# Top 10 Bizarre Origins of Famous Companies

Some companies have very benign origins; nerds come up with an idea while in college, beg some rich investors to throw them some cash. After years of more begging and hustling, they become successful. Most companies follow some variation of this path. However, the origins of some of the most famous companies in the world are weirder and more exciting than this. Here are the 10 most Bizarre Origins of Famous Companies.

## Number 10: Vaseline

Whenever find yourself with dry skin, you might reach for Vaseline. Do you know the strange origin of Vaseline? Vaseline was founded by British chemist Robert Chesebrough, in 1859. He had been making kerosene from the oil of sperm whales, and was eager to learn what other products could be made from petroleum. He was down an oil well when he discovered what was called “rod wax”, which was a gooey substance. Chesebrough noticed that the workers would use the goo to heal cuts and burns. In 1865, He patented his own process of making petroleum jelly into a usable product. He traveled throughout New York state in a horse and cart, spreading the word about his product, that he called a “miracle healer”. He did this by hurting himself and then applying the Vaseline to his skin. He was kind of a mad man. Today Vaseline is a household name with various skincare products that is currently owned by the multinational conglomerate, Unilever.

## Number 9: Nascar

If you are an adrenaline addict, then Nascar might be the sport for you. Nascar is a popular sport of adrenaline and ego that owes its origin to Prohibition. Nascar started during the era of Prohibition when drivers called runners, delivered moonshine and used soup up cars to deliver the illegal alcohol, so that they would not be caught by federal agents who wanted to nab them. When they outran the agents, the drivers would have racing contests amongst themselves, to see who was the fastest. Nascar became an organized sport when BIG Bill spearheaded the formation of the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) in 1947. On February 15, 1948, the first official Nascar race was held on the beach in Daytona. Today Nascar is a family owned, private company. It oversees over 1,500 races at more than 100 tracks spread throughout 39 US states and Canada.

## Number 8: Automoili Lamborghini SPA

Automoili Lamborghini SPA was founded by Ferruccio Lamborghini, who first started out with a tractor-building company called Lamborghini Trattori. He was an avid collector of sportscars, including those sold by Ferrari. He bought a Ferrari 250, but found that its clutch was defective. He decided to meet Enzo Ferrari at the Ferrari factory in Italy to complain. However, he received a dismissive answer from Ferrari, who told him that "the problem is not with the car, but rather, the driver," and suggested he look after his tractors. He went home and tried to fix his car by dismounting the transmission. He then discovered that it was built with the very same transmission used in his own tractors. He summarized that with his pervious knowledge he could build his own super cars. In 1963, the Lamborghini 350 GTV was presented at the Turin Auto Show as the first of many Lamborghini masterpieces. Lamborghini is today owned by the Volkswagen Group through Audi AG. Last year it sold 3,457 cars; they most it has ever sold.

## Number 7: Toyota Motor Corporation

Everybody owns a Toyota car, or at least it seems that way due to its popularity. However, Toyota was not started as automobile maker or anything close to that. Toyota was founded as the Toyoda Automatic Loom Works by Sakichi Toyoda. Its first product was the Model G Automatic Loom, first sold in 1924.A British Company, called the Platt Brothers, bought the production and sales rights for the loom for a cool £100,000. Sakichi gave the money from the sale to his son, Kiichiro, to develop automotive technology at Toyoda. In 1933, an automobile department was established at Toyoda. The Company's first passenger car, the Model AA, was launched in 1936. In 1937, the automobile division was spun off as the Toyota Motor Company. Toyoda Automatic Loom Works is still around today as Toyota Industries, a manufacturer of forklifts, textile machinery and motor vehicle parts. Last Toyota was the fifth largest company in the world by revenue with 255 billion dollars made in 2016. It was also the second largest car manufacturer with 10.175 million units sold just behind Volkswagen.

# Number 6: The Coca-Cola Company

Coca Cola is one of the world’s favorite drinks, that has a very addictive taste and a very additive effect on your body fat. The addictive nature of Coca-Cola should not be surprising when one considers the origins of Coke. In 1986, Dr. John StythPemberton, a pharmacist and the founder of Coca-Cola started selling a nonalcoholic version of his tonic he called French Wine Coca, the original name of Coca-Cola. When Coca-Cola started, it had enough cocaine in it to make you fly. Back in the day, cocaine was a common ingredient in medical portions, which Coca-Cola was first marketed as. However, public sentiment began to turn against cocaine in the 1890s. Coca-Cola worked to remove cocaine from its soda by switching from fresh coca leaves to spent coca leaves that had no cocaine remaining. At the same time, it started advertising Coke as a refreshing beverage and not a medicine. Today the Coca Cola Company is far more than a Coke company. It owns popular brands like Vitamin Water, Fanta, Barq’s, Powerade and Sprite. Last year it made 42 billion dollars in revenue.

## Number 5: Nintendo

Nintendo has successfully marketed itself as a family friendly video games developer, but its past is not so pristine. Nintendo was founded in 1889, by Fusajiro Yamauchi. Its primary product was a playing card called Hanafuda, that was only legalized three years earlier. Hanafuda is a traditional Japanese card game that was gambled with, by the Yakuza. When Nintendo first started, it found little success. It only became successful when the Yakuza learned how to use them to gamble. Nintendo have tried many things in its past, but has found its greatest success as a video games company especially through its Wii console that has sold 101.7 million units worldwide since 2006. Its newest console, the Switch, is the bestselling console in the USA, this year. It has created many popular video games such as Mario, Donkey Kong, Zelda and Pokémon.

## Number 4: Listerine

Do you remember when you had to keep Listerine in your mouth for thirty seconds; all for a cleaner mouth. Yet, mouths were the farthest things from the mind of Listerine creators. Listerine was developed in 1879, by Dr. Joseph Lawrence based on the work of Joseph Lister. Listerine was originally made to dress wounds after surgery through a company called the Lambert Pharmacal Company formed by pharmacist Jordan Wheat Lambert. After finding little success, its creators decided that Listerine could suddenly be used in the mouth, and started marketing it to dentists in 1895. It only became a household name, when Jordan son, Gerard, joined the company and started promoting Listerine heavily. Listerine is currently owned by the giant pharmaceutical and consumer goods company, Johnson and Johnson. It lines of products have expanded to include toothpaste and floss and its mouthwashes are as popular as ever.

## Number 3: Wrigley

One of the most annoying things your best friend can do is chew a Wrigley gum loudly with an open mouth. Wrigley was founded in 1892, by William Wrigley Jr. He started out selling necessities like soap and baking powder. However, he noticed something very bizarre; he would give away sticks of gum as an incentive to purchase his real merchandise. He then noticed that the gum was far more popular than the soap and baking powder. Wrigley Jr. quickly redirected his efforts into developing his own line of gums. The Sweet Sixteen Orange and Lotta Gumwere were Wrigley’s first gums. They paved the way for a revolution in chewing gum’s appeal. The public at large, especially, the youth were onboarded with these gums. In 2008, Wrigley was bought by Mars Incorporated for 23 billion dollars. Some of its most popular brands are Extra, Eclipse, Skittles, Doublemint, Winterfresh and Life Savers. It is sold in more than 180 countries.

## Number 2: Red Bull GmbH

Despite Red Bull’s false advertisement of “Red Bull gives you wings”, flying is very important to the history of Red Bull. Red Bull started out as a just a local Thailand energy drink called Krating Daeng, in 1976. It was created by Chaleo Yoovidhya as refreshment to keep sleep away. The Red Bull that you consumed while studying, was not developed until 1987 through the vision of Dietrich Mateschitz. He had experienced jet-lag after a flight. He decided to use Krating Daeng to help his lethargy and found that it cured his sluggishness. He then decided to take the energy drink to the west with the blessing and financial help of Chaleo Yoovidhya. He called the new company Red Bull GmbH. Red Bull now owns many sport teams including two soccer teams in the UEFA champion league this year. Red Bull Racing, a Formula 1 team, has won four championships since 2004. In 2016, 6 billion cans of were sold. All together 62 billion cans have been sold to date.

## Number 1: Fanta

Fanta is the most festive carbonated belly enhancer in the world. Although Fanta loves to bring the party, its origin is far darker than a night without the internet. It was created in Nazi Germany during World War 2. After the attack on Pearl Harbor Coca-Cola stopped shipping its intimately guarded secret syrup to Germany. Due to this embargo, Max Keith, the head of Coca-Cola Deutschland, was no longer able to produce Coke, while stocks available were depleting very quickly. Max would not allow Germany to go without soda. He brought together some random ingredients including leftover by-products from a local cheese factory, whey and apple pomace; all these ingredients were brought together by a healthy dose of sugar. This new product was called Fanta and it quickly became a Nazi Germany favourite due in part to its taste. The Coca-Cola company eventually took over the production, sales and marketing of Fanta in 1955. Fanta is now sold in 180 countries, being most popular in Latin America, South America and Europe. It has come a long way from being a Nazi drink.

Which company’s origin did you find most fantasticating? Do you know of any other company with bizarre origins that you feel deserves a place on this list? Have you started a business in manner that can be considered bizarre? Let us know in the comments section below. Thanks for watching.