



BLOG

SMALL BUSINESS ENTREPRENEUR FIGHTS TO BREW MORE SUCCESS

September 18, 2020 | PPP loan



For many office-based professionals, adjusting to the pandemic has just meant grabbing their laptop and setting up shop at home. For Rawley Macias, owner of [Rouleur Brewing Company](#) in Carlsbad, it hasn't been that easy.

"We can't bring all these home," Rawley said, nodding to the eight massive brewing tanks in the back of his 5,700-square-foot facility. "Our overhead expenses haven't changed, but our revenues have dropped substantially during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. It's tough for us."

It's been more than three years since Rawley said goodbye to a 13-year career as an aerospace mechanical engineer to open his popular brewery. He married his passion for suds with his love of biking, especially the Tour de France race. Bike parts and tools adorn the walls of his tasting room along with historic, breath-taking bike-race photos. He's been concocting ales, pilsners, IPAs, stouts, sours and seltzers ever since, pleasing the pallets of thousands of customers who visit his tap room or buy his creative libations in local stores.

[Hear from Rawley on how he quickly pivoted to navigate the challenges of Covid-19 on his small business:](#)

Navigating Uncertain Times with Rouleur Brewing



SBA FINANCING SUPPORTS GROWTH, HELPS AMID PANDEMIC

In February, Rawley's business was going strong. He had just secured an SBA Community Advantage loan from CDC Small Business Finance that helped him consolidate debt and buy two more large brewing tanks to ramp up beer production. Then COVID-19 struck.

Rawley had to act fast. He convinced his landlord to restructure his lease, which reduced monthly expenses. Then he researched all the lenders that were authorized by the SBA to offer Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loans. Coincidentally, CDC Small Business was on the list so Rawley reached out.

"I already had a working relationship with CDC and within a few weeks our loan was approved," Rawley said.

With the new funding, Rawley was able to keep all his employees, but was forced to temporarily close his tasting room because of government mandates. He re-deployed his brewing tanks to make sanitizer for two months, but demand for that product soon waned. So Rawley focused once again on his liquid bread and butter – craft beer.



Rawley Macias, owner, Rouleur Brewing

DETERMINED TO OUTLAST PANDEMIC TO BREW HIMSELF BACK TO PROSPERITY

Rawley has now re-opened the Rouleur tasting room and, aided by recently relaxed state COVID-19 restrictions, has expanded his tasting experience with tables and tents outside his front door.

"It's definitely helped, but business continues to be a roller-coaster," Rawley said. "The COVID rules seem to change almost week to week, so it's hard to get any traction going forward."



Eight huge brewing tanks are kept busy at Rouleur Brewing

Rawley admits a second wave of PPP funding out of Congress would be welcomed. He knows he has no control over if and when a federal booster shot arrives. So instead he's gearing up to produce and distribute more beer (in cans) to grocery stores (e.g. Trader Joe's) as well as bars and restaurants that are expanding their outside customer seating. The Rouleur tap room is open every day of the week.

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