2760 The Standard Holds or It Doesnt

Product Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/2760-the-standard-holds-or-it-doesnt/

Cost pressure arrives at the Product level as a temptation to compress what the Guest receives.

Smaller portions. Cheaper proteins. Reduced staffing on the floor. QR codes replacing the cast member who would have read the table. Each compression is defensible in isolation. In aggregate, they are a curriculum — the operation teaching the Guest, visit by visit, that this place delivers less than it used to.

The Guest does not read a balance sheet. The Guest reads the experience. When the experience compresses, the Guest's expectation of what this operation is worth compresses with it. The operator has protected margin on the cost side and destroyed it on the revenue side simultaneously — because a Guest who expects less will not pay more, and a Guest who expects less is one competitive discount away from leaving.

The [Rising Costs Argument] in Product is a standard question: does cost pressure cause the standard to hold or does it cause the standard to compress? The operator who holds the standard under cost pressure is building a defensible price point. The operator who compresses the standard under cost pressure is training the Guest to expect the compression as the new ceiling.

Build first. Amplify second. Subtract nothing. Cost pressure is not an exception to that sequence. It is the moment the sequence is tested.

What Changes Tomorrow

Identify one product or service standard that has been compressed in the last twelve months under cost pressure. Name what the Guest lost. Decide whether to restore it or own the compression as a permanent standard change. Silence is not a decision — it is a drift.