

NEW NAMES PROLIFERATE, SO DO-IT-YOURSELF NAMING GUIDE DEBUTES TO SPEED PROCESS

150,000 new names were registered at the US Patent & Trademark Office in the past 4 years. That's double the number registered in the 4 years before that. More than 4,000 established companies have changed their names in that same period, reports The Salinon Corp. To assist those wrestling with the naming process, Salinon has prepared a Naming Guide.

Checklist instructs: 1) get basic info -- describe what you're naming, summarize what you'd like the name to accomplish, to whom are you appealing, list names you like, dislike & competitors names, identify the type of name you want; 2) build your name-part & synonym list -- Guide includes list of generic roots & words; 3) manipulate & re-combine the parts till you come up with 3 or more good names; 4) verify name availability & 5) test the name -- check for off-color meanings too.

Guide illustrates the process with an example. Also covers trademarking considerations, where to go for more information, bibliography of naming sources, list of naming terms. (Free from Salinon, 7430 Greenville Ave, Dallas 75231; 214/692-9091)

5 TOUGHEST QUESTIONS FROM MEDIA ARE AMAZINGLY SIMPLE ONES

Facing a media interview? Be ready to answer each of these 5 questions in 60 to 120 words, advises Jim Lukaszewski of Chester Burger Co (NYC): 1) What does your organization do? 2) What do you do in the organization? (So your mother or brother can understand.) 3) Where does your org'n fit into your industry? 4) What does your org'n give back to the community? 5) What is your org'n doing to advance women & minorities?

"If you can't answer these simple questions, you are not fully prepared for media interviews. And if you're not ready to tell your organization's story, don't expect the media to do that job for you the way you would like to see it done."

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

AWARDS. Jim Haynes (Jim Haynes Communications, Austin) receives Texas PR Assn's Golden Spur Award for his outstanding contribution to TPRA & the profession...M. Fredric Volkman (Washington Univ, St. Louis) wins Council for Advancement & Support of Education's Ashmore Service Award for his distinguished service to the profession & CASE.

INDICTED. Mike Deaver, on charges of illegally using influence from his star White House pr days to benefit clients of his new firm. Some claim trouble began when his pic appeared on Time's cover for a story about high-priced lobbyists. Apparent moral: it's ok to do it as long as you don't get publicity for it.

"Those hard-to-spell, hard-to-pronounce corporate monikers that are in such vogue today are lexicographic travesties. They can't endow a company with qualities that are not there in the first place," says John Budd, Emhart's vp corp comms. Instead of changing its name, Emhart is redesigning its "corporate plumage" for a more contemporary look. "Nothing is sacred -- except the name. Besides, we operate in 30 countries. I hate to think of the legal, patent & language searches needed to make sure any coined name is acceptable everywhere."

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ANYONE WHO WONDERS WHETHER PUBLIC RELATIONS PHILOSOPHY PAYS OFF NEED ONLY READ JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S CENTENNIAL HISTORY: PATHBREAKING POLICIES AND 11.6% COMPOUNDED ANNUAL GROWTH FOR 100 YEARS!

For its handling of the two Tylenol crises, J&J is universally praised. Now vp-pr Larry Foster's "A Company That Cares" shows how the corporate philosophy that overcame those stunning blows has been working in equally striking fashion for decades. This case study demonstrates the perpetual value of building public relationships:

1. Improving human relationships in the workplace. When poor working conditions & wages were the rule, J&J in 1906 began offering a variety of employee benefits. Creative problem-solving was the approach, so that a French chef was hired to prepare a midnight meal for the third shift in order to make working those hours more acceptable. During the Depression, ways were found to spread worktime & wage cuts across the employee & managerial force -- so no jobs were lost!
2. Using buildings as internal & external pr tools. In a day when factories were generally ugly, unsafe & built for expedience, CEO Robert Wood Johnson began a "factories can be beautiful" campaign. What prompted him were the poor conditions he noted in some workplaces. Other companies thought him crazy -- but J&J reaped better production as well as employee & community accolades. The buildings cost more but in the long run were far less expensive because of these indirect benefits.
3. Avoiding micromanagement thru decentralization is another way J&J respects the dignity of managers & workers. Each of its 55 companies has its own identity, name & mission -- even tho spread across 160 countries & 77,000 employees. What links them is concentration in a single industry, healthcare, and the J&J policy umbrella.
4. Publishing educational materials, not just promos, built the business. "Modern Methods of Antiseptic Wound Treatment" (1888), with suggestions by "eminent surgeons," was a scientific document and a sales catalog. The magazine "Red Cross Messenger" (that symbol has been used by J&J since 1895 by contract with the Red Cross) united pharmacists behind the idea they were "educators who rank with the clergyman, the teacher & the physician." There were many others.
5. Such enlightened self-interest led J&J to donate quantities of medical supplies to disaster areas, beginning with the Galveston hurricane (1900) and

"We do not think of corporations as being caring, but they can be. They can also reflect many of the other emotions we reserve for people, which is not so surprising, for in a larger sense corporations are a collection of people who work together."

-- from Foster's Introduction



San Francisco earthquake (1906). Dealer invoices under \$100 -- a lot of money then -- were cancelled & the company replaced free any damaged supplies (a la Tylenol).

6. These & other pathfinding actions culminated in the now-famous Credo of 1943. In an early version, R.W. Johnson said: "Industry only has the right to succeed where it performs a real economic service and is a true social asset. Such permanent (sec) success is possible only thru the application of an industrial philosophy of enlightened self-interest." This means realizing that "service to customers comes first, service to employees & management second, and service to stockholders last." Later service to community was added as the third responsibility.

"Institutions, both public & private, exist because the people want them, believe in them, or at least are willing to tolerate them. The day has passed when business was a private matter -- if it ever really was. In a business society, every act of business has social consequences & may arouse public interest. Every time business hires, builds, sells or buys, it is acting for the people as well as for itself, and it must be prepared to accept full responsibility for its acts."

-- Robert Wood Johnson  
in the 1940s

The strategy seems to have been one of taking the lead -- by thinking first of the company's publics.

This has built trust & gained prominence. But most of all it demonstrates that putting the needs & values of stakeholders first turns out to be hard-headed pragmatism. Public relations is not "soft."

WHY DID J&J PUBLISH 176-PG ILLUSTRATED HISTORY?  
"PROUD EMPLOYEES ARE HAPPIER EMPLOYEES"

"And you can make a case where a happier employee is more productive," Larry Foster told prr.

The project's goals were to 1) stimulate pride as well as 2) honor the company's 100th anniversary.

"We have a very distinguished history which many of our employees don't know about. We were a very close part of the growth & expansion of medical science. So we wanted to instill a sense of pride. To show them how much of a role they continue to play in the growth of medicine."

Book also 3) unifies a diversified company. With 160 affiliates worldwide -- some recently added -- many employees had no knowledge of J&J's history. "The book was especially well received by these employees who were trying to blend into the company."

STORY LINE parallels J&J's advance with the march of medicine. Bringing in other historical events fits the company's progress into a broader social picture. Historical photos, ads & newspaper clippings visualize that feeling.

DISTRIBUTION to employees, retirees & friends was handled by the affiliates. Some placed them on employees' desks. Some mailed them. Some tucked coupons in pay envelopes that could be redeemed for a copy. All books were personalized with a cover note signed by both the chrm & president.

RESULTS. Foster, as author, has received hundreds of letters from employees & retirees saying how happy they are to receive the book.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDER WITH IMPORTANT PUBLIC:  
"GATEKEEPER PROGRAM" TRAINS CONTACT EMPLOYEES  
TO RECOGNIZE DISTRESS SIGNS IN OLDER PERSONS

"It's a great device -- low cost, training can be conducted in an hour at minimum (tho we recommend more), can be a cost savings,

builds morale among employees & relationships with customers," Theresa Lambert, dir of development, National Ass'n of State Units on Aging, told prr. 40 org's have initiated programs.

Began as a demonstration project of the Washington State Office on Aging. Grew to a partnership with Puget Sound Power & Light. PSP&L trains its meter readers & others who have contact with customers to recognize when an older person needs help. Local agency on aging is then notified and connects the older person with the services needed. 4 yrs into the program, PSP&L employees now refer 100 older people per month to appropriate community services.

"PSP&L was getting about 35 older-customer payment problems per month that employees identified. These have been reduced to 0. That's a cost savings to the company."

Training package is now available for other organizations to get involved. Cost is \$125 for 1) video, 2) instructor's manual, 3) how-to info on putting program together, 4) set of camera-ready slicks for printing checklist of signs that indicate an older person needs help, with space for plugging in the local agency on aging's phone number.

Video "is a sensitization film. It touches the heart." It's about 2 older women, very good friends, widowed & a support to each other. One breaks her leg and goes to recuperate at her son's. While she's gone, the other woman gets into a crisis situation -- has problems with the bank that's managing her money, loses her hearing aid & can't hear, etc. A public contact person comes to her home, realizes there's a problem and connects her with a senior services agency.

For employees it's a morale booster. Some of PSP&L's were so concerned for the older customers they were in contact with, they paid their bills out of their own pockets. "By connecting the older customers with aging services, employees felt better and didn't need to pay because other services were available." (More info from NASUA, 600 Maryland Ave SW, Ste.208, Wash DC 20024; 202/484-7182)

NEW SITCOM PREMIERING APRIL 1 IS ABOUT  
"PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN WITH AN IMAGE PROBLEM"

Name is "Take Five." George Segal stars. First installment Wed, April 1, at 8:30pm on CBS.

In the show, Segal's wife leaves him after 21 years. Because he'd been working for his wife's father, he is also out a job. He ends up working for the public relations firm Max Daves & Son where he is the scapegoat -- getting none of the credit and all of the blame.

Show is chiefly about Segal and the people he interacts with -- his boss, psychiatrist and friends. But he will inevitably toss off some lines about public relations, to its credit or its denigration. Hope they had a technical adviser from the profession.

Maybe it won't matter. "Dynasty" starts at 9 o'clock on ABC and some say every-one turns to that network early so as not to miss anything.