



**“I was able to pay it back without hassle—it was just one affordable monthly bill.”**

## Customer Success Story: Elyse Thogerson – RAW

**Elyse Thogerson crafted her raw juice mixology into RAW, a thriving San Francisco-based business. Thanks to a strong business lending relationship with Opportunity Fund, RAW is expanding to serve new neighborhoods with a second location.**

### 👉 FRUIT FOR THOUGHT

Elyse Thogerson started juicing for her health. Her interest in raw, organic juice became a business thanks to her outlook on demographics. “Everyone needs juice,” she said with a smile. RAW began in San Francisco in 2012, in a small space at the Second Act theatre on Haight Street. After a successful first year in business, the demand for her raw juices and cleanses was quickly taxing the business budgets. That, on top of a slowdown in business, made her look for funding to support RAW.

“My rainy day money ran out,” she said. “My juicers were breaking down every few months plus I needed a point-of-sale system. It cost me so much money.” Elyse had Opportunity Fund in the back of her mind after a visit to the Small Business Administration office in San Francisco. She decided to take a closer look at our small business loans after a tip from her banking connections at Wells Fargo.

### 👉 A FRESH TAKE ON FINANCING

Opportunity Fund loan consultant Sergei Minets started working with Elyse and closed RAW’s first loan in November 2014. The \$3,000 loan helped replace the broken juicers, and more importantly, it started a good lending relationship for her business.

Elyse stresses why it’s so important for her business to have access to easy-to-get, fast, and affordable small business loans. “It’s almost like when you start a business, online lenders can smell you,” she said. “They seem like they’re for small businesses. Then you read their APR and it can be almost 200 percent.”

She decided to stick with Opportunity Fund and got two more loans in 2015 and 2016, for \$7,000 and \$10,000 respectively. With the influx of new working capital, Elyse is on her way to opening a second RAW location in the city’s Castro District, with a new point-of-sale system, a new juicer, and remodeled floors and countertops. Elyse has big plans for RAW, including expansion into a retail storefront with a cafe and a kitchen. Her strong relationship with Sergei made her believe in Opportunity Fund’s ability to help her business grow.

“He supports my business,” Elyse said. “Sometimes he just calls to see how I’m doing. He’s helped me through some of my most stressful moments as a business owner. Plus he comes in with his wife to buy juice. He’s awesome.” We’re happy to support RAW’s big moves with our small business loans. We’ll be there to help Elyse serve her juices and cleanses to everyone who needs some refreshment.

To get started today, call us at 866-299-8173 or visit us at [www.opportunityfundloan.org](http://www.opportunityfundloan.org)