

# Naming: project, product or venture

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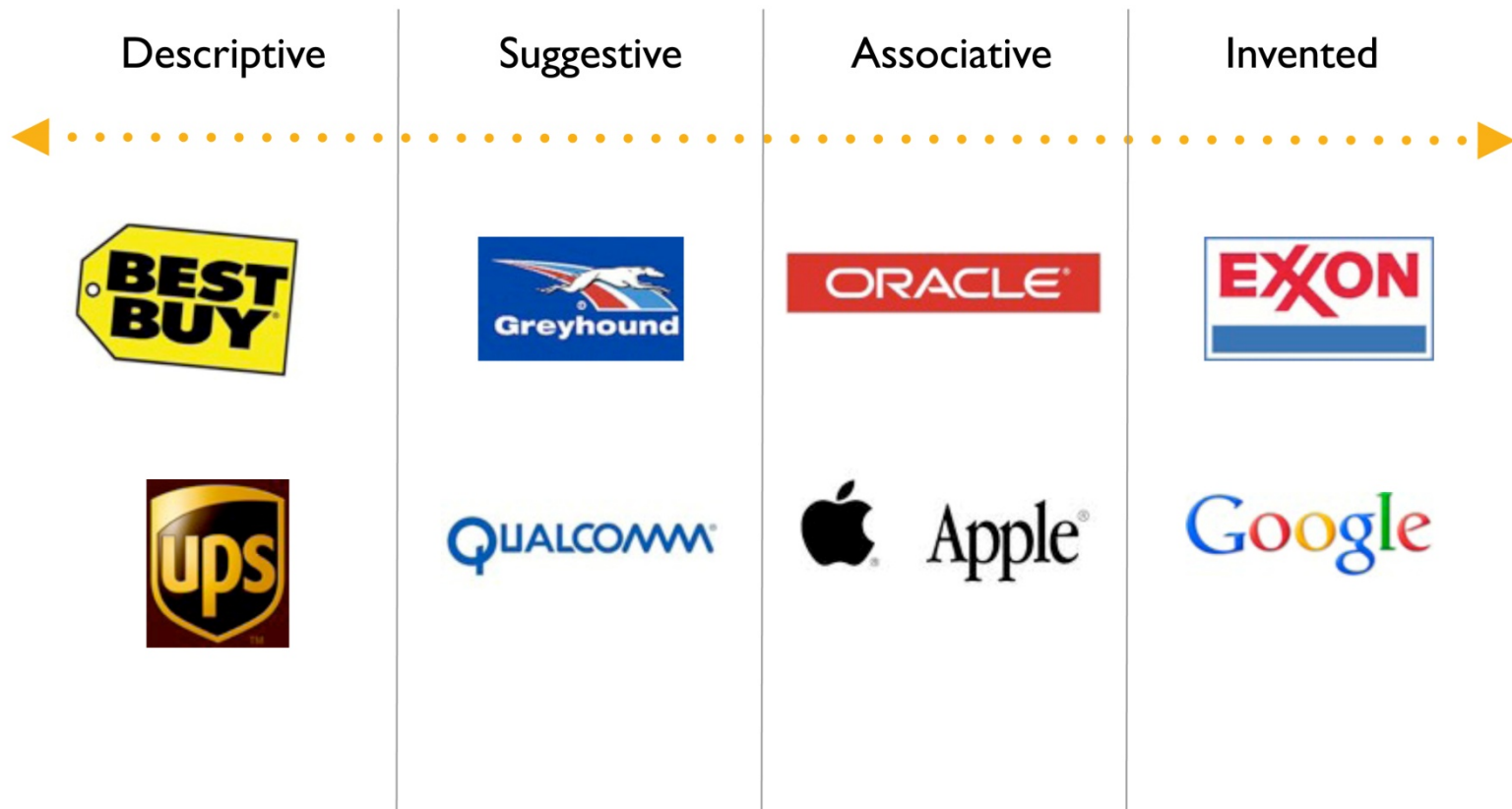
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# Types of Names

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- Types of Names
  - Nonsense words (Exxon, Ebay, Sombli)
  - Real Words (Whole Foods, HotMail, Staples, Amazon)
  - Abbreviations (KPMG, A & W Root Beer, EXOS, Nabisco)
  - Contractions (ToysRus, PetsMart, FedEx, Osram)
  - Sounds like meaning (Zeemote, Z8, Samsonite, Smrtguard)
- Origins
  - Derived from other languages (Nintendo, Daewoo, Lycos)
  - Derived from Mythology (Nike, Lada)
  - Names of inventors (Bose, Adidas, McDonalds)
  - Names of animals, vegetables, minerals, places etc (Apple, Lotus)



# Naming Process

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- Write a description of the product, service, company
- Write words that describe the emotional feeling you want people to have
- Write attributes you want the name to communicate
- List the languages you want to make sure it works in
- Brainstorm
- Rank and categorize
- Select your top 3-5

# Availability

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- Check on <http://www.whois.com/> to see if chosen names are free
- Grab urls of candidates and park them (~\$10/year)
- Search USPTO  
<http://tess2.uspto.gov/bin/gate.exe?f=searchss&state=4007:j251k5.1.1> to see if there are companies using your name or similar names
- Think about possible name confusions
- Pick a name

# Trademark

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- File a TM application early
- Get a consult with a TM counsel
- Do a professional search ~\$600
- Register any service marks you use as well
- Cost approximately \$325 to file
- Set aside lawyer fees to help in getting it issued

# Case Study



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- EXOS
  - Short for exoskeleton
  - Short and memorable
  - Near front of alphabet for lists or trade shows
  - In beginning of company told people what we made
  - Had less relevance later
  - Unfortunately XOS pronounced Xsos means shit in Japanese

# Case Study

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- Playsmrt
- Looking for a name that conveyed product attributes
- Most names were taken as urls and TM—this one was available
- Playsmart is owned by IDG and trademarked for a report
- Trademark will probably stand
- More research needs to be done before product launches
- Product name should probably be different



# Don't wait



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- Just changed the name to Playrific, Inc.
  - Had 25 candidate names
  - Used Survey Monkey with Beta users
  - They picked Playaloo
  - Our UK people didn't like the bathroom reference
  - Had to start again at the last moment
  - Luckily a light bulb went off and people liked it
  - PIA

# Zeemote



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- Original name Zietoo after my daughter Suzie
  - Initial investors couldn't pronounce it
  - Changed name to Zeetoo—got .net url and .com seemed to be able to be bought
  - Many \$1000's later Malaysian company that owned Zeetoo.com refused to sell after initially offering us \$750K to buy our name and TM and accepting an offer of \$10K for us to buy theirs
  - Protracted naming exercise led to adoption of Zeemote (product name for company).

# The origin of Amazon

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- The original name was Cadabra (from abracadabara)
- At the time many websites were listed alphabetically, Amazon starts with an A
- Amazon is the biggest river in the world, and the goal was to make his bookstore the biggest in the world.

# Moral of story

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- Do your homework up front renaming is painful
- Mistakes in naming can cost big bucks later
- Names set the tone for everything that comes next when experiencing your product