

# Good Characters

That's who we are; that's what we do.

[info@goodcharacters.com](mailto:info@goodcharacters.com)

Good Characters is  
a pioneer in professional  
Chinese naming and strategies  
with 18 years of experience.

We have been crafting names and  
continually improving the naming process  
in this “beautiful country”  
(the Chinese name for America).

Good Characters.

That’s who we are; that’s what we do.

We are grateful that agencies entrust us to work with their clients such as Intel, Cisco, eBay, and many of the world's biggest brands that you would recognize and respect.

For confidentiality reasons we stopped identifying our clients after a few years into our business.

We've crafted Chinese names for world leaders in technology, finance, energy, medical technology, consumer goods, and startups, contacted either directly by the client or through agency referral.

We don't do “branding and marketing  
and, *by the way*, naming.”

We specialize in naming,  
more specifically, **Chinese naming.**

Chinese naming is all we do.

When you absolutely need  
the best, you want to hire  
the dedicated specialist.



Our approach is simple:  
We generate a **truly exhaustive** number of  
name candidates (*long list*) and  
**rank them methodically** based on  
your branding brief and our  
cultural and linguistic expertise  
to form a Top 20 (*short list*).

The main deliverables are two reports:  
**One**, a 100-plus-page full naming report that takes you through the entire process, including our methods, in step-by-step transparency; it lists all characters and names considered.

**Two**, a 20-40-page executive summary slide deck that presents the top 20 names with detailed explanations of meanings and rationale for choosing the names.

In addition to the reports, we work with your team in America and in China via emails and conference calls to gather feedback and discuss revisions, name ranking and prioritization, and any further developments until your team reaches consensus and is ready to send the short list to your legal team for trademark registration.

Note: Here we use “China” as a general term. There are four trademark jurisdictions that mainly use Chinese character-based names, namely China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. A client’s “team in China” often consists of employees in America, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

With Good Characters, you sail through  
the labor-intensive part of the naming  
process and land directly on  
the most important part —  
the final evaluation and decision.

In addition to Chinese naming,  
consider the following services  
we can provide:

**Tagline:** We help you craft  
Chinese taglines that resonate  
and are on message.



**Brand Language:** Having a distinct voice is not just about what you say, but also how you say it. We help you create a vocabulary and a set of terms to which your translators and copywriters can refer to keep all your Chinese communications consistent. If your company developed a brand language in English, you certainly should do the same in Chinese.

## IPR Strategies for Corporations:

Good Characters knows the market and the psychology in Greater China. When you hire Good Characters, you build a Chinese brand that works. We know the importance of timing, positioning, and doing things right the first time.

Business success in China  
begins with a great Chinese name.  
Good Characters crafts  
exceptional Chinese names  
for global brands.

*If You Don't Have Good Characters, You Don't Have Good Characters.*

**More information about  
Good Characters**

**Times have changed:  
Why you need help from  
Chinese naming  
specialists today**

**Why you need to  
start the  
Chinese naming process  
right away**

**Common Chinese naming  
pitfalls and how  
Good Characters  
overcomes them**

# **More information about Good Characters**

Good Characters is a naming company  
in California known for creating  
exceptional Chinese versions of  
American business names.

Helping you get  
the best Chinese name  
for your brand.



Did you know . . .  
. . . some of the best Chinese names  
have been crafted in the United States.

Millions of Chinese Americans in the United States are among the richest and most intellectual Chinese in the entire world. Many Chinese Americans keep in touch with friends and family in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and many other Chinese-speaking regions. They stay current with news, events, and the latest language development. They are sophisticated in the nuances of Eastern and Western cultures. Living in a free society also enables many Chinese Americans to think expansively and creatively without limitations and restrictions. Most people believe they have to go to China for Chinese names, but the truth is that the best Chinese names can be and have been crafted in the United States.

Our vision to advance the field of  
Chinese naming right here in America:

As a native speaker of multiple Chinese languages with an advanced degree and professional training in experimental psychology (with a focus on research in bilingual memory) and connections in the Chinese communities in America and the Greater China Region, founder and president Andy Chuang began Good Characters in 2001 in California, the first professional brand naming company specializing in creating Chinese versions of company and product names. For 18 years, Good Characters has been crafting Chinese names and continually improving the Chinese naming process through knowledge and experience with thousands of large and small naming projects. Great Chinese names crafted in America can be top of the mind in China.

People and media have been  
talking about us:

Good Characters has been cited in several publications:

*New York Times*

*Los Angeles Times*

*Sacramento Bee*

*Fresno Bee*

*The Business Journal*

*Fox News*

*Radio: KQED, Public Broadcasting for Northern California*

*Book: The Making of a Name: The Inside Story of the*

*Brands We Buy*

*Book: The Name Game*

# Working with the Top Chinese Naming Experts

Good Characters will develop a comprehensive list of potential Chinese versions of your business name in as short a time as 14 days so you can register and protect your brand in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. Good Characters. That's who we are; that's what we do.



# Why Good Characters?

Startups, established brands, and  
Fortune 500 companies hire  
Good Characters because of our  
expertise, speed, and value.

Fast: Two weeks, not two months.

Easy to work with:  
Responsive via phone, text, and email.

Established brands and billion-dollar companies hire Good Characters in tandem with their existing branding agency and as a redundancy because we provide more names in less time as well as the most in-depth analysis in the field. Chinese naming is our laser focus; it's what we do.

Billion-dollar company CMOs are sometimes compelled to hire big name branding agencies because “nobody ever got fired for buying IBM.”

Smart executives hire Good Characters, Inc. in parallel to or as a backup for the large agencies because they know we provide more names faster and with in-depth analysis.

**Experience:** For 18 years, Good Characters has helped global businesses from startups to Fortune 500 companies, from the Silicon Valley to Shanghai, create Chinese names for their companies, their products, and their services. Our clients have been satisfied and return repeatedly for our services. The names we provide have enabled them to initiate powerful and profitable cultural connections with Chinese speakers.

**Speed:** We provide some of the fastest Chinese naming, which is an advantage in the hyper-paced Chinese market. One Shanghai-based brand consultancy was described in a major newspaper as typically “arriving at a proper name” in “4 to 12 weeks.” That’s one to three months. We are able to deliver your name candidates within two weeks because we are technologically advanced, highly specialized, and efficient in Chinese naming. Our world-class first-mover clients demand quick turnaround times.



**Transparency:** You'll be informed at every step of the process. You will receive both a full list, typically thousands to tens of thousands of names, and a short list, typically our top 20 recommendations, weighted and ranked according to your branding criteria so you can immediately start the process of registering and protecting your brand name in China.

You will appreciate having the in-depth naming report and presentations written in fluent English so you, your team, and your boss can make an informed naming decision.

## Confidentiality:

All corporate projects are kept completely confidential.

Our focus is on your name, not trumpeting ours.

We're happy to stay behind the scenes.

Your data are never published except when you want us to publish limited information about your project for PR reasons.

One\* Chinese name to rule them\* all

**One:** Your major customers in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong are in three different trademark jurisdictions but use the same Chinese language. We want to help you build a strong brand by developing one Chinese name that can be registered and protected in all three jurisdictions.

**Them:** A great Chinese name helps you differentiate and rule over all your competitors in Greater China.

# Naming Q&A:

Q. Should I pay attention to  
the naming trend report?

A. Your Chinese brand name should not be trendy; it should communicate a long-term vision, be timeless, and be able to stand the test of time.

The correct use of the trending report is to help you differentiate your name, not to follow any trend.



Q. I think paying \$\$\$\$\$+ for a name is too much.

A. Spending \$\$\$\$\$ to get the best name to double your one million-, ten million-, or hundred million-dollar business investment or push it up 10 times in China is by no means expensive. Also the work takes about 100 hours. Your company could spend several times that amount just to put up signs. A business or brand name often lasts longer than a logo and a slogan. Slogans change frequently, logos change rarely, but a brand name hardly ever changes.

*Q. What's the value of receiving a full list?  
I don't think I'll need it.*

*A. You not only can use a full list of brand name candidates for your current project, but it is potentially useful for future projects.*

When we work with agencies and corporate clients to develop Chinese names, we present not only “a few good names,” but an army of rank-ordered and other similar names. This is so if clients choose, they can build a “Great Wall of Chinese Names” to protect and defend their core name and identity.

Using traditional Chinese icons as analogies:

**Your Forbidden City Palace Name:** This is the core Chinese version of your company, brand, product, or service name, designed to win minds and command the market. It should be trademark registered—thus legally protected—and infringement is forbidden.

## Your Great Wall of Chinese Names:

These are names similar to your core names—names you should defensively trademark register to form an impenetrable wall of protection for your core name. So no one can create a name that is close to your core name and thus causes confusion.



Q. Your proposal looks as good as and even better than ones from other agencies and your fee is better but we have to hire them because they are a much bigger firm.

A. Large agencies have more projects and more people to manage. Unless you're one of their largest clients, you might not get their A team to work on your project.

And you might not be their top priority.

If your project gets pushed behind others, you may miss deadlines or lose opportunities. Besides, it costs more to work with a large agency. We're your safer choice because we focus on delivering what is most important to you: the best possible Chinese versions of your name without bells and whistles that cost extra.

Q. Can I see a list of Chinese names  
you've developed in the past?

A. *We work with individual companies and branding agencies on secret and not-so-secret projects. Many clients don't want us to talk about their projects due to the competitive nature of their businesses. We have a policy of not saying anything so no one needs to worry about us leaking any information they do not want shared.*

*We do share some of our views, methods, and examples of individual naming with the general public.*

Q. Can I do Chinese naming myself?

A. You can do Chinese naming but you will probably find it extremely difficult.

It can be like running a marathon for the first time without months of training and trying to finish in the top 10. Remember what happened to the first person to run a marathon? He collapsed and died at the finish line!

On average it takes 100 hours to do a thorough job of Chinese naming... unless you have a proprietary database and programs and algorithms that can cut the time down to 50 hours. Some things just can't be accomplished in a short time.

Most people treat do-it-yourself naming like fishing, trying ideas one by one. What you need is to cast the widest net; gather everything and then separate the good from the bad. Most people only have a fishing rod. We have a giant fishing boat with the latest sonar to locate the greatest number of the best ideas.



Brainstorming and generating tens of thousands of names is mostly science; picking the best ones, however, is art. You need an experienced guide or best names can slip through and all your effort is wasted.

Of course, if you're lucky, you might come up with  
a great name without so much effort.

But you should not depend on luck.

Even casinos calculate odds and control the likely  
outcome. Don't be a gambler. Be sure, like a casino.

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**Times have changed:  
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specialists today**

**Why you need to  
start the  
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To do business in the hyper-competitive  
Greater China market and succeed,  
you need to secure the best Chinese version  
of your brand name.

It's harder and harder to get a good Chinese name because every passing minute—as you are reading this—more and more names are being registered and becoming unavailable to you.

*As you know, if you're "one in a million" in China, there are 1,420 people just like you.*

*As the number of good and legally available Chinese names dwindles, your only option is to up your game and explore more creative options faster than everyone else.*



That was then ...  
Galileo made many discoveries with  
a 36.5" refractor.

Today scientists use the Very Large Array (VLA), a system of 27 radio-telescope antennas distributed over the high desert, and a 65-mile fiber link to study naturally-occurring radio light from stars, galaxies, black holes, and other astronomical objects.

That was then . . .  
Fisherman casting a net

This is now . . .  
Commercial fishing boats

That was then . . .

The fastest mode of travel was by horse

This is now . . .

Ordinary people travel by bullet train or jet

Back then a few people could  
brainstorm together and come up with  
a good Chinese name.

Now the only way to ensure  
a good Chinese name is to engage  
dedicated professionals who specialize in  
Chinese naming.

*And you need to do it now.*

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There are tens of thousands of Chinese characters and tens of millions ways to combine them to create names.

But the number of available Chinese names is becoming fewer and fewer by the minute.

China has the highest amount of trademark filing activity in the world according to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

In 2015, 2.8 million trademark applications were filed in China. That's 5 times the number in the United States.

In 2017, 5+ million trademark applications were filed in China.

In 2018, 7+ million trademark applications were filed in China

If you just wait and see, you'll have fewer and fewer options available for you.

*As the number of good and legally available Chinese names dwindles, your only option is to up your game and explore more creative options faster than everyone else.*



In America, as long as you use the name first,  
you're entitled to certain rights.

Not so in China.

China has a “first-to-file” system that requires no evidence of prior use or ownership, leaving registration of popular foreign marks open to third parties.

So if someone registers the most obvious or not-so-obvious good Chinese version of your brand before you do, you'll either have to come up with a new Chinese name or buy the registered name back.

You may sue them in court or they could sue you in court. You might win, but you could also lose. It's a big waste of your time, money, and market opportunity.

When you learn that “your” Chinese name has already been registered in China, it might be your own fault. You know, China has a first-to file trademark system, and if you do not register your name as soon as you can, someone else might.

It is like knowing the chance of rain  
but not bothering to carry an umbrella . . .  
and getting caught in a rainstorm.

You cannot claim Chinese “identity theft” if you never officially declare and trademark your Chinese name. If someone else registers “your” Chinese name first, that name is technically and legally not yours. Don’t complain if you neglect your responsibility to protect your own name.



You may have heard: “President Donald Trump got a piece of long-awaited good news: After more than a decade of hold-ups in court, his application to trademark his name in China was finally approved.”

—The Story Behind Trump’s Chinese Trademark - The Atlantic Feb 22, 2017

You may also have heard: “Apple has lost a trademark fight in China, meaning a firm which sells handbags and other leather goods can continue to use the name ‘IPHONE.’”

—Apple loses trademark fight over ‘iPhone’ name in China - BBC: 4 May 2016

“A Beijing court said Apple wasn’t able to prove that iPhone was a ‘famous brand’ in China, before the local company applied for a trademark in 2007, the year the phone was released.”

—Apple loses fight over iPhone name in China - Wednesday 4 May 2016

So Good Characters advises you to start your Chinese naming process immediately.

Delaying the process is a disaster waiting to happen. It's not "if" but "when."

*A stitch in time saves nine.*

Engage Good Characters now and we'll develop an exhaustive list of potential Chinese names for you and rank them from the best to the least desirable.

Our comprehensive naming reports empower  
you to execute the following actions:



You'll be fully informed and able to  
make wise decisions.

You may find the most obvious translation/  
transliteration of your brand out there  
in the market, created by others, is actually  
not the best; now you can register  
a better one from our list.

If the best names are taken but other options are still good, you can simply go down the list and register the top ranking name that's available.

If you decide to own the already taken Chinese name, knowing all of your Chinese name options enables you to price name acquisition correctly and negotiate wisely.

Victorious warriors win first  
and then go to war.  
—Sun Tzu

孫子兵法：勝兵先勝而後求戰

Business success in China begins with  
a great Chinese name.

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The basic Chinese naming process  
can be boiled down to 3 steps:

(1)

Develop an exhaustive list of  
Chinese names.

(2)

Rank the names  
from the best to the least desirable.

(3)

Go down the list and register  
the first Chinese name  
that's legally available.

Common pitfalls:

Fail to create lots of names:

Most people are too narrowly focused  
at the beginning.

People don't come up with enough names;  
they leave many options on the table.

Good Characters reaches deep and wide:  
With naming expertise and 18 years of  
experience, Good Characters develops ideas  
that are far and wide and very deep.

Fail to create lots of names: (*cont.*)

Most people are too slow.

People take too much time to name.

The longer it takes,  
the fewer options you'll have.



Good Characters is fast:  
Good Characters has expertise and  
a proprietary system that generates  
thousands of names a second.

Fail to rank the names:

Most people fall in love with the wrong name.

They rank with personal bias and preferences,

or they fall in love with a name and

stop evaluating others.

Too much emotion clouds objectivity.

Good Characters is  
experienced and objective:

We're objective.

We have been doing this for 18 years.

Fail to rank the names: (*cont.*)

As a result of subjective personal bias, most people mistakenly reject some unique and good names (false negative) and put too much weight on common and mediocre names (false positive).

Good Characters has a dual analytical approach, using both humans and machines. The result is balanced and objective.

Most people don't take the time necessary to rank the names and reach consensus.

The result is panic when the first chosen name is legally unavailable. Then they go back and forth trying to select the second or third name.

Good Characters instills the discipline to rank the names so you can simply execute the process by going down the list and applying one by one. It's unemotional and efficient.

Other branding firms vs. GC:

For most other design or branding firms,  
naming is just a small part of their business.

We specialize in Chinese naming.

Naming is all we do.



Translation companies vs. GC:  
Some agencies outsource to translators  
instead of professional namers.  
Nammers are specialized.

“Almost good name” vs Good name

*The difference between the right word and  
the almost right word is the difference between  
lightning and a lightning bug.*

—Mark Twain

Without a good name, you could  
lose the whole game.

CMO: It's harder and harder to get  
a legally available good Chinese version of  
your brand name in China,  
so you need to act fast.

Engage early so you can be ready  
when you need to be.

Ask your agency about Good Characters  
Chinese Naming. Business success in China  
begins with a great Chinese name.  
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