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Gail Perry • Jan. 28, 2016



[Death Wish Coffee Company](#), which roasts and packs what it calls the world's strongest coffee, has won the Intuit QuickBooks [Small Business Big Game](#) contest. This includes a 30-second commercial during Super Bowl 50 on February 7.

The ad, to be broadcast during the third quarter of the game, will be the only one to feature a small business and will be seen by more than 100 million viewers. Death Wish Coffee, based in Round Lake, NY, was selected from more than 15,000 entries and hundreds of thousands of votes in the contest sponsored by [Intuit Inc.](#)

“Winning this commercial is beyond our wildest dreams, and we could not be more

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thousands of other small businesses to get to the big game and came out on top. Each small business that applied had a unique, inspiring story to tell, and we're proud that Small Business Big Game provided an opportunity for them to share it.”

Intuit QuickBooks kicked off Small Business Big Game in June, inviting small businesses to apply on [Own It: A Small Business Network](#). A panel of Intuit judges selected the top 10 finalists in September from more than 15,000 applicants. A public vote then determined the grand prize winner.

In addition to the expenses-paid commercial, Death Wish Coffee is receiving free, lifetime use of QuickBooks Enterprise software. Intuit also honored the top 10 finalists with prizes that demonstrate the QuickBooks mission of fueling small business success:

- The two runners-up, [Chubbies Shorts](#) and [Vidler's 5 & 10](#), each receive \$25,000, as well as local media and advertising valued at up to \$15,000.
- The seven other finalists each receive a \$10,000 prize as well as a congratulatory ad in their local paper, while the accountants of all 10 finalists receive \$10,000 and local advertising.

Bill Rancic, entrepreneur, author, and reality television star, is a spokesman for Intuit and is helping to promote the Small Business Big Game program in conjunction with the Super Bowl. “This is about celebrating the success of small business. We’ve done that with this competition, not just with Mike, but with all the small business owners,” said Rancic.

This is the second year QuickBooks has hosted the program. Educational toy company [GoldieBlox](#), based in Oakland, CA, received the ad in 2014.

Originally an accountant by trade, Brown fell in love with coffee when he was

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process, Death Wish Coffee has collected thousands of caffeinated fans throughout the world.

Brown started by selling the coffee in his shop and online. “We were selling a pound of coffee a week online, then it grew to two to three pounds a week. All of a sudden we were selling one to two pounds a day, getting great reviews, and at that point we thought, ‘Maybe this could be more of a business on its own instead of supplemental income.’” One of Brown’s employees who was looking for more responsibility took over the marketing and focused on getting the word out.

In retrospect, Brown said he would go directly to an online business if he had it to do over again. “The coffee shop was fun, I got to meet the community, but I would start online first, build up there, then move into retail.” He hopes to see Death Wish Coffee in national stores in the future, and is considering expanding into other areas (“We’re working on a lot of neat projects – including the cold brewed coffee craze”).

“Mike’s going to have a real opportunity to take his business from online to major national retailers,” said Rancic. Over 100 million people are expected to see the Death Wish Coffee Super Bowl ad.

Meanwhile, Brown and his team are preparing for the exposure he expects to get with his Super Bowl commercial. “We’ve been gearing up since Thanksgiving, ramping up production, gearing up our distribution centers with lots of coffee.”

About the Advertisement

The Small Business Big Game program and 30-second television spot for Death Wish Coffee were developed and produced by RPA, agency of record for Intuit QuickBooks, based in Santa Monica, Calif. The advertisement brings the winner’s concept to life

with a tribe of fierce Vikings sailing on a sea of black coffee, serving as an apt

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