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Show Me the...Brand? Key to Stimulating Small Business Growth During Slow Recovery is Not Just About the Money

Second Edition of Popular Brand Strategy Guide Shows Small Businesses, Startups and Entrepreneurs How to Make Smarter Marketing Moves on a Budget

San Mateo, CA, April 1, 2014—As we enter the sixth year following the recession, small businesses especially are still struggling during the slow recovery. Sales continue to be tepid and many will need an extra boost in order to stay afloat. What these businesses do not realize is that more capital is not the answer to their problems; the stimulus they really need is to get smarter about how they market to, connect with and delight their target customers.

Brand strategist, speaker and author Maria Ross of Red Slice has helped countless startups and small businesses with her popular book, *Branding Basics for Small Business*, since its publication in 2010 shortly after the end of the recession. This practical and entertaining guide to building a strong brand has now been updated with fresh content around social media, networking, email marketing, content marketing; interviews with the likes of Alexandra Franzen, Ann Handley, Mike Michalowicz, Marty Neumeier, Amy Schmittauer and more; additional real-world case studies of entrepreneurial success; and a recommended reading list. The second edition will be published on April 1, 2014.

"Small organizations waste so much time and money on 'random acts of marketing' that get them nowhere, so more budget is not the answer," says Ross. "It's about creating a clear brand strategy to target the right people with the right message at the right time. There are just too many marketing options out there and you can drive yourself mad by trying to do it all. You can be more effective if you focus on the brand strategy to guide fewer activities that really engage, inform and delight your audience."

Small businesses, startups and non-profits can build as solid a following as large corporations can with the resources they have available to them. As Ross details in *Branding Basics for Small Business*, the secret is starting with a strong brand strategy. Brand is your core promise, personality and reason for being. Effective branding is not about how much money you spend but on how clearly and consistently you communicate the right message through everything you do. Ross shares practical tips and actual case studies of powerful small business brands, plus insights from global marketing experts and entrepreneurs on generating buzz and loyalty, making smarter and more efficient marketing decisions, and standing out from the crowd.

Marty Neumeier, author of *The Brand Gap*, *Zag*, and *Metaskills: Five Talents for the Robotic Age* says, "Maria Ross makes it clear that branding isn't just for big

companies, rich companies, or consumer companies. It's for your company. In a single readable volume, she shows you how to separate yourself from the pack and win."

About Maria Ross

Maria Ross is a brand strategist, author and speaker who believes cash flow and creativity are not mutually exclusive. As creator of Red Slice, she advises entrepreneurs and small to midsized businesses on creating irresistible brands. Prior to that, she spent years guiding marketing strategies for both start-ups and global brands, including Discovery Networks, Monster.com, and Business Objects. Ross has written two books and delivers keynotes and workshops for organizations such as BlogHer, The New York Times Small Business Summit and the Chamber of Commerce. She has appeared in numerous media outlets, including MSNBC, ABC News, Huffington Post, NPR, and *Entrepreneur*. Maria is based in San Mateo, California and serves clients worldwide. Find out more at www.red-slice.com.

About the Book:

Branding Basics for Small Business: How to Create an Irresistible Brand on Any Budget (Norlights Press) was first released in 2010 and is used by entrepreneurs, start-ups, small businesses and nonprofits everywhere to build an irresistible brand on any budget. The newly updated 2nd Edition launches April 1, 2014 and includes fresh content around social media, content marketing and networking trends and additional real-world case studies of small business and entrepreneurial success. It is available online at Amazon.com, BN.com and BrandingBasics.info in paperback and digital forms or can be requested from your local bookseller via Ingram Distribution.