Embarrassing product names created: Windows CE

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The project to develop Windows for handheld systems had been operating under its code name of Pegasus when one of the project managers was given the task of picking a public product name.

He took this job seriously, trying hard to avoid a name of the form *Windows + two letter acronym* since the sting of "Windows NT = Windows Nice Try" was still fresh. He asked the product team members for suggestions. He hired a marketing firm to come up with names. He ran focus groups with users to see which names resonated best with them. He exercised the due diligence you would expect to make sure the name carried the desired connotations, while being resistant to ridicule and avoiding being <u>unintentionally salacious</u> or offensive.

The field of candidates was narrowed down to ten options. He brought them for approval to executive leadership, who decided to pick none of them.

The executive in charge of approving the name insisted on the name *Windows CE,* for no reason other than "it sounded good."

When asked what the letters CE stood for, the answer was that they didn't stand *for* anything, although they hinted at *Consumer Edition* or *Compact Edition*.

The hardware partner companies on the project were not particularly happy with this name, since it sounded like it was favoring Compaq.

And then somebody abbreviated the product name to WinCE, or *wince*.

His lesson from this entire experience: Do everything you can to prevent upper management from naming your product.

Related reading: <u>Embarrassing product names averted</u>. Note that the name WinCE didn't "<u>slip through</u>"; it was *pushed* through!

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