

# Bare naked brand names

 By [Naseem Javed](#)

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Last century business names were colourfully dressed with uniquely stylized lettering, colourful logos, slogans and contextual support. This century, such 'stylized dependency' has been pushed over the cliff by neo-socio-mobile-media-lingo. They're stripped and typed in black and white text as soundbite-sized 'bare naked words', blending into chat lines alongside abbreviations and numbing-mumbo-jumbo.

The majority of big name brands are losing their luster. Powerful imagery from the old newspaper era of double sized full page ads are replaced by typed words on small portable devices.

Can you identify the high maintenance big brand names on the following social media chats?

*... just checked the wind at the mall, grand service but tag too high...*  
*... I have no option but united, they would know where my real goodies are...*  
*... no matter what, for me prime is the way to go before I try orange or wave...*  
*... and then she gave me a rolex...*

## Distinguishing brand names

Highly distinct brand names like Rolex or Panasonic are identifiable in any typed conversation while diluted names like 'United' 'Premier' 'Orange', 'Wave' 'Wind' disappear in the bursts of text making no sense, causing confusion and least building any distinct name identity. Camouflaged brand names are only going to end up invisible.

Today, the socio-mobile-lingo-depository is the fastest growing and the largest communication pool in the world. Tweeting, Facebooking, MySpacing, YouSmiling, MeWatching, YouListening or LinkedIning, alike have transformed name brands into 'typed lingo'.

The largest majority of the last century names do not fit the next generation digital platforms. If global socio-mobile marketing is mandatory for high level results, names must pass a 'nudity-test': a name must be inserted into an everyday social media conversation and checked to see if it's still identifiable or lost within the text. If it doesn't, it provides instant proof why cash registers aren't ringing and what's killing all the potential sales.

Last century, when names with special styles of lettering appeared in full page ads, there was no need to clarify the meaning or connection of the name with the subject. 'United Furniture' with furniture arranged in shape of the letters, 'United Logistics' stylized with a large cargo ship or 'United Bank' with a monetary symbol and logo to create distinction.

Everybody understood what was what.

Today, with some 250 000 different businesses around the world already using 'United' as a name brand, the typed word has to appear lost in the depths of the English dictionary. The name values and visibility for such style dependent names are dying on upstream and downstream social media.

## Identifiable brand names

In this socio-mobile-marketplace only the very small percentage of highly distinct names has a clear competitive advantage. Microsoft, Rolex and Panasonic are easily identifiable in any sentence, in any format without question.

Corporations are shy to face the nakedness of their own names. When the management of 'United Logistics' sees their name brand, they are so conditioned to first see the stylized logo, the slogan and the whole package, with a globe replacing the 'o' in the 'logistics', a tiny plane forming a circular line arching over the name and bold italic letters telling the fast dynamics of the logistic trade. Now try searching 'united' as an example on social media; it will demonstrate the instant erosion of a branded name identity.

## Names based on dictionary, geographic words

Currently, studies show that the largest majority of business names are based on dictionary or geographic words followed by surnames and acronyms or initials. Less than 1% of business names are distinct and unique. While global ad expenditures are touching \$700 billion, why is this aspect of global naming complexity not on any syllabus at any of the MBA programs in the world? The question remains; what is the reason for this waste, and more importantly, who benefits from it?

## Domain name management

After the massive success of social media, new domain name management platforms will further kindle huge fires up the major global branding and marketing services. A new stage is being set by the International Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and their global top level domain (gTLD) name program, where name-centricity will drive the digital branding explosion.

What should the brand owners do? Strip their business name clean of every support, attachment, and gimmick and assess the risk of them being lost in the crowd of common language. Without a professional name evaluation report the entire marketing and branding budget may be questionable. A distinct name identity is what separates a name from a word; the stripped down identity test will prove this.

## ABOUT NASEEM JAVED

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