

Why do I see the same fake names in Microsoft samples over and over?

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Raymond Chen

If you see a fake name in a Microsoft sample web site, sample code, or sample documentation, you'll probably find that it's usually one from a small set of names. A sample corporation is typically called Contoso or Fabrikam. A sample store is typically Wingtip Toys. (For a few weeks, they used Wingtip Toys on Windows Live Local.) A sample bank is Woodgrove Bank. And a sample software company is Litware, Inc. (There are other fake names, but these are the ones you're most likely to see.)

Where did these fake names come from?

The Trademark Group in Microsoft's legal department.

The Trademark Group performed background checks on these names and cleared them for use as fictitious entities by Microsoft samples and documentation. The web sites for all of these "companies" redirect to the main Microsoft home page. Having a pool of "standard fake names" means that Microsoft samples and documentation don't run into the problem of a fake URL turning into a porn site.

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