

Minerals firm loses its name to Microsoft's Paul Allen

VANCOUVER

A tiny Canadian minerals company has lost its name to Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft Corp., in a court battle and would be happy to get advice from the public on choosing a new moniker.

Vancouver-based **Vulcan Ventures Corp.**, listed on the Canadian Venture Exchange, said last week that a Canadian court had ruled that the multibillionaire has exclusive use of the name Vulcan Ventures.

Mr. Allen uses Vulcan Ventures for private investments in a growing list of technology firms, including **Metricom Inc.**, **Go2Net** and **USA Networks Inc.**

The Canadian company's president, Roger MacInnis, said the name Vulcan Ventures was a natural fit for his gold exploration firm because Vulcan is the Roman god of smiths and metal workers, and the company's shares trade on the venture exchange.

Mr. MacInnis said that he thought this was the first time that a publicly traded Canadian company has been forced to change its name by a foreign-owned private company with no known presence inside Canada.

Suggestions on a new name are welcome, Mr. MacInnis said, but added: "Sadly, we cannot afford prize money.

"The only proviso being that the name cannot be similar to any name of any private company in the world owned by a multibillionaire," Mr. MacInnis added.

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