

DUH! MARKETING is a humorous jaunt through the marketing jungle.

DUH! Marketing: 99 Monstrous Missteps You Can Use to Learn, Laugh, and Grow Your Business

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***DUH! MARKETING™: 99 Monstrous Missteps You Can Use to Learn, Laugh, and Grow Your Business!***

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# **DUH!** **MARKETING™**

## **99 MONSTROUS MISSTEPS** *You Can Use to Learn, Laugh, and Grow Your Business!*

**LIZ GOODGOLD**

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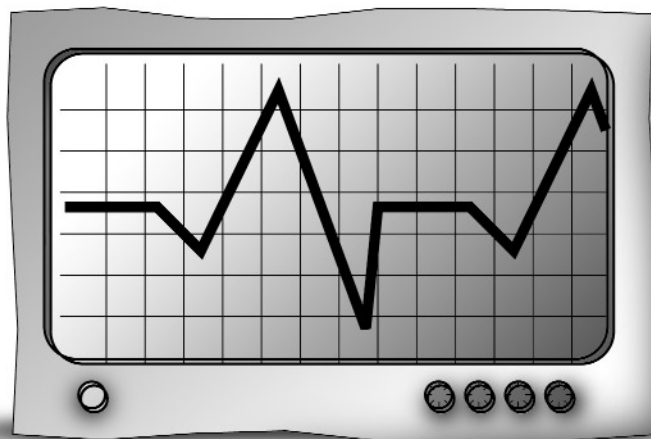
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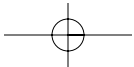
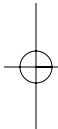
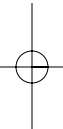
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## **Chapter 3: Monitor Your Moniker**





# #8 DUH!

## THE *Double-Fault* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **SerVenRich, Inc.**, headed by Richard Williams. The firm derives its name from the first three letters of his tennis-star daughters' names: "Ser" (for Serena) and "Ven" (for Venus). So where's the logic behind putting *his* name anywhere at all? The first SerVenRich product was oxygenated water—that made sense. But can you believe the next one was barbeque sauce? Just how does expertise on the tennis court add credibility to *this* brand extension?

*The Lesson: Celebrity endorsements are a part of marketing, but they must play off the key attributes of the endorser.*

.....

# TA DA!

## *Making Fun in Marketing*

**Dannon** gets a TA DA! Award for creating a name for its kids' line of yogurts: Danimals. The drinkable, lowfat yogurt comes in wild colors and bottles shaped like bears, monkeys, and even dinosaurs. The company continued the kid-friendly theme by giving the flavors fun names such as Strawberry Explosion. This brand extension not only makes sense, it was carefully crafted to appeal to both targets—kids and moms—alike.

# #9 DUH!

## THE “C” *If You Can Find Us* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Cingular**, formerly Pacific Bell Wireless (and, in some markets, Cellular One), for selecting a common word and then intentionally misspelling it. And, for not emphasizing that it is spelled with a “C” throughout any of its marketing communications! Typing in the domain name phonetically leads folks to “singular.com,” an information technology provider. Or even worse, customers are misspelling it “singulair.com” and arriving at Merck’s asthma medication website.

*The Lesson: A good name has to be easy to say, spell, and find on the Web.*

# TA DA!

## *The Success of Simplicity*

A TA DA! Award exemplifying the power of simplicity is Quaker with its **Quaker Rice Cakes** print ad. It featured a stark-white page with the iconic Cracker Jack toy surprise in the center, about 2 inches by 3 inches in size. The copy read only: “Surprise! Guess what’s inside?” Opening the perforation in the ad revealed a photo of the new product with the message of “60 calories, 1 gram of fat.” This visually arresting ad was a surprise to all of the copywriters who believe more is more . . . sometimes, less is better.

# # 10 DUH!

## THE *Tell It Like It Ain't* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Aspercreme**, **Cafix**, and **Tejava**, each of whom thought against the traditional wisdom of naming products based on their ingredients. Aspercreme proudly proclaims, “contains no aspirin,” and if you’re looking to get your caffeine fix from Cafix, this instant beverage reassures with the statement, “100% caffeine free!” Tejava also contains no coffee, but is instead made with tea leaves from the island of Java. Ooooooh, now we *almost* get it!

***The Lesson: Use properly descriptive brand names to magnify your product’s strengths.***

.....

# TA DA!

## *Clear Communications*

Check out **Avon’s** Skin-So-Soft line. Absolutely no guesswork is needed here—we know exactly what it is and what it does. A TA DA! Award goes to Avon for naming clearly, concisely, and for giving the benefits of the products right in the name.

# #11 DUH!

## THE *Dastardly Duds* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Yeslam Bin Laden** for preparing to launch a new line of clothing under the Bin Laden label. Osama's half-brother predicts, "People are able to distinguish between Osama and the rest of the family." Really? Clearly, this product will be an unmitigated failure.

*The Lesson: A recognized name doesn't necessarily translate into a great brand. Great brands connect with us in an emotional, positive way.*

# TA DA!

## *You Wear It Well*

It's worth calling one of the most enduring taglines of all time to the forefront for a TA DA! Award: **Cotton Incorporated's** "THE FABRIC OF OUR LIVES." It alludes to our enduring relationship with cotton products, and their role in our everyday existence. The tagline is simply said and easily remembered, and the emotional bond it evokes makes it a real winner.

# #12 DUH!

## THE *Great Product, Stinky Name* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Swheat Scoop**. Er, run that by me again? Did you get confused trying to figure out how to say the name? If so, you're not alone. This product actually has a very unique point of difference: cat litter made from wheat that can be flushed down the toilet. But until you determine that the key product attribute is wheat, the tendency is to pronounce it "sweat," as in perspiration. Maybe they should've just spelled it "sweet" instead of trying to come up with a spelling that makes the product name hard to figure out.

*The Lesson: Ensure your product's name is easy to pronounce.*

.....

# TA DA!

## *Winning Names, Paws Down*

Naming in the multi-billion-dollar pet product industry calls for a combination of cute, clever, and believable, since pet owners tend to think of their pets as kids. **Bone Appetit** and **Pup-peroni** are both TA DA! Award winners for naming right on target.



# #13 DUH!

## THE *No Contest* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Einstein Bros Bagels** for putting on a naming contest! That's right—the general public had the opportunity to throw name candidates for a new sandwich into the hat for a chance to win \$500 and a year's worth of free paninis. Of course, the company wouldn't fork over the real bucks to a pro who could ensure the name was trademarkable, linguistically sound, and free from foreign language misinterpretations, negative connotations, political overtones, or sexual innuendo.

*The Lesson: Our experience shows a naming contest rarely works.*

# TA DA!

## *Tastefully Named*

Compare Einstein Bros' approach to that of Pepsi's **Aquafina** brand of bottled water, named by a professional naming firm. Said aloud, it's mellifluous—has a lovely cadence helped by both syllables ending in the "a" sound. Its imagery is that of fresh, clear water. Although the name has foreign overtones and literally means "fine water" in Spanish and Italian, it is still easy enough for most Americans to pronounce.

# #14 DUH!

## THE *Fatal Naming Mistake* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **Umbro**, one of the leading international soccer-apparel manufacturers, for naming a style of shoe Zyclon. What's the problem? Zyclon (sometimes spelled Zyklon) is infamous as the poisonous gas used in human extermination in the chambers at Auschwitz. Even if Umbro failed to do any foreign language research, a simple Google search shows the very first listing referencing Zyclon's Holocaust usage.

***The Lesson: A quick web search can divert a long-term disaster.***

# TA DA!

## *Winning Brand*

It's hard to argue with either the name or the positioning of **Nike**, a TA DA! Award winner. From the Greek mythological goddess of victory, Nike has soared over its competitors with technological advancements, fashionable sports apparel, and picking celebrity athletes at the pinnacle of their sport. From Michael Jordan to Andre Agassi to Bo Jackson, this brand always seems to come up a winner.

# #15 DUH!

## THE *Almost-Right Name* AWARD

Honorably awarded to **24 Hour Fitness**. In an otherwise engaging radio ad, the brand added this disclaimer: "Many facilities not open 24 hours." What?!? Here's a gym called 24 Hour Fitness, but they're not open 24/7? Perhaps they should change their name to "20 Hour Fitness" or "17-and-a-Half-Hour Fitness." It's unconscionable, not to mention ridiculous!

*The Lesson: Select a name that is appropriate for your brand, and one that will actually stand the test of time.*

# TA DA!

## *A Real Pearl*

A brand name that's near and dear to bicyclists' hearts is that of **Pearl Izumi**, a TA DA! Award winner. Leveraging its expertise in cycling apparel into cycling footwear, the company created some extremely edgy ads. One example: "For over 20 years, we've been covering your ass. Wait 'til you see what we did for your feet." Yes, it's bold; yes, it's controversial; but most importantly, it's a great way to stand out while, at the same time, extending its brand name from top to bottom.

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