



## The Oregonian

### Startup: Vital signs of a young regional company

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**JONATHAN BRINCKMAN** The Oregonian

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Nonverbal Solutions Portland Formed May 2007

The product: Training and coaching in nonverbal communication, for both corporations and individuals.

Price: Corporate pricing depends on the size of company and the length of program, and runs from \$600 to \$5,000. Individuals attending workshops pay \$59 for two-hour sessions and \$149 for all day.

The founder: Sari de la Motte, 36, is from the San Francisco Bay Area and moved to Portland with her family when she was 13. She has a bachelor's degree in music education from Pacific University and a master's in teaching from Portland State University. She taught piano -- from her home and at elementary schools, PSU and Pacific University -- before launching her company. She met Michael Grinder, a nonverbal communications expert from Battle Ground, Wash., in 2001 and worked part time as a nonverbal communications consultant until 2007.

Employees: Two, de la Motte and an administrative assistant.

Where they work: In the founder's home office in Northeast Portland, and at training sites.

Why she started her company: After working as both a communications consultant and teacher for five years, she was overwhelmed and hired Stacey Lane, a business coach. "Stacey told me, 'You're standing on a pier with one foot on the pier and one foot on the row boat that's leaving. You've got to decide whether to stay on the pier or jump into the boat.' I quit teaching piano and started my company."

Why she's glad she did: "I am living my dream. I own my own business, which allows me to do work that I love: assisting people to become more charismatic, influential and successful in their work and personal lives."

The money: A family friend gave her \$8,000 to get started; expenses have been paid from revenue. "Being married helped."

Most common problem she encounters: "Where most people go awry is they don't match their verbal and non-verbal communication. If there's not congruence, the listener will always go with the nonverbal message."

A favorite workshop: It's called Cats and Dogs. "Dog people are highly accommodating, cat people are highly independent. This workshop provides nonverbal ways to get difficult personalities to cooperate." Workshops, including Charismatic Communication and Don't Shoot the Messenger, are described on the Web site.

Her fear: The recession. "Corporations are being squeezed. As much as people want this training, they may not be able to afford it. Momentum that we have built up over two years could be lost."

The forecast: After \$35,000 in sales in the first year and \$45,500 in the second, she projects sales of \$70,000 this year.

Web site: [www.nonverbalsolutions.com](http://www.nonverbalsolutions.com)

-- Jonathan Brinckman

Know a startup? Send ideas for business startups to profile to Jonathan Brinckman: 503-221-8190;  
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