

CREATING REGULARS

A practical framework for turning first visits into relationships without becoming intrusive.

The long-term asset: a regular does not simply buy more often. A regular reduces the need to re-win the decision every time; the bar becomes part of that person's routine and identity.

▲ SEC. 01

THE PROGRESSION

STRANGER → GUEST → RETURNING GUEST → RECOGNIZED GUEST → REGULAR → ADVOCATE

Hospitality research has linked attentive service, feedback seeking, communication, prompt service, and effort with customer experience and loyalty. **[R7]** Social-servicescape research also suggests that employees and other customers help shape the experience and behavioral intentions. **[R3]**

▲ SEC. 02

LOW-CREEP RECOGNITION

- Remember names when they are naturally learned.
- Remember a drink preference when useful.
- Recognize recurring groups and occasions.
- Introduce guests when there is an obvious social connection.
- Do not collect sensitive personal details or behave as though the bar is tracking people.

LEADING-BAR EXAMPLES

Jewel of the South explicitly frames hospitality around bringing strangers together, conversation, anticipation, and leaving guests in better spirits. Kumiko's award-winning model emphasizes intentional care and community building. [c2][c4]

What to measure later: repeat-visit behavior, recognition by staff, event return rate, review language, and customer referrals are better long-term indicators than simply pushing for one more transaction tonight.

▲ SOURCES

EVIDENCE & SOURCES

● **RESEARCH EVIDENCE** peer-reviewed study

○ **MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** established management literature

■ **LEADING-BAR CASE** documented operator practice, not a controlled experiment

R3 ● **RESEARCH** "The restaurant social servicescape: Establishing a nomological framework." *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 74 (2018), 13–21. **Source**

R7 ● **RESEARCH** Sattavorn & Khasasin (2026). "Impact of Japanese hospitality; Omotenashi; on customers' experiences and their loyalty to restaurants." *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 133, 104523. **Source**

M1 ○ **FRAMEWORK** Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser & Schlesinger (1994). "Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work." *Harvard Business Review*, March–April 1994. **Source**

C2 ■ **CASE** Jewel of the South, New Orleans. North America's 50 Best Bars: Michter's Art of Hospitality Award 2024. **Source**

C4 ■ **CASE** Kumiko, Chicago. Michter's Art of Hospitality Award 2026; Best Bar in Midwest USA 2026. **Source**

Interpretation note: hospitality and restaurant studies are used as evidence for general service and environment principles. They should not be read as guarantees of a specific sales lift in a particular bar. Leading-bar examples illustrate execution patterns consistent with those principles.

Part of The Happy Thesis Co.'s free Bar Owner Resource Library. **Get in touch** if you'd like help putting any of this into practice.