2470 The Menu That Was Never Questioned

Product Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/2470-the-menu-that-was-never-questioned/

The menu that hasn't been questioned is running on assumptions the market may have already moved past.

The item that "always sells" — when was the last time the operator verified that the Guest is ordering it because they love it, not because it's the only familiar thing on the menu? The price point that "works" — when was the last time the operator tested whether "works" means profitable or just unchallenged? The concept that "is what we are" — when was the last time the operator asked whether what they are is still what the market needs?

[Activity Crowding] in the Product fundamental produces a menu, a physical environment, and an experience architecture that calcify around whatever was working when the operator last had time to look. The operator who is always executing service never steps back far enough to evaluate whether the service is still the right service.

The Product learning discipline is the scheduled audit — not the crisis audit that happens when covers drop, but the proactive audit that happens on a regular cadence whether anything feels wrong or not. The menu engineering review. The plate walk. The Guest observation session where the operator watches the experience without intervening. The vendor conversation that asks not "what do you have?" but "what are your other restaurant clients doing that we're not?"

The operator who never questions the product is not running a stable operation. They are running an operation that is drifting from the market at whatever rate the market is moving — and calling the drift stability because nothing has broken visibly yet.