

The Stories Behind the World's Biggest Brands

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **biography** Noun /baɪˈɒɡ.rə.fi/ an account of someone's life written by someone else
Example: Reading the biography of Steve Jobs provides great insight into the early days of Silicon Valley.
2. **co-founder** Noun /ˌkəʊˈfaʊn.dər/ a person who helps to establish an organization or company
Example: While one person had the original idea, the co-founder was responsible for the technical development.
3. **inspired** Adjective /ɪnˈspaɪəd/ filled with the urge or ability to do or feel something, especially to do something creative
Example: The artist was inspired by the colors of the sunset to create her most famous painting.
4. **combine** Verb /kəmˈbaɪn/ to join or merge two or more things together to form a single unit
Example: To create the new flavor, the chef decided to combine sweet chocolate with spicy chili.
5. **directory** Noun /daɪˈrek.tər.i/ a book or website listing individuals or organizations alphabetically or by category
Example: Before search engines existed, people used a thick paper directory to find local businesses.
6. **alphabetical** Adjective /ˌæl.fəˈbet.ɪ.kəl/ arranged in the order of the letters of the alphabet
Example: The teacher asked the students to line up in alphabetical order by their last names.



Every great company needs a great name—a name that people remember and that makes customers want to buy its products. But how did the world's biggest and most famous companies get their names? While some names seem like they were created by marketing experts, others have much more personal or even accidental origins.

There have been many different stories about how **Apple** got its name. Some people believe it was named after the Beatles' company, Apple Records, while others suggest it was a way to stand out from companies with more technical-sounding names like IBM. However, in his biography, Steve Jobs explained that the name was inspired by his fruitarian diet. Jobs felt the name sounded "fun" and "spirited" rather than intimidating.

Microsoft founders Bill Gates and Paul G. Allen took a more literal approach. They named their company by combining the words "microcomputer" and "software." At first, they used a hyphen and called it "Micro-Soft" before eventually changing the spelling to the single word we know today. Although they joked about names like "Outcorporated Inc.," they ultimately chose a name that described their core business.

When **Amazon** was founded in the 1990s, the internet was a very different place. Because there were so few websites, many were listed in online directories similar to a phone book. These directories were usually organized in alphabetical order. Founder Jeff Bezos intentionally chose a name starting with "A" so his company would appear at the top of these lists, ensuring it was one of the first things users saw.

Choosing a name is a significant sacrifice of time and energy for any new business owner. A name must create a strong connection with the audience and reflect the brand's well-being and values. Whether inspired by a piece of fruit or a clever linguistic combination, these names have become a necessity in our daily lives, proving that a simple idea can grow into a global empire.

DISCUSSION

1. If you started a company today, what would you name it and why?
2. Do you think the name of a product affects how much you trust the brand?
3. Is it better for a company name to be a real word (like Apple) or a made-up word (like Google)?
4. Does the alphabetical order of businesses still matter in the age of search engines?
5. Can a bad company name cause a business to fail even if the product is good?
6. How many brand names can you think of that have become "everyday" words?
7. Would you ever try a "fruitarian" diet like Steve Jobs?