

The Power of Language

***Nomen est omen* for company and product names**

Nomen est omen – “In the beginning was the word.”

Names brim with portents, which point the way and create reality. The power of the images behind the words also holds true for company names and the names of articles for sale. A striking name is crucial to the economic success of a product.

“When VW launched their new flagship product, they gave it the name *Phaeton*, resulting in an expensive flop. Little guessing the meaning, they named the car after the mythical son of the sun-god Helios, the archetype of the boastful, incapable yet pretentious wannabe. Long before the appropriate time he demands his father grant him the right to drive his chariot across the sky, proving incapable of controlling it. This obviously set the seal on the fate of the car of the same name,” so states Ruediger Dahlke in his preface to the book “*Nomen est Omen – The Hidden Message Of First Names*” by Joachim Schaffer-Suchomel, published by Goldmann-Arkana in 2007.

Companies aware of the power concealed in names can avoid such disasters. Toyota are exemplary: with the slogan for their new car “Auris”, the group advertise their new brand, creating synchronicity on various levels: *Eyes open* (the slogan in Germany) conveys the image of wide-open eyes gazing in admiration at the new model; on top of this, the name *Auris* means ‘red sky in the morning’, creating an image of the rising sun. As is generally known, the sun rises in the East. Thus, Toyota, as a Japanese company, is signalling that the economy in the East, i.e. the Asian economy, is on the road to success. In Aurich / Germany, Toyota registered 100 cars with the number plate “Aur-I” - Asian companies are all too aware of the magic of such analogies.

Similarly brilliant are Canon with their slogan “*You can!*”, because we all want to be achievers. On top of this, we can take snapshots with a camera, and the name “Canon” reminds us of the cannons we use for shooting. Like *Auris*, *Canon* produce synchronicity on different levels and things which run synchronously automatically make people happy, regardless of the quality of the product.

Another example is the English name *Donald*, which is of Celtic origin and means “the powerful”. The Scottish version of *Donald* is *Donal*, which means “great chief”. Seen from this perspective, *Donald* – a very

common name in the United States – embodies a “white chief”. McDonald’s exploited this to the full.

The images created by myths, as well as the power behind names and the word images in names, invite people to follow or dissuade them from following the business or the product, thus ensuring its success or otherwise.

Even single letters, such as the rod as a symbol of power, imply special qualities. The vowel “i”, for example, resembles a burning candle, symbolizing the intuition, freedom and strength of the “I”- the “first person”. The vowel “u” leads us into the depths, into the unconscious and physical desires. An “S” looks like a snake rising up to do battle, conveying the image of alertness and speed.