



From Altoids to Zima: The Surprising Stories Behind 125 Famous Brand Names

Evan Morris

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Ever wondered what the Ms in M&Ms stand for?


If Scotch tape was invented in Scotland?

Why a cereal that contains neither grapes nor nuts is called Grape Nuts?

Who thought Gap was a good name for a clothing store?

From the Adidas we wear to the Volkswagens we drive, the daily lives of Americans are dominated by the manufacturers' trademarks that adorn nearly everything we own. Food, clothes, cars, household furnishings, even cell phones are all chosen by brand name. Yet many of these trademarks and product names pose mysteries.

But not when Evan Morris, creator of the award-winning The Word Detective website, is on the case! In *From Altoids to Zima* he reveals the fascinating, often wacky stories behind 125 brand names. Organized by product categories -- food and drink; clothing; technology, toys, and assorted bright ideas; cars; and drugs and cosmetics -- the story of each product is told with Morris's trademark wit and humor, complete with sidebars that highlight brand names that have become "genericized" (aspirin); a "What Were They Thinking?" honor roll of strange and often disastrous product names (Edsel); what happens when good brand names go bad (Kool-Aid after the Jonestown mass suicide); and debunked urban legends (the combination of Pop Rocks and soda that was rumored to be lethal).

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