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What You Didn't Know About Corporate Names

How much would it cost if you had to change the name of your business? Many business owners mistakenly believe that they 'own' their business name. They do not realize that a business name registration or incorporation does not provide that kind of protection, particularly not against a trade-mark registration.

A business name, trade name or corporate name is the legal name under which your company operates. It is the name you enter in the provincial or federal registers and use for licences, taxes and other administrative activities. The extent of your rights in your 'business name' amounts to what you can prove in a court. Nothing is a given. A mere business name is no match for a conflicting trade-mark registration, no matter how long the business name has been used.

Trade-mark registration confers Canada-wide exclusive rights. Trade-marks are often used with product names, logos and slogans, but they are also used to protect company names. Any 'mark' that identifies a good or service with your company is worth considering for a trade-mark registration.

The bottom line: registering a trade-mark is the best way to protect your hard-earned goodwill and investment.