

EVENTS SHOULD SOLVE A BUSINESS PROBLEM

A simple framework for turning bar events from random promotions into measurable experiments.

Start with the problem; not the event. "We should do trivia" is an idea. "Wednesday 6–9 PM is underused and we want a repeatable reason for 25–40 people to visit" is a business problem.

▲ SEC. 01

THE SIX-STEP EVENT TEST

STEP 1

PROBLEM

What underused period, audience, or business goal are we trying to improve?

STEP 2

HYPOTHESIS

What do we think the event will change?

STEP 3

BASELINE

What normally happens during this time?

STEP 4

TEST

Run the event consistently enough to generate useful information.

STEP 5

MEASURE

Track incremental revenue, direct cost, attendance, repeat participation, operational strain, and guest response.

STEP 6

DECIDE

KEEP / MODIFY / KILL / SCALE.

Hypothesis-driven testing is consistent with the lean-startup management approach: treat assumptions as hypotheses, gather feedback, revise, and scale after evidence rather than relying only on planning or intuition. **[M2]**

▲ SEC. 02

CONCEPT FIT STILL MATTERS

Servicescape research indicates that physical and social environments affect customer experience and behavioral intentions, so an event that fills the room but feels wrong for the bar can create a real tradeoff. **[R3][R4]**

- A biker bar, tiki bar, neighborhood pub, and cocktail lounge may solve the same slow-night problem with completely different events.
- Owner enthusiasm matters because recurring events require ongoing promotion and execution.
- Do not over-program. A bar still needs to function as a bar when no event is happening.

LEADING-BAR LESSON

Superbueno's documented success emphasizes strong cultural identity, a sense of fun, an unintimidating atmosphere, and deliberate environmental choices. The useful lesson is to make programming reinforce identity rather than dilute it. **[c3]**

Example: Problem: Tuesday is underused. Hypothesis: a weekly artist-led social night will attract 30 incremental guests and create repeat behavior. Baseline: normal Tuesday revenue/transactions. Test: six weeks. Decision: scale only if the economics, guest response, and operating fit justify it.

▲ SOURCES

EVIDENCE & SOURCES

● **RESEARCH EVIDENCE** peer-reviewed study

○ **MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** established management literature

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

M2 ○ **FRAMEWORK** Blank, S. (2013). "Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything." *Harvard Business Review*, May 2013. **Source**

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

R4 ● **RESEARCH** Kaminakis et al. "Hospitality servicescape effects on customer-employee interactions: A multilevel study." *Tourism Management*, 72 (2019), 130–144. **Source**

R5 ● **RESEARCH** Milliman, R. E. (1986). "The Influence of Background Music on the Behavior of Restaurant Patrons." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(2), 286–289. **Source**

C3 ■ **CASE** Superbueno, New York. Ranked No. 2, North America's 50 Best Bars 2024. **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.

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.