

# Turning Market Volatility Into Opportunity

An Interview with Vance Howard, Chief Executive Officer and Portfolio Manager, Howard Capital Management, Inc.

**EDITORS' NOTE** Vance Howard began his professional money management career in 1992 with the formation of Chartered Financial Services, Inc. before founding Howard Capital Management, Inc., a fee-only Registered Investment Advisor, in 1999. Howard specializes in research, development, and the implementation of various types of trading systems. Previously in 1988, Howard formed Delta Waste Services, a waste management firm which



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he sold in 1992. He was also the co-publisher of The Savvy Investor and the SI Intermediate-term Trader newsletter with subscribers in over 25 countries from 1992-1999. Howard was elected four times to the Huntsville, Texas city council, and twice as mayor pro tem. He has served in various capacities over the years, including City Finance Chairman of Huntsville, Texas; Chairman of the 911 Emergency Service for Huntsville/Walker County; board member of Houston/Galveston Economic Development Council; and board member of the District 910 Legal Grievance Committee. He is a past President of the Huntsville Rotary Club and is still an active member. Together with members of his family, he owns and operates the Bar C Ranch in Madisonville, Texas, specializing in registered longhorn cattle.

**FIRM BRIEF** Howard Capital Management, Inc. (HCM) is a SEC-Registered Investment Advisory Firm founded by Vance Howard which offers professional money management services to private clients, financial advisors, and registered investment advisors through a suite of separately managed accounts, retirement tools, self-directed brokerage accounts, proprietary mutual funds, and ETFs. The vision for HCM ([howardcm.com](http://howardcm.com)) originated after seeing the devastating financial losses investors suffered during the stock market crash of 1987, an

event precipitated by computer program trading and investor panic. In an effort to help investors monitor changing market conditions, Howard developed the HCM-BuyLine®, a proprietary math-driven indicator, designed with the goal of reducing the impacts of emotional investment decisions.

## Will you discuss your career journey?

I've always had a strong drive to build things from the ground up. Early in my career, I founded Delta Waste Services, which I later sold to pursue my passion for markets and finance. In 1992, I established Chartered Financial Services, and by 1999, I launched Howard Capital Management. At that time, the financial world looked very different. There were fewer algorithms and a much greater reliance on hands-on research. You had to roll up your sleeves and commit significant time and effort

to understand the companies you were investing in. While that core discipline still matters, technology today allows us to streamline much of the research process. The industry has become more data-driven, with a greater emphasis on algorithmic models.

At Howard Capital Management, we've helped to lead that shift by developing proprietary tools and math-based systems, like our HCM-BuyLine®, which help guide our decisions with objectivity and discipline.

## What was your vision for creating Howard Capital Management and how do you define its mission today?

The idea behind HCM really first was sparked after I saw how investor panic and emotion led to devastating losses during the stock market crash of 1987. With HCM, I wanted to build a firm that helped people protect their wealth. A firm built on logic, not fear.

Our mission today is to be a growth manager that also manages risk effectively. We aim to deliver strong upside potential while actively aiming to mitigate risk on the downside by moving to cash or safer positions when necessary. We're not passive participants – we're hands-on, constantly monitoring the markets to help mitigate volatility and preserve capital.

## Will you provide an overview of Howard Capital Management's services and capabilities?

Our firm offers professional money management services to private clients, financial advisors, and registered investment advisors through a suite of separately managed accounts, retirement

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tools, self-directed brokerage accounts, proprietary mutual funds, and ETFs. What sets us apart is our active approach. We don’t just ride the market. We navigate it. Our strategies allow us to shift to cash when conditions warrant, and our tactical asset rotation seeks to identify the sectors and opportunities with the highest return potential.

**How do you describe Howard Capital Management’s investment strategy?**

We’re active, meaning proactive and never reactive. We like to think of ourselves as being one step ahead of the market, which is made possible by our proprietary monitoring systems and tools. We use ETFs extensively because they give us exposure and flexibility. We also trade individual stocks and some bonds when the opportunity is right. We’re fast-moving. If something isn’t working, we pivot quickly.

Everything we do is driven by quantitative analysis. We use math, not emotion, to make decisions. Tools like our HCM-BuyLine® help us determine when to be in or out of the market, while our Proactive Sector Rotation methodology helps us identify where the best opportunities are.

**How critical has it been to build the Howard Capital Management team, and will you highlight the experience and expertise of the team?**

Building a strong team has been absolutely key to our success. At HCM, our team is made up of a group of A-players. They are smart, energetic, and forward-thinking professionals who are deeply committed to our mission. We’ve been intentional

about bringing in a younger, tech-savvy team with a strong vision for the future and a drive to keep the firm evolving.

We also have a robust nationwide presence, with wholesalers across the country who stay closely connected and genuinely support one another. There’s a strong sense of camaraderie here. When someone has a big month, the whole team celebrates. When challenges arise, everyone rallies behind each other. That’s the kind of culture we’ve worked hard to build.

**Did you always know that you had an entrepreneurial spirit and desire to build your own firm?**

Absolutely. I’ve never wanted to work for someone else. From a young age, I’ve had a strong internal drive to build, create, and lead. Howard Capital Management is the nucleus of everything we do, but over time, that entrepreneurial mindset, and the success of HCM, has led me into other ventures as well.

In 2022, I founded Lucky Number 8 Productions, an independent film company focused on producing A-level documentaries and feature films. We also purchased and restored the Café Texan, the oldest operating café in Texas. With its rich history, we transformed it into a nonprofit that supports local charities. Then there’s the Bar C Ranch in Madisonville, Texas, where we raise both cattle and exotic animals. Some of the species roaming the ranch include kangaroos, gemsbok, scimitar oryx, addax, wildebeest, zebra, and kudu. We also raise Longhorns, Angus cows, and Angus bulls.

Looking ahead, I’m planning to launch a research institute in Huntsville focused on health innovation. It’s a project I’m incredibly excited about.

**What do you feel are the keys to effective leadership and how do you approach your management style?**

Leadership starts with vision. You’ve got to know where you’re going and be willing to take the risks to get there. It also takes a relentless work ethic. In most cases, 60- to 70-hour weeks are just part of the deal when you’re building something meaningful.

Another aspect of leadership that I think is key to earning trust is having your own skin in the game. At HCM, I invest right alongside our clients. I’m in the same funds, same strategies. That kind of alignment matters. And I try to lead by example: work hard, stay humble, and make good decisions based on data, not emotion. You can’t fake that.

**What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers?**

Find a place where you can learn and grow, and somewhere with great mentors who’ll help you get past the early learning curve. And once you’ve got your foundation, decide whether you want to stay and be a team player or branch out on your own. Either way, commit fully. If you’re on a team, do everything you can to make that team better. If you’re on your own, be prepared to work hard and take the punches. There are no shortcuts, but if you stay focused and put in the effort, you’ll be amazed at what you can build. ●

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