

Change of the Business Name

Introduction

The choice of the name that is used to represent your services to the market is an important decision which sometimes does not get the full attention it deserves, with the default option of a numbered company name (e.g. 123456 Ontario Limited) being taken in order to advance the registration process.

While the numbered company option might have been expedient there are some negative aspects for an operating business doing so. The most obvious is that of client memory. People commonly remember a name such as Bob Smith Services Ltd, better than they remember the number in a numbered company name. Additional to this reality is the fact that judge once commented that when one sees a numbered company they think of a “ *Holding* ” company as opposed to an “ *Operating* ” company which has clients. In that court case, this perception contributed in part to an adverse decision for the business’s shareholder.

The good news is that it is possible to either change/amend the name of a numbered company or to simply introduce/register a new name under which you can deliver your businesses produces and/or services.

Amend Your Business Name

If your business has been incorporated, the current cost to change / amend your name in your Articles of a Business Corporation is a fee of \$200.00 with you having the option to request the change either online or by mail. Information on making such a change can be found at **1) [Amending the Articles of a Business Corporation Online](#)** and it is suggested that your read information before you start.

- If you chose to make the changes on line you can do so through Corporations Canada’s **2) [Online Filing Centre](#)** (Scroll down to “Services for Business Corporations ONLY”. Choose “Amend articles of the corporation” and follow further directions).
- For the information on a non-online application by email, mail or fax please visit the **3) [Industry Canada](#)** website.

You may wish to consult a lawyer or business professional if you have specific questions. Additional expenses will be applicable to these services.

Register a New Name (doing business as - dba new name)

The approach is less costly and may be preferable, as it is easier and faster. As a start, it is recommended to read **4) [Business Name Registration Information](#)** before proceeding. On this page you can find **5) [Information Sheet](#)** with all the guidelines, FAQs, Forms and Applicable Legislation.

This approach involves registration of the new business name (Operating name) for an existing corporation. A “*Trade Name*” is any name under which you do business other than the current legal name on your corporate registration record (Example: Corporation’s name is 12345 Canada Inc., and the business advertises as ABC Consulting, which is registered as a trade/style/operating name).

This registration can be made online (60\$ fee) or by mail (80\$ fee). You can start this process at a Service Ontario office or visit Service Ontario online at their website **6) [Service Location Finder](#)**.

On this same Service Ontario web page, you can start your online application or find a mailing address for a non-online application submission. There are some important points to remember:

- There is no limit on the number of trade names, which may be registered by one corporation.
- You must use your corporate name together with the trade name on all legal documents.
- Canada Revenue Agency should be notified about all the changes made to your business. To make changes please visit **7) [CRA website](#)**.

As with the amending option, you may wish to consult a lawyer or business professional if you have specific questions. Additional expenses will be applicable to these services.

Summary

Positioning yourself to provide your services to the business community requires time and effort. The above comments regarding the choice of name for your company represent simply one point to consider. For additional points to consider please visit the [Association of Professional Canadian Consultants web site](#) to review a check list of things to consider.