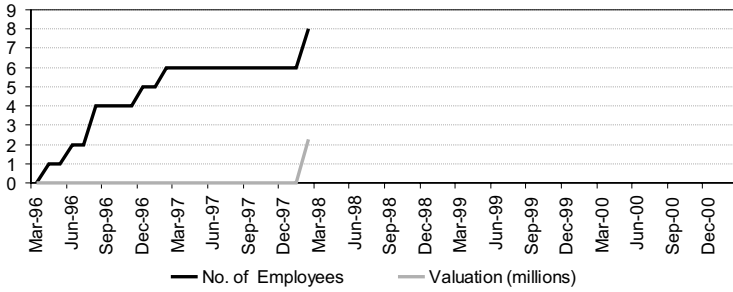


# February 1998



# Identity



In time, we would become known for what we had accomplished. For now, we were known only for what others imagined us to be.

We knew investor feedback had started in earnest when Wally sent Jeff and me this email regarding a meeting at a potential new law firm:

*Denis and I met with Casey today for about an hour. He is perfect for us, as I am sure Denis will agree. I suggest that one of you call him as soon as possible to set up an appointment to meet him. You will be impressed. He is very excited about Neoforma, but hates the name.*

At just about the same time, Alexander and JP wanted Jeff and me to meet with Andrew, a well-respected man from a top management consulting firm. He was the kind of guy people were supposed to listen to. One of his partners had just written a book about the importance of communities to the successful websites. The book was all the rage. Everyone was using its jargon as the justification for the decisions they were making.

Jeff and I set up a meeting with Andrew. He was a very impressive guy. I really don't remember anything about his appearance or style, but I remember that he was able to see and express the relevance of things that escaped most of the investors we spoke with. He really seemed to get it! And he said so. He told us that he really liked what we had to say, but that, of course, we'd have to change the company name.

Many investors we met had expressed concerns about the name. It just didn't sound like a BIG company name. (*And the name you pick should have no more than two syllables—one is better.*)

The name had to *mean* something, but nothing negative. We emphasized that the name *did* mean something—to us.