

Apollo, Silverlight, Java & Zinc – It's a Name Game

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As we approach the public 'beta' of Adobe's Apollo, the question naturally comes round to what is going to be the final name for their latest piece of software. We've been told that 'Apollo' is only the code name for the application and will be changed sometime soon. Looking from a marketing viewpoint, this could be a rather dangerous thing to do. The Apollo brand has to date has been very successful, to such an extent that it is immediately recognisable within the industry.

The marketing guru's at Adobe should be very wary about re-branding. Microsoft have announced 'Silverlight' to the adoring public and it would seem that the name has captured the imagination. Brand names and in particular how they sound do capture the imagination of the consumer.

A classic example of this is 'Flash.' It immediately conjures up thoughts of those storms and tempests that are often highlighted by a 'flash of lightning,' extremely quick, lighting up the darkness and of course all powerful. Apollo is good choice of name and it works on two levels. 'Apollo' was one of the more powerful gods who resided upon the top of Mount Olympus, Apollo was god of the Sun, the giver of light, is this how Adobe wishes their new application to be viewed?

As a code name or 'working title' it's also good choice. In the 21st century 'Apollo' is more associated with NASA space missions, the name now gives the impression that Adobe are attempting to enter into the unknown, they are going to be exploring all possibilities.

Sun Inc. chose the name 'Java' to brand their application and launched it in the 1990s. It has since become synonymous with that decade, when everything was cool or hot depending on what you were talking about and to who, those New York 'Friends' began meeting in those coffee houses, socialising became an everyday sport and at that time name 'Java' encapsulated all this. Unfortunately times have changed and recently Sun Inc. announced 'Java FX.' But does this name work? The 'FX' suffix has possibly been added to make 'Java' look 'cool' once more, though it may well give off the impression that they're in something of a 'fix.'

MDM Zinc is another great brand name. Zinc is an impervious metal, though once heated it becomes malleable and can easily be crafted into various shapes. This name, in its literal sense, today tells us that the application is strong and impervious to external forces. It also speaks of great creativity, enabling the end user to 'sculpt' what ever image they desire. Here is also a great example of how the sound of the products name can give it that extra appeal. 'Zinc' it is short; too the point, sounds rather sharp, giving it an 'edge' and strangely grandly impressive rather like gold or silver.

'Silverlight' is a clever choice of name for Microsoft. 'Silver' does the much the same as 'Zinc' in regards to the sound of the name, but within, there is also a nice link to the 'silver screen' and when considering Silverlight's video streaming capabilities this rather fortuitous. The word 'light' of course speaks for itself.

But do they work well when placed together? Well opinion is divided; some are for it, saying, it sounds new, invigorating and 'leading the way.' Others are not so sure, feeling that 'Silverlight' sounds very lightweight, when compared to the stronger sounding names of Adobe Apollo or MDM Zinc.

End.

Multimedia Limited (MDM) is an industry leading multimedia software company.

At MDM our aim is simple: to make great software. Established in 2002, we have quickly gained recognition as an industry leader in 3rd Party development tools for Macromedia Flash®. With meticulous attention to detail, innovative software and superb customer support, we aim to continue providing our customers with great software.

Our flagship title, Zinc™ v2, has quickly become the industry standard in Rapid Application Development based upon the Flash Format. Zinc™ v2 has also paved the way for our other exciting and innovative Rich Media Application products.

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