

Request for Reconsideration after Final Action

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SERIAL NUMBER	87514563
LAW OFFICE ASSIGNED	LAW OFFICE 101
MARK SECTION	
MARK	https://tmng-al.uspto.gov/resting2/api/img/87514563/large
LITERAL ELEMENT	THE BORING COMPANY
STANDARD CHARACTERS	YES
USPTO-GENERATED IMAGE	YES
MARK STATEMENT	The mark consists of standard characters, without claim to any particular font style, size or color.
ARGUMENT(S)	
Please see the actual argument text attached within the Evidence section.	
EVIDENCE SECTION	
EVIDENCE FILE NAME(S)	
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DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE FILE	Please note that Exhibit A to the Lauter Declaration was divided into two parts due to file size limits.
SIGNATURE SECTION	
RESPONSE SIGNATURE	/Judd Lauter/
SIGNATORY'S NAME	Judd Lauter
SIGNATORY'S POSITION	Attorney of Record, CA Bar

SIGNATORY'S PHONE NUMBER	6508435960
DATE SIGNED	11/15/2018
AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY	YES
CONCURRENT APPEAL NOTICE FILED	YES
FILING INFORMATION SECTION	
SUBMIT DATE	Thu Nov 15 21:07:36 EST 2018
TEAS STAMP	USPTO/RFR-XXX.XXX.XXX.XX- 20181115210736397879-8751 4563-6105ff8c072ad8858a39 aafa0733a16464862ad8e9d33 3329fb13e4169e555419ec-N/ A-N/A-2018111520533558569 9

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Request for Reconsideration after Final Action

To the Commissioner for Trademarks:

Application serial no. **87514563** THE BORING COMPANY(Standard Characters, see <https://tmng-al.uspto.gov/resting2/api/img/87514563/large>) has been amended as follows:

ARGUMENT(S)

In response to the substantive refusal(s), please note the following:

Please see the actual argument text attached within the Evidence section.

EVIDENCE

Evidence in the nature of Please note that Exhibit A to the Lauter Declaration was divided into two parts due to file size limits. has been attached.

Original PDF file:

[evi_17322717410-20181115205335585699_.OA_Response_re_THE_BORING_COMPANY_Classes_37_39_.pdf](#)

Converted PDF file(s) (5 pages)

[Evidence-1](#)

[Evidence-2](#)

[Evidence-3](#)

[Evidence-4](#)

[Evidence-5](#)

Original PDF file:

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Converted PDF file(s) (2 pages)

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Original PDF file:

[evi_17322717410-20181115205335585699 . Declaration of Steve Davis.pdf](#)

Converted PDF file(s) (2 pages)

[Evidence-1](#)
[Evidence-2](#)

SIGNATURE(S)

Request for Reconsideration Signature

Signature: /Judd Lauter/ Date: 11/15/2018

Signatory's Name: Judd Lauter

Signatory's Position: Attorney of Record, CA Bar

Signatory's Phone Number: 6508435960

The signatory has confirmed that he/she is an attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of a U.S. state, which includes the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other federal territories and possessions; and he/she is currently the owner's/holder's attorney or an associate thereof; and to the best of his/her knowledge, if prior to his/her appointment another U.S. attorney or a Canadian attorney/agent not currently associated with his/her company/firm previously represented the owner/holder in this matter: (1) the owner/holder has filed or is concurrently filing a signed revocation of or substitute power of attorney with the USPTO; (2) the USPTO has granted the request of the prior representative to withdraw; (3) the owner/holder has filed a power of attorney appointing him/her in this matter; or (4) the owner's/holder's appointed U.S. attorney or Canadian attorney/agent has filed a power of attorney appointing him/her as an associate attorney in this matter.

The applicant is filing a Notice of Appeal in conjunction with this Request for Reconsideration.

Serial Number: 87514563

Internet Transmission Date: Thu Nov 15 21:07:36 EST 2018

TEAS Stamp: USPTO/RFR-XXX.XXX.XXX.XX-201811152107363

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In Re the Application of:)	
)	
Applicant:)	The Boring Company
)	
Mark:)	THE BORING COMPANY
)	
Serial No.:)	87/514,563
)	Trademark Law Office: 101
Class:)	37, 39
)	Examiner: Barbara Rutland
Filed:)	July 3, 2017
)	
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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

In response to the Final Office Action issued on May 15, 2018 in connection with the above-captioned application (the “Application”) for the trademark THE BORING COMPANY (“Applicant’s Mark”), Applicant, by and through counsel, submits this request for reconsideration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 2.63(b)(3) (*see also* Section 715.03 of the Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure). Applicant notes that, pursuant to the applicable rules, it is filing a Notice of Appeal to the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board concurrently with this request in order to preserve its right to appeal the Examining Attorney’s refusal of the Application.

The Examining Attorney has concluded that Applicant’s Mark is merely descriptive and thus is not entitled to registration on the Principal Register absent a showing of acquired distinctiveness. In particular, the Examining Attorney did not find persuasive Applicant’s argument that Applicant’s Mark is a double entendre because “applicant has failed to proffer

evidence” of the same. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examining Attorney reconsider her position based on the arguments and materials submitted herewith.

I. Applicant’s Mark is a double entendre, and is therefore a suggestive mark.

A mark that connotes two meanings is not merely descriptive, so long as one of the meanings is not merely descriptive. 2 McCarthy on Trademarks and Unfair Competition § 11:19 (4th ed.); TMEP § 1213.05(c). The multiple interpretations that make such an expression a "double entendre" must be associations that the public would make fairly readily, and must be readily apparent from the mark itself. *See e.g., In re Tea and Sympathy, Inc.*, 88 U.S.P.Q.2d 1062, 2008 WL 2515086 (T.T.A.B. 2008) (THE FARMACY for stores services selling natural herbs is not merely descriptive because it is a double entendre play on “the pharmacy” and “the farm.”); *In re Colonial Stores, Inc.*, 394 F.2d 549, 157 U.S.P.Q. 382 (C.C.P.A. 1968) (holding that SUGAR & SPICE for bakery products not only suggests ingredients, but stimulates an association with the nursery rhyme “Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice. ...”). *See also In re National Tea Co.*, 144 U.S.P.Q. 286, 1965 WL 7345 (T.T.A.B. 1965) (NO BONES ABOUT IT was not descriptive of fresh pre-cooked ham, noting the “double connotation.”).

In *Institut National des Appellations d’Origine des Vins et Eaux-de-Vie v. Vintners International Co.*, the Board concluded that the mark "CHABLIS WITH A TWIST" for a citrus-flavored wine was a double entendre and therefore inherently distinctive. Opp. No. 81,742 (T.T.A.B. Mar. 19, 1991), *aff’d without consideration of the point*, 958 F.2d 1574 (Fed. Cir. 1992). Among other reasons, the mark was opposed on the ground that it was merely descriptive because "with a twist" simply denoted a beverage containing flavoring from a strip of citrus peel. *Id.* The Board, however, rejected the opposer's contention. It found that the phrase "with a twist" was susceptible to the interpretation placed on it by the opposer, but could be construed also to suggest that the product had unspecified attributes that were "unusual, unexpected or unique." *Id.*

The Board held that "[t]he double entendre created by this situation... removes this term from the category of merely descriptive words and shifts it clearly into the area of suggestive marks." *Id.*

Applicant's Mark is no less a double entendre than the marks CHABLIS WITH A TWIST, FARMACY, SUGAR & SPICE, and NO BONES ABOUT IT. Applicant's Mark simultaneously conveys two meanings as applied to Applicant's offerings—one of which is not descriptive: (1) certain of Applicant's services relate to the digging of tunnels (*i.e.*, "boring"); and (2) the often times mundane or dull nature of such services. Applicant's use of the definite article "the" serves to emphasize the double entendre, suggesting that Applicant is a singularly boring endeavor. Applicant's Mark is thus both an expression of what Applicant does, and commentary on the same. In a world where companies typically seek imaginative and laudatory marks, Applicant does the opposite by literally referring to itself as "boring."

One would not expect this overt incongruity to be lost on consumers, and it is not. Indeed the dual meaning of Applicant's Mark is often one of the first things that individuals notice about Applicant, as evidenced by the countless articles, blog posts, and social media comments acknowledging the mark's multiple meanings. A sampling of such materials is included herewith. (*See* Declaration of Judd Lauter ("Lauter Decl."), Ex. A.) For example, in an article dated January 9, 2018, Fast Company identified Applicant's Mark as one of the best company names adopted in 2017, describing it as "a beautiful double entendre, that grabs the listener." (Lauter Decl., Ex. A, pg. 5.) Other prominent publications have described Applicant as "cheekily named," (The Guardian, *Id.* pg. 40), and "cleverly named" (Fortune Magazine, *Id.* pg. 53), while PC Magazine exclaimed, "[w]e will never get sick of using the pun in the name of The Boring Company." (*Id.*, pg. 26.) These third-party comments were made without Applicant ever needing to explain the significance of Applicant's Mark.

The evidence makes clear that the public readily comprehends both meanings of Applicant's Mark, and that the mark is inherently distinctive. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examining Attorney withdraw the 2(e)(1) refusal.

II. Alternatively, Applicant's Mark cannot be descriptive of services unrelated to tunnel boring.

In the alternative, and should the Examining Attorney maintain that Applicant's Mark does not function as a double entendre, Applicant requests the deletion of Class 37. The remaining services covered by the Application, namely, transportation services in Class 39, do not concern boring or digging of tunnels. Therefore, Applicant's Mark cannot be descriptive of such services.

The primary test for determining a mark's descriptiveness is whether it immediately conveys to consumers nothing more than a feature, characteristic or the nature of Applicant's goods, or whether consumers must use "imagination, thought or perception" to draw that conclusion. *See J.S. Paluch Co. v. Irwin*, 215 U.S.P.Q. 533, 536 (T.T.A.B. 1982). The Board has made it clear that in order for a mark to be considered merely descriptive, the mark must describe the goods or services with "**particularity.**" *See In re Bright-Crest Ltd.*, 204 U.S.P.Q. 591, 593 (T.T.A.B. 1979) (emphasis added); *see also In re TMS Corp. of the Americas*, 200 U.S.P.Q. 57, 59 (T.T.A.B. 1978) (THE MONEY STORE held registrable for financial services wherein funds are transferred to and from a savings account from locations remote from the associated financial institution); *Airco, Inc. v. Air Prods. & Chems., Inc.*, 196 U.S.P.Q. 832, 835 (T.T.A.B. 1977) (AIR-CARE held registrable for applicant's preventive maintenance services directed to a scheduled maintenance program for hospital and medical anesthesia and inhalation therapy equipment); *In re Silva Mind Control Int'l, Inc.*, 173 U.S.P.Q. 564 (T.T.A.B. 1972) (MIND CONTROL held registrable for lectures and lecture-type educational programs of a scientific and philosophical character designed for achieving mental acuity and other powers).

The Examining Attorney asserts that Applicant’s “transportation services will feature boring.” Respectfully, the Examining Attorney is mistaken. Applicant’s construction services involve the digging of tunnels, or “boring”; but Applicant’s transportation services do not. (Declaration of Steve Davis (“Davis Decl.”), ¶ 3.) The provision of “a private transit-way for others” and “private underground tunnels for vehicle travel” do not relate to boring. (*Id.*) The fact that the tunnels used by Applicant for transportation services may have been “bored” during construction, cannot render Applicant’s Mark descriptive any more than the words “STEEL” or “GLASS” would be inherently descriptive of services rendered in buildings constructed with those materials. Any connection between the activity of boring and Applicant’s transportation services is far too attenuated for consumers to readily connect a meaning of Applicant’s Mark with such offerings. Accordingly, Applicant’s Mark, as applied to the remaining services covered by the Application, is not descriptive.

* * *

With the foregoing response, Applicant believes that it has fully addressed all of the issues raised in the Final Office Action, and that the Application is in condition for publication. Favorable action is hereby requested.

Date: November 15, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

COOLEY LLP

/Judd D. Lauter/

Brendan J. Hughes

Judd D. Lauter

COOLEY LLP

1299 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20004

Tel: (202) 842-7800

Email: trademarks@cooley.com

Counsel for Applicant The Boring Company

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In Re the Application of:)
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Applicant: The Boring Company)
)
Mark: THE BORING COMPANY)
)
Serial No.: 87/514,563) Trademark Law Office: 101
)
Class: 37, 39) Examiner: Barbara Rutland
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Filed: July 3, 2017)
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In Re the Application of:)
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Applicant: The Boring Company)
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Mark: THE BORING COMPANY)
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Serial No.: 87/542,474) Trademark Law Office: 101
)
Class: 42) Examiner: Barbara Rutland
)
Filed: July 25, 2017)
)
_____)

DECLARATION OF JUDD LAUTER

1. I am an associate with the law firm Cooley LLP, counsel for Applicant The Boring Company (“Applicant”). I have personal knowledge of the facts contained in this declaration in support of Applicant’s Office Action response for the above-captioned mark (“Applicant’s Mark”), which is submitted herewith.

2. Attached hereto as Exhibit A are true and correct copies and/or screenshots of articles, blog posts, and social media comments collected by me or at my direction between November 1,

2018 and November 15, 2018. These materials reflect that the public perceives Applicant's Mark as a double entendre. I have added highlighting in yellow on some of these materials in order to make the relevant sections easier to find.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

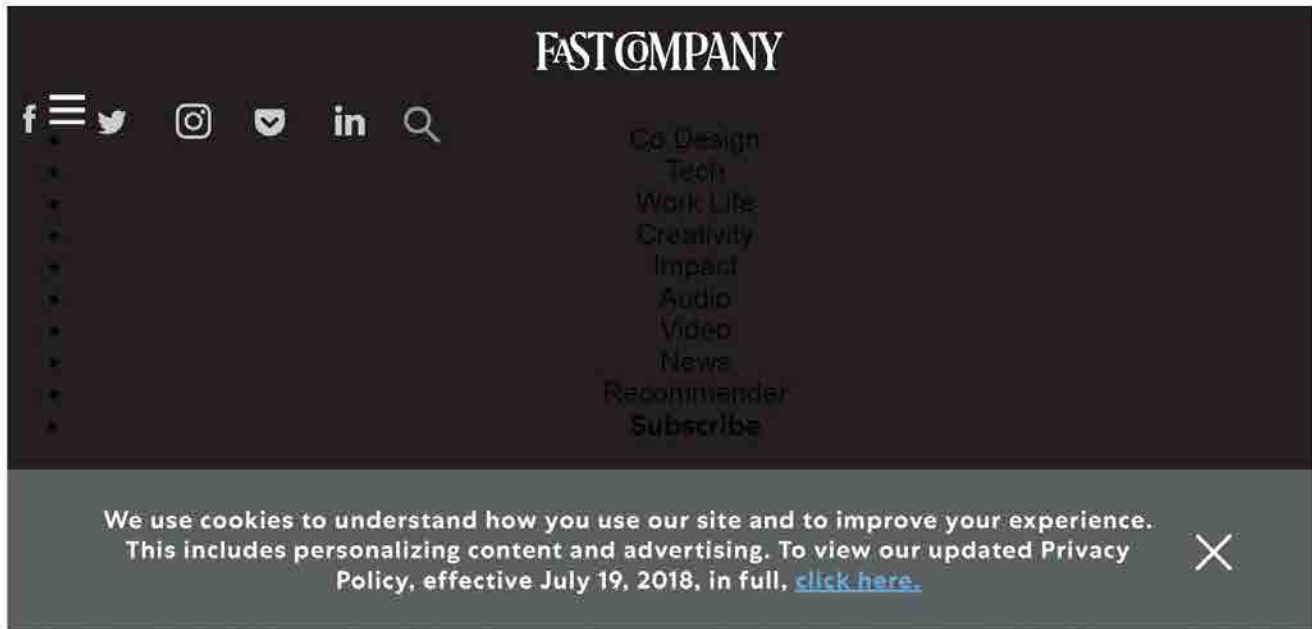
Executed this 15th day of November, in Palo Alto, California.

By:

/Judd Lauter/

Judd Lauter
Cooley LLP
3175 Hanover Street
Palo Alto, California 94304
(650) 843-5960
jlauter@cooley.com

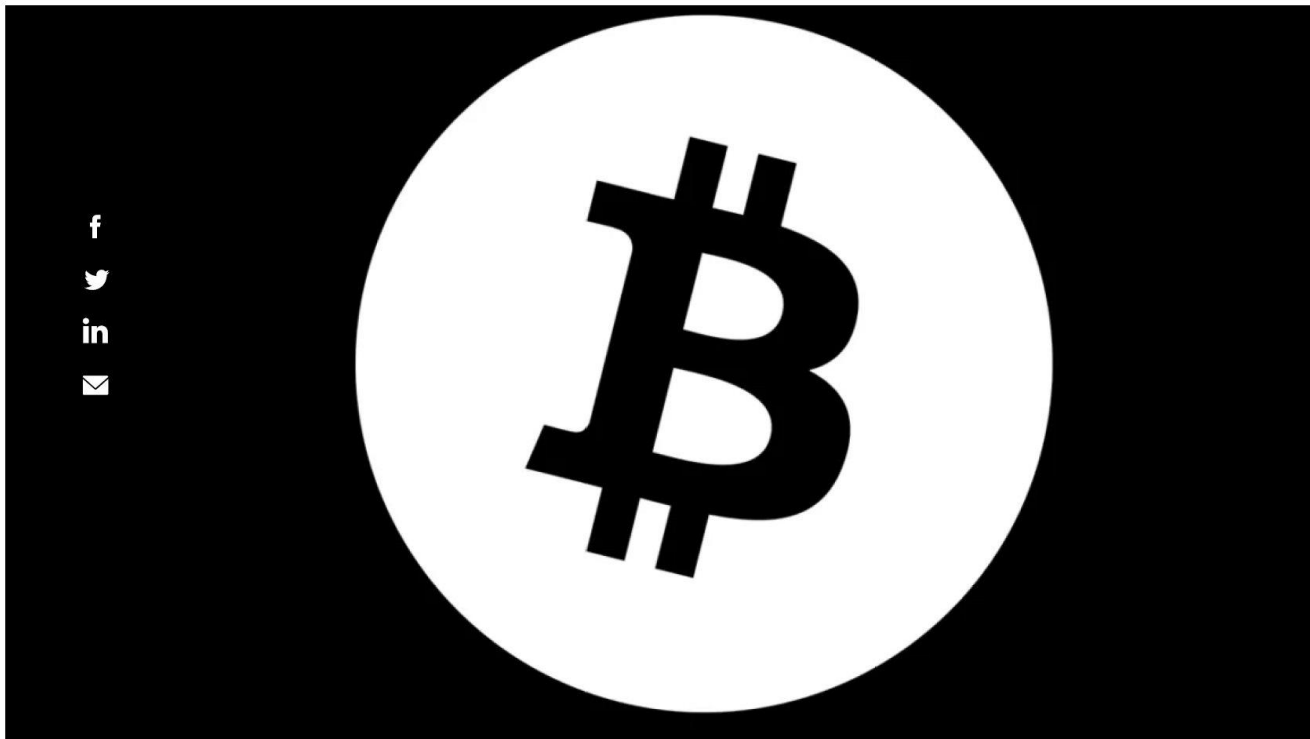
EXHIBIT A
TO LAUTER DECLARATION



01.09.18

2017's Best and Worst Brand Names—And 3 Naming Trends For 2018

Naming a brand is one of the most important things a company does, yet many people just go with what “feels good.” Here’s who got it right in 2017, and who got it very, very wrong (looking at you, Amazon).



BY WILLEM VAN LANCKER AND GREG LEPPERT
9 MINUTE READ

When naming is done well—be it for a business, a band, a product, or anything—it paves the way for a good impression, enticing the listener or reader to come in closer. But when naming goes wrong, as it did for some companies in 2017, it can become the hook upon which the world hangs its grievances, the basis for punny headlines, and an invitation for Twitter shaming.

Too often, naming is an informal exercise. Startup founders who spend months meticulously developing products have been known to go with a name that just “feels good,” without bothering to examine cultural contexts, competitive landscapes, or even simple pronunciation.

It has also become harder to choose a good name amid a booming startup scene. How do you find a unique-sounding name when it seems like everything is taken, or leverage familiarity without sounding derivative? The answers often surface in trends, where Flickr begets Tumblr (Domain taken? Drop a vowel.) and Birchbox begets Barkbox (Nothing says “subscription service” like *-box*).

But there's a better way. As product builders who have advised and named a number of companies, we've seen how good tools and techniques can help avoid naming mistakes. Recently, we've compiled them into a resource called Onym (a name we came up with by following our own advice). Take a look at it [here](#).

It's also helpful to look at why some names succeed and others fail. With that, here are the best, and worst, names of 2017 —and what trends we have to look forward to in 2018.



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THE BEST



[Image: The Boring Company]

THE BORING COMPANY

If Tesla is a bit on the nose for some, Elon Musk's latest venture, The Boring Company, takes it to the logical extreme. A beautiful double entendre that grabs the listener, it's also a little self-deprecating given the company's lofty ambitions to dig (nay, bore) an extensive tunnel system for high-speed automobile travel.

Takeaway: Humor can work (especially with a fanbase like Musk's) but be conscious of your audience and context.



[Image: Brandless]

BRANDLESS

In a world where more of our online staples come from a single company (Read: Amazon), it's refreshing to see a startup breakthrough with a clear value proposition on low-priced essentials. The positioning of a brand without branding cuts through the noise and aligns well with broader post-consumerism consumer movements, but it's still more than a little ironic that they hired a fancy branding firm to deliver the look and name.

Takeaway: Bucking convention works best when it's aligned with your core message.



[Image: Carta]

CARTA

This one is not as much about the name (it's good) but more about the thoughtful rebrand of eShares—makers of software for managing shares and options in a company—away from a dated name that never reflected the seriousness of the company's business-minded audience. The team's detailed announcement gave a nice glimpse into the creative reasoning behind the change without being breathlessly grandiose.

Takeaway: A story worth telling can amplify the significance of a name.

[Screenshot: Nike]

OFF-WHITE X NIKE "THE TEN"

While designer Virgil Abloh's OFF-WHITE was started in 2014, his work (and love of framing words with quotation marks) broke into the mainstream this year with an extremely limited run of Nike shoes. One of the most notable trademarks of OFF-WHITE is that just about everything on the products is labeled, from "SHOELACES," and "FOAM" to "SCARF" and "WEBSITE"—it's obvious and repetitive but OFF-WHITE pulls it off and now owns a piece of grammar that was not long ago ubiquitous and plain.

Takeaway: A strong naming aesthetic can support an entire system of names.

[Image: Aftermath/Interscope]

DAMN.

Sure it's one of the best albums of the year, but the title of Kendrick Lamar's DAMN. is also a powerful statement. In talking about the single word, all-caps, punctuated style that extends to the song titles (BLOOD., FEEL., LUST., etc.), Lamar explained that he wanted them to encapsulate the content and feeling of each song. DAMN., then, is left to describe the collection as a whole by referencing the most common reaction listeners have had when hearing this artist at the top of his game. Between OFF-WHITE, DAMN. and JAY-Z (who switched to all-caps and reinstated a hyphen this year), uppercase is having a moment.

Takeaway: A thematic structure, when used appropriately, can be powerful—but be careful, it can also come across as incredibly lame.

[Image: Ollie]

OLLIE

Ollie, an online dog food company, follows on the mega-trend of startups using first names to humanize their cold digital souls (See: Harry's, Oscar, Alfred, Clara, Siri, Alexa, Casper, et al.). But Ollie uses the trope really well. First, it's a short and pretty word with a nice set of characters for the logotype that, in this context, brings to mind a very slobbery, very good boy. Perhaps more importantly, it's common enough to be familiar while remaining uncommon enough for the brand to own it.

Takeaway: Following a trend doesn't necessarily mean blending in—when well-executed, it can provide a useful foundation.

THE WORST

[Image: Bodega]

BODEGA

An otherwise ordinary startup launch became mired in controversy, in large part because of an insensitive name. The SF-based founders of Bodega, a vending-machine replacement, thought the name would be a cute wink to the urban corner stores they claimed to admire, but in reality were looking to disrupt. Instead, New Yorkers (and others) saw yet another cash-flush Silicon Valley duo trying to exploit a beloved institution, and with the gall to steal the name while they were at it.

Takeaway: Take the time to understand your name's cultural context and, above all, avoid cultural appropriation.

[Image: Apple]

IPHONE X

Despite its product prowess, Apple continues to name things with no interest in ease of use or sequential logic (for instance it is “wrong” to use articles like *an* and *the* before iPhone). It may read as the 24th letter in the alphabet, and was prophesied by the Apple blogosphere to be pronounced as “Ex”, but Apple, just like the Super Bowl, is still trying to make Roman numerals a thing. Coupling this with the fact that it’s actually the 9th (or 14th) major iPhone version and was released alongside the iPhone 8 adds to the fact that this name really takes the L (that’s L as in loss, not the Roman numeral for 50).



Takeaway: If you’re aiming for wide appeal, aim for widely understood naming conventions.



[Image: Juicero]

JUICERO

This is less a story about the name and more a lesson about where the public can take your name, especially when the narrative is already against you. Juicero, an at-home juicing system, became the target of public ire after reports that their \$400 appliance was superfluous—no better at extracting juice from their propriety juice packs than a pair of ordinary human hands. The absurdity of Juicero’s solution-in-search-of-a-problem, coupled with their mismanagement and eventual flameout as a company, led to the coining of a nickname: Juicebro. The term fit well with the growing bro-culture narrative emerging from some of Silicon Valley’s highest-profile companies and investment firms.

Takeaway: Before settling on a name, consider how it could be misused or mocked.

[Image: Oath]

OATH:

In a year when AOL’s most-loved product (AIM) said goodbye, AOL, the parent company of Aol., Tumblr, Yahoo!, *TechCrunch*, *HuffPost*, and more said goodbye to its own name. Heralded by its CEO as “unstoppable,” the collection of once-powerful companies rebranded as Oath:, a clunky and hollow name that somehow reads as “O-ath” and inexplicably includes a colon (but only sometimes). While parent company names tend to be pretty meaningless, the history and legacy of the brands Oath: holds makes it that much more painful and botched. All in all, a worthy follow up to last year’s tronc debacle.

Takeaway: When you have heritage and history, don’t bury it—leverage it.

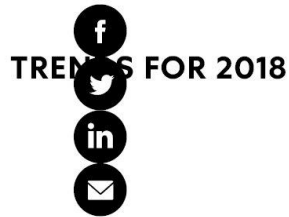
[Images: Amazon]

AMAZON’S NEW PRIVATE LABEL BRANDS

Lark & Ro, Franklin & Freeman, James & Erin—no, these aren’t wedding registries or trendy restaurants in Seattle; they’re new Amazon brands. Amazon does a lot of things really well, but branding has never come naturally to the company. That hasn’t stopped it from launching in-house labels to replace third-party products on the site, leveraging its strong distribution power to compensate for brand names that look and sound like they were generated by a dated trend algorithm. Also coming to an Amazon search

near you: Goodthreads, Buttoned Down (really), Mama Bear, Pinzon, North Eleven, and Single Cow Burger.

Takeaway: If you're Amazon, you can probably get away with having bad names. But you're not Amazon—spend the time to do it right.



CRYPTO- NAMES HAVE THE CHANCE TO CATCH FIRE IN CONSUMER COMPANIES.

Transformative technologies have a history of bringing new affixes with them. In the '90s, the internet gave us names with cyber-, e-, net- and, .com; two decades later, blockchains come bearing crypto-, bit-, -coin-, and -chain.

Bitcoin, Bitfinex, Coinbase, CoinDesk, Cryptokitties, Mediachain—the list goes on. Nevermind prefixes, with blockchain hype at an all-time high there's value in simply shoehorning the word into your name as The Long Island Iced Tea Company proved when it renamed itself Long Blockchain, temporarily sending its stock on a 500% run.

We expect the crypto themed names to continue (so long as bitcoin's price continues to rise) in the short term, but as the space matures and the technology diffuses, expect affixes to phase out of crypto-naming, much as they have for "internet" companies.

[Images: Google, Apple, Facebook]

THE ANTI-SILICON VALLEY BACKLASH WILL CONTINUE

2017 was the year that the public opinion of tech players shifted from "plucky upstarts" to "abusers of unchecked power and wealth." Every major tech firm (and many powerful tech leaders) were pilloried for overreaching privacy, poor treatment of employees, and draconian policies.





It's increasingly important that young tech companies avoid (and be conscious of) names (and aesthetics) that are easily pegged to the cash-rich, move-fast-and-break things culture of Silicon Valley. The message in 2018 should be move-prudently-and-be-a-genuinely-good-citizen, beginning with your company name.

THE BRANDED MOVEMENT

The internet has empowered people to quickly coalesce around shared causes. And, often what transforms a fleeting moment of solidarity into a lasting movement is a name—one that travels well in the bit-sized formats of Twitter and Facebook and serves as a hyperlink back to the founding moment.

The names we saw rise in 2017 had the power to help elect a president (#MAGA), fuel a response (The Resistance), dress-up unpalatable ideas in new clothes (Alt-Right), and empower individuals to speak up (#MeToo).

While this phenomenon isn't new, the speed of organizing is increasing and the power of a name is being leveraged at earlier stages. With political dissonance on the rise (especially with midterm elections this year) and the cultural stage becoming a battlefield for equality, expect 2018 to be a year of branded movements.




 Willem van Lancker is a Brooklyn-based designer and company builder. In 2012, he founded Oyster (now part of Google) the first Netflix-for-books service. He previously designed products at Google Maps, Apple, and IDEO. Greg Leppert is a designer and developer. He previously helped found and sell the product bookmarking site Svpply, now a part of eBay. He lives in Cambridge, MA where he's an affiliate at the Berkman Klein Center at Harvard. Willem and Greg developed Onym to make naming things easier. It's open source, and they have a mailing list about names. You can subscribe here.

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In the Spotlight: What a New Start Says About Working at Lakeside

June 29, 2018 by Heather Bicknell

By naming his tunnel construction business The Boring Company, Elon Musk used double entendre to cop to something few CEOs would want to admit: that many lines of business are, well, boring. At least on the surface **ba dum tss**.

“Enterprise IT software” doesn’t sound much more exciting than digging holes. And it’s not something most developers envision themselves working on. But as I look around the Lakeside Software R&D office, I see a lot of young, engaged faces, whiteboards filled with code, and collaboration across generational divides.

Instead of giving you a whole spiel on why it’s great to work at Lakeside, I decided to hold my microphone up to the horse’s mouth. That is, host one of our software engineers on our podcast.

Avery Dews is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan and current backend developer at Lakeside. His interests include Mac OS, pottery, and film. He joined us this week on Lifeguard IT to talk about what university classes

proved most useful for his job role, what drove him to apply to Lakeside, and what his experience has been like at the company so far.



Lifeguard IT hosts Linda Tsao (left) and Heather Bicknell (right) with Avery Dews, software engineer at Lakeside

Below is a lightly edited transcript of a portion of the episode. To hear the full thing, listen on [iTunes](#), [Google Play](#), [Stitcher](#), [Overcast](#), or [PodBean](#).

Questions about the episode and suggestions for future topics can be directed to  guardt@lakesidesoftware.com.

Heather: *How did you find Lakeside and what made you want to apply?*

Avery: *I was perusing the career center site the engineering college graciously lets graduates access up to a year after they graduate, and I found Lakeside. I liked that it was primarily stuff that I had experienced in the operating systems course (a lot of backend, C++ stuff) because at Michigan, you primarily learn C++ in your engineering courses. So, it seemed like it was a good match for my skillset.*

Heather: *Was there anything else from your job search experience that you feel like would be helpful for people looking?*

Avery: *I remember being a student and feeling like I was supposed to go to one of the big-name tech companies out in San Francisco. I don't know how much the university pushed it, but that's definitely the message that I received.*

I would say for anyone looking for a job, there's so many opportunities out there besides the bigger names that might be better for you. So, keep an open mind. You never know where you might fit in the best.

Heather: *How would you describe the Ann Arbor office culture?*

Avery: *The Ann Arbor office is very laidback. I can go talk to my supervisors at any time. Sometimes the CEO will come in and he'll talk to you. Everyone's very approachable here. People are nice; there's a lot of company bonding stuff at work and after work. It's a team-oriented atmosphere, but at the same time there's always space to do your individual work and get it done.*

Heather: *What have you learned over your first year as a full-time software developer?*

Avery: *I have learned how to estimate how long something's going to take to do. I learned how to be more effective with my research around stuff that I need to figure out how to do. And I've also learned—and this is probably the most important thing—I've learned how to be confident in my code. Like we mentioned at the beginning of the podcast, I'm the Mac person. So, it's my project. And I've learned to trust my knowledge and my ability to produce code that will work. That confidence is something that you can't underestimate, and I feel like it's something that I very much got from being at a company this size.*

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