



CASE STUDY

CLIENT Keystone Studios
PROJECT Hydrochromic Ad

Water-Activated Magazine Ad Insert Makes a Splash for Agricultural Client

When the creative agency for one of the largest, multinational pharmaceutical and life science companies on the globe was tasked with developing a creative ad insert, they knew they had to come up with something that would make a splash.

The life science company's product line includes healthcare products, agricultural chemicals, seeds and more. The company's magazine ad would focus on a line of agricultural products targeting farmers across North America.

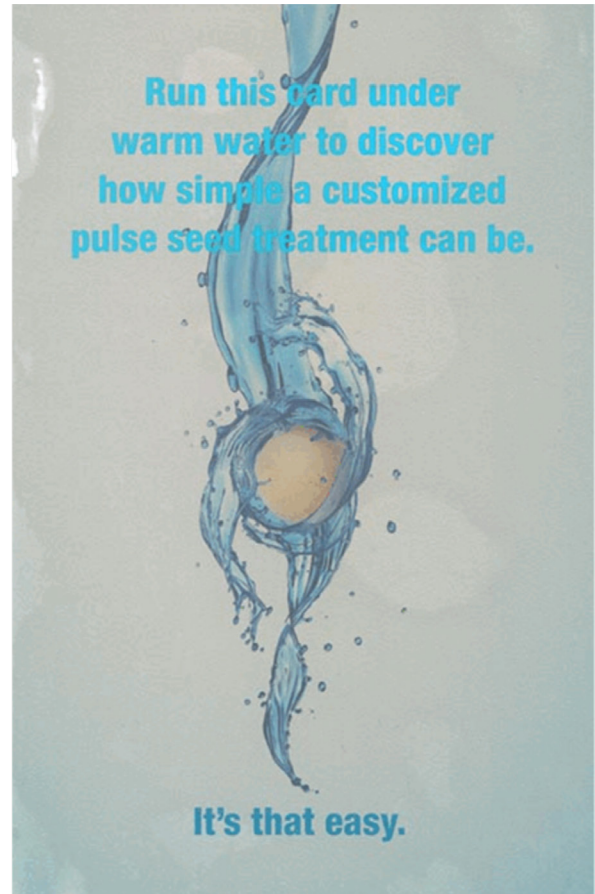
The challenge? The magazine ad insert would need to connect with farmers in a creative, yet visceral way – and the due date was quickly approaching. With that in mind, and inspired by a water-activated Crayola product they had seen, the creative team at Keystone Studios decided to create hidden messaging that would be revealed when exposed to the agricultural audience's most critical resource: water.

HYDROCHROMIC AD INSERT: JUST ADD WATER FOR THE "WOW"

Keystone Studios President Paul Rossen said the team wasn't sure exactly how it could be done at first. "The word 'hydrochromic' was not in my vocabulary," Rossen said. But their client wanted something more than a standard insert or mailer. "They wanted more of a wow factor," he said.

"We were just so happy they were willing to collaborate and help us accomplish our goal."

– Paul Rossen, President of Keystone Studios



High-quality hydrochromic coatings change from color to transparent when they interact with water, revealing messaging and artwork underneath before returning to the original color when dry. At H&H Graphics, **chromic effects** like this are a specialty, used by some of the **world's biggest and best-known brands** to add an irresistible sense of mystery or anticipation to promotions, packaging and multisensory products. Inks that react to **temperature, light** or **water** can be used to create a magical "reveal" of messaging, sweepstakes results, discount codes or images.

The Keystone team dove right in and began researching to find the right printing partner. "H&H Graphics popped up immediately," Rossen said.



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THE OBSTACLES: UNCHARTED WATERS & TIGHT DEADLINES

Two challenges popped up almost as quickly: The project had to be completed on a much tighter deadline than originally planned, and the hydrochromic process is not typically used for four-color artwork. It was going to be an exercise in innovation and never-been-done-before.

Fortunately, innovation and never-been-done-before are right in the sweet spot for both Rossen’s team of creatives and the H&H Graphics R&D squad.

The two teams developed a plan of action to produce the piece the way it was envisioned – and turn it around in about a week’s time. Impossible you say? Hah! The two teams took to the challenges like fish to water... (ahem).

“They came through,” Rossen said of H&H. “We were just so happy they were willing to collaborate and help

us accomplish our goal.” Both teams went the extra mile, or in the case of Keystone Studios, the extra 1,100 miles: to save on shipping time Keystone made the 18-hour roundtrip drive from Markham, Ontario to Illinois to pick up the finished inserts.

IRRESISTIBLE MULTISENSORY EFFECTS & UNMATCHED CUSTOMER SERVICE

The project was a success and the agricultural product client got the “wow” they were looking for. “A lot of the regional executives thought it was really cool,” Rossen said. The insert was completed and delivered in time to make the next issue of the agricultural farm publication, where many farmers undoubtedly took the time to dunk it into the nearest source of warm water.

As for H&H, Rossen said the customer service was also a wow. “We definitely will be working with them again when the opportunity comes up.”

WATER MARKETING BY THE NUMBERS



2

Hydrogen atoms in a water molecule

4

Color printing used to create the magazine insert with 50% opacity

7

Working days to complete the project

9

Hours driven between Markham, Ontario and Vernon Hills, Illinois

60

Seconds: Maximum time for underlying image to be revealed after exposure to water



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NEED A PARTNER FOR YOUR UNIQUE PRODUCT IDEA?

To learn what H&H can do to create an experience around your next promotion, new packaging or **multisensory product launch**, **contact us** to discuss your next idea. We can also evaluate your current or recent projects as part of our **“Even Better If...” Audit** to show you the possibilities that H&H Graphics multisensory screen printing and product development expertise can bring.

ABOUT KEYSTONE STUDIOS

Keystone Studios has nearly three decades of experience in the design and print business. The full-service studio is equipped to meet any design and layout needs. They're skilled at adapting existing creative, 3D rendering, retouching, preparing print ready files, distributing assets to publications. In addition, they can print large format, digital, direct mail, vehicle wraps, retail displays, trade show booths, stationery, brochures and more.

More at <https://keystonestudios.ca/>

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ABOUT H&H GRAPHICS

H&H Graphics creates custom inks and coatings that achieve any desired look, feel or smell with the highest quality and performance, complemented by a level of client service unequalled in the industry. Example special effects include thermochromic, glitter (never rubs off), gloss, matte, scented, scratch-off, glow-in-the-dark, and textures.

H&H Graphics was founded in 1978, is a certified woman-owned company (WBE certified) and has won numerous Graphic Excellence Awards for client projects.

More at: <https://www.hhgrfx.com/>