In 1844 a group of eleven school teachers discovered a small waterfall near Ellenville, New York and agreed to give it a name by reversing the number of their party. The Nevele Hotel, founded in 1911, now includes Nevele Falls on its property, with a plaque permanently recording the history of its name. Stories like these are, of course, extraordinary, but there exist a good many other brand names and company names which are either palindromes or are based on similar word reversals. "All things in nature are palindromes," said the now-obscure Victorian logologist Edwin Fitzpatrick, "since no variation in their shape or essence can rob them of their immanent symmetry. Language, sadly, is the sole exception of this." (For more on Fitzpatrick, the reader is referred to Howard Bergerson's Palindromes and Anagrams, published by Dover in 1973.) And when a word becomes exempt from Fitzpatrick's dictum, it is probably this very starkness and symmetry which gives it its instant memorability, the property which advertisers and other marketers are so eager to exploit as a bit of gimmickry in their sales campaigns.

Although it is by no means exhaustive, I have tried to compile a list of palindromes which have been given this kind of commercial usage -- with the hope that other Word Ways readers, especially those with a knowledge of English and other foreign businesses, can help me to expand it. I have not bothered to include a number of wholly imaginary brands such as Lonely Tylenol, Lion Rock Corn Oil, and Brand X, nor rather obvious and non-acronymic initial-based names such as A.W.O, C.C.O or S.D.S.

Aziza (cosmetic line)
Civic (car by Honda)
Dama/Amad (a perfume and men's cologne manufactured by the same firm)
Elle (magazine)
Eve (cigarette)
Ibis/Sibi (the upstairs and downstairs sections of a New York club)
Laval Deli Grocery (Brooklyn, N.Y.)
Mem Company (realty sales)
Mum (deodorant)
Nissin Foods (Lancaster, Pa.)
Noxon (silver polish)
Oyo Enterprises (an import-export firm; the name is taken from an African tribe)

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Most such reproductions to TOOT, Logo, and repeated words such as (dud rhymes) (1971 W. H.) by stereographs letters generally not been

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