



Why **AI STINKS** At Brand Naming

Part 1: The Simple Truth

Hello!

AI does many things well. Naming brands is... not one of those things. We've tried it (a lot). And we've worked with a lot of teams who have tried it. Unfortunately, the results just stink.

As a leading brand naming agency (hey, check us out at Tanj.co!) we've been thinking about this a lot. Quite frankly, we talk to prospects daily — from big tech companies to solopreneurs — who've toiled with AI to name their brands for weeks to no avail.

So why isn't AI doing a good job at helping teams land a great name? Let's break it down →

AI minimizes the importance of naming

Serious business decisions deserve serious focus. When we just plug things into ChatGPT and see what it spits out, we're not taking time to truly think about what we're doing.

It's a shortcut that cuts out important thinking & strategic rigor that help you shape a unique strategy and name. It's hard to give something the focus and attention it needs when you're cutting your own brain out of the process.

AI is a total & complete yes-man

We all love a good hype-man sometimes, but that's not what we need to help us work through important strategic decisions. The response shouldn't always be, "That's a great idea!" or "Love this brief."

We need different perspectives. We need people to push back on us, to question our strategy, to show us what might be missing. While AI can make great suggestions, too often it simply accepts input and heaps undue praise on it.

AI produces low-quality ideas

AI is built on data that already exists, so everything feels regurgitated... because it is. We see many of the same name suggestions pop up over and over again (Flux, Pulse, Nexum, Atlas...)—no matter what we're naming; no matter what themes and concepts we ask AI to explore.

Want coined names? Whether you're naming a car, a streaming service or an AI startup, expect to see Axera, Vectra, Tivra and Fluxon in the list.

AI can't handle the rigor trademarks require

AI is struggling with creating names that are legally viable, and with giving accurate information about trademark availability.

This is one of the biggest hurdles brands **MUST** overcome in nearly any naming engagement. AI barely gets you off the ground.

Humans crave creativity

We do! We crave creativity. Both to take part in it as creators, and to witness it. It's why we have poetry, novels, dance, art, playdough, doodles in the margins... and names like Google, Slack and Wii (**we named** this last one btw).

Our brains & souls want to play. We want to feel a spark. We want to be drawn in.

AI doesn't have that "spark"

AI could probably come up with names like Netscape, Instant Messenger and maybe Playstation, if given the proper inputs and guidance. (Google, Slack and Wii again? Nope. That level of creativity just isn't there.)

But way more often, we're seeing names like Flash, Pulse, and Quix. Low-hanging fruit and bottom-of-the-barrel stuff. If we're going to use an idiom to describe the results of a naming exercise, we want it to be the cream of the crop ;)

It leads to wasted time (and opportunities)

People often assume a DIY naming solution will save time and money, but it actually ends up wasting time that could have gone toward a more productive approach.

When it doesn't yield useful results, you don't have a finalized name. When you don't have a name, you can't ship your product. Now you're not only wasting time — you're losing opportunities to promote your product. That's time and money lost.

Where to go from here?

At Tanj, we're far from luddites. We welcome AI in the naming process. But as of now, it's simply not working as the primary vehicle to help teams land a name.

We suggest using AI as a way to gather ideas and info—just as we've always gathered info from dictionaries, books, encyclopedias, Wikipedia, magazines, etc. AI speeds this stuff up a lot. You can have lots of ideas at your fingertips in seconds rather than minutes or hours. But if you need a great name, you need a great process.

Give naming the attention it deserves.

Get human help

Check out our free guides, content & more if you want to DIY properly. Or just reach out to us & we'll make sure it gets done right.

Tanj on the **Internet**

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Change the world, **one name** at a time