

Japan Brand Fit Check

SAMPLE REPORT | VITANOVA | 15 October 2026

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

Client	Brightfield Wellness Inc. (fictional) · Austin, Texas, USA
Proposed name	VITANOVA (Latin letters)
Products	Daily multivitamin and mineral supplements · Class 5
Target market	Japan · health-conscious adults aged 30–50 · mainly online sales
Positioning	Science-backed daily wellness · ¥4,500 per 30-day pack
Name origin	Coined from “vita” (life) and “nova” (new)
Founder’s intended reading	“vy-ta-NO-va” (ヴァイタノヴァ)

Our recommendation: Keep VITANOVA. Use ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) in Japan.

I would keep the name VITANOVA, but I strongly recommend ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) as its official Japanese reading. The spelling is not the problem. Asking Japanese customers to pronounce it as ヴァイタノヴァ is.

In my judgment, very few Japanese consumers would arrive at ヴァイタノヴァ naturally when seeing VITANOVA for the first time. ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) is the more natural and practical choice, particularly for a supplement brand.

A brand should make itself easy for customers to remember, find and recommend. It should not make customers work to pronounce its name correctly.

Why I would change the Japanese reading

1. The product category points to ビタ

Japanese consumers already know ビタミン (bi-ta-min), the Japanese word for “vitamin.” On a multivitamin package, VITA is likely to suggest ビタ, not the founder’s English-style “vy-ta.” This is a matter of ordinary Japanese reading habits, not a lack of English proficiency.

2. ノバ is easier to carry consistently

The second half can be rendered as ノバ or ノヴァ. For this product and this name, I prefer ノバ. Together, ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) is straightforward to say, write and repeat. ヴァイタノヴァ introduces complexity without a clear commercial benefit in Japan.

3. The real cost is repeated friction

A customer who hesitates over the reading may still buy the product. That is not the point. The problem is what happens repeatedly: a customer searches under a different spelling, a friend cannot confidently recommend the product aloud, or a review uses a different katakana form.

None of these incidents is necessarily fatal. But a small obstacle repeated across many customer encounters can make brand-building more expensive than it needs to be. For a small business, that is a cost worth avoiding before launch—not something to solve later with a larger advertising budget.

I would rather adjust the Japanese reading once, now, than spend years trying to persuade customers to change theirs.

The seven aspects of brand fit

These ratings are qualitative judgments, not consumer-survey results. They describe the name as proposed for Japan, with the founder's intended reading. The recommended Japanese reading resolves the main concerns.

Criterion	Assessment	Reason
Readability	Caution	The Latin spelling is readable, but the intended Japanese reading is not intuitive.
Pronunciation	Caution → Good	ヴァイタノヴァ creates friction; ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) is simple and natural.
Memorability	Good	Short, rhythmic and linked to the familiar sound ビタ.
Meaning & connotations	Good	Suggests vitamins and vitality; no obvious adverse Japanese meaning identified in this review.
Distinctiveness	Good, with limits	The full combination has a recognizable shape, though ビタ is suggestive for supplements.
Searchability	Caution → Better	Consistent use of ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) should reduce fragmentation among katakana variants.
Business fit	Good	The vitamin association supports the product category and wellness positioning.

Good = no material concern identified in this qualitative review. Caution = a practical issue worth correcting. “Distinctiveness” above refers to consumer-facing differentiation, not legal registrability.

What I would do before launching in Japan

1. Keep VITANOVA as the Latin-letter brand name. There is no reason, on the naming considerations reviewed here, to abandon the spelling.
2. Adopt ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) as the official Japanese reading. Use it consistently on packaging, the Japanese website, marketplace listings, product descriptions and social channels.
3. Do not spend money teaching the market to say ヴァイタノヴァ. That is a fight the brand does not need to pick. Put the budget into making the product worth remembering instead.

4. Check trademark rights separately. Before filing or launching, conduct an appropriate trademark search for VITANOVA and the relevant Japanese forms, including ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba). This is a legal clearance step, not a request for costly consumer research.

My final view

VITANOVA is a name I would be comfortable seeing a small business build upon in Japan—provided it accepts a Japanese reading that fits the market. ビタノバ (bi-ta-no-ba) is not a compromise that weakens the brand. In my view, it is the reading that gives the brand its best practical start here.

Keep the name. Let Japanese customers say it naturally. Spend your time and money building trust, not correcting pronunciation.

Scope of this check

This is a qualitative professional opinion based on the name and business details supplied for a fictional example. It is not a consumer survey, market test, guarantee of commercial success or quantitative forecast. Clear recommendations are still possible without commissioning additional research. We have not assessed trademark registrability, prior rights or availability; those require a separate trademark search before filing.

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