

Restaurant Opportunities and Small Business Loans for Women





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“Where do we go from here?”

2059.

Believe it or not, that’s the year economists project we’ll finally see equal pay between men and women in the workplace become reality. Today’s woman, despite strong upward momentum throughout the 1980s and 90s, still makes only 82 percent of the weekly paycheck her male counterpart makes, on average.

And that’s white women. For women of color, the disparity is much more dire, falling as low as 62 percent for Latina women by comparison to white men.¹

Meanwhile, women are better educated than ever before, now representing 57 percent of all college entrances.² Moreover, the gap in graduation rate has widened in recent years, with 30 percent of all women in America graduating college, by comparison to 22 percent of American men.³

As 2017 continues, there will be many questions floating unanswered about the food industry. And many of those questions are necessarily about labor and employment for women and minorities specifically.

What affect will changes in Federal agencies and programs have on women in the workplace? Will women be able to find jobs in restaurants? Will their job needs be covered? And if they’re able to get hired, will these women still find fellow female employees at their new jobs who will be able (and willing) to back them up?

The following four chapters are designed to give female and male managers (and their ambitious women employees) a sense of where the overall industry is today, what some of the struggles have been, and what to expect in the terrain ahead as women continue to expand their expertise in nearly every business model under the sun — but none so much as the restaurant industry.



Chapter

Getting Noticed

There's a false perception among the general public (and in the eyes of some in the industry as well), that not many women work in restaurants — that “traditionally” women don't work in the food industry, despite the long association between women and the kitchen. And even when confronted with stats, the perception remains that women only work in the front of house as servers or hostesses, never as chefs, managers, or owners.

However, this just isn't the case. First, according to the NRA (National Restaurant Association), over 60% of American women have worked in the restaurant industry at some point in their life.⁴ That's huge.

But the importance of women in the industry goes beyond just basic employment.

Ownership Opportunities

In the past few years, the number of female celebrity chefs and female celebrity restaurant owners has been on the rise. For instance, there's Lisa Vanderpump, television celebrity and co-owner of SUR and nine other restaurants and bars across the world. And she's designed the interior space for all of them, as well! But Vanderpump is far from an anomaly. She's in great company when it comes to female restaurant owners.

The NRA states that nearly half of the restaurants in the US have women as full owners or co-owners, with women as about 45 percent of restaurant managers. That statistic is actually higher than the 38 percent of female managers in other industries.⁵ Women are simply more likely to hold mid to senior leadership roles in the restaurant industry than other industries.

Leadership Roles

However, there's still a slim majority of men in direct leadership positions overall in the United States. That statistic gets even more lop-sided when it comes to corporate positions in the food industry. While Kat Cole (president of Cinnabon) and Sally Smith (CEO of Buffalo Wild Wings) are paving the way for women to rise to the top, they're still in the minority of corporate leadership. And that path to success is still perceived to be full of systemic prejudice that pushes back against ambitious women working toward their futures.

Nationwide, roles for women outside of management show mixed results. Female employees account for:

- 52 percent of all restaurant staff,
- 41 percent of fine dining bartenders (although 55 percent of family style restaurant bartenders, at lower earning level),⁶
- But only 19 percent of chef positions.⁷

The disparity between women trusted with front of house duties versus chef or cook positions in the back of house is striking, as is the disparity in responsibility between fine dining and family/casual restaurants.

But even when women take positions in the restaurant industry, who manages them can make a strong difference in their experience and success overall. In restaurants without female leadership, the work culture for female chefs and servers is often described as strained at best, toxic at worst. The call for consistent gender equity in the workforce on all levels is seen as key to ensuring women are given the best chances to succeed.

Women on the Ground

However, Deborah Boardman-Leferve, owner of M Restaurant in Philadelphia, is confident that things are looking up: "I think the male dominance is changing very fast as each week another female decides to join the workforce as a chef!"

Women account for:



of all restaurant managers



of all restaurant staff



fine dining bartenders



of chefs



Many female leaders in the restaurant industry strive to create the environment they wanted to see when starting out. Little by little, these female chefs, managers, and owners are helping change the industry's perceptions of women from the inside out.

Boardman-Leferve has seen that happen through her own hiring practices: "It's been really awesome to see our head Chef Robin come in and be a woman in that leadership role. It's been a very empowering experience to see that as another woman."

Another empowering recommendation for women in the restaurant industry? Find your drive. Anju Kapoor, owner of Mayur Cuisine of India in Corona Del Mar, California says, "[The restaurant] is what makes me jump out of bed – not get out of bed, but jump! I've got 10 things I need to take care of and this is what keeps me going."

"I think it all is changing and the key to success for women is to show we are just as capable as men," says Boardman-Leferve, "and to prove with talent, focus, patience, and respect that we can equally match the top chefs of the world that are male."

Without a doubt, the numbers are there to support that. The question is, what can restaurateurs do today to ensure women have their shot at food industry success?

In short? ***Pay them fairly.***



Chapter

Getting Paid

So much of the focus on women in the restaurant industry these days is on getting through the door and into a job, management position, or ownership stake. That is no doubt a struggle, even today. But the many other challenges women in the restaurant industry continue to face on a daily basis can easily be overlooked.

After all, you made it.

But are women really making it?

Signs point to a much more difficult path for women who take on roles and responsibilities in restaurants compared to their male counterparts. Idiosyncrasies of individual workplaces aside, almost all women will face institutional challenges that cross all environments — hurdles that transcend the restaurant industry and are

built into the structure of small business in America in 2017.

Three such challenges stand out among many — base salary, parental leave (paid or unpaid), and health care. Let's break each one down.

Salary

In a recent report entitled, "Racial and Gender Occupational Segregation in the Restaurant Industry" conducted by Restaurant Opportunities Center United (ROC United), results showed a large gap in pay not just between men and women in California, but also between white restaurant industry employees and persons of color in similar roles.⁸

ROC United concluded average wages across all roles to be:

- White men: \$14.18/hour
- Men of color (including Black, Latino, Asian, and Arab): \$11.63/hour
- White women: \$11.30/hour
- Women of color: \$10.13/hour

And while it is true that front of house workers (servers, hosts, managers) — male or female — tend to make higher wages than back of house workers (chefs, cooks, dishwashers), there is only, on average, a 30 cent gap per hour between the two areas for women, while the same move from back to front nets a man, on average, at least a \$2.00 increase.

This gap is surprising given that the number of women in front of house positions is nearly twice that of women in back of house positions. Front of house positions are generally considered more prestigious because they require constant interaction with guests. The front of house staff is literally the face of the business. Yet, women in these roles yield merely thirty cents more per hour than their back of house counterparts.

We can speculate about the causes (actual or perceived) of the wage gap between men and women. However, evidence suggests that the roles and opportunities achieved by women in the restaurant workplace simply do not pay as well as those maintained by men without similar household responsibilities.

So what's specifically holding women back? Two-thirds of women now occupy the position of breadwinner in their households⁹ — either sharing the responsibility with a spouse or partner or shouldering it alone as a single parent — making additional training, extra shifts, and the ability to accept upward mobility more difficult. Managerial or senior-level jobs that pay higher wages may be out of reach for women who are unable to prioritize work over home in every instance.



The opportunities for women in the restaurant workplace simply do not pay as well as those for men.

Women often function as the primary caregiver in their families, either to children or elderly parents, which could require women to withdraw from the work force for variable periods of time. When women withdraw from the work force, it creates opportunities for men and other women to advance and achieve higher wages.



Parental Leave

But the effect of parental leave on the female employee isn't just about salary and upward mobility. The reality is, protections for women taking leave during pregnancy through the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) don't apply to every worker — and likely apply to fewer restaurant employees than you might think.

In most cases, the FLMA provides for twelve workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for eligible employees. The key protection FMLA provides workers is the guarantee of reinstatement to a previous (or a similar) position and pay scale upon returning to work after the applicable leave of absence.

FMLA does not require the employer to pay any salary or the employee's portion of group health insurance premiums during the leave period.

FMLA can be used in the event of pregnancy or child birth, but also in the event of:

- Care for self, spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
- Placement of a child for adoption or foster care
- Military Family Leave

FMLA does not differentiate between women and men in regard to who can take leave under these circumstances, only that eligible employees must have been with the company for 12 months prior to the leave and worked a minimum of 1,250 hours in the past 12 months.¹⁰

Unfortunately, one of the limitations of the law as it stands is that it only applies to businesses that employ at least 50 employees within a 75-mile area. Work for a small franchise? FMLA will likely apply. If you work for Starbucks or McDonald's, you can safely assume the benefit is available to you.

Unfortunately, 90% of restaurants do not employ that many people.¹¹ Therefore, any family leave granted would be strictly voluntary on their part. That leaves a lot of women in the restaurant industry on shaky ground should they choose (or find themselves in the position) to raise a family or take care of an elderly or sick parent.

Federal courts take cases regarding FMLA violations very seriously. Restaurants may face serious repercussions for failing

to comply with FMLA requirements. It's important to follow the law carefully, both for your bottom line and ultimately for the protection and relief of your dedicated employees.

That said, there are restaurants that enthusiastically embrace the concept of family leave as a way of respecting work/life balance — and a tool for quality employee retention — offering FMLA leave in conjunction with paid time off for employees who choose to take it.



Starting January 1, 2017, full-time employees at Danny Meyers' Union Square Hospitality Group are able to take four weeks of maternity/paternity leave with full pay.¹² Other notable restaurant chains that offer paid leave include: David Chang's restaurant group, Momofuku, provides four weeks paid leave, plus vacation time; Hank's Oyster Bar offers two weeks paid leave; and Laughing Planet Cafe, a chain of burrito joints on the West Coast, provides a full twelve weeks of paid leave.

While not the standard for the restaurant industry — or many other American industries — these benefits underscore (in policy form) a desire to provide equal treatment and opportunity for male and female employees.

Health Care

At the time of this writing, so much is still unknown about the future of health care in America for all employed and non-employed citizens, much less the restaurant industry specifically.

The Affordable Care Act currently provides female insurance holders with the following guaranteed coverage through its programs:

- maternity care
- prescription drugs, including contraceptives
- hospitalization
- free preventive services such as well-woman exams
- mental health care services
- family planning
- STI screenings¹³

Pre-existing conditions (including cancer, pregnancy, endometriosis, and heart disease, among others) no longer preclude anyone from acquiring health insurance, a benefit of the ACA that applies to insured individuals who buy through the public exchange and those who receive insurance through an employer.



of women in the quick service segment have reported going to work **coughing or sneezing**, with a fever or diarrhea, or vomiting in the past year.

For its part, the National Restaurant Association recognized the financial burden the ACA placed on small business owners,¹⁴ and developed programs to help restaurants deal with notification, tracking and communication to employees about enrollment in employer-sponsored offerings, federal or state exchanges, or whether to seek a health care plan from a private exchange.

Despite coverage, women in the industry tend to work through illness at astonishing (and frightening) rates; in fact, 70 percent of women in the quick service segment have reported going to work coughing or sneezing, with a fever or diarrhea, or vomiting in the past year. Why? Because only 14 percent of women working in the industry as a whole have access to paid sick leave. The economic incentive to go to work sick is larger than the communal danger it represents in a food service environment.¹⁵

What's unknown at this point is whether the ACA will be rescinded by Congress and replaced with anything comparable for health care coverage. There are also a number of bills in their early stages, that if enacted into law, may prevent some women from receiving the treatment necessary for true contraceptive health, whether or not their coverage is employer-based or on the public option.

As news about these legislative shake-ups and executive orders come fast and furious every day, we may even have a clearer picture by the time of publication. But suffice to say, health care in the restaurant environment — in any small business scenario — is a financial challenge that will continue to plague owners and employees alike.

Every good employee will tell you that it isn't just money that's keeping them in a job — the ability to feel fulfilled and be supported by your peers can often mitigate other hardships. In the next chapter, we explore workplace challenges that women specifically meet head on, including ***gendered assumptions and sexual harassment***.



3

Chapter

Getting Respect

The restaurant industry is no different than most others in 2017: challenges for women who want to succeed, or just get their job done safely, are still common. How women and men, managers and employees, deal with these challenges can define the success of your workplace — not to mention play out over your bottom line, as the workforce gets even more integrated in the years to come.

Breaking into “The Boys’ Club”

Women represent half of both management¹⁶ and staff¹⁷ in restaurants nationwide, but barriers still exist when it comes to the perception of the quality of their work — and sometimes their actual presence. Navigating the working environment for women is complicated, awkward, and complex. Managing past the cliquy behavior among

male employees (including higher-level staff) — and other elements of the atmosphere that leave women feeling excluded — can be quite difficult.

This is especially true at independently or family-owned restaurants that have built (or been built from) longstanding friendships and associations. While this behavior can be quite innocent and unintended, cliquy behavior in male employees can have repercussions for the health and well-being of your staff over time.

One solution to alleviate this phenomenon is developing an open culture for employees and managers at your restaurant. Open book management often focuses squarely on the financial aspects of a business, providing transparency to the success and challenges of the establishment



An open work environment enables every employee to have their voice heard. **Its just good business.**

as a whole to every worker — from dishwasher to head chef and everyone in between.

One of this practice's prominent side effects is enabling every employee to have their voice heard in maintaining the health of every aspect of the business. This gives both women and men employees opportunities to be heard — not just by you, but by each other — in a forum that won't favor long-time employees or any kind of "boy's club." The key to success of an open culture is leadership's management of staff interactions in the spirit of openness the process encourages. This is not an easy path to follow, but as the diversity of the workforce continues to grow, it is a necessity for your business to thrive. An open work environment, is just good business.

Gendered Pre-Conceptions

Restaurants may have policies committed to gender diversity, but it is a struggle to put that commitment into successful practice. Restaurant owners and managers should treat gender diversity like the business imperative that it is, and that starts with better communication, more training, and clearer focus on the results.

Gender bias applies to both men and women, and can be as innocent as only asking men to lift and move heavy boxes, or as insidious as presuming women employees won't be as good at math as the men. Pre-conceived notions about staff that arise from gender bias can have a real debilitating effect on staff as a whole. At its worst, these types of assumptions would appear to contribute significantly to the gender imbalance we see in workplace roles today.

Even though there are nearly equal numbers of men and women working in the industry, we still see pockets of the industry today where 7 out of 10 servers, but only 2 out of 10 chefs, are women.¹⁸ Some of that distillation may start showing at the hiring level, but in truth, pre-conceived notions of gender value — and who feels welcome in what position — goes all the way back to early training and culinary school applications for many women in the industry.

Restaurant managers and owners must make an effort to cater their reactions and instructions to the actual skill set each employee brings to the table, regardless of gender. This needs to be true in daily interactions with existing staff and in the entire hiring process, from resume read to final decision.

It's not just about fairness, even though as an ethical business owner that is important. It's also simply good business sense to be able to recognize talent and valuable resources on an individual basis. Your restaurant benefits from every skill your team can bring to the table. There is no value in ignoring any of it, especially given the growing challenge of filling positions.

Work-Life Balance

As we mentioned in Chapter 2, extra responsibility outside the workplace can leave women at a statistical disadvantage, both in terms of advancement and perceived diligence among supervisors (male or female) who may not experience the same additional burdens in their home lives.

Making reasonable accommodations (and planning schedules based on employees' real needs) as a manager or owner is only

half the battle. Employees need to plan for as many contingencies and variables as possible so as to disrupt their workplace as little as necessary. And above all, leave guilt at the curb. There's an enormous pressure in our country to be the "perfect mother," "perfect daughter," or "perfect employee." Do your best, lean on those willing to support you, and don't be afraid to ask for help.



Challenging Customer Service

When so much of your job is dealing with customers directly, it's practically unavoidable that most women in the front of house will experience additional challenges from guests. No amount of in-house training can stop a customer walking in off the street from being condescending or suggestive, but smart training can suggest ways for servers and hosts to handle and diffuse the situation.

Staff needs to know it's ok to stand up for themselves when necessary, and that includes talking to a manager about incidents that make them uncomfortable.



Don't wave off customers being inappropriate, especially since some men can choose to see a polite smile as an excuse to push even more.

If a customer continues to make an employee uncomfortable and won't take the hint, see if a co-worker of the opposite gender can take over the table while the server goes "on break."; if things get really serious, especially in a bar setting, do not be afraid to ask security staff for assistance. And be certain your managers are ready to back their employees up, as well. The best policies are those enacted all the way from the top to the bottom and back again.

Ultimately, don't let tips decide your behavior. It can be frustrating, but physical safety and self-worth are more important than those dollars. If you're afraid for your or your server's safety, it's always better to have a manager intervene, even if it means a customer leaves without tipping.

Sexual Harassment from Management or Co-Workers

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature ... [and] offensive remarks about a person's sex."¹⁹

The EEOC goes on to say that "Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex. Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in ... the victim being fired or demoted."

While 90 percent of women working in restaurants have experienced sexual harassment on the job, it's not always from a boss.²⁰ To wit, according to the 2014 report on Sexual Harassment funded by the advocacy organization Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United, women in



of women working in restaurants have experienced **sexual harassment on the job.**

the restaurant field identified being targeted at these percentages overall:

- 67 percent experienced harassment from managers
- 69 percent from co-workers
- 78 percent from customers²¹

In short, harassers can be anyone from a restaurant owner present on a daily basis to a visiting vendor who shows up once a month for a delivery.

And the lowest paid employees (those making the tipped sub-minimum wage set at \$2.13 per hour — plus tips — since 1991) are traditionally the ones most at risk of experiencing sexual harassment.²²



It's important for restaurant owners and managers to consult their corporate attorney in establishing a thorough sexual harassment policy, as well as a set of ongoing training for all employees that supports openness and prevents repercussions for those who report incidents of harassment.

With two-thirds of women restaurant workers surveyed by ROC United feeling they would face negative repercussions if they reported sexual harassment by their manager,²³ it's important for managers to put that fear to rest if female employees are truly going to feel safe and respected in the workplace.



Your restaurant has an important role to play in reaching gender equality, and everyone benefits when you succeed. A fairer, more inclusive work environment will lead to more engaged employees, which we know results in a successful business that attracts more engaged customers. Gender equality is good for your restaurant, your employees, and for all of us.

And a significant meter for success in gender equality in the business environment is the ability to get financed as a women business owner. Continue on with Chapter 4 to learn more about the state of **small business loans for women** and other avenues of business funding available today.



Chapter

Getting Financing

“I had a long track record at the time I started Pearl Oyster Bar — twenty years as a chef, but not as a business owner. And that was the kind of track record they were looking for.”

– Rebecca Charles,
Pearl Oyster Bar, New York City²⁴

Last year, The James Beard Foundation Awards, an event most of the culinary world refers to as “The Oscars of the Food World,” graced the stage of the Lyric Opera House in Chicago.

Presented annually since 1990, the James Beard Awards recognize excellence in cuisine, culinary writing, and culinary education.

Some of the most coveted awards go to individuals for their outstanding personal style and success.

This year, and for the first time in 12 years, women took home the very top honors:

- **Outstanding Chef:** Suzanne Goin, Lucques (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Outstanding Pastry Chef:** Dahlia Narvaez, Osteria Mozza (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Outstanding Baker:** Joanne Chang, Flour Bakery & Cafe (Boston, MA)
- **Rising Star Chef:** Daniela Soto-Innes, Cosme (New York, NY)

This is exciting news — and we aren’t surprised. Women chefs are making in-roads in the restaurant industry, taking high profile roles in kitchens and ownership chairs across

the country. Our television screens are packed with women competing for the role of “Top Chef,” fighting for the win on “Chopped,” and headlining their own cooking shows like never before.

What’s Really Happening in the Industry

While women are making great strides in the restaurant industry, popular media and award shows can be misleading as to the reality on the ground.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is the main Federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity. The BSL tracks occupational demographics on a yearly basis. The most recent data collected by the BSL about the restaurant industry shows that women are still underrepresented in the upper echelons of the profession.

While they make up roughly 40 percent of America’s cooks,²⁵ women are actually only 19 percent of chefs and head cooks nationwide.²⁶

That sobering statistic could be changing rather quickly, however.

As of October 2015, women comprised 49.9% of the students enrolled at the Culinary Institute of America.²⁷ The sheer number of women preparing to take on positions in the culinary world could be just the boon the industry needs, particularly with concerns over filling all the necessary positions in the years to come.

In its 2015 industry forecast, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) reported that “growth in the number of hospitality job openings accelerated sharply [in 2014], a development that [was] out of sync with the pace of hiring.”²⁸ There’s a world of opportunity available to chefs coming up in today’s market, and with so many women learning the craft AND acquiring the credentials to take on leadership roles, there’s no limit to how successful they can be.

But opportunity shouldn’t just stop at the kitchen doors.

“Women-owned restaurant businesses grew at a rate more than three times faster than the overall restaurant industry in



“Women-owned restaurant businesses grew at a rate more than **three times faster** than the overall restaurant industry in recent years,”



recent years,” jumping 40 percent between 2007 and 2012, according to research compiled by NRA Chief Economist Bruce Grindy.²⁹ One-third of all restaurants are majority-owned by women, and another 15 percent of all restaurants are owned in equal shares by women and men.

That phenomenon is certainly not limited to the restaurant industry. American Express OPEN recently published the findings of its fifth annual investigation into the state of women-owned businesses in the United States. As of 2015, “it [was] estimated that there [were] just over 9.4 million women-owned businesses in the United States, generating nearly \$1.5 trillion in revenues and employing over 7.9 million people.”³⁰

The average earnings for women-owned businesses rose a whopping 54 percent between 2012 and 2013, with twice as many of those businesses applying for credit than in years past.³¹ Women-owned businesses are becoming an economic powerhouse in the job and financial markets, even in the

period of fiscal uncertainty that’s continued since the financial crisis of 2008.

This impressive growth and economic muscle, however, is not always reflected in the availability of small business loans for women-owned businesses.



Small Business Loans for Women

In practice, 16 percent of conventional small business loans are awarded to women-owned businesses.³² This equates to women-owned businesses receiving only 4.4 percent of the total dollar value of all small business loans. Because 33 percent of businesses are majority-owned by women, that discrepancy can feel like a chasm to budding entrepreneurs.

Indeed, the U.S. government has recognized that it, too, has fallen short of reaching benchmarks instituted to help remediate these discrepancies. According to a 2014 report of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, the government has never met its goal of awarding 5 percent of all federal contracts to women-owned businesses. This only adds

to the urgent need for more widespread access to small business loans for women.

One avenue of progress could be achieved in passage of the Women's Small Business Ownership Act of 2015, or other similar legislation. Introduced to Congress by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA), this legislation is designed to increase funding specifically for women entrepreneurs through the Small Business Administration (SBA), a federal agency that guarantees loans for small businesses exclusively — and a leading guarantor of small business loans for women. While the Act could help ameliorate many of the obstacles faced by women-owned businesses in the small business loan market, this proposed legislation is in its infancy. It may never make its way through Congress and passage into law.

At the same time, access to small business loans in general continues to diminish. Since the financial crisis of 2008, there's been a 20 percent decrease in the distribution of small business loans, while loans to larger business are up by about 4 percent.³³

As a result, many restaurateurs may anticipate challenges in approaching banks to obtain conventional small business loans for women.

So, the question remains: what alternatives do professional women have to explore to receive funding for their first-time restaurant business or renovation/expansion project? We lay out *the **benefits of merchant cash advance*** funding for women entrepreneurs in our conclusion.





Pushing forward

Dishema Fulton, owner of Baltimore Crab & Seafood and Pearl Lounge, knows first-hand what it's like to face an uncertain experience with small business loans for women.

"[Rewards Network] supported my business for the last eight years," said Fulton. "When I first opened, it was very difficult to get financing through banks and traditional lending. And it really put me in a position where I was able to push forward."

There's a reason for that. Rewards Network specializes in restaurants and sees the potential in entrepreneurs who may expect to be turned away from lenders or other financial providers. Our restaurant clients run the gamut, some have been operating (and serving excellent food) for years. Others have been in business for as little as three months.

Many of our women-owned restaurants may not have been able to access operating capital through other means, including specially-designated small business loans for women.

The flexibility of financing through our merchant cash advance program can be an enormous boon to business owners, providing faster access to cash and an in depth understanding of the specific cash-flow needs of women-owned restaurants. Rewards Network's merchant cash advance products are not loans; we purchase future credit card receivables in exchange for upfront cash to help grow your business.



As a **savvy businessperson**, you should look for the same relationship in your financing that you look for with any vendor.

Every merchant cash advance from Rewards Network also comes with (at no extra cost) a proven, effective marketing program that targets high income, frequent diners in your area, and drives these customers through your doors.

Our loyalty dining program members tend to spend 25 percent more on average per check in our program restaurants and can add a consistent three to five percent to your bottom line. That's monthly revenue above and beyond the upfront cash that comes with our restaurant funding.

A small business loan for women may not be the best option for, or available to, every restaurant business. A merchant cash advance based on future receipts may be exactly what you need in order to take your business to the next level. You can be confident that your investment in yourself will reap rewards.

And who doesn't want to feel more comfortable and confident with the process of funding your dream? As a savvy businessperson, you should look for the same relationship in your financing that you look for with any vendor. You want a personable, one-on-one connection with a company that cares about your specific needs — and knows exactly how to address them.

That's exactly what Rewards Network has been doing for over 30 years: bringing the dreams of restaurant owners to life with financial and marketing support that nothing else — not even small business loans for women — can provide.

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