



## A Systematic Brand- and Domain-Naming Approach

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Is “sky blue” or “millennium blue” more valuable as a brand and domain name? To determine such values, you need a systematic methodology to ensure confidence in your best choices.

An [experiment conducted by professors Miller and Kahn](#) asked participants to distinguish between four categories of color and flavor names:

1. Generic common (e.g., blue)
2. Descriptive common (e.g., sky blue)
3. Unspecific description (e.g., Gatorade blue)
4. Ambiguous (e.g., millennium blue)

The researchers found that the products with unspecific and ambiguous names, names that were unexpected, distinctive, and a bit mysterious, were regarded as more desirable than products with generic or straightforwardly descriptive names.

Two more advantages to branding with an offbeat name: The name will be easier to spot among search engine results, and the corresponding domain name is more likely to be unregistered.

What about names that are simply difficult to say—are they desirable? A [study by professors Alter and Oppenheimer](#) tried to answer the question. The researchers generated fictitious stocks that were either very easy or very difficult to pronounce, then presented these to participants as real companies and asked them to estimate future performance. The easy-to-say names were picked to earn more than the hard names and to rise in stock price. The participants also predicted the prices of the latter group would go down.

A systematic approach to selecting brand names would be to combine results from experiments and studies in order to select the most valuable among identified options using a [comparables-based statistical valuation models](#). ■