

Collaborative Marketing Case Studies for Horticulture



Kristin L. Getter¹ and Bridget K. Behe²
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI

Abstract

While common in business schools, the use of case studies are less common in horticulture curricula, especially for business-related topics. After graduation, most students will go to work in a business, but horticulture majors are often not as well prepared for business management as they are for the technical aspects of horticulture production. In the horticulture industry, collaboration among businesses without formation of a formal cooperative is atypical; thus, the collaboration of independent retail plant sellers in Western Michigan provided an excellent opportunity for the development of a horticultural marketing case study. Branding, especially among state industry groups, has become increasingly popular as a means to differentiate products and stimulate sales. Pricing products can also be challenging, and bundling products often purchased together may give a wholesaler a competitive and price advantage. Since case studies on non-cooperative collaboration, branding, and pricing were not available, three case studies were developed and are presented here for use in an upper-level horticulture course. Students enrolled in a senior-level elective course, Horticulture Marketing, have participated in these case study discussions since 2002. Suggestions for using this case study are also presented.

Introduction

In an effort to make higher education more relevant to the workplace, case-studies are one cooperative learning strategy used in the classroom (Bransford et al., 2000). They are useful in bridging classroom theory and real-world practice in that they allow students to explore alternative solutions and risks, practice analytical techniques, work in teams, make presentations, write reports, and exercise good judgment (Brennan, 2009; Dexter and Tucker, 2009; Burge and Troy, 2006). Using case studies in

the classroom also leads to improved learning and retention, enhances motivation to learn, provides a multidisciplinary systems perspective, and develops teamwork skills (Smith, 1999; Springer et al., 1999; Johnson et al., 2006).

While common in business schools, the use of case studies are less common in horticulture curricula, especially for business-related topics. Within the horticulture industry, collaboration outside formal cooperatives is unusual, thus the collaboration of independent retail plant sellers in Western Michigan provided an excellent opportunity for the development of a horticultural marketing case study. Plant branding has become more popular with an increase in the number of business, regional, and even national plant brands. Since existing case studies on these topics were not available, three case studies were developed from real-world observations and used in an upper-level horticulture marketing course. The objective of this paper is to provide these case studies for faculty teaching upper-level horticulture or agriculture classes with a business marketing component to use (Appendices 1, 2 and 3), as well as to describe classroom management techniques for using them.

Case Study Objectives

Upon completion of the multiple case studies, the students should:

- Gain experience in solving a problem faced by a group of horticultural businesses.
- Be able to use their newly learned marketing concepts, terminology, and skills to analyze alternative actions for the businesses.
- Find additional pertinent information to help make a decision about the direction of the business.
- Articulate and defend their choice with marketing concepts and supplemental information.

¹Post-Doctoral Researcher, Department of Horticulture, A288 Plant and Soil Sciences Building

²Professor, Department of Horticulture, A288 Plant and Soil Sciences Building, Email: behe@msu.edu

- Be faced with real-world decision-making situations where choices with marketing activities and other resources need to be made, based on industry and market knowledge as well as marketing concepts.

Classroom Management

Implementing the Case Study. Students in the elective senior-level 3-credit horticulture marketing course are required to complete three case studies, which are presented here (Appendices 1, 2, and 3). For each case study, they are assigned to work in a group and as an individual and assume a different role for each case-study: present facts and critique solutions, present solutions, or write an individual response. Students are asked to read the case and problem/questions, gather outside and additional facts, consider what the real challenges are for the business, present a set of recommendations, and consider the strengths, weaknesses, and costs of alternative recommendations, and ultimately defend their decision or choice. To do this, students must use reading skills, analytical skills, informational research skills, teamwork skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills. Rotating the roles each student plays as well as asking them to do some work within an assigned group helps to replicate skills needed in the business world.

Students are required to begin their preparation for participating in the case by reading the information on a website (<http://www.mhhe.com/business/management/thompson/11e/case.htm>), which describes why case studies are used, the objectives of case studies in the classroom, how to prepare for and participate in the classroom discussion, how to prepare a written analysis, as well as how to research companies and industries on the internet. The instructor devotes one class prior to assigning the case studies to the approach of the case studies, using the website as talking points. Some appropriate steps are reviewed: reading the case multiple times, identifying key questions or issues within the case, identifying missing or needed information then seeking that supplemental research or data to support a decision or direction, and prioritizing (with budgets, if needed) the solutions. The entire class is divided into three groups, assigned to simulate a business environment where employees lack free choice of with whom they will work.

The roles rotate among groups by case to give students an opportunity to focus on different skills for different case studies (Table 1). Role #1 asks students to orally present the factual information in the case, which must be presented within the 10 minute time frame allotted. Role #1 also requires students to identify which chal-

lenges or questions are most pressing by prioritizing the issues. The students with this role are also asked to critique the solutions presented by students in Role #2. Students in Role #2 are charged with developing a set of recommendations and presenting that set of recommendations and costs, along with any challenges they identify. Students in Role #2 are asked to use marketing terminology and concepts learned in the course as well as incorporate additional research or facts that help support their solution. This presentation is limited to 10 minutes also. Then, students with Role #1 are asked to meet separately (out in the hall) and discuss the recommendations they just heard. The next 10 minutes are an opportunity for students in Role #1 to refute or support the recommendations and evidence produced by students in Role #2. Students in Role #3 write an individual response or solution to the case study, which is submitted prior to the start of class. Students inside the classroom can also engage in an informal critiquing process with students in Role #3. The remaining time in the 50-minute class are spent in open discussion, including students with Role #3. Each part may take up to 10 minutes, but some parts often finish earlier than the 10 minute allotted time.

Roles #1 and #2 require both individual input and group work. Role #3 requires that the student work individually to respond to the case in writing as an individual effort. The student with Role #3 may collaborate in the group, but their recommendations and supporting information are to be presented in their own words. This structure enables discussion and sharing of resources, and potential discussion of possible solutions or outcomes, to give the students some intermittent feedback prior to submission of the case solution.

The instructor’s role during case study discussions is primarily to manage the time by making sure each group stays within their 10-minute allotment. The instructor takes notes on student performance and drafts questions to ask during the general discussion. S/he also may choose to answer questions as they arise. The instructor is virtually silent until the open

Table 1. Rotating roles of groups for each of three classroom case studies. The table is listed in order of classroom exercise

Group or Role Number	Role
3	Full written report that includes recommendations, costs, and associated challenges turned in at beginning of final case study oral presentations.
1	Group orally presents the facts of the case (10 minutes).
2	Group presents a set of recommendations (including costs) to solve the problem and associated challenges (10 minutes).
1	Orally critiques solutions presented by Group 2 (10 minutes to discuss in hallway their thoughts, 10 minutes to present to class).
1, 2, 3	Participate in final entire class discussion (10 minutes)

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discussion portion of the exercise, where s/he would then offer any new information on how the case was resolved.

Other suggestions. Writing good case studies is not trivial and crafting a response to the case takes practice. Few agriculture students have much/any exposure to the case study method prior to this. The lack of familiarity with how to approach a case study learning method was a key finding in the use of case studies in this class. Adequate preparation of all students, especially for the first case, dramatically improved the responses and the student's ability to defend his/her choices. Additionally, writing the individual response without the group effort or opportunity for discussion also produced highly variable results.

Class discussion is a critical step in the case analysis, as students become more aware of their recommendations and reasoning compared to their peers. Like the business climate, information to support conclusions is sparse and not easily found yet still critical to the success of an argument defending a choice. Encouraging group discussion prior to the presentation to the class further encouraged students to "test" their proposed solutions before a grade was assigned. This was especially true for students presenting the written solution.

Writing a response prior to class discussion prepares most students to more actively engage in discussion. It also requires the student to consider his/her choices relative to the assigned group and re-examine reasons for the choice. Perhaps more evidence is needed or a different perspective exposed in discussion. An alternative to only writing a response (Role #3) might be to have all students complete the written response and, two or three days before class, divide them into two groups for presenting facts and solutions. They should be prepared to work with their peers in the two roles in addition to having written their own response. If an instructor wanted to incorporate only one case, s/he might have all students complete a written response submitted prior to class discussion.

Some potential pitfalls to anticipate using these cases would be student unfamiliarity with the case study process and poor preparedness. Only with practice do students become familiar with a case study method. Few students come to upper-level horticulture courses with any case study experience. Devoting one class period to the process, not the case itself, has improved participation in all roles. Generally, working more closely with upper-level undergraduates during the first case helps to improve the level of preparedness. Explaining how and where to find additional information helps direct students to resources

that will improve the quality of their response. It also shows students that finding pertinent information specifically from the horticulture industry is challenging. Therefore, they must find related products and make the intellectual leap to apply findings to the case. Decisions or results of business decisions with similar situations, like perishable food products, can be helpful. Students who must write a case response are often better prepared to discuss the case in class. Visual aids (graphs or charts, images and text) improve the effectiveness of presentations, but selecting groups at the beginning of class would likely reduce the students' ability to create effective visual aids.

In the first year, the case studies did not include questions as often is typical in the business schools. It became clear, however, that many agriculture/horticulture students needed some additional direction in the case study itself. In subsequent years, the questions proved to help guide the students on what was important to think about in the case study. By the end of the third case study, students seem to have a better understanding of the case study method and needed less formal direction and more informal checking of progress.

Summary

Students seeking a career in horticulture will be faced with many other job responsibilities that have little to do with the plants themselves. Using case studies is one useful teaching technique that bridges classroom theory to real-world practice as it allows students to explore alternative solutions and risks, practice analytical techniques, work in teams, make presentations, write reports, and exercise good judgment (Brennan, 2009; Dexter and Tucker, 2009; Burge and Troy, 2006). Giving students a chance to enhance these skills may be important to their future success. With some planning and preparation the use of the case studies described in this article can be incorporated into any horticulture marketing module.

Appendix 1. Marketing Collaboration Case Study

Background. As traditional independent plant retailers (IR) perceived an increase in competition from non-traditional plant retailers, including mass-marketers, they saw a tremendous burst of advertising in the spring which gradually took business away. National Gardening Association (NGA) statistics showed that market share for IR's was eroding from approximately 35% in 2000 (Butterfield, 2000) to approximately 23% in 2007 (Butterfield, 2008). Indi-

vidually, the IRs considered activities that might help generate more business. Several IRs had separately reflected that it might be possible to work together in some capacity to respond to decreasing market share to the box store chains. They were not interested in forming a formal buying cooperative, but rather seeking creative and collaborative means of communicating with their customers.

Year 1. Fourteen IRs in Western Michigan met in Grand Rapids at the Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) office in Kent County. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the collaborative marketing efforts that might be more effective together than separately. Two MSUE personnel helped facilitate the discussion which focused on collective marketing efforts, more specifically cooperative advertising. Some discussion evolved with regard to collective buying, but that was not pursued by the group at that time. The group did not create a formal cooperative, but rather each company committed to invest \$650 each to conduct four joint promotions in Year 1. Some businesses not represented at the meeting also agreed to join the effort. The group was called the My Favorite Garden Shops group (MFGS).

The collective funds produced \$6,000 with which to work. One item they collectively agreed to participate in was a "Tour de Plants" brochure, map and coupon. The coupon on the brochure entitled the shopper to one free plant (worth ~ \$5). The idea was to identify participating IRs and encourage consumers to tour multiple sites, hopefully stimulating purchases at each location they visited. Brochures (5,000) were printed at a cost of \$270, which also had a coupon good for a free plant with any purchase that expired at the end of the summer. Twenty-two businesses were listed on the original map and brochure. Each business was given 500 brochures to distribute to their customers. Although the coupon had a Year 1 expiration date, all of the artwork, logo, and map belong to the group and could be used again.

A second cooperative promotional effort was to buy the back cover of the regional magazine *Grand Gardens*. The back cover was a prominent advertising space and, again, the group decided to include a coupon in this advertisement. The advertisement ran in May, June, and September. The magazine had a circulation of approximately 5,000 in the Western Michigan area.

A third collective promotional effort was a series of newspaper articles written by an MSUE Horticulture Educator in the daily newspaper *Grand Rapids Press* (circulation of approximately 475,000). Each of ten articles highlighted one of the member businesses

and each business had a plant or two on which they focused. Members reported some increase in interest, and perhaps sales, from the newspaper articles. Surprisingly, there was some interest at IRs who were not featured in the article (spillover effect).

A fourth effort by the group was the development of a website that included two articles on specific plants. The group purchased the url (<http://www.myfavoritegardenshops.com/>) for "My Favorite Garden Shops" (MFGS) which contained links to each of the cooperators. An internet coupon was posted for \$5 off a \$30 purchase valid at any of the participating retailers and valid through the end of the summer. A local Grand Rapids company charged \$1200 to develop the website. During the first four days of March, the website averaged five unique visitors per day, which increased to about 10-15 unique visitors per day during the spring months. On the website was a map of the participating retailers, a coupon, and an article about the ten best reasons to buy flowering plants locally. A Michigan State University Horticulture student wrote an article on the Perennial Plant of the Year (*Nepeta*) and a second article on tropical plants. Both articles had accompanying photography. The idea was for each participating businesses to focus on promoting the plant featured in the article and have that information ready for inclusion in their own newsletter. Given the diversity of businesses involved at the start, it was a real challenge to agree on one plant on which to focus.

Recap of First Year. In the fall of Year 1, the group reassembled to discuss progress and future efforts. Most were pleased with the initial results. One of the original stores decided to not continue to participate in the collective efforts, but several new businesses were represented at the meeting. They had heard of the collaboration and were interested in participating. Very few coupons were redeemed at any store, with an average of only 10-12 coupons returned to any one store. Comments from IRs included the fact that customers were probably just using the brochure for the free plant and not touring any other retailers. Some still expressed reluctance to send customers to their competitors. One retailer used the *Nepeta* article, but most agreed that they got the article too late in the season to be able to use it (March). They believed it might be more successful if they had it earlier, but deciding on one plant was still a challenge.

Year 2. The MFGS group decided to make an effort to work together a second year. One sub-group was charged with developing membership guidelines and another group agreed to develop promotional efforts for the group. There was a multi-store IR that wanted

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to join the group. Some members felt this firm was too much like a mass-merchant; others were not opposed to that IR joining, but how would their membership fee be charged (by store or by firm)?

For communication efforts in the second year, there was considerable discussion about a joint advertisement in the *Grand Rapids Press* instead of buying the back of the magazine cover. One member called for the rates. For a weekday, a whole page advertisement (in color) was \$1150, a half page was \$475, and a quarter-page was \$125. For a Sunday, a whole page advertisement (in color) was \$1500, a half page was \$850, and a quarter-page was \$275. These fees were acceptable to most of the group and two advertisements (1/4 page) were run in color in the Sunday issue in late April and early May, just ahead of what should be the busiest season. The website was updated for the second year, including a different coupon offer than the one in the Sunday issues of the *Grand Rapids Press*. The MSUE Horticulture Educator also agreed to write at least four more articles for the *Grand Rapids Press* in Year 2. Although there was no charge for her work, the time to write, shoot photography, and submit the articles should be considered a cost of promotion. Each article took approximately six to eight hours to complete. Additionally, the MFGS group had a small display (\$500 cost for booth rental) at the Home and Garden Show in Grand Rapids in March. Coupons were also distributed there, with an offer similar to what would appear in the newspaper just a month later.

At a meeting at the end of Year 2, retailers reported the number of coupons redeemed:

- Grand Rapids Press Coupon \$5 off a \$25 purchase: 1735
- Website \$10 off a \$50 purchase: 1198
- Home and Garden Show distributed 5000 and 300 returned a \$5 off a \$25 purchase (6% return).

Year 3. Fifteen retailers met in the spring of Year 3 and paid \$1000 each to continue membership in MFGS. Some of the funds were devoted to the website, which was revised again and upgraded. The collaborators purchased a room consisting of 16 booths (\$1600) at the Grand Rapids Home and Garden Show, held March 5-8 with an average attendance of 40,000. MFGS members helped to build the booth and staffed it to distribute the \$5 off \$30 purchase coupons.

With the help of dozens of MSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers, they distributed more than 10,000 coupons for MFGS and thousands of individuals ones. The return rate was still about 7.5% of what was distributed. In addition, MFGS paired up with the MSUE public garden tour which is held on a weekend every year in June. Every site on the garden tour had

a “retail partner” who embellished their garden and display during the weekend of the tour. Each MFGS member promoted the tour at their own businesses to increase publicity and attendance.

At a meeting at the end of Year 3, retailers reported the number of coupons redeemed:

- Grand Rapids Press Coupon \$5 off a \$25 purchase: 2478
- Website \$10 off a \$50 purchase: 1422
- Home and Garden Show distributed 10,000 and 7489 returned a \$5 off a \$25 purchase (7.5% return).

Year 4. The 17-member group paid \$1000 each and cooperated to distribute over 3,000 coupons with \$10 off a \$50 purchase on the website and 10,000 coupons at the Home and Garden Show, which had an 8% return. In addition, roadside billboards advertising MFGS were put up April 15 to June 15 at four locations in the Grand Rapids market at a cost of \$650 each. MFGS asked Scotts (a fertilizer company) for co-operative advertising dollars. MFGS members all carry a few lines of the Scotts product, so they could use the co-operative advertising dollars (about \$2500). The products were Osmocote Potting Soil, and Osmocote Planting Soil. These products were part of Year 4’s MFGS advertising program. MFGS also agreed to be part of the West Michigan Home and Garden Show in March again. Their booth space was in a separate room, the Grand Gallery, and cost \$2000. An additional \$500 was spent on more plants and other display contents (decking material). A “booth committee” was established to design, order plants, schedule installation, and schedule shifts for working the booth during the show.

New in Year 4, the MFGS members want to assemble an idea book or small/short lifestyle/gardening magazine. A few quotes were considered beyond reach (\$10,000 or more), but there were several doable options well within their budget. Their idea was to have an informative, inspiring, pretty piece that people would retain to use the information on planting and maintenance as well as use the enclosed coupons. An option was presented that would be mailed to 300,000+ homes and gave MFGS extra to distribute at the Home & Garden Show for \$5000.

What to do for Year 5?

You are the new marketing consultant for the group. The group has several questions for you. For each of these questions, the MFGS group will be interested in the cost and how they can measure the return on their investment (effectiveness of the change). Keep the costs and evaluation in mind as you answer their questions.

1. How should the group evaluate the effectiveness of the billboards which were new for Year 4? How much will it cost to do the evaluation?

2. What should the group feature on their website? You should visit the site and give them some feedback about what they are doing right and what they might consider adjusting for Year 5. <http://www.myfavoritegardenshops.com>

3. The MFGS group would like to develop a booklet much like the lifestyles booklet that some branded annual plant marketers distribute after customers call and request a copy. What would you include in the booklet? How much would it cost to produce 300,000 to 500,000 copies?

4. Use of cooperative advertising dollars is a new concept to most of horticulture, but an exciting one. Essentially, the manufacturer (in this case, Scotts) adds to advertising dollars spent by the group on a product the manufacturer makes. If the group spends \$5, Scotts will give them \$1 to have a total of \$6 to spend. This is, essentially, how they will help finance the booklet (cooperative advertising). What are some strengths/weaknesses of using a fertilizer for cooperative advertising? What other products might be a good fit for cooperative advertising?

5. The Grand Rapids Home and Garden Show has been quite successful for them to distribute coupons for purchases made at MFGS stores and encourage people to use their website. What will the booklet add to this? Will it be worth the cost? How do they link the booklet to the website (any way to drive traffic there)?

6. The group would like to host some type of special event to create excitement and increase the number of shoppers over a specified weekend. Since most of the flowering plants (annuals and perennials) are sold in May, the event should most likely be held the second weekend in June. Create an event for the group to host, including costs of materials and cost of any advertising you might encourage them to undertake to promote the event.

7. There are no written rules for membership into the group at this point. An independent retailer with several locations is interested in joining the group next year. They have already been accepting internet coupons from the website at this retailer. Some of the independent retailers perceive this store to be more like a chain or box store because of their multiple locations. Others voiced concern that this retailer didn't buy into the collaboration initially, so they should pay more than the other "members." What are the key advantages and disadvantages of the independent multi-site retailer joining the group?

Should they be admitted for Year 5? If so, how much should they pay? Incidentally, they already honor the MFGS coupon and aren't even a member yet. What does that say about that company?

8. The MSUE Horticulture Educator started a blog about MFGS. What should she be focused on blogging about? How should the blog help improve purchases?

Appendix 2. Marketing Pricing Case Study

Determining the price of a product or service takes many things into consideration. For nearly four decades, Wholesale, Inc. has been a prominent and successful supplier to the greenhouse growers of all sizes in Michigan. Growers traditionally purchase components to grow products separately from a few wholesale businesses (not just a single source) including Wholesale, Inc. If a commercial greenhouse operator wanted to grow 10,000 vegetative annuals, like geraniums or petunias, or poinsettias, the grower would order media separate from fertilizer and cuttings, containers and tags. The industry has developed to the point where net profit margins, profit made after direct and indirect costs are covered, are very slim. Growers know prices are competitive because their own profit margins are thin. Imagine being a wholesaler and attempting to price your product when your customer can literally "shop around" for the best price. The answer becomes easier when the product is differentiated and/or the price difference becomes greater.

Especially for the small producer (classified as growers or farms with sales of <\$100,000 per year), who purchases in smaller quantities, the price they pay for components for production becomes a real issue. They cannot purchase larger quantities to get the discount their larger competitors receive. They could come together in a cooperative and purchase in quantities and distribute them among the cooperative members. Wholesale, Inc. can't (and doesn't want to) form a cooperative for or with some of their better customers who are small growers. Most small growers don't want to join in a cooperative either. Another interesting aspect Wholesale Inc. faces is their communication and service to the smaller grower. It takes at least one day for a salesperson from Wholesale, Inc. to visit three clients. Most of Wholesale Inc.'s salesperson's time is spent on larger greenhouse clients. Smaller clients don't get visited by Wholesale, Inc.'s staff more than once each year. They do speak often (once per month) on the telephone. They aren't ignored, but economics don't allow the wholesaler to visit smaller clients

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very often. Larger clients purchase more products, contribute more to the bottom line (profits), and get more frequent visits by Wholesale, Inc.'s staff more frequently. Wholesale Inc. wants to develop a creative, yet profitable, pricing strategy alternative that might be attractive to the smaller grower, giving them some price advantage like they can the larger grower.

Wholesale, Inc. is considering price bundling packages especially for their small growers for branded vegetative annuals, poinsettias, and cutting geraniums. They would like to offer a "Complete Package" price or program where smaller growers could purchase a "bundle" or package of products rather than individual components. What can you suggest as a strategy they try? How would you price each bundle of products? Which commercial greenhouse products would you package in the bundle? What alternatives can you permit (what substitutions are feasible)? Knowing that you would only get to visit small growers once annually, how would you communicate with your small growers about such a program? At what time of year would the small growers be most receptive to buying into this program? As part of your research, look-up costs of products you would package, using several wholesale operations as your sources. Unearth your cost of production notes and develop a novel price bundling strategy that you consider to be attractive to the small grower, but profitable for Wholesale Inc. How many small growers are there in Michigan? How many branded vegetative annuals, geraniums, and poinsettias are sold at wholesale from Michigan growers? What share of the market might Wholesale, Inc. expect to capture with this new price strategy? Which products (branded vegetative annuals, poinsettias, geraniums) are a good first choice to try this strategy? What other product combinations would you suggest (with some cost and pricing examples)? What are examples of the prices, both bundled and unbundled, of those products? Show price examples and mark-up on cost. How much profit should Wholesale Inc. make on each bundle? If they do implement bundling, give some examples of how you suggest they track the effectiveness of the price change?

Appendix 3. Marketing Branding Case Study

The Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA) initiated the plant promotion committee eight years ago. The purpose of this committee is "to promote the Michigan Certified Nursery program by selecting plants worthy of promotion and bestowing an award of merit to them in order to promote the selected plants . . ." Since then, several plants were

selected for the Grower's Choice Award (a trademark for the MNLA and this program). Most plants were either woody trees or shrubs (no annuals or perennials – they have their own awards programs like All-America Selections (AAS) and the Perennial Plant of the Year (PPY)). The program died five years later due to the lack of a response by both customers and retailers.

Your marketing group has been asked to investigate the possibility of reviving the program for next year. If MNLA were to revive the program, would you change the name (was that part of the problem)? What would be a better name for the program? How should they now promote this program to consumers, members, growers, and suppliers to make it effective? How many branded woody plants are on the market today (compared to herbaceous plants)? Can the program make a difference in marketing woody plants? How can the independent garden center plants be differentiated from national woody plant brands like Color Choice (CC)? What can you learn from CC or AAS or PPY that might be helpful in promoting Grower's Choice plants?

Consider a typical channel of distribution for woody plant material (draw it to show how plants move from propagator to end-consumer). Identify at least 5 different types of businesses who may be involved in growing and marketing woody plants to customers. Show MNLA ideally how partners in the supply chain would participate in delivering or executing this program. Describe a promotional objective and strategy for the Grower's Choice program for each member in the channel. Assume no one knows anything about the program. Use information from the advertising and promotion chapters. What are some truly creative ways industry members can promote this program?

Who are purchasers of woody plants? What does this market segment look like demographically and how many people buy woody plants each year? How much of the market share would Grower's Choice expect to get, especially in Michigan? If plants are grown in Michigan and shipped to markets throughout the U.S. east of the Mississippi River, do people in other states care if a plant is a Michigan Grower's Choice award-winner? Who pays for the promotional efforts? If, for example, MNLA buys tags or radio time, who pays for that? How do you get participation in the program? Should MNLA even try to revive it?

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