

Japan Brand Fit Check

SAMPLE REPORT | KUSORA | 15 October 2026

Fictional example. The client, brand and business details in this report are invented solely to illustrate our approach.

Client	Nordlys Botanics Oy (fictional) · Helsinki, Finland
Proposed name	KUSORA (Latin letters)
Products	Premium facial serums, creams and cleansers · Class 3
Target market	Japan · consumers seeking natural, understated skincare
Positioning	Nordic purity and calm · ¥8,000–¥15,000 per item
Name origin	Coined name inspired by Finnish nature and “sora” (gravel)

Our recommendation: Reconsider the name

KUSORA is easy to read and pronounce in Japanese. Unfortunately, that is part of the problem.

Japanese consumers are likely to read the name as クソラ (ku-so-ra). The opening sound, kuso (クソ), is a familiar vulgar expression roughly equivalent to “crap” or “shit.” For a premium product applied to the face, this is a serious mismatch with the intended brand image.

Investing in Japanese packaging or marketing under this name would amount to spending money to inflict lasting damage on your own brand.

A note on our assessment. Our check considers seven aspects of a name, but not every aspect needs a separate rating in every case. When one issue is decisive, we focus on that issue rather than score the rest for the sake of completeness. Here, the negative connotation of “kuso” outweighs the name’s other qualities.

Why the name raises concern

The first impression is difficult to undo

The reading itself is straightforward: ku-so-ra. Most Japanese readers will not need an explanation to pronounce it. The difficulty is that its first two sounds form a word with a strongly unpleasant association. Some consumers may find it funny; others may simply find it off-putting.

If KUSORA enters the Japanese market under this name, it risks being perceived as something like “poop you put on your face.” It might go viral on social media as a joke, but I do not believe it can establish itself as a premium skincare brand.

If success in Japan is the goal, I recommend going back to the drawing board and choosing a new product name.

The association is especially unfortunate for skincare

The proposed products are facial skincare sold at premium prices. The brand is intended to communicate cleanliness, restraint and care. An association with excrement works against those qualities, even though the full name is a coined word and has no such intended meaning.

This concern is about brand communication, not a claim that every Japanese consumer will react in the same way. It is also not a finding that the trademark would be refused registration.

Changing the lettering would not solve the problem

A stylized logo or a katakana rendering would not remove the spoken association. A visually attractive design can help presentation, but it cannot reliably change what store staff or customers say aloud.

What we suggest

The most direct option is to consider a different name for Japan. If continuity with the existing international name is important, changing the opening sound may be worth exploring. A Japan-specific name is another possibility.

If I agreed to file this trademark application despite these concerns, I would not be fulfilling my responsibility to you as a trademark attorney. I am sorry, but unless the name is changed, I must decline to handle an application for KUSORA before the Japan Patent Office.

We have not proposed or cleared a replacement name in this report. Any new candidate should receive its own linguistic review and a separate trademark search before filing.

Scope of this check

This is a qualitative professional opinion based on the name and business information supplied for this fictional example. It is not consumer research, market testing or a prediction of commercial success. We do not assess trademark registrability, prior rights or availability here; those questions require a separate trademark search.

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