[Reciprocity Test]

The Operator's Dictionary · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/reciprocity-test/

Definition

The diagnostic that surfaces every Road 1 / Road 2 mismatch across the operation. Runs across all four counterparty contracts simultaneously — [The Hospitality Contract] or [The Service Contract] as parent form, [The Guest Contract] or [The Customer Contract] as Guest-side instance, [The Cast Contract] as Cast-side instance. Asks a single question of every party inside every contract: is this party manifesting at the level of the contract they are inside, or receiving or claiming terms greater than they manifested? Failures surface within a single contract (party-level asymmetry) and across contracts (operator running different roads across counterparties). The test is the native read Guests are already running on every operation they enter, whether they can name it or not. The framework names what Guests already do so the operator can audit his own operation against it before the Guest audits it by not returning.

Family

Canon — MAJOR. Top-level. The cross-contract coherence diagnostic that governs the contract family. Pairs directly with [Operator Arbitrage] as the position surfaced when the test fails by design.

Why Behind the Thinking

A contract holds together when every party inside it manifests at the level of the contract they signed. Ownership alone is insufficient. Two parties can each stay in their own lane and the contract can still be asymmetric because one lane is being run at a lower level than the contract specifies. That is not a boundary violation. It is a level violation. Mine/Theirs/Ours inside each contract names who owns what. [Reciprocity Test] names whether each party is meeting the level of the contract they are inside.

The Guest is the primary instrument. The Guest does not need the vocabulary to run the test — they run it somatically, on the visit, in the body. The gap between what was marketed and what

was manifested registers as a felt read before the Guest has left the parking lot. Guests cannot always articulate why the Road 2 marketing did not match what happened at the table, but the felt sense is immediate and it drives the retention read. The Guest votes with their feet. The framework's move is to make the test explicit at the operator level, so the operator can run it on himself before the Guest runs it on him and stops coming back.

The test is neutral on intent. It surfaces the mismatch whether the mismatch is intentional, faulty design, faulty read, or drift. The mechanic underneath — [Operator Arbitrage] — carries the accountability read. [Reciprocity Test] surfaces the position. [Operator Arbitrage] names it.

Three read categories the test produces:

- **Real Road 2 operation** — [The Hospitality Contract] running coherently. Road 2 architecture, Road 2 execution, Road 2 compensation, Road 2 Cast investment, Road 2 Guest experience. All parties manifesting at Road 2 level. Test passes.
- **Dressed Road 2 operation** — [The Hospitality Contract] marketing running against [The Service Contract] cost structure. Road 2 pricing and Road 2 tip expectations against Road 1 execution. Test fails. Position surfaced is [Operator Arbitrage].
- **Honest Road 1 operation** — [The Service Contract] running coherently. Road 1 architecture, Road 1 execution, Road 1 compensation, Road 1 Customer experience. Counter service, QSR, quick service, take-out, delivery-primary. All parties manifesting at Road 1 level. Test passes. A coherent Road 1 operation is a real business, not a demotion.

Failure catalog by location of gap:

- **Within-contract asymmetry (party-level manifest failure).**
  - Guest receiving Road 2 hospitality while compensating at Road 1 level.
  - Customer arriving to a counter with no Road 2 service and being asked for Road 2 tip at settle.
  - Cast delivering Road 1 execution inside a Road 2 offer while expecting Road 2 tip compensation.
  - Operator claiming Road 2 pricing while executing Road 1 architecture.
- **Cross-contract mismatch (operator running different roads across counterparties).**

- Road 2 [Hospitality Contract] paired with Road 1 [Cast Contract] — operator claims Road 2 from the Guest while paying Cast Road 1 wages, offering Road 1 development, treating shifts as transactional. The Guest is being asked to fund Road 2 experience the operator will not pay Cast to actually deliver.
- Road 2 [Hospitality Contract] paired with Road 1 [Guest Contract] execution — the dressed Road 2 operation. Road 2 marketing, Road 2 pricing, Road 1 delivery.
- Road 1 [Service Contract] paired with Road 2 tip expectations at settle — counter-service tip prompt failure.

- **Marketing-manifest gap ([Operator Arbitrage] running).** Marketing amplifies a contract the operation does not manifest. Acquisition treadmill funds Guest replacement. Retention softens. Silent churn bleeds LTV.

The tip fight the test surfaces:

The counter-service tip prompt backlash is a [Reciprocity Test] failure at national scale. Counter operations running [The Service Contract] — clean Road 1, transactional, settle at close — inserting a tip prompt at settle that asks the Customer to compensate as if it were [The Hospitality Contract]. Customer arrived to manifest Road 1. Compensated at Road 1. Then got asked to add Road 2 compensation on top of a Road 1 exchange. Cast did not manifest Road 2 service. Operator did not architect Road 2. Public is not anti-tip. Public is refusing an asymmetric claim inside a transactional contract. Same eyes then look upstream at full-service and see most operations running Road 2 marketing against Road 1 execution. The counter-service fight did not create the industry's dressed Road 2 problem. It exposed it.

Pairs with

[Operator Arbitrage], [The Hospitality Contract], [The Service Contract], [The Guest Contract], [The Customer Contract], [The Cast Contract], [The Operator Contract], [Marketing as Architecture Amplification], [Causal Read], [Lost Opportunity Tax], [Consent Erosion], [Two Roads], [Static Decline], [By Design or By Default]