the following potential names for my company?”

How

to avoid creating a bad brand name

Creating a good brand name is difficult and requires time, expense, and effort but it is worth it. A brand name that does not resonate with customers, or worse, offends them, can damage your company or product's success. Here are a few common mistakes to avoid:

- **Impolite or culturally inappropriate names:** Make sure you understand all the cultural meanings of the name you select for the markets you plan to sell in.
- **Out-dated:** Product categories that are more fashion and trend-driven like shoes and apparel often feature creative and evocative brand names. But creating such a name without deep cultural understanding or professional branding expertise is less likely to be 'cool' in US customer's minds and thus less effective.
- **Literal translation of foreign names:** Brand names are highly culturally-specific. Translating a company or product name directly from one language to another (e.g.: Japanese to English), is unlikely to have the same meaning or effectiveness as for its original language and audience.

Creating a Brand

Keep these strategies and best practices in mind.

Any opportunity you have to mention your brand name is a marketing opportunity. Placing your brand name in front of customers in different places can increase the likelihood of them recalling your brand, and can help distinguish your products from others. This can accelerate your journey towards becoming a trusted household brand name.

Once you have determined your brand name, there are many places you should consider putting your brand when selling on Amazon, including:

- Amazon detail pages
- Product labels
- Product tags
- Packing slip
- Packaging

Hot Chocolate Designs, a shoe seller based in Venezuela, sells its shoes on Amazon.com in a unique chocolate milk carton-themed shoebox which further differentiates its product while embodying the company's brand themes of bright color and fun.

