

Using brands to launch new products: a breeding company's perspective[©]

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Bailey Nurseries, Inc. owns and manages three consumer plant brands (Figure 1) including Endless Summer[®] Series hydrangeas, First Editions[®] trees and shrubs, and Easy Elegance[®] roses. We use these brands as the primary means for introducing new products developed by our breeding company, PII, and by external breeding partners throughout the world.



Figure 1. Bailey brands.

Using BloomStruck[®] *Hydrangea macrophylla* as an example, I will talk about how we used the Endless Summer[®] brand to introduce this new plant. Endless Summer[®] plants started with one cultivar in 2004 and changed the *H. macrophylla* market forever with this remontant new introduction backed by a consumer marketing plan and a distinctive blue pot. To fund this marketing campaign Bailey Nurseries collected a marketing fee as well as a royalty on each plant.

Over the years, we have introduced a total of four cultivars under the brand Endless Summer[®] Series collection. BloomStruck[®] hydrangea, the most recent cultivar, was introduced through the brand in 2014 (Figure 2). We put all the brand marketing tools developed for Endless Summer[®] hydrangea to work for BloomStruck[®] and it has quickly gained market share. At the end of 2015, BloomStruck[®] hydrangea made up 22% of all Endless Summer[®] Series collection sales while The Original (Figure 2) was 60%, Blushing Bride was 6%, and Twist-n-Shout[®] was 12%.

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Figure 2. *Hydrangea macrophylla*, 'Bailmer', Endless Summer® The Original hydrangea on the left and 'P11HM-11', Endless Summer® BloomStruck® hydrangea on the right.

We used the following marketing tools to successfully introduce this new cultivar under the brand umbrella of Endless Summer® in a very competitive marketplace: communication with growers; communication with retailers; brand packaging and merchandising materials; consumer communication via print advertising, digital advertising, regionally targeted billboards and radio; social media; retail events; and public plantings.