

Lauren Izenberg did her homework before buying The Daily Grind Downtown, a thriving espresso shop/café in Spokane's U.S. Bank building.

Izenberg attended the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. After that, she created wedding cakes, and had been a pastry chef at the Kempis in Spokane. She'd always wanted her own business, though, so when a Spokane cake shop came up for sale, she investigated closely.

Izenberg visited the Spokane Area Business Information Center to use the resource library. She said, *"I think the BIC is a great place . . . the staff was amazing. When I used the library, they were so helpful."*



At the BIC, Izenberg worked with Jack Fischer, a SCORE counselor and retired banker, to assemble a business plan. She said, *"Jack was really helpful. At first, I thought, 'He's so negative!' But he was playing devil's advocate. People starting a business need that reality check."*

Although that sale fell through, it led Izenberg to consider The Daily Grind Downtown, a twist of fate she's never regretted. Fischer referred her to Reneé Warner at the Northwest Business Development Association, with whom she developed a second business plan. Izenberg commented, *"NWBDA is great. Reneé is super-supportive of small businesses. She really believed in me and my ideas for the Daily Grind."* In May 2000, using an SBA-backed loan through Washington Trust Bank, Izenberg bought The Daily Grind Downtown.



One year later, another loan helped her remodel, painting the facility's dark walls a sunny yellow and adding drywall to create efficient workspace for employees and a cozy place for customers.

Izenberg plans to repaint and retille soon to maintain the clean, bright look. WhiteRunkle Associates has created a new logo for the shop and a new sign bearing the logo is also in the works.



From the morning's fresh-baked breads and scones to made-to-order lunchtime sandwiches, customers perk up to Daily Grind Downtown's great espresso, fresh food and

cheerful service. Izenberg arrives around 6:00 am to make baked goods, including scones that sell out every morning. They serve customers from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm. Sales exceeded projections last year and are on track to do so again.



Izenberg, who formerly coordinated a food donation program at the L.A. Food Bank, brings the rare leftover baked goods to the downtown Women's Drop-In Center.



The Daily Grind
Downtown

Brewing up Success
in Spokane

Izenberg relishes interaction with clients, a large percentage of whom are regulars she greets by name. She says, *"Customers help us figure out what works best. We get such good feedback. It's no big deal to stay an extra 20 minutes to do another batch of scones. People are so appreciative . . . Customers feel like it's their shop too. Friendships and romances have started*



here." If customers can't come for their usual sandwich, the café offers delivery service within the skywalk.

"As a small business owner, it's pretty much on you. If you don't do it, it's not

going to get done. You have to go that extra step." Izenberg says her biggest challenge comes from staffing. *"It's hard to find really good people who are extremely customer service oriented."* Her benefit package for employees includes health insurance and paid parking.

She also says she's learned a lot about taxes, including payroll and sales tax. She advises other entrepreneurs, *"Make sure you understand the taxes. Go to the BIC and learn about bookkeeping. I would definitely recommend people talking to . . . SCORE."*



Customers can get "wired" on coffee while going wireless with their communication. In November 2002, area Internet broadband provider One Eighty Networks installed a free community wireless hot spot at the Daily Grind so that their customers with laptops and Pocket PCs can partake of high-speed Internet access as well as tasty treats.

All challenges aside, Izenberg says she's happy at The Daily Grind Downtown. *"I still like it. Of all the different types of jobs I've done, I think this is what I've done best. It's hard to imagine what else I would be doing,"* she said.

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Opened 2000—1 person
2003—staff of 4

Offers coffee, baked goods,
lunch menu, and catering



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