



## Numbered Companies by Scott D. Abel

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Did you ever wonder how or why someone chose to do business as 1234567 Manitoba Ltd.? Why not chose a corporate name, and not do business as a numbered company?

A corporation is a separate legal entity, owned by shareholders who elect directors to manage the business. As a corporation is a separate legal entity, it must have a name. Sometimes the name is a number, other times it is a word or series of words.

The numbers are simply determined by the Companies Office. When you incorporate, if you have not chosen a name, the Companies Office will simply assign you the next number available for the corporation.

If you wish to have a name, you must reserve the name first. You cannot chose a corporate name that is already being used in a business, or would likely be confused for another business. You can use your family name, or chose a name which is descriptive of the type of business you are operating.

Often times, the name of the corporation does not matter, as

the corporation will not be involved in any active business, where name recognition is important. For example, the corporation may simply own land, or the corporation is being used as a shareholder in another company. Whatever the reason, if the incorporators do not wish to have a business name, a number will suffice.

Even if the corporation is a number, it can still do business with a business name. If you look at any retail business, the sign on the front of the store may not have Inc., Ltd. or Company at the end of the name. The business may be a corporation, but it is doing business under a separately reserved business name. Your favorite restaurant or retail store may be a numbered company, operating as the business name you have come to know and recognize.

From a retail point of view, it is the business name and the recognition which is important for the business, not whether or not it is a numbered company. The decision to be a numbered company or a named company was a decision made long

before the business opened its doors and became profitable.