

# In The Nick of Time: 4 Reasons to Embrace a Nickname

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A brand starts as a name. And, as every good trademark attorney will tell you, it's best to follow the rules about treating your brand lest you puncture the trademark protection or even worse- turn it into a common name thereby "committing genericide." But, sometimes adopting a nickname works for 4 key reasons:



## Nicknames Boosts Recall:

With the London Olympics in the near past, we might be hard pressed to remember the exact spelling or pronunciation of some of the star athletes, but I guarantee we will forever remember The Lightning Bolt (Usain Bolt) and even The Flying Squirrel (2-time American gold-medalist Gabriel Douglas). If branding is about flawless recall, nicknames are a shortcut to getting there.



## Nicknames Demonstrate Personality:

It seems as if every brand holder is trying to find its DNA, but if your customers have created a nickname for you, the personality is right in front of you! When Target customers started calling it Tar-zhe, it signified that the brand had reached a pinnacle: its merchandise had such cache, it was worthy of a high-class moniker. Wow!



## Nicknames Demonstrate Love:

Virtually every time your clients create a nickname for you, they are showering you with love. Embrace it and savor it.

General Motors looked foolish in July 2010 by officially declaring that their car should only be referred to as a Chevrolet, not a Chevy. What someone forgot to tell GM is that you can't regulate speech. If songwriter Don McLean wants to "drive his Chevy to a levy," he can! And, if you want to shop at Bloomies (Bloomingdales), Nordies (Nordstrom), or BevMo (Beverages & More), please knock yourself out!



## Nicknames Fit Into Shorter-is-Better World:

It seems as if our multi-tasking society has brought us all to the brink of attention-deficit disorder. We tweet in 140 characters and like shorter brand names. Federal Express has morphed into FedEx, Barnes & Noble into BN, and even Monster Board into Monster.

Next time a client or customer turns a phrase with your brand, tune in. They may just be creating a brand-worthy nickname.