2780 The Product That Keeps Getting Deferred

Product Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/2780-the-product-that-keeps-getting-deferred/

The menu engineering review that has been on the list for three quarters. The facility update that keeps getting pushed to "after the holidays." The systems upgrade that is always next year's capital expenditure. The concept evolution that everybody agrees is necessary and nobody has time to start.

[Temporal Discounting] in the Product fundamental produces a building that is always being maintained and never being developed. The immediate product needs — the 86 list, the vendor short, the plating issue on table 12 — are loud and certain. The strategic product work — the menu audit, the experience architecture review, the physical environment assessment — is distant and abstract. The brain reliably funds the loud over the abstract.

[Present Bias] keeps product development perpetually deferred. The platform work always loses to the feature request. The concept evolution always loses to tonight's execution problem.

[Future-Self Disconnect] turns product debt into inheritance. The menu that hasn't been audited in two years, the facility that has been patched instead of invested in, the experience design that was set at opening and never revisited — all of it becomes the future operator's problem. The future operator is the same person.

[Exponential Growth Bias] hides product decay until it's visible. The menu item that slowly stopped earning its real estate. The physical environment that aged past the Guest's expectation. The experience that was competitive three years ago and isn't anymore. None of it declines linearly. It drifts — then tips.

The Product discipline is the scheduled investment that is not negotiable. The menu engineering review that happens on a calendar regardless of whether the operation feels like it needs one. The facility walk that produces a prioritized list regardless of whether anything is visibly broken. The experience audit that asks whether the product is still the right product — before the market answers the question for the operator.