



## Ross Stores Reports September Same Store Sales Gain of 8%, Raises Third Quarter EPS Guidance

October 8, 2009

PLEASANTON, Calif., Oct. 8 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Ross Stores, Inc. (Nasdaq: ROST) today reported that sales for the five weeks ended October 3, 2009 increased 12% to \$629 million from \$561 million for the five weeks ended October 4, 2008. Same store sales for the month rose 8%.

For the eight months ended October 3, 2009, sales totaled \$4.647 billion, up 9% over the \$4.262 billion in sales for the eight months ended October 4, 2008. Comparable store sales for the eight months ended October 3, 2009 increased 4% on top of a 3% gain in the prior year period.

Michael Balmuth, Vice Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, commented, "September comparable store sales exceeded our expectations for a 6% to 7% increase. We believe our performance for both the month and year-to-date periods reflects that our core strategy of delivering fresh and exciting name brand bargains continues to resonate with today's value-focused consumers. Merchandise and geographic trends remained relatively broad-based. Shoes, Home and Dresses were the top merchandise categories during the month, while the Mid Atlantic, Southeast and Texas were the best-performing markets."

Looking ahead, Mr. Balmuth said, "I am pleased to report that earnings per share for the 13 weeks ending October 31, 2009 are now projected to be in the range of \$.75 to \$.77, a significant increase over \$.44 in the third quarter of 2008. The forecasted upside from our previous earnings per share guidance of \$.57-\$.63 is being driven mainly by favorable shortage results from our annual physical inventory of stores in September. We believe our projected shrink for the year, which is now expected to be much lower than originally forecast, is benefiting from continued investments in our shortage control initiatives as well as the reductions we have made in selling store inventories. Our updated third quarter guidance also reflects stronger-than-planned sales and merchandise margins quarter-to-date and our continued expectation for a 5% to 6% same store sales gain in October."

Mr. Balmuth concluded, "For the important holiday period, we continue to project a comparable store sales gain of 5% to 6% and earnings per share of \$.88 to \$.94 for the 13 weeks ending January 30, 2010. For the 2009 fiscal year ending January 30, 2010, earnings per share are now projected to be in the range of \$3.18 to \$3.26, a forecasted increase of 36% to 40% over \$2.33 in fiscal 2008."

Additional recorded information concerning today's press release and the Company's future outlook can be accessed by calling 706-645-9291, PIN #13475425, from 8:30 a.m. Eastern time on October 8, 2009 through 8:00 p.m. Eastern time on October 9, 2009. A transcript of these comments will also be available in the Investors section of the Company's website at [www.rossstores.com](http://www.rossstores.com).

The Company expects to report October 2009 sales results on Thursday, November 5th.

*Forward-Looking Statements: This press release and the recorded comments and transcript on our corporate website contain forward-looking statements regarding expected sales and earnings levels in future periods that are subject to risks and uncertainties which could cause our actual results to differ materially from management's current expectations. The words "plan," "expect," "target," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "forecast," "projected," "guidance," "looking ahead" and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements. Risk factors for Ross Dress for Less® ("Ross") and dd's DISCOUNTS® include without limitation, competitive pressures in the apparel or home-related merchandise industry; changes in the level of consumer spending on or preferences for apparel or home-related merchandise, including the potential impact from uncertainty in financial and credit markets and the severity and duration of the current recession; changes in geopolitical and general economic conditions; unseasonable weather trends; disruptions in supply chain; lower than planned gross margin, including higher than planned markdowns and higher than expected inventory shortage; greater than planned operating costs; our ability to continue to purchase attractive brand-name merchandise at desirable discounts; our ability to attract and retain personnel with the retail talent necessary to execute our strategies; our ability to effectively operate our various supply chain, core merchandising and other information systems; our ability to improve our merchandising capabilities through the development and implementation of new processes and systems enhancements; achieving and maintaining targeted levels of productivity and efficiency in our distribution centers; and obtaining acceptable new store locations. Other risk factors are detailed in our SEC filings including, without limitation, the Form 10-K for fiscal 2008 and Form 10-Qs and 8-Ks for fiscal 2009. The factors underlying our forecasts are dynamic and subject to change. As a result, our forecasts speak only as of the date they are given and do not necessarily reflect our outlook at any other point in time. We do not undertake to update or revise these forward-looking statements.*

Ross Stores, Inc., a Fortune 500 and Nasdaq 100 (ROST) company headquartered in Pleasanton, California, is the nation's second largest off-price retailer with fiscal 2008 revenues of \$6.5 billion. As of October 3, 2009 the Company operated 939 Ross Dress for Less® ("Ross") stores and 53 dd's DISCOUNTS® locations, compared to 885 Ross and 57 dd's DISCOUNTS locations at the end of the same period last year. Ross offers first-quality, in-season, name brand and designer apparel, accessories, footwear and home fashions for the entire family at everyday savings of 20 to 60 percent off department and specialty store regular prices. dd's DISCOUNTS features a more moderately-priced assortment of first-quality, in-season, name brand apparel, accessories, footwear and home fashions for the entire family at everyday savings of 20 to 70 percent off moderate department and discount store regular prices. Additional information is available at [www.rossstores.com](http://www.rossstores.com).

SOURCE Ross Stores, Inc.

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