

DID YOU KNOW?

Stories Behind Names

There are very few people these days for whom the names **iPad**, **Instagram** or **Skype** do not ring a bell. But although the devices and apps presented below have become an inseparable part of our lives, we seldom realize or bother to check what their names really mean. If you are curious to discover the meanings and origin of some popular names and brands, read on.

Google

This popular search engine, which was registered almost 20 years ago, takes its name from the word **googol**, a number equal to 10 to the 100th power (1 followed by 100 zeros), in informal English known as an unfathomable number. Google is just a play on this mathematical term.

i...in Apple products

As Steve Jobs explained when he first introduced iMac, the vowel "i" stood primarily for **internet** but also for *individual*, *instruct*, *inform* and *inspire*. Although Apple have recently decided to drop the "i" prefix from many of their products, this teeny-weeny letter has been identified with the brand ever since it was first used for iMac in 1998.

Instagram

As you can find in Instagram's 'FAQ' section, the name of the application is a combination of two words: **instant** and **telegram**. And that is basically what this social networking service is all about, the app makes it possible for people to share photos and videos with their followers very quickly.

Pinterest

Co-founded by the visionary Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra and Evan Sharp and first launched in 2010, Pinterest is a portmanteau of the words **pin** and **interest** because the service allows users to save their favourite images on different boards.

Skype

While the **sky** element of this trademark seems to be an obvious part, the -pe portion remains a bit of mystery for many. In fact, it comes from the term **peer-to-peer** because the platform was released as software for P2P communication. However, the name *Sky peer-to-peer* was too long and did not sound good so they decided to shorten it to *Skypier*. But this is not the end of the story. As many of the domains for the company's newly invented name had already been taken, they were forced to shorten it once again. As a result, the final consonant was dropped and that is how they ended up Skype.

Twitter

This microblogging service, which turned 10 last July, takes its name from the English verb **to twitter**. The verb dates back to the late fourteenth century (and Middle English form *twiteren*), and when used with reference to birds it means to produce a series of short, high sounds, to chirp. It seems to be a perfect name for the service that is a combination of instant messaging, blogging and texting.