



From kitchen experiments to national reach: Chicago French Press grows with PayPal

Inventive flavors. Bold leadership. Smart use of PayPal's business tools. Chicago French Press founder Kris Christian proves that passion, purpose, and partnerships can take you from a great idea to a fast-growing business.

Learn how Christian puts a fresh spin on everything she does—from her unique coffee brewing process to her ambitious business model.

Better cup, bigger potential: In a coffee industry crowded with big names and familiar flavors, [Chicago French Press \(CFP\)](#) aims to give coffee lovers something new and exciting. Since 2017, CFP has redefined the cup of coffee: with better ingredients, a tastier brewing process, and a unique spin on infusing flavor into every brew.

With five busy cafes, an online store, and licensing on the way, Christian is preparing to bring CFP to new cities and countless coffee-lovers.

However, success didn't come overnight. Her journey is filled with lessons for other business owners—from building a brand with heart, to leveraging tools like PayPal to scale, and navigating entrepreneurship with resourcefulness and confidence.

Check out Christian's top four tips for starting and growing a business:

1. Stand out by solving a problem in a new way
2. Find the best tools to help you grow
3. Get the funds you need to scale your business
4. Center around purpose and partnerships

#1

Stand out by solving a problem in a new way

Christian started out not as a coffee expert, but as a frustrated coffee consumer.

"I was one of those girls who was pouring sugar and cream in my coffee just to make it palatable," Christian admits. "And I said, you know what? This is not healthy, and I want something different."

Tired of the not-so-great ingredients and the lack of flavor options, Christian envisioned a better brew, and a big business opportunity: high-quality, flavorful coffee that doesn't require the usual add-ins.

Every CFP blend is roasted and flavored in-house, using an oil-based infusion process. "We roast and then flavor by hand," Christian explains. "We use oil-based syrups to infuse flavor directly into the beans." Next, a variety of brewing methods—including the French Press, CFP's namesake—are used to craft the perfect coffee creation.

Christian's one-of-a-kind blends resonated with consumers and set the foundation for rapid growth.



#2

Find the best tools to help you grow

CFP's success began online. From the moment Christian launched CFP's ecommerce store in 2017, she has offered [PayPal Checkout](#) to her shoppers.

Using PayPal to support payments is something of a tradition for Christian. "I've used PayPal for every business I've started," Christian recalls. "I've had a magazine. I've had a creative agency. I've had an online jewelry store. And now I have a coffee business. I've done a lot, and I used PayPal for all of it."

For an emerging brand, Christian finds trust to be an important piece of the ecommerce puzzle. "Seeing [PayPal] on your website is like a badge of trust."

Today, CFP serves customers across the U.S. through ad hoc and subscription-based online orders, many of which are powered by PayPal. "People know it's a trusted source," Christian explains. "PayPal helps customers feel safe."



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Founder, Chicago French Press

#3

Get the funds you need to scale your business

As CFP grew from an online storefront to multiple cafes, Christian needed to keep up with the demand.

"We were growing fairly quickly," Christian recalls. "We had a need for equipment—espresso machines and other major items."

Traditional financing options can be limited, especially for a young, Black-owned business still proving its concept. That's where [PayPal Working Capital](#) came in.¹

"Being able to access working capital based on the relationship we had already built with PayPal allowed us to cover some of the major expenses that came along with those opportunities," Christian recounts.

PayPal Working Capital helped CFP act quickly, without waiting on traditional lenders. Says Christian, "It takes money to make money...PayPal definitely helped us when we needed it."

#4

Center around purpose and partnerships

Christian's commitment to her community is as bold as her custom brews. "The most meaningful thing for me is being able to employ women, people of color, people that have a disadvantage," Christian affirms. "That's a big part of why I do."

Christian also takes on high school interns who design their own products and learn about entrepreneurship firsthand. The interns' creations are sold in CFP cafes, and a percentage of proceeds go to nonprofit [The Gray Matter Experience](#).

One standout from this partnership is the Tres Leches Latte, a flavor combination inspired by an intern's Mexican American heritage. It became a top-seller and is now a part of CFP's regular menu.

Christian urges entrepreneurs not to underestimate the long-term value of a brand with a purpose: "It becomes about other people. The business grows, and you grow."



Power growth with PayPal Open

Chicago French Press shows what is possible when founders combine creativity with purpose—and use tools like [PayPal Checkout](#) and [PayPal Working Capital](#) to scale.

Want to follow in CFP's footsteps? Learn how PayPal Open can help your business grow.

PayPal

¹The lender for PayPal Working Capital is WebBank. PayPal Working Capital is currently unavailable to businesses located in certain states. This is not an offer or commitment to provide capital. Applicants must satisfy certain requirements to be eligible. Lender approval required. Terms and conditions apply. Repayment percentage chosen prior to loan funding and applied to each PayPal sale. Minimum payment required every 90 days. Terms and conditions apply. In limited cases, a loan applicant may be asked to provide documentation before a credit decision is made.

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