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Food Labeling

By [Robert Ancill](#) | Submitted On October 16, 2007

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Do you have a worker who's **brilliant and independent**-one who refuses to go along with the crowd? Then you could have a maverick on your hands. But why do we call our independent thinkers mavericks?

In the middle of the 19th century a lawyer named Samuel A. Maverick made his home in south Texas, according to The Merriam-Webster New Book of Word Histories. He was not a cattleman, but he did accept 400 head of cattle as payment from a client for a \$1,200 debt. Maverick, it seems had no use for the cattle, and largely ignored them, leaving them in the care of one of his men. Consequently, the cattle were never branded and were allowed to roam free. Things being as they were; some of the local ranchers decided to take advantage of the situation, branded the cattle as their own and herded them away. In the end, Maverick sold off what was left of the herd, and the term maverick began to designate any unbranded cattle found. The usage spread throughout the West.

By around 1890, the term began to be applied to any member of a group who refused to accept one or more of the group's policies, the idea being that these people refused to be "branded" with what they considered to be restrictive or conformist labels.

Sometimes referred to as a Maverick himself, The Next Idea CEO, Robert Ancill says: "I don't think being a Maverick in the 21st century is about ignoring the importance of branding, however it is about independent thinking, and the ability to identify what is hidden in a world of opportunity - and then acting on it!"

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