

A Business Name Preference Survey

conducted from February 16-26, 2007
for Nikki Heckman by Randy Strothman & Associates

Executive Summary

Description of the project:

In mid-February 2007 a primarily e-mail survey tested the appeal of 13 preselected names for Nikki's new food-based business; she made the final decision about what names to include on the list. From 60 to 70 individuals responded and "voted" for 178 name preferences (people could pick more than one name). The respondents also offered 40+ additional name ideas and 4+ pages of comments, all of which are listed in the Appendices. Among the respondents, four people did not like any of the names listed.

Some basic conclusions:

1. No name took a commanding lead over the others, but some were clearly more preferred. These included the following "Top 5," with the %-age of the total "votes" indicated:
22%—**Bistro to Go**
17%—**Allegheny City Cooking Company**
15%—**Taste Buds**
12%—**Simply Delish**
10%—**Allegheny Cooking Company**
2. A 70% majority of respondents preferred names in the list that did not make "historic reference" to the location; men preferred the historic references slightly more than women.
3. While 4 of the top 5 preferences were evenly split between men and women, more than three times as many women as men preferred the name *Taste Buds*.
4. Names with a sensuous quality would appear to have a slight advantage in the group, particularly among women. Examples include *Taste Buds*, *Bistro to Go* and *Simply Delish*. These three names appealed to 48% of respondents.
5. Although mostly unintended, this exercise seems to have stimulated consumer: a) interest, b) curiosity, c) anticipation, d) support, and e) creative involvement (given the new names suggested and numerous other suggestions). This stimulated early media interest, too.
6. The ACAC church congregation and staff will likely be very strong supporters of the business.

Some potential biases in the survey results:

The e-mail survey included names from 3 different lists: Randy's, Nikki's and *Central Northside Neighborhood Coalition's* Yahoo chat room listserve. Since the survey process was not random, several potential biases could have resulted from using these lists as targets for the survey, including:

1. toward female choices, given their higher response rate
2. toward urban and Northside respondents
3. toward internet users and, by inference, perhaps the middle class
4. probably toward Caucasian respondents
5. toward the Alliance Church population, versus other denominations or faiths

Various potential name prefixes:

Whatever the name that is chosen, any one of several prefixes could be added to the name. These include: **Nikki's**, **Deuschtown**, **Allegheny**, **Allegheny City**, **Main Street**.

Additional interest generated:

As a result of the survey, PopCityMedia.com and PittsburghDish.com are already interested in doing stories on the new business. Perhaps Diana Nelson Jones of the Post-Gazette will do one also.

Other marketing-related insights generated from the survey:

The following marketing messages and ideas also resulted from the consumer survey process as a result of the numerous write-in comments captured in Appendix 3:

- If you use *Gourmet* in the name, make sure the products and services are gourmet quality.
- Shorter (and catchy) names could be easier to remember and might work better on signage, cards, letterhead, etc.
- The Buds in *Taste Buds* could also refer to the “warm” concept of buddies or friends.
- Several suggested the name should reflect what the customer gets, not where it’s located or what it does.
- The idea of a “frequent shopper club” or membership could reward loyal customers.
- Historic names aren’t progressive enough: “Pittsburgh marketing dwells too much on its past.” Another suggested that the name should be “unique, to the point and catchy.”
- Nikki’s “energy, outgoing personality and years of working with people (in and out of the kitchen) is your new businesses greatest asset.” Therefore, “*Nikki*” in the name could be good.
- *Deushtown* in the name would support the community’s new branding/identity efforts.
- Several felt *Bistro to Go* was the only name on the list that actually described the business.
- There is a restaurant or catering business in Fox Chapel named *Simply Delicious*.
- Words like *Bistro*, *Culinary* and *Gourmet* could initially be off-putting to a some consumers, especially those who are more class-conscious.

Appendix 1: raw data from the survey

The following survey tallies do not represent individual persons, but rather choices of names by respondents. Some respondents picked one name, many picked two, a few picked three.

mid-Feb. 2007 survey results	male choices	female choices	total	% of T
We Cook Inc.	3	5	8	4%
3. Taste Buds	6	21	27	15%
2. Allegheny City Cooking Company	16	15	31	17%
5. Allegheny Cooking Company	10	8	18	10%
City Cooking Shoppe		2	2	1%
The Cooking Shoppe		2	2	1%
Gourmet Studio	1	2	3	2%
1. Bistro to Go	19	20	39	22%
4. Simply Delish	8	13	21	12%
The Daily Meal*	2	10	12	7%
Gourmet Station	2	7	9	5%
Calico Cooking Company			0	0%
Dancing Bear Cooking Company		2	2	1%
<i>none of the above</i>	4		4	2%
TOTALS	71	107	178	100%
% preferring historic reference	37%	25%	30%	
% not preferring historic reference	63%	75%	70%	

NOTE: The names highlighted in yellow have been defined here as having historic references, in order to differentiate these from the others. There is a group of respondents that prefers this strategy, but not a majority.

Also, it appears as though the ACAC list (particularly women) is the group voting for *The Daily*

*Meal**; respondents from the other/secular group did not vote for this and sometimes criticized it: “a religious soup kitchen?” Finally, many from Nikki’s church and personal list recommended including her name in the name of the business, although this option was not included in the original survey list.

Appendix 2: additional suggested names

The following additional names were suggested by respondents during the survey:

Diverse names

Seasons
Cornucopia
Fork It Over
Fancy Pig
Metropolitan Meals
Mainstreet Bistro
City Culinary Club
Purple Monkey (*this was a leader in a preliminary survey*)

Heat n' Eat
Pick up Artist
Deli to Go
Bring Home the Bacon
Gourmet to Go (*3 or more people*)
Bake & Take
I Cook, You Eat

Lettuce Serve You
Lets Dish
Feast Fest
Spice of Life Kitchen
The Daily Bread
Soul Food
Bistro Alle'
What a Treat
The Crazy Cook
Taste Buddies

Historic or geographic -referenced names

Allegheny City Cookery
Allegheny City Eatery
Allegheny Epicurian Society
The Allegheny Cooking Shoppe
Allegheny Taste Buds
North Side Slop
Pittsburgh Pick Up
North Side Pick Up
Deuschtown Diner
Deuschtown Deli
Deuschtown Saloon
Deuschtown Cooking Company
Northside Neighborhood Comfort Food

Personalized names

Nikki's Cooking Company
Nikki's Nook
Nikki Can Cook
Heckman's Helper
Nikki's Foods, Inc.
Nikki's Meals...*We Make, You Look Good!*
Nikki's, We Prep, You Serve

Hybrid names

Nikki's Northside Comfort Food
Nikki's Northside Take-Out Meals

Appendix 3: write-in comments from respondents

Eric Milliron: I like the idea of celebrating Allegheny City. With that said, I am gravitating towards [Allegheny City Cooking](#), but I would drop the Company. It seems too long + unnecessary. She could even do something kind of "hip" like having a logo that is AC^2
My primary thought is that is should be something short and sweet that rolls off the tongue. I don't think it is prudent to have a long name. The squared thing I thought might be a nice touch for napkins, menus, etc. A little hip promotional twist.

Eric Miller: Forget about what they the business does, concentrate on what we the consumer get. To succeed, sell food, not Allegheny. The "[Gourmet Studio](#)" isn't bad either. P.S. "[Calico Cooking Company](#)" makes me think of cats, cooked cats. We already have a Chinese take-out. [Dancing Bear Cooking Co.](#) makes me think of the Grateful Dead. Music is good, but I wouldn't want Jerry making my meatloaf.

I also want to say the whole concept is a very good idea as long as its affordable. If it costs more

than eating at max's then its less tempting. Kazanski's deli in Squirrel Hill has a variety of frozen soups etc that we buy sometimes. Delallo in Greensburg has that too. That would be great to have here!

Randall Burns: Don't use [Simply Delish](#) - too similar to a Fox Chapel establishment . . . Simply Delicious.

Bob Cecil: I like 1) [Allegheny Cooking Company](#) because it identifies where you are located and will get shortened to ACC by the community which is easy to say and remember, and 2) [Simply Delish](#) because it says simple and good (which might also imply reasonably priced) and again will be easy to say and remember.

Cindy Cassell: like [Allegheny Cooking Company](#)...has a bit of a historic flavor and defines the company while not being too long or complicated...easy to remember. I didn't really have a 2nd choice.

Cheryl Lowitzer: My top 2 votes would be: [Taste Buds](#) (I like the double entendre of "buds" meaning "friends or pals" -- goes well with feeling of Northside Community). Also like [Simply Delish](#) (gets across feeling that using this service will make mealtime easier and "yummier" -- with apologies to Rachel Ray and her trademarked? "Yummo")

Lynn Schraff: I like [Taste Buds - Bistro to Go](#) - and the [Gourmet Station](#) - it would be good to tie in the last one with the new "T" stop that is tunneling its way to the northside if possible. A possible suggestion "[Deuchtown \(sp\) Deli](#)"
I think it's important to tie into the "place" but some of the Allegheny names sound a bit too much like a cooking school. good luck with your venture!

David Oney: [Allegheny Cooking Company](#). The ACC. Nice ring to it. And do a retro/industrial looking art deco logo! Sell chafers/warmers and party serving equipment with your cool logo on them. People who buy them would get 5% off future food orders. Repeat business! Oh, I got all the answers....(free advice, worth every penny...)

Don't ever name a business with the words Shoppe, Gourmet, Bistro (unless you're French and right off the boat and you're opening an actual Bistro), Buds, or for gods sake, Delish. Just sayin'.

Try using Society or Club. (Maybe name of a "frequent shopper" membership?) As in [Allegheny Epicurean Society](#) or [City Culinary Club](#) if you want some illiteration. The use of the word 'epicurean' alone warrants a 10% price hike from the get-go.

Good luck from us here on the North S...in Allegheny City!

Chris Rapier: Honestly, I can't find anything in that list that makes me say "Yes, I want to go there!" The inclusion of the Grateful Dead reference just makes it that much worse. Perhaps something like [Metropolitan Meals](#), or simply [Metropolitan](#).

Jackie Tulumaris: I like the progressive image. If more businesses look progressive, it may attract other like kind onto the street. The "Ye OLDE" and "[Allegheny City](#)" names conjure a depressing image for me. The Victorian era was very stuffy and regimented. Don't get me wrong, I soooo appreciate the historical fabric of the North Side neighborhoods, but I like to bring it "forward".

Also, as a "boomeranger" (a native Burgher who has lived outside PGH, but returned), I have noticed that Pittsburgh's marketing dwells so much on its past. I fully appreciate the past and believe in celebrating it, but sometimes it seems like it forgets about reinventing itself for the 21st century. (just a side note)

I love the "[taste buds](#)" name. It peaks curiosity and allows for the business to expand what it does as it grows without being bound by its name. Just my opinion.

Robert Sands, art director: I don't mean to be mean however with the cost of signage and printing bags and cards menus etc. etc. It's not a good idea not to have a good idea. First of all there is not enough information to make an intelligent evaluation. Where on the street? What's the address? What kind of food? French, Italian, German, South Western?? What segment of the market are they going for? What type of classes, candy making, baking, food prep? How long will they last? How much will they cost? Who's teaching? how big of a place is it? The other thing is I've heard or seen some of these or something very close to them. None of them seem to be very catchy for today's market. None of them congers up a quick visual. I've typed in my comments beside them.

[Taste Buds](#)---sounds like beer

[Allegheny City Cooking Company](#)---Working Allegheny in is community-friendly, but not appetizing

[Allegheny Cooking Company](#)

[City Cooking Company](#)---Not very appetizing

[The Cooking Shoppe](#)---Pretty generic

[Gourmet Studio](#)---Will it really be gourmet or will I be disappointed?

[Bistro To Go](#) ---Implies French

[Simply Delish](#)---Saw this

[The Daily Meal](#)---Religious soup kitchen?

[The Gourmet Station](#)

[Calico Cooking Company](#)---A little to feminine... men like to cook also

[Dancing Bear Cooking Co.](#)---Feminine

Didn't want to be so critical. Here is an example of what I would consider an instant review in the news media and marketable to all kinds of people including tourists. A restaurant specializing in eastern European/German sausages could be called "[THE WURST RESTAURANT IN PITTSBURGH](#)". It's a story just waiting to be told, and I doubt you would ever forget the name once you heard it. Where are you going?...[THE WURST RESTAURANT IN PITTSBURGH!](#)

Sue Maloney: Nikki, we think [Taste Buds](#) is very cool! We all liked that one. I also personally kind of like [Allegheny City Cooking Company](#). It has a classy air about it while promoting the community's historical presence.

Priscilla Ortlip: I like [Simply Delish](#) and [Taste Buds](#). Unique, to the point, and catchy.

Barbara Burns: Here are my comments. [Taste Buds](#), [Simply Delish](#), [Old Allegheny City Cooking Company](#) names are a considerations. My favorite is [Nikki's Cooking Company](#). I believe your energy, outgoing personality, and years of working with people (in and out of the kitchen) is your new business's greatest asset. Did I not mention great food and location!

David McMunn: The [Deuschtown Diner](#). [The Deuschtown Saloon](#). All that you selected earlier are fine, but something that speaks to the East Allegheny-Deuschtown neighborhood or its German heritage would be great. Play up the ethnic thing. Play up the historic.

Andrew Antoninka: how about [Bring Home the Bacon](#). other wise I like [Allegheny City Cooking Co](#). Goes with the old and features the new.

Scott and Karen Thistle: We are excited for you as your business plans fall into line. It sounds wonderful. I like [Taste Buds](#) (because of buddy or friend or helper) and also [Allegheny Cooking Company](#). There is a restaurant in Fox Chapel called [Simply Delicious](#). Did you know that?

Dave & Charlene Reckless: We enjoyed hearing from you. As people who had a business for 22 years, we would highly recommend that you use either your name or a reference to your location in the

business name. We think [your name](#) would work because so many people know you already. Alternatively, the location reference such as "Northside" or "East Ohio Street" would be beneficial to your business as well.

Plus, I just thought you'd like to hear the opinion of a younger person...I told my daughter about your business, and she loved "[Bistro to Go](#)."

Of your list we liked "[We Cook, Inc.](#)" and "[Bistro To Go](#)". (Can you add Nikki's, or Northside, or East Ohio Street to these?)

We came up with about a dozen other names for you to think about, of which I am sending you a few.

[Nikki's Meals...We Make, You Look Good!](#)

[Nikki's Northside Comfort Food](#)

[Nikki's, We Prep, You Serve](#)

[Nikki's Northside Take-Out Meals](#)

[Northside Neighborhood Comfort Food](#)

And, by the way, you have a smart marketing consultant!

Jen Saffron: This is really exciting! Is the church supporting you in this move? I think that you might want to touch base with Northside Common Ministries to see if your business could have any interface with their food pantry and/or shelter meal program. I cook for them a few times a year - 30 guys at a time - and they sometimes need assistance when people who are supposed to serve don't show up, etc.

I think that, regarding the name of your fantastic new business, I like [Bistro to Go](#), and/or I would go for something that involved the word [Chef](#).

Karen Dillaman: I really like the [Bistro to Go](#). I also like [Gourmet Station](#). These are catchier and easier to remember than the Allegheny ones since that is in a lot of names around here. Also like [Nikki's Cooking Company](#).

Rock Dillaman: For what it's worth, I'd choose [Allegheny Cooking Co.](#), [Bistro to Go](#), and [Simply Delish](#), with my favorite being [Bistro to Go](#), as it makes it clear what you are offering. Some of the others could be seen as selling food like a grocer, or cooking utensils.

Bernie Beck: [Bistro to Go](#)-it's the only one that describes the business.

Loleda Moman: I am excited about your new business and I will keep you in my prayers. As I look at the names below the two that stand out for me are [The Daily Meal](#) and [Taste Buds](#).

Max Mavrovic: here are my comments below...

[We Cook Inc.](#)

[Taste Buds](#)

[Like it]

[Allegheny City Cooking Company](#)

[Too long]

[Allegheny Cooking Company](#)

[City Cooking Company](#)

[The Cooking Shoppe](#)

[Easily remembered]

[Gourmet Studio](#)

[Bistro To Go](#)

[My Favorite]

[Simply Delish](#)

[Very good, but easily confused with Simply Delicious Catering]

[The Daily Meal](#)

[Second Favorite]

[The Gourmet Station](#)

[Calico Cooking Company](#)

[Dancing Bear Cooking Co.](#)

[Cute, great LOGO opportunities]

What about [CORNUCOPIA](#)? There was a vegetarian restaurant in Oakland in the 1970's called that, but they've been gone for decades. I always liked that name. I checked the phone book and there isn't a listing in PGH now. Or maybe you could go clever with [BAKE AND TAKE](#).

Dara Rodney: how wonderful for you! I like the “city cooking” names because it then won't intimidate people to come on in! fancy names make me feel like i don't fit in

Cindi Harris: I have new ideas to rattle your brain, sorry! I first thought of, 'East Ohio Bistro" but the two didn't mix. I do not think that the north side is a bistro kinda neighborhood, but it could be. My second thought is simply, "Seasons" It might be too simple but it does what you will do both figuratively and literally. Sorry I choose my own two

Tony Spearman: The names are very good, but the one I feel would be best, is one I know you will not use, Because of your modesty. But, volumes of people know this name...

1. NIKKI'S FOODS INC.
2. The daily bread
3. SOUL FOOD (smile...)

David and Mary Lee: (from Nikki's conversation) They are asian-american who lived in the North side area prior to leaving for Paris. He is now a strategic planner for PNC bank. Mary worked in the food service business. (chef/manager)

They wanted to meet with me to provide personal feedback on the name of the business. (This name thing sure has created sound combined enthusiasm) They responded positively to the word "Bistro". They also wanted to insure I understand the meaning of how the French use the word Bistro. A Bistro is better than a Cafe but not pretentious like a restaurant. It is a comfortable place locals hang out to get good food. (I liked that) My husband made the comment that the North Side may not relate to the word or understand what it means. David said "a little mystery is good" They also said in reference to "Bistro To Go" they would change the word "To Go" to the french meaning " Alle' "

Their final recommendation: [Bistro Alle'](#) (He needs to verify the verb) Maybe underneath it would say "Great Food or / Comfort food to go"?
One more to add to the list

from Nikki: I was wondering what you think of utilizing the words '[Main Street](#)' in the name? Any appeal? Looks to me from researching there is huge popularity on the 'market farm house theme.' It seems to catch the masses. The diversity in these types of menu items could go from 'upscale to a little soul' Jazzy salads with fresh greens, creamy lobster pie with flaky puff pastry, sweet molasses barbecue ribs, Market potato salad drizzled with dijon mustard vinaigrette, sweet bourbon glazed salmon, Summer Zucchini Frittata, Gargen veggie lasagna, Cider roast turkey with sage butter stuffing, Thyme scented chicken meat loaf. Your thoughts? Is it makin ya hungry?

Somethin better click soon I'm drivin my husband just a little crazy! Now there's a name [The Crazy Cook!!!](#) [Main Street Bistro?](#)

Jim Ward: Hi! From the list I like [Bistro to Go](#) and [Gourmet Station](#). Keep in mind what the name will look like on a sign, and what is conveyed to a passing motorist...Another suggestion might be "[What a Treat!](#)"

Mark Hoover: Don't overlook a sit-down restaurant. It's what is missing - a clean, affordable, restaurant with non-bar food...

Jennifer Flannigan: Looking forward to sampling the products!

Michelle Adams: I hope your venture is a great success I am looking forward to patronizing it.

James Christner: I would select these...much more relevant to the area than the other more generic names. [Allegheny City Cooking Company](#) and [Allegheny Cooking Company](#)

[Nikki:](#)

Blaine Workman: For what it is worth, I really liked [Taste Buds](#) (first) and less so [Bistro to Go](#) (second)... and this from a history buff. I went online to check the domain name tastebuds.com and of course it was taken. As a result, you would have to add a prefix or suffix for your web site. This would be true for many of the names except for very specific ones involving your location (allegheny city) or your name (nikkis taste buds). I think it is interesting that women preferred homey names like the ones above- your target market is primarily women- they will be the ones driving men to the pick-up dinner business.

Carolyn Friday: I like Bistro to Go - it id's that you're pickup/takeout, not eat-in and you can list what you do without redundantly using the word 'cooking', e.g. Bistro to Go - Takeout meals, pickup catering, onsite cooking classes.

from Nikki: I'm liking Foster's Market a lot. This theme and feel of the web site really appeals to me. Menu type matches what I cook at ACAC to please em all. It's not too over the edge upscale, just a little eclectic, a little diverse soul, some occasional ethnic flair without sending the old fashioned message. I came across this in my cook book collection and dug into the site. Their restaurants got pieced in after they opened because of demand. I cant imagine that occurring on EO, but other than that I think it has a broad market appeal. I could tie this easily into the community philosophy of the White Dog. I think it would tie in nice to selling at the upcoming co-op and using the NS urban produce growers Jen mentioned.

Foster's Market : Upscale Market, Deliimage, Cafe, Grocery & Catering ...

Preparing homemade southern gourmet and comfort food recipes for daily breakfast, lunch and dinner served in an eclectic relaxing restaurant with two North Carolina locations.

- www.fostersmarket.com
- [Cached page](#)

Appendix 4: the basic survey

The survey instrument was a simple e-mail sent originally to a list of primarily North Side residents, businesses and other stakeholders. In addition, the Central Northside Neighborhood Coalition published it to their Yahoo listserve and Nikki Heckman sent it to her list of friends and associates, primarily at the Allegheny Center Alliance Church (with some additional language). The basic survey included the following:

Friends,

Something special is coming to East Ohio Street later this year: a new business with tasty offerings. You can look forward to:

- 1) a variety of prepared meals to go,
- 2) take-out catering and
- 3) fun cooking classes.

All of this is going to be provided by an experienced chef and prepared with the best ingredients.

We need your opinion on a NAME for the business. What strikes your fancy in this list? Please take a minute and pick only **your top two favorites**. Or add one you come up with!

[We Cook Inc.](#)

[Taste Buds](#)

[Allegheny City Cooking Company](#)

[Allegheny Cooking Company](#)

[City Cooking Company](#)

[The Cooking Shoppe](#)

[Gourmet Studio](#)

[Bistro To Go](#)

[Simply Delish](#)

[The Daily Meal](#)

[The Gourmet Station](#)

[Calico Cooking Company](#)

[Dancing Bear Cooking Co.](#)

Thanks much for taking the time to help us sort through the possibilities.
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