

CRAIG RUVERE

Strategic Marketing and Communications Leader

201-838-5203 • cruvere@gmail.com • Westminster, CO • [LinkedIn Profile](#)

The most powerful marketing doesn't just describe an organization; it shapes how the world views it.

CASE STUDY

The HC Companies: Branded Container Guerrilla Marketing Campaign

How a targeted, tactile direct-mail campaign unlocked a high-growth market segment and drove 63% sales growth in branded printed containers.

OVERVIEW

The HC Companies is a leading North American manufacturer of horticultural containers, serving commercial greenhouse and nursery growers across the continent. Among its most innovative offerings is a branded, four-color printed container program — custom, four-color printed growing containers that allow commercial growers to differentiate their products at the point of sale and build consumer brand loyalty at garden centers and big-box retailers. As demand for branded plant programs grew — driven by high-profile growers such as Monrovia — HC identified a significant opportunity to expand its share of this emerging and highly competitive market segment.

CHALLENGE

Despite a compelling, technically differentiated product — including the industry's first capability to custom-print on square growing containers — HC's branded printed container program lacked the market awareness needed to convert new grower accounts at scale. The target audience is a specialized, relationship-driven segment in which purchasing decisions are rarely made based solely on digital advertising. Conventional sales outreach was not generating sufficient engagement, and HC needed a strategy that would cut through the noise, demonstrate product quality firsthand, and initiate meaningful conversations with the right decision-makers across North America.

SOLUTION

I partnered with the sales team to identify 100 high-potential growers across North America whose operations were ideally suited to benefit from branded printed containers. Rather than relying on traditional sales outreach, we launched a multi-touch guerrilla marketing campaign centered on bimonthly direct-mail deliveries. Each package combined a physical sample of an actual branded printed growing container with a thoughtfully selected, HC-branded gift — each item chosen to carry a deliberate and memorable message:

- **Branded Tape Measure:** “Let us help you measure your success” — reinforcing HC's commitment to grower outcomes
- **Branded Thermos:** “Let us drink and toast a new partnership” — a personal invitation to begin a relationship

By combining physical product samples with branded, message-driven gifts, HC transformed a traditional prospecting challenge into an immersive, memorable brand experience. The campaign not only drove immediate revenue growth but also established HC's branded printed container program as a premier solution for North American growers seeking to differentiate their products in an increasingly competitive retail landscape. HC's in-house printing capabilities — including the industry-exclusive ability to print on square growing containers — remain a key competitive differentiator available at hc-companies.com/branded-planters.