

# Naming your baby for online success

 By [Matthew Arnold](#)

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Whether you or your partner are currently pregnant, planning to start a family soon or even if the thought of having a child is still comfortably off in the distance, there is one thing that you, along with all other potential parents, will give a lot of thought to; your baby's name.

Your name is a major part of your life. It's the name which everyone will refer to you as, from the primary school bullies to the name engraved on your Nobel Prize. Names show our lineage, reflect our culture, have deeper meanings and set us apart from the next person.

## Digital persona

However in the digital age there is now an additional aspect that you should consider when naming your future child - their name's searchability, meaning how well their name ranks in organic search listings. In the information age we rely heavily on digital personas. All of our profiles, articles and achievements are scattered across the internet and are strung together purely by our names. Having a unique name will impact the online world your offspring inhabits.

This issue is something that is rather close to my heart as my name - Matthew Arnold - is particularly common. I was recently invited to a Facebook group that consisted of a number of other people with the same name as mine from all across the world. I also happen to share my name with a rather famous poet, ensuring that search engines almost always direct you to a Wikipedia page of a heavily side-burned man who has not updated his content in 126 years.

## SEO advantage

One of the topics of conversation on my namesake Facebook group was the use of our name and digital platforms. Who has the ideal Gmail address or Twitter handle? If you have a similarly popular name you will know the frustration of trying to set up a Gmail address and ending up with the unremarkable `YourName11334587@gmail.com` as the lynchpin holding your ever-growing online world of Google services together.

Having a unique name will provide an SEO advantage for your offspring ensuring that their content is easier to find amongst the surging volume of content on the web. However, this is not always a good thing. Having a common name does provide an unintentional layer of privacy, an increasingly important aspect of online life. If you have a common name it would be much harder for anyone to do a simple Google search and find every online mention of you. Fortunately for me some of my horrible first attempts at writing or website creation from my past are quite neatly buried underneath the substantial amount of content generated by the multiple Matthews across the world.

The big question is, will this matter in ten, fifteen or twenty years time? When your child reaches the relevant age, will having a unique name be of any significant value? At the moment the constant creation of content is at an all time high and doesn't show any signs of letting up. Although the potential online audience is growing every year, with more and more information building up, it is becoming harder and harder to be heard.

## Future search engines

The introduction of Google Authorship will assist greatly by ensuring that all of your generated content is linked together and more accessible, which shows a glimpse of a future where it will be more than just the characters that make up your name that determine your online profile. Search engines are becoming more sophisticated at helping you find what you are looking for, but there is no guarantee that text based search will be the main format in 2035.

With the uniqueness of human faces and the increase in facial recognition software, image search could be the main way to find out more about a person online, rendering your baby's unique name irrelevant. However, text search has been with us for quite some time already and will more than likely still feature in the future.

So if you are about to name your baby I would urge you to put aside the *Meanings of Baby Names* book that you are reading for a couple of minutes - and consider the online impact of your child's name, their future internet fame or battle for privacy.

## ABOUT MATTHEW ARNOLD

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