It's an investment that takes time and diligence, but understanding the importance of corporate brand handbook: a constant reminder of the potential of brand names to advance brand meaning, and a concrete toolkit for ensuring that every name does so consistently at every touch point.

High-level naming vision

Perhaps the most important aspect of a brand's naming guidelines is a crystalized statement of naming vision, and its supporting proof points. They serve as the basis of articulating and deploying a brand's values, ambitions, and identity in names. While many corporations publish guidelines for the way their brands are named, the absence of specific naming guidelines is the rule, not the exception. As a result, an ad hoc process often ensues, with individual managers to take risks and assert brand-consistent strategies in service of the pre-existing naming architecture.

GUIDELINES

A CALL FOR ORDER

Beyond the values that are suggested by each name, names can abide by structural conventions that enhance or diminish the brand's ability to communicate and achieve its manifestations. It's important to recognize that naming is a strategic activity that requires a high-level vision coupled with tactical execution. Moreover, it's a systemic approach to building a brand through the consistent use of names.

What is our strategy for using naming to advance our brand?

What conventions guide our naming architecture, as well as each individual name within our namescape: name type, tone, format, structure, etc.?

What is the process used to develop and select every name candidate?

Especially with larger brands that have portfolios of names that do little to support one another or a greater brand identity, it becomes essential to have a guiding set of rules. This is precisely why naming-specific guidelines exist within brand architecture, and why they are so valuable in creating a cohesive brand identity.

WHAT IS NAMING?

Whether an entity is a private or public corporation, what is the role of naming in the strategic background of an organization's activities? How does the organization plan to use names to achieve its goals? What are the goals? What are the objectives? How will names support the achievement of these objectives? How will the organization interact with naming agencies to accomplish these goals?

Whose responsibility is it to take the lead in the naming process? How can the organization establish a naming strategy? What are the potential costs and benefits of naming?

NAMING VISION

How the names themselves come to life and work together

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One of the key questions is whether the existing naming strategies work to serve the strategic vision of the organization. If there's a disconnect between the two, it's essential to consider how the organization's strategy can be redefined. Alternatively, the organization may need to redefine the strategy to accommodate existing naming strategies.

So what do these guidelines look like? Recognizing the elements of true guidelines can help brand leaders assess whether work needs to be done to best seize the opportunity.

What does the organization's current naming strategy achieve?

What are the potential costs and benefits of naming?

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