

Ideally, a corporate name should consist of a distinctive element and a descriptive element:

Example: “Winnipeg Beauty Shop Ltd.”

Winnipeg = distinctive element

Beauty Shop = descriptive element

Distinctive Element

The distinctive element serves to differentiate names having identical or similar descriptive elements.

Names such as “THE DOLL SHOP LTD.” and “FOOD STORE INC.” lack an appropriate distinctive element, and for that reason, would be rejected.

They would, however, be acceptable, if they included a distinctive element such as “DOLL SHOP OF **WINNIPEG LTD.**” and “**MARISADOR** FOOD STORE INC.”. Consider how original the distinctive part of your corporate name is (e.g., is the distinctive portion common, such as Winnipeg, Canadian or Western).

Descriptive Element

The descriptive element is useful in describing the nature of the business. It allows for the use of identical or similar distinctive elements, which might be desirable in developing a particular presence in the marketplace.

Example - “BRANDON AUTO ELECTRIC LIMITED” and “BRANDON ROOFING LTD.”

Descriptive elements can be the first word in a corporate name. In this case, pizza is the descriptive element in the name “PIZZA HAVEN INC.”.

Legal Element

Incorporated companies must have a legal element or abbreviation thereof, as the last word in the name.

- Limited or Ltd.
- Incorporated or Inc.
- Corporation or Corp.

Note: A corporate name does not have to contain both a distinctive and a descriptive part. Sometimes a corporate name may contain only a distinctive element and a legal element. These names may be difficult to obtain, as the name will be rejected if that word is already contained in another company name.

Numbered Names

If you want to carry on business under a numbered name in Manitoba (i.e. 12345678 MANITOBA LTD.), a Request for Name Reservation is not required.

Punctuation Marks

Only the following punctuation marks are permitted: ! “ \$ % & ‘ () * + , _ - . / : ; < = > ? [] \

Family Names (Surname)

A corporate name may contain a family name, but the name cannot be a surname alone (e.g., Reynolds). When a corporate name contains a surname of an individual, the individual must be a director, officer or incorporator or provide consent.

Initials in a Name

Where a corporate name is made up entirely of initials, at least three letters are required with a legal element (e.g., ABF Limited).

Names Indicating the Practice of a Profession

If a corporate name suggests the practice of a profession that is regulated by a statute (e.g., ABC Engineering Limited), consent is required from the professional association.

Prohibited Names

A Corporate name may not:

- Use the word **Manitoba** as the first word in the name. However, Manitoba can be used anywhere else in the name. Example – Tulips in Manitoba Incorporated
- Contain the words Association or Society
- Misdescribe the business, goods or services of a company (e.g., Western Trucking Limited - but the nature of business is a bakery).
- Contain obscene terms, vulgar expressions, racial slurs, or and expressions that suggests a business that is obscene, scandalous or immoral.
- Imply a connection with the Crown, members of the Royal Family, Government of Canada or Government of Manitoba, unless a consent from the appropriate authority is received.

Other Factors to Consider

The Companies Office considers many factors when deciding whether a name is too similar to name already on record. This includes:

Sound - Do the names sound the same even though they are spelled differently (e.g., Knight, Night and Nite)?

Nature of Business - Are the companies in similar lines of business?

Location - Are the companies located in the same city, town or area of the province?

Bilingual Names

If the proposed name is a bilingual name that are:

- **Visually similar**, then only one Name Reservation is required.
Example – “COLE LIMITED / COLE LIMITEE” or “ABC ENTERPRISES LTD. / LES ENTREPRISES ABC LTEE.”

- **Visually dissimilar**, then two separate Name Reservations are required with a fee for each name Example – “SISTER CLEVEMONT HEALTH PLAN INC. / PLAN SANTE SOEUR CLEVEMONT INC.”