

# Arena Names

Sports Stadium/Arena With Corporate Names

City Name	Stadium/Arena Name	Sports Played
Anaheim	Edison Field Arrowhead Point of Anaheim	MLB Baseball NHL Hockey
Arlington (Texas)	Ameritrust Field	MLB Baseball
Atlanta	Turner Field Phillips Arena	MLB Baseball NHL Hockey
Arizona	Bank One	MLB Baseball
Baltimore	PSINet Stadium	NFL Football
Boston	FleetCenter Gillette Stadium	NBA Basketball NHL Hockey NFL Football
Buffalo	HSBC Arena Rich Stadium	NHL Hockey NFL Football
Calgary	Pengrowth Saddeldome	NHL Hockey
Charlotte	Erickson Stadium	NFL Football
Chicago	United Center Wrigley Field US Cellular Field	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey MLB Baseball (Cubs) MLB Baseball (White Sox)

Cincinnati	Cinergy Field	MLB Baseball
Colorado	Coors Field Pepsi Center	MLB Baseball NHL Hockey
Columbus	Nationwide Arena	NHL Hockey
Dallas	American Airlines Center	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey
Denver	Pepsi Center	NBA Basketball
Detroit	Coamerica Park	MLB Baseball
Edmonton	Skyreach Center	NHL Hockey
Florida	National Car Rental Center	NHL Hockey
Green Bay	Lincoln Financial Field	NFL Football
Houston	Compaq Center Minute Maid Field (formerly ENRON) Reliant Stadium	NBA Basketball MLB Baseball NFL Football
Indianapolis	Conseco Field House RCA Dome	NBA Basketball NFL Football
Jacksonville	AllTel Stadium	NFL Football
Los Angeles	Staples Center	NBA Basketball (Lakers, Clippers)/ NHL Hockey

Memphis	FedEx Forum	NBA Basketball
Miami	American Airlines Arena Pro Player Stadium	NBA Basketball MLB Baseball
Milwaukee	Miller Park	MLB Baseball
Minnesota	Target Center Excel Energy Center	NBA Basketball NHL Hockey
Montreal	Montreal Centre Molson	NHL Hockey
Nashville	Gaylord Entertainment Center	NHL Hockey
New England	Gillette Field	NFL Football
New Jersey	Continental Airlines Arena	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey
New York	QuikTime Arena	NHL Hockey
Oakland	Network Associates Coliseum	MLB Baseball
Orlando	TD Waterhouse Centre	NBA Basketball
Ottawa	Corel Centre	NHL Hockey
Philadelphia	Wachovia Center Citizens Bank Park	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey MLB Baseball

Phoenix	America West Arena	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey
Sacramento	ARCO Arena	NBA Basketball
San Antonio	SBC Center	NBA Basketball
San Diego	Petco Park	MLB Baseball
San Francisco	Pac Bell Park	MLB Baseball
San Jose	Compaq Center	NHL Hockey
Salt Lake City	Delta Center	NBA Basketball
Seattle	SAFECO Field	MLB Baseball
St. Louis	Busch Stadium Savvis Center Edward Jones Dome	MLB Baseball NHL Hockey NFL Football
St. Petersburg	St. Pete Times Forum	NHL Hockey
Tampa Bay	Tropicana Field	MLB Baseball
Toronto	Air Canada Centre	NBA Basketball/NHL Hockey
Vancouver	General Motors Place	NHL Hockey
Washington DC	MCI Center FedEx Field	NHL Hockey/NBA Basketball NFL Football

Updated list found [here](#) Also: [Naming Rights Online](#)

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# Our souls For Sale or Rent



By Robert Philpot



Star-Telegram Staff Writer



Our anger started when the name of the Ballpark at Arlington changed to Ameritrust Field in Arlington. Well, it didn't start there, but it was the last straw. We're bombarded with corporate-logo info every day. It's ubiquitous. And, of course, it's hardly new. Here are key moments in the history of American corporate sponsorship, naming rights (which is not exactly the same as mere corporate sponsorship), product placements and celebrity endorsements. This is hardly comprehensive, but it was enough to make us want a stiff drink (we won't say which brand).

The biggest shills

Tiger Woods: His golf earnings are a mere \$6.67 million. Total earnings are more than \$75 million.

LeBron James: The Cleveland Cavaliers star's basketball earnings are a relatively low \$4 million. But his \$35 million in endorsements makes him the third highest-paid working American athlete, according to Sports Illustrated.

Andre Agassi: Nearly \$25 million in endorsements for the charismatic tennis pro. You'd think the dude could 'buy' some hair.

Venus and Serena Williams: The only women on Sports Illustrated's list of the 50 highest-paid American athletes, thanks largely to a combined \$29 million in endorsements and appearance fees.

The sellout timeline, brought to you by the Star-Telegram.

Some key individual endorsements:

Adolph "Ad" Toepperwein: Unless you're a firearms historian, you're probably asking, "Who?" He was a young sharpshooter that Winchester approached in 1901, offering him an unlimited supply of bullets and a now-unknown sum of money to endorse the company's products at shooting exhibitions. It's believed to be the first such deal between a sportsman and a sporting-goods company.

Honus Wagner: The Pittsburgh baseball legend was one of the first pro athletes to endorse a commercial product. In 1905, he signed with bat-maker J.F. Hillerich & Son, allowing the company to stamp his autograph on their bats.

Red Grange: The "Gray Ghost," a Chicago Bears running back, signed a deal in 1925 to endorse various products. He earned \$250,000 that year from playing and endorsements. He was also one of the first athletes to have a personal agent.

Lou Gehrig: In 1934, the New York Yankees star becomes the first athlete to appear on a Wheaties box. But it wasn't until 1958 that a jock (decathlon gold medalist Bob Richards) appeared on the front of a box.

Mary Lou Retton: In 1984, the chipper gymnast becomes the first female athlete to appear on the front of a Wheaties box (note to anal-retentive wiseguys: aviator Elinor Smith appeared on the 'back' of a Wheaties box in 1934).

By the numbers

11: Pro-sports naming-rights deals completed so far in 2004.  
16: Major-league baseball teams playing in a corporately named venue, now that the Texas Rangers are playing at Ameritrust Field.  
18: Number of times Michael Jordan has appeared on a Wheaties box, the most by an athlete. Three of those were with

his Chicago Bulls teammates. 26: NHL teams (out of 30) playing in corporately named venues. 70: Amount, in millions, that Tiger Woods makes in endorsements and appearance fees

The product placement hall of shame

Directors began including real products, rather than fake or generic ones, into their TV shows and movies to increase verisimilitude. Now companies pay for the privilege.

- E.T.: The Extraterrestrial: Sometimes, product placement is at least subtle. Not so with the groundbreaking use of Reese's Pieces in 1982's sci-fi blockbuster. Reese's got a big boost for its product when Steven Spielberg's gentle alien became addicted to the candy. Spielberg, by the way, originally approached Reese's competitor M&Ms, which turned the director down.
- Risky Business: Tom Cruise made Ray-Ban sunglasses a star in this 1983 movie – but whose boxers was he wearing when he danced to Bob Seger's Old Time Rock 'n' Roll?
- Independence Day: The argument in favor of product placement is that it adds a realistic element to films. But it can have the opposite effect when companies get their way, such as in this 1996 sci-fi actioner, when Jeff Goldblum says the word "Coke" about four times in two lines of dialogue. And everyone knows, a movie about hostile aliens trying to destroy Earth can't have anything that seems fake in it.
- Tomorrow Never Dies: This 1997 James Bond flick really lays it on thick with plugs for Visa, Avis, BMW, Smirnoff vodka, Heineken beer, Omega watches, Ericsson cell phones and L'Oreal makeup.
- Friends: During the brief time that Phoebe and Rachel are roommates, they debate the merits of Pottery Barn furniture, ultimately overcoming their guilt at

supporting a big corporation because it just happens to turn out a superior product.

- Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery: ' Sure, placing Dr. Evil's headquarters in the Starbucks-logo-festooned Seattle Space Needle is a great joke about corporate influence, but it got Starbucks' name into the movie, didn't it? By the way, last time we were at the Space Needle, it sold Seattle's Best Coffee, not Starbucks.
- Cast Away: Practically a Federal Express commercial, as well as a big plug for Wilson sporting-goods equipments. Because you never know when you're going to be stranded on an island for four years, with only a volleyball for company.
- American Idol: Do you channel-surf during commercials? The Fox network is on to you. There is literally no way to avoid the product plugs on its mega-hit talent contest, as the young wannabe pop stars are forced to shill for the show's myriad sponsors. Yo, dawg, you were a little pitchy on I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke.
- The Last Ride: This TV movie, which recently aired on USA, was such an ad for Pontiac GT0s that Pontiac returned the favor and aired GT0 commercials that plugged the movie.

When product placement goes wrong

- 2001: A Space Odyssey: IBM was originally involved with the film, till it found out that a malfunctioning computer was a big plot point. So Stanley Kubrick named the big computer HAL – each letter of the name is one letter “behind” IBM.
- Jerry Maguire: Reebok asked TriStar to include a mock shoe commercial in the film. When the commercial was cut, Reebok sued and won a \$10 million settlement. But the company is still mentioned in the movie, when Cuba Gooding Jr.'s character makes a derogatory statement about it. All this in a movie where integrity in the



pro-sports biz is a major plot point.

- Spider-Man 2: In May, Major League Baseball and Sony announced a multi-million-dollar marketing deal that included putting Spider-Man 2 movie logos on bases and on-deck circles at major-league ballparks. Baseball purists loudly complained (George Will's face is 'still' red). It worked: MLB backed down, killing the deal.  
Some naming-rights firsts

Pro football: The first pro-stadium naming-rights deal appears to have taken place in 1972, when Rich Products Corp., a Buffalo-based food-products manufacturer, acquired the naming rights for Buffalo's new NFL stadium. Under the deal, the company paid \$1.5 million for 25 years.

You might ask, "What about Wrigley Field?" Well, Wrigley was named for William Wrigley Jr., who owned the Chicago Cubs at the time. So he didn't, of course, pay for the naming rights, and neither did the chewing-gum company that bears his name.

NASCAR: Professional stock-car racing was struggling in 1971 when R.J. Reynolds, looking for new ways to get its message out after Congress banned cigarette ads on TV, gave the series an infusion of cash. The result: The Winston Cup – and a three-decade-long relationship between NASCAR and R.J. Reynolds that only ended last year, when Nextel took over RJR's sponsorship of the series.

College: The first college-venue naming-rights deal happened in 1979, when Carrier Corp., a Syracuse-based air-conditioning manufacturer, paid a one-time \$2.75 million fee for naming rights to the Carrier Dome.

College bowl game: The first, apparently, was El Paso's John Hancock Sun Bowl in 1986, and if you've ever been to El Paso,

a financial-service company and a Revolutionary War figure aren't the first things that come to mind. This year's game will be sponsored by Helen of Troy, an El Paso-based maker of personal-care products, which plans to call it the Vitalis Sun Bowl, after a hair product.

But well before the naming-rights era, there were bowl sponsorships: Coca-Cola and Anheuser-Busch sponsored the Orange Blossom Classic football game at Florida A&M in the 1950s. It's thought to be the first such corporate sponsorship of a postseason game.

Pro basketball: In 1986, Atlantic Richfield Co. paid a reported \$7.5 million for naming rights to the Sacramento Kings' Arco Arena, the first such deal in the NBA.

Entertainment: In 1990, Hardee's acquires the right to rename the Walnut Creek (N.C.) Amphitheatre to the more cheesy – and more burglary – Hardee's Pavilion at Walnut Creek. It's believed to be the first naming rights agreement for an entertainment venue.

Baseball: The first deal takes place in 1990, when Coors Brewing Co. announces its bid for naming rights for a new Denver baseball stadium. Coors also is a part owner of the Colorado Rockies baseball team, which began playing when the stadium opened in 1995.

### Naming-rights extremes

- In 1999, instead of selling naming rights to its stadium, football's Cleveland Browns sell naming rights to each of the stadium's four gates.
- In 2000, Reliant Energy pays \$300 million – the largest sum to date – for a 32-year agreement allowing the Texas-based energy company not only to slap its name on the new home of the NFL Houston Texans, but to rename

the Astrodome and three other venues near the stadium.

- Bacardi USA recently paid \$5,000 to the local government of Richland, N.J., to change its name to Mojito – a Caribbean rum rocktail – for at least two weeks. Richland – er, Mojito – produces mint, a key ingredient in a mojito.

The worst:

3Com Park, San Francisco, formerly the much more romantically named Candlestick Park. Now SBC Park, which is almost as bad.

Things you forget are named after corporations:

Times Square, New York, named for The New York Times Company

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Sources: ESPN Sports Business

([espn.go.com/sportsbusiness/s/stadiumnames.html](http://espn.go.com/sportsbusiness/s/stadiumnames.html) );  
Naming Rights Online ([www.namingrightsonline.com](http://www.namingrightsonline.com) );  
Arizona Republic; El Paso Times; Business Week; Brand Strategy; Los Angeles Times; Sports Illustrated and Sports Illustrated for Kids; Wheaties official Web site ([www.breakfast-of-champions.com](http://www.breakfast-of-champions.com) )

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At (Your Name Here) Arena, Money Talks

May 30, 2004

By RICHARD SANDOMIR

GET your scorecard. You will need one to traverse a peculiar, fast-growing marketplace in which companies craving public recognition and customers vie for the rights to name arenas and stadiums after themselves.

To paraphrase the sportscaster Al Michaels, do you believe in Petco Park? Or Heinz Field? Or the Edward Jones Dome? (Who knew that nice Eddie from the cul-de-sac even owned a dome?)

And, really, who had ever heard of “naming rights” until a decade or so ago? But they have become an indelible part of sports marketing, a natural extension of corporations’ sponsoring of golf tournaments or buying of stadium advertising. This month, almost out of the blue, came word that the home of the Texas Rangers – with a nearly incognito name, the Ballpark in Arlington – was being renamed Amerquest Field. In return, the Amerquest Mortgage Company is paying the Rangers \$75 million over 30 years.

“In 1988, there were only three naming-rights deals with a total contract value of \$25 million,” said Dean Bonham, the chairman and chief executive of the Bonham Group, a sports marketing company based in Denver that has negotiated many naming agreements. “Today, there are 66 deals worth \$3.6 billion.”

That means that more than half the arenas and stadiums in professional baseball, football, basketball and hockey now bear corporate names, creating new cultural touchpoints that may be difficult for fans accustomed to the sound of a Fenway Park or a Yankee Stadium.

The Staples Center, for instance, is not a distribution point for paper clips and laser printers but the retailer’s

gigantic Los Angeles marketing tool, where the Lakers and Clippers play basketball and the Kings play hockey. And Miller Park is not a giant kegger for beer drinkers but home to the Milwaukee Brewers, who get \$2 million a year from Miller Brewing.

"I hope there's no Viagra Stadium," said Jeff Knapple, the president of Envision, a sports marketing company that has made many deals for naming rights. "Most owners would have a difficult time saying, 'We took \$10 million from Viagra.'"

STILL, people can become attached to the most mundane name, even that of a telephone company. In San Francisco, Giants fans accepted Pacific Bell as a civic link to the success and beauty of what became known as PacBell Park. Before this season, though, it became SBC Park, reflecting a decision by SBC Communications to rename all its divisions, including Pacific Bell and Ameritech.

"There was some derision, but in the end, we were able to sell it as the same company," said Larry Baer, executive vice president of the Giants. "Pacific Bell had departed from the language." To soften the impact, season-ticket holders got \$100 ballpark replicas and SBC sponsored opening-week giveaways.

SBC, like other companies, is a serial namer. It also paid to name the SBC Center in San Antonio. There is also the American Airlines Center in Dallas and the American Airlines Arena in Miami, as well as the overnight-delivery daily double: FedEx Field, the home of the Washington Redskins, in Landover, Md., and the FedEx Forum, under construction in Memphis, where the Grizzlies will play their N.B.A. games.

And Bank of America, after recently supplanting Ericsson, the cellphone maker, at the Carolina Panthers' stadium, is

negotiating to replace the name of its new acquisition, Fleet Financial, on the Boston arena where the Celtics and Bruins play.

The market for naming rights reflects the undulations of American business. Bankruptcies, mergers, the stock market tumble and accounting scandals have resulted in a fair degree of discombobulation. Some stadiums and arenas changed their names, some lost their corporate identities altogether and some were not around long enough to get one. Here are some examples:

CMGI Field, we hardly knew ye – and the New England Patriots never played in you. CMGI, an Internet marketing and holding company, with its business floundering, bailed out of its naming deal just weeks before the 2002 season began, replaced quickly by Gillette, whose name has long been synonymous with sports.

Remember the CoreStates Center in Philadelphia, home of the 76ers in basketball and the Flyers in hockey? It became the First Union Center when the First Union Corporation bought CoreStates Financial. Then First Union acquired Wachovia, assumed that name and redubbed the arena the Wachovia Center. The bank kept paying for new arena stationery. “We didn’t particularly like changing the name,” said Peter A. Luukko, president of Comcast Spectacor Ventures, which owns the arena. “But people found us. If I could do one thing over, I’d have negotiated one name change, then we’d have to open it up and negotiate a better fee.”

How about that nice, retro Enron Field in Houston, the hitters’ mecca? The Astros played there for nearly two seasons as accounting tricks made Enron look as solid as Wal-Mart, but the discovery in 2001 of financial finagling and its subsequent filing for bankruptcy protection led to the disappearance of Enron’s notorious name from the ballpark. The Astros made a wholesome switch to a juice

maker a year later, and now they play in Minute Maid Park.

Well before Adelphia Communications crashed into bankruptcy protection in 2002 amid accusations that it was looted by its founding family, the Rigases, it agreed to pay \$30 million over 15 years to the Tennessee Titans football team to put its name on a new stadium. Today, what was once Adelphia Coliseum is simply the Coliseum, feeling a little unloved by the corporate world. After all, the nearby Gaylord Entertainment Center, where the Predators play hockey, still has its name.

Then there is the tale of Pro Player Stadium. Once, Pro Player was a highflying sports apparel maker with deals to outfit National Football League teams. Its name seemed perfect for the home of the Miami Dolphins and the Florida Marlins. They're all pro players, right? Fruit of the Loom, which owned Pro Player, filed for bankruptcy protection and shelved the Pro Player brand. The stadium still bears the name (Perry Ellis International bought the brand in 2001 and licenses it to makers of athletic wear) and Fruit now belongs to Warren E. Buffett.

You never know what will happen in a world where a team can't make a corporate sponsor do 500 sit-ups when something goes awry. The Houston Texans started play in the National Football League in 2002 at Reliant Stadium, named for the utility Reliant Energy, which is paying \$300 million over 30 years for the connection. Last month, a federal grand jury indicted several Reliant employees on charges of manipulating prices during the California energy crisis.

Thirty, 40 or 50 years ago, when fans sat in Tiger Stadium, Boston Garden or Crosley Field, sports facilities were named, free, for a team, a city, an owner – or a coach, politician or soldier. It was as simple as Ebbets Field (for Charles Hercules Ebbets, who owned the Brooklyn

Dodgers) or as convoluted as the Polo Grounds. That horseshoe-shaped ballpark in upper Manhattan was a successor to polo grounds just north of Central Park where the New York Giants first played baseball. The Giants moved north, but the name stuck despite its irrelevance to baseball.

Those days are gone. Players earn millions of dollars a year. Stadiums cost hundreds of millions to build. Teams can't subsist on attendance of a million fans a year. Sponsorship has become a sophisticated business, with naming rights a crucial element. The parade of buyers has included banks and other financial institutions (with nearly a third of all the deals), energy companies, insurers, dot-coms, airlines, telecoms, auto companies, brewers and software makers hoping that every mention, every impression made by their names – now connected, if tenuously, to Shaquille O'Neal, Barry Bonds or Peyton Manning – will build their credibility.

"A lot of these make perfect sense, and others you look at, you wonder why did they do it?" said Jim Andrews, vice president of the IEG Sponsorship Report, a newsletter based in Chicago. "The big benefit is the branding opportunity, but the big 'why' that jumps out is the Pepsi Center in Denver. Pepsi doesn't need name awareness."

What do companies get for their money? There is no easy way to calculate a return on investment.

In Houston, the Toyota Center has a showroom and a truck that hangs out of two former luxury suites. A giant bell installed in left field at Amerquest Field will clang (to evoke the company's logo) when a Texas Ranger slugs a home run. At the brand-new Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia, "ballpark bankers" drive fans from the parking lot in golf carts, usher people to their seats, and, yes, discuss opening new accounts. Petco Animal Supplies has pet



adoption days during Padres baseball games at Petco Park.

For Ameriquest Mortgage, of Orange, Calif., naming a stadium and sponsoring this year's All-Star Game voting are part of a plan to raise its profile – even though it made its move in the year that the Rangers' star Alex Rodriguez was traded to the Yankees. "Match the American dream for homeownership with the American pastime," said Adam Bass, vice chairman of Ameriquest. "Baseball is a game for the entire family, and homeownership is the ultimate family occurrence."

Name recognition they get, but do companies log substantially more new sales or customers than if they paid for more traditional advertising or sponsorships? If they are correct about a need for new ways to send their messages in an era when TiVo technology can make commercials obsolete, is attaching their names to sports buildings a sure thing?

"We aren't near the point that these deals are totally measurable," said Mr. Bonham, the marketing executive. "But 16 years ago, we had no clue. We have a better idea. The only true measure is how these relationships impact the bottom line."

Bank of America is uncertain of the returns it will reap from replacing Ericsson on the stadium in Charlotte, N.C., beyond a general appeal to the large number of customers and employees in its hometown. "It's not an awareness ploy for us," said Cathy Bessant, Bank of America's chief marketing officer. "Awareness is already quite high for us."

She acknowledged that the bank's measurement of "customer satisfaction and customer delight" was, shall we say, evolving. "The desire for scientific precision hasn't quite caught up with its availability," she added.

But maybe there is some measurement, especially if you are seeking the type of attention that Bank of America already has. Consider M&T Bank of Buffalo. It was about as well known in Baltimore as PsiNet, the Internet company that paid to put its name on the Ravens' football stadium but then went bankrupt. M&T acquired the Allfirst bank chain, based in Baltimore, and suddenly needed to be known there.

"It's a highly competitive market," said William Mabee, senior vice president for marketing at M&T, adding that his bank was competing with Bank of America, Wachovia, SunTrust and Mercantile. The M&T name replaced PsiNet's last season – at a cost of \$75 million over 15 years. Up went the exterior signs for M&T Bank Stadium: two that were 29 feet high and 130 feet long and two that were 20 feet high and 17 feet long.

"In the first four months, we went from zero recognition to third place among 18 banks in our survey," Mr. Mabee said. And its customer retention rose. "I'd like to say it's great advertising, but we think the naming rights are a big part," he added.

PETCO PARK, said Shawn Underwood, a company spokesman for Petco, is not intended to compel Padres fans to buy bags of Iams cat food every time Phil Nevin hits a home run. But the chain has stores in every Major League Baseball market, and it estimates that because of Petco Park, its name was seen 200 million times in the first four months this year, compared with 230 million times for all of last year, before the stadium opened.

"Continually seeing our name," Mr. Underwood said, "we hope will make our name click with people, and say, 'I want to shop here.' "

Still, the notion of public companies spending millions on such endeavors rankles Nell Minow, editor of the Corporate

Library, an independent research firm that specializes in corporate governance. She wonders about shareholder returns from these deals.

“Are they about pride?” she said. “Ego? Are they about schmoozing or returning value to shareholders? I’m not sure that brand recognition, unassociated with the product or service you sell, is valuable. If Nike wanted to do it, I could see it, but why a bank would do it is beyond me.”