

*What's
the deal
with golf ball names?*



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The Golf Market



The market for golf equipment – balls, clubs, bags, and more – is projected to grow to \$23B by 2032.

Especially for emerging golf markets, growth will likely come most from mid-price performance gear with marketable technological innovations.

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Golf naming conundrums

Golf brands targeting growing markets have to find clever ways to thread a particular branding needle:

- Signaling **accessibility and leisure** on the one hand, while emphasizing **technical prowess and high performance** on the other.
- Product naming amplifies this challenge: you have to find the right balance in just a few letters.

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Take golf balls ...

Balls alone are a substantial portion of the golf market. And not all golf balls are created equal.

Aside from the ultra-cheap, by-the-bucket category, golf balls fit into three major tiers...

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Golf ball tiers

- **Tier 1:** Premium Tour balls, urethane cover, high spin control and shot-shaping for players who know what they're doing.
- **Tier 2:** Mid-Tier Performance, ionomer or hybrid covers – distance and spin but more affordable.
- **Tier 3:** Recreational, more for beginners, low spin but with more durable covers.

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Ball tier naming

So, how do golf brands use **naming** to build effective **strategies** for communicating these tiered golf ball offerings?

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Alphanumeric

Several brands, like **Titleist** and **TaylorMade**, use a pattern with different name types for different tiers:

- Top-tier tour balls get **alphanumeric** names, lower tiers use more approachable **common words**.

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Titleist

TaylorMade®

TIER 1
PREMIUM TOUR

PRO V1X®



TP5x

TIER 2
MID-TIER PERFORMANCE

TOUR SOFT



Tour
Response

TIER 3
RECREATIONAL

TRUFEEL



Distance+

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Why alphanumeric?

Alphanumeric codes were central to early industrial standardization – think Ford’s Model T and Model A.

Especially since the mid-20th century, the public has associated alphanumeric product names with specialization, insider technical knowledge, and performance-driving production.

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Why (not) alphanumeric?

Conversely, brands with a strong alphanumeric naming character have shifted away from it when they needed to appeal to **broader audiences, family markets, or luxury consumers.**

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Why (not) alphanumeric?

See Porsche moving from names like **911**, **944**, and **928** to **Boxster**, **Cayenne**, and **Macan** to open up new brand meanings, and therefore new consumer segments.

There's a whole article about it on the **Naming at Scale** Substack [Check it out here.](#)

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Conversationality

We see a similar pattern with top tier names being a little more “**stiff**” and lower tiers being more “**conversational**” with their naming.

Consider **Snell Golf**’s tour-grade **Prime** series versus the lower tier **Get Sum**.

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**TIER 1
PREMIUM TOUR**



**TIER 3
RECREATIONAL**

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Hard vs. Soft

There's a subtler metaphor at play where Tier 1 balls get "hard" names like **Chrome** and lower tiers go the opposite direction and get touchy-feely names like **Soft Feel**.

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TIER 1
PREMIUM TOUR

Callaway's CHROME TOUR



TIER 3
RECREATIONAL

Srixon's SOFT FEEL

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Where's the growth?

Tier 2, i.e. “mid-price performance gear with marketable technological innovations” is likely to see a lot of growth.

Golf brands will need to emphasize the technical value of Tier 2 over Tier 3 balls while still making them seem accessible.

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What's the white space?

Therefore, names at the Tier 2 level could speak to this segment by finding the *medium ground* of different high vs. low tier name strategies.

They can find and fill in the *naming white space* – name types that aren't yet prevalent in a particular category, and are open for building new category associations to the brand.

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What's the white space?

Maybe that looks like...

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Organic Strength

Words that straddle hard vs. soft by suggesting organic, living strength.



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Softer Alphanumeric

Letters and numbers with intentionally softer, more liquid phonetic (sound) qualities.



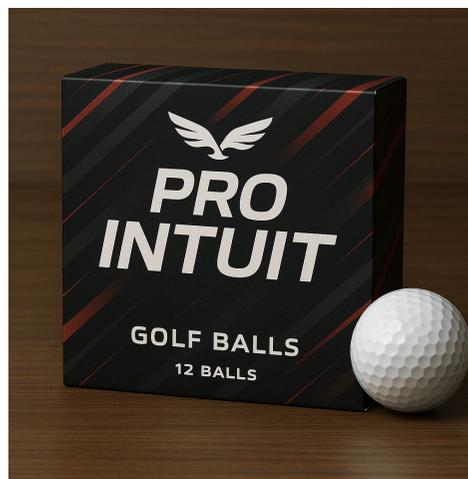
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Intuitive Skill

Instead of left-brained technical precision, aim for more emotive right-brained expressions of power and ability.



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Naming Architecture

REMEMBER!

The best product names don't come from one-off ad hoc problem solves – they come out of a strategic ***naming architecture*** that's lets individual names serve the broader brand strategy.

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Naming Systems

Clear naming architectures also support more fluid decision making processes for **brand owners** and **c-suite decision makers**.

It's easier to make big money moves when you know where you're going!

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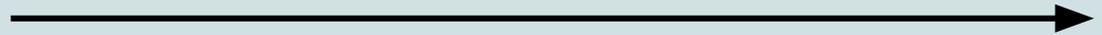


Naming Systems

The Naming Group is **the** naming systems agency.

We've helped some of the world's biggest brands transform their identity and their business through better naming - not just creative words, but powerful systems, architectures, processes, and frameworks that chart a clear path to growth.

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*So, what's the deal
with your business's
naming systems?*

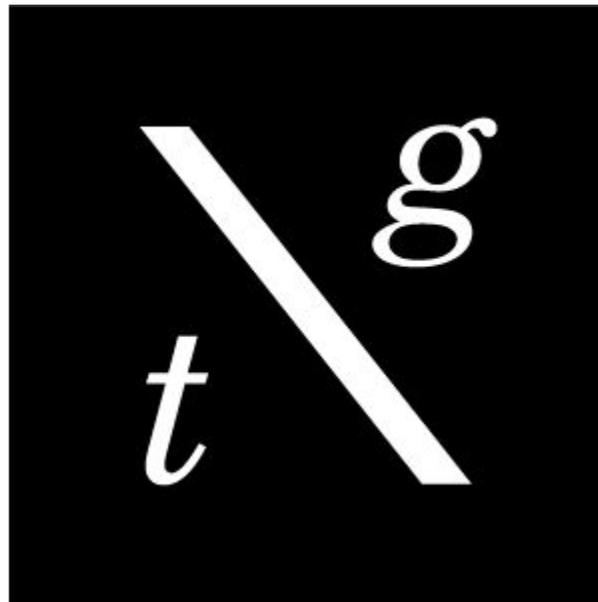
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