The 15 dumbest names for Web 2.0 startups

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I'm someone who frantically scours the web for interesting new online trends, concepts, startups and projects at any given time of any day. It's something I simply can't turn off, I just have a passion for finding new stuff and find out if it resonates with me from a user and business perspective. That also means I come across a mountain of poorly executed websites and applications, or startups that have business models that you just know will never bring in a dime of revenue.

But what strikes me most is the awful names that are given to services and applications. I realize naming is a difficult thing, and finding the domain name to match the name or description you have in mind is virtually impossible these days. I also realize names don't *necessarily* have to be descriptive enough to sum up what you do in one or two words, as long as it's memorable and distinctive enough.

How many people would have considered 'Google' a good name for a search engine in the late nineties or even at the dawn of the new millennium? Or Yahoo! for that matter?

Update: per request in the comments, here are some interesting articles on naming:

Seth Godin - the new rules of naming
Folksonomy - 7 tips for naming your Web 2.0 startup
GigaOm - 3 rules for naming your startup
LSVP blog - Naming your startup
Startup Spark - Everything You Need To Know About Naming a Startup
TechRepublic - The dos and don'ts of naming your start-up
GigaOM - A Two-part Rule for Naming Your Startup
Seth Godin - Sloppy naming
Fort Worth Startup blog - Naming your startup
Entrepreneur.com - Naming your business
Name Ideas - Naming Your Start-up: Simple Do's and Don'ts
Guy Kawasaki - The Name Game

But still, here's a list of 15 startups I personally think have some of the dumbest names in the Web 2.0 industry (note that I'm not judging their actual service), in no particular order:

1. Adaptive Blue

Develops personalization technologies that leverage semantics and attention.

My guess is they absolutely wanted to use the word 'adaptive' but were unable to get the right domain name, so they just picked any color and magically combined the words into something horrendously unmemorable.

2. Thoof

Personalized/social news recommender

Thoof. Pfoof. Floof. Any startup that gets named after a farting sound deserves to be on this list. Enough said. Note: Thoof was reportedly deadpooled, but the domain now points to Reddit. I wonder if this was a generous last configuration of the owner or an unreported acquisition?

3. Weebly

AJAX website creator

Weebly has *some* ring to it, but compare it to the names of their closest competitors (Synthasite, Webnode, KickApps, etc.) and it sounds more like a kid's toy, or an adult website. I'm guessing 'weeb' is supposed to make you think of the term 'web', but I'm really not sure. According to UrbanDictionary, it can also refer to a monkey penis or someone who would do anything to get some attention.

4. Yoono

Social link and tag sharing network

Yoowhat? A typical example of a startup so desperate to have a two-syllable name that they'd have picked anything that sounded remotely pronounceable. Except of course you're likely to forget the name or the spelling of it after a heartbeat.

5. Zlio

Gives users the ability to create their own shops and sell goods from other e-commerce services.

A 'z' isn't meant to be followed by another consonant, and there's a good reason for that. It's not only hard to pronounce - I personally tied a knot in my tongue -, it's also extremely forgettable.

6. Diigo

Social annotation service

Using 'ii' in your name is never a good idea. There's absolutely no way you can talk about your startup without having to spell its name for people to actually find it on the web. When I search 'digo' (the most logical keyword to use when you hear the name), you won't find it, but you will come across an internet phone service on the first page.

7. Heekya

Social storytelling platform

Whatever a 'social storytelling platform' is, it doesn't even matter if the name 'Heekya' doesn't even refer to anything. I would love to see their employees pitch normal people about their service in plain English. And what's with the dots above the e's?

8. Insala

Web-based software for organizations implementing talent development, management, and retention initiatives.

Is this the name of a trendy salad bar? An islamic prayer? Or is it a synonym for Innovation, Customer Responsiveness and Focus, Employee Satisfaction, International Reach, Entrepreneurial Accomplishment and Rapid Growth? You guessed it, it's supposed to be the last one.

9. Jiglu

Automatically creates intelligent tags for your web content.

While Jiglu on itself is already absolutely meaningless, painfully undescriptive and just not very catchy as a term, the entire product line is named after it: JigluTags, JigluHood, JigluMedia and JigluEnterprise. As if it was actually meant to create confusion about everything the startup produces.

10. Mzinga

Bbrings white-label social networks to consumer research.

Just like 'z' isn't meant to be followed by a consonant, it's better not to put it after a consonant, either. The word 'Mzinga' makes me think of an African warlord, or an exotic Hawaiian dance routine, but it certainly won't make me go "Aha, that's that white-label social networking site creator". Gotta wonder how to came up with that one.

11. Oooooc.com

Provides a marketplace for contents and services.

Much like [Zooomr](#) and [ooooj](#), it's just too many o's. How do they refer to their service? Worse, how do they point people to their website on the phone? "No it's 5 o's, c, dot c-o-m, sir … No no no, 5 times the letter 'o' … ah crap." If you want to be the next-generation eBay, you might want to consider changing the name first, guys.

12. ooVoo

Attempts to add the human experience into communicating online with improved video and voice communication tools.

Same story as Yoono: it may sound pronounceable, but the fact that's is so damn hard to remember the name and the spelling thereof doesn't justify picking a two-syllable word. I mean, it sounds like an evil spell or a character from Star Wars.

13. SocialThing

Synchronizes your personal information, content, and friendships so that you can post this information across the social web.

It's really hard coming up with a good name that starts with 'social' anymore these days, but if you're going to do it anyway, why pick something so blatantly generic as 'thing'? It's like they couldn't figure out what their own product actually did, and they just talked about it as some 'thing' they were coding. Oh yeah, and the exclamation mark thing was very cool in the nineties.

14. Sclipo

Social learning network for teaching through video & webcam.

Say 'sclipo' out loud. Enough said, right? It sounds like a name that's been incubated by someone with a speaking disability. It reveals nothing about the product, which is fairly niche to begin with. Nada, zip, rien du tout. The only thing it makes me think of is the Roman politician Scipio.

15. CrazyEgg

Advanced analytics to track what your users are doing on your website.

This one, like Weebly, has some ring to it and with so many competitors it's probably meant to stand out just a little. But CrazyEgg? Crazy. Egg. Sounds like they really wanted to have a logo with an egg in it and found out crazyegg.com wasn't registered yet, so they just went for that name.

http://thenextweb.com/2008/10/13/the-15-dumbest-names-for-web-20-startups/