

Naming primer

Considerations, tips & three key questions



OVERVIEW

This is a primer we share in the early stages of Bluegreen naming projects (which are typically part of broader branding engagements).

The company's leadership team is asked to look this over individually, then submit answers to the three questions on page 13.

Their responses shape the next step: a facilitated naming workshop, usually ~90 minutes and virtual. That's where the magic happens.

A red Tesla Roadster is shown in space, with the Earth visible in the background. The car is viewed from a low angle, looking up at it. The Earth is a large, blue and white sphere in the upper left corner. The car's interior is visible through the windshield, showing a white astronaut in a space suit sitting in the driver's seat. The car's body is a vibrant red color. The overall scene is set against the blackness of space.

TESLA

COMMUNICATES:

Electric (vs. car)
Smart, scientific
Elegant, stylish
Bold, pioneer

Considerations & Context

What are we naming?

Who is the audience?

What are we communicating?

How will we communicate?

Any other considerations?

Considerations & Context

What are we naming?

- Company, product, service, technology, etc
- Where will the name be used? On a building, in marketing, packaging, URL
- Where does it fit in brand architecture? Standalone brand, endorsed brand, masterbrand



Considerations & Context

Who is the audience?

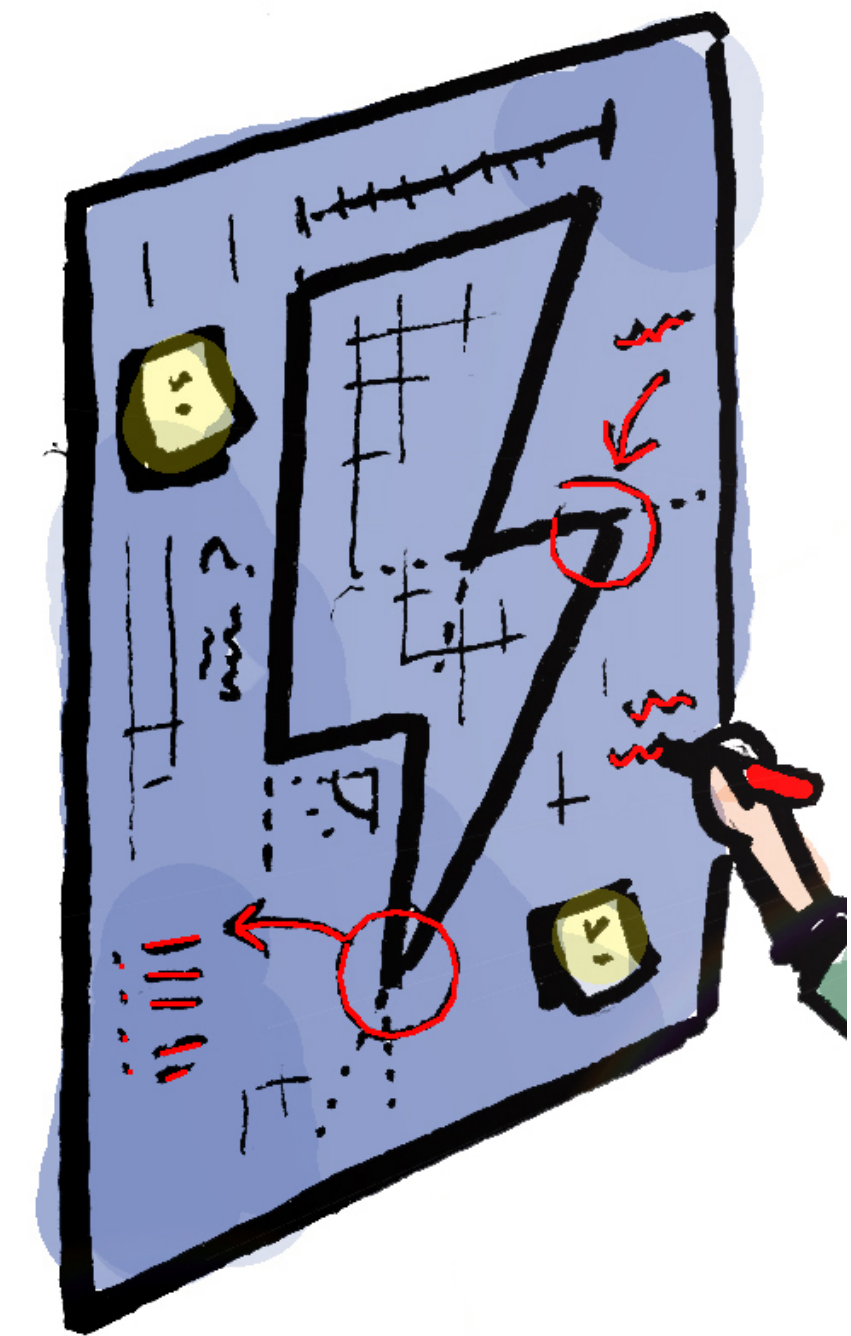
- Basic demographics, esp. age and education
- Occupation? (industry pros or laymen? prospective customers and employees?)
- What do they care about? (psychographics)



Considerations & Context

What are we communicating?

- How is the brand positioned?
- Has messaging been established?
What is the value proposition?
- What other features, benefits, values and themes are relevant?



Considerations & Context

How will we communicate?

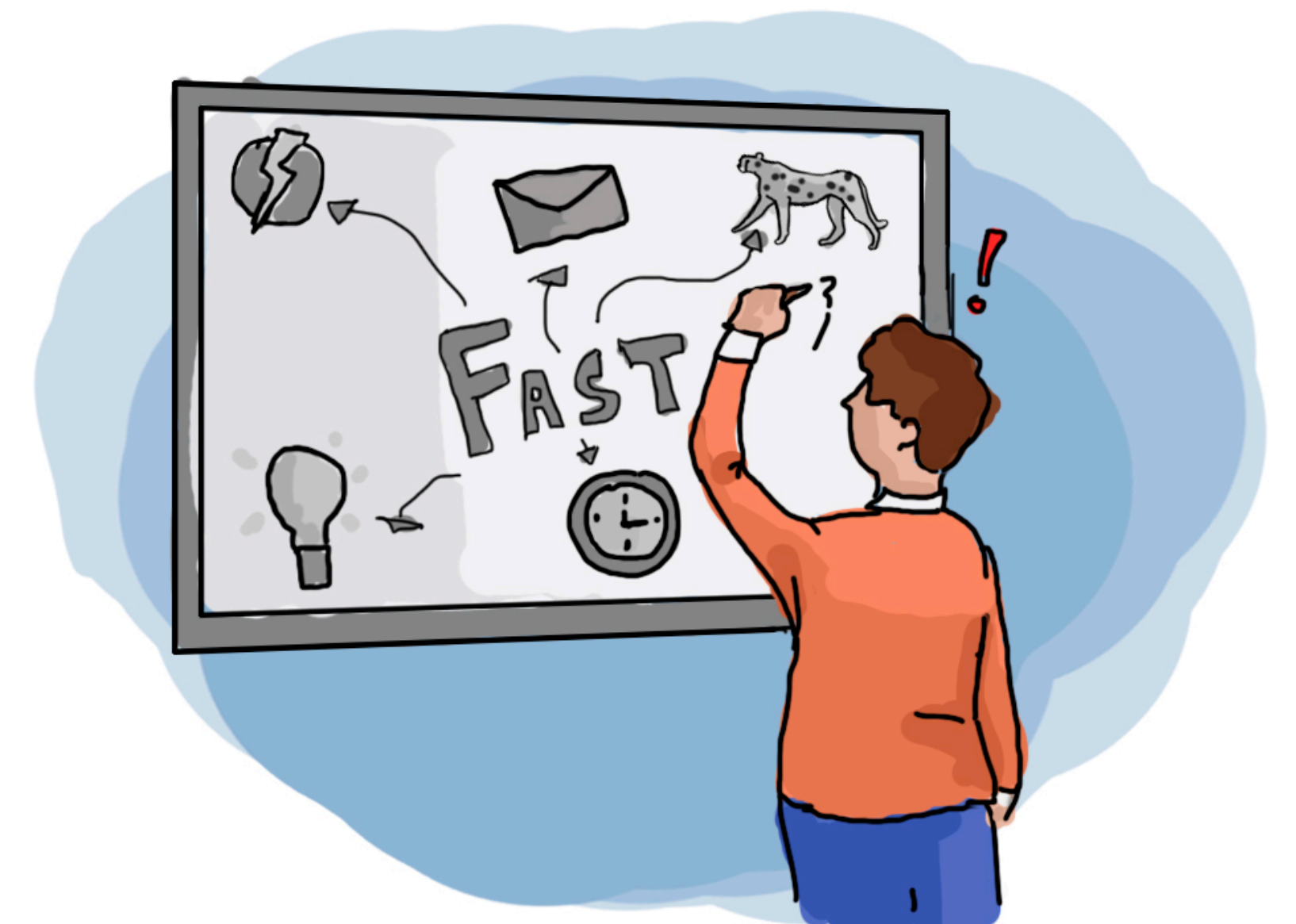
- Brand tone of voice – e.g. technical vs conversational, colorful vs straightforward
- Spectrum: descriptive, associative, abstract? (see page 11)



Considerations & Context

Any other considerations?

- Need for unique URL
- Name extensions (e.g. NewCo Solutions, NewCo Design, NewCo Studios, etc)
- Names already explored, considered, rejected
- Other brand names you like
- Things to stay away from



What's in a (good) name?

DISTINCTIVENESS

Does it stand out from the crowd?

BREVITY

Short enough to use, remember?

APPROPRIATENESS

Does it fit business purpose?
Easy spelling/pronunciation

LIKEABILITY

Does it sound good? Bring nice
imagery to mind?

EXTENDABILITY

Can you use it in different ways?

PROTECTABILITY

Can it be trademarked?
Is the URL available?

Tips from [The Brand Gap](#) by Marty
Neumeier (great branding book)

Naming Strategy

DESCRIPTIVE

ASSOCIATIVE

ABSTRACT

Literally describes benefits or attributes of the brand.

Examples:

5-hour ENERGY • Facebook
E-Trade • Cars.com • 1800Flowers

Pros:

Instant understanding
Explains category

Cons:

May lack distinction
May be limiting

Conveys benefits/persona related to the brand.

Examples:

DuraCell • Google • Tesla
Twitter • Palantir

Pros:

Reinforces key message
More memorable/ownable

Cons:

May require add'l explanation
May lack meaning in other cultures

No literal meaning initially; may gain meaning over time.

Examples:

Kodak • Xerox • Amazon
Apple • Yahoo

Pros:

Unique and distinctive
Few language problems globally

Cons:

Understanding takes time
More investment to promote

Tips & Tricks

- Metaphors and analogies
- History, mythology, geography
- Say the name out loud
- WordMerging
- Unique spellings
- Other languages
- Avoid acronyms
- Avoid plurals, “The” article
- Name after founders/partners (pros and cons)
- Consider name extensions



HOMework

- Would you prefer to explore names that are more descriptive, associative, or abstract? (see page 9 for definitions)
- What are three of your favorite brand names (in any industry) and why?
- If you needed a name extension, what would you go with? (e.g. NewCo Communications, NewCo Solutions, The NewCo Agency)

Please email your responses, along with any other background info, strategy docs and previous naming work, to shachar@bluegreenbranding.com