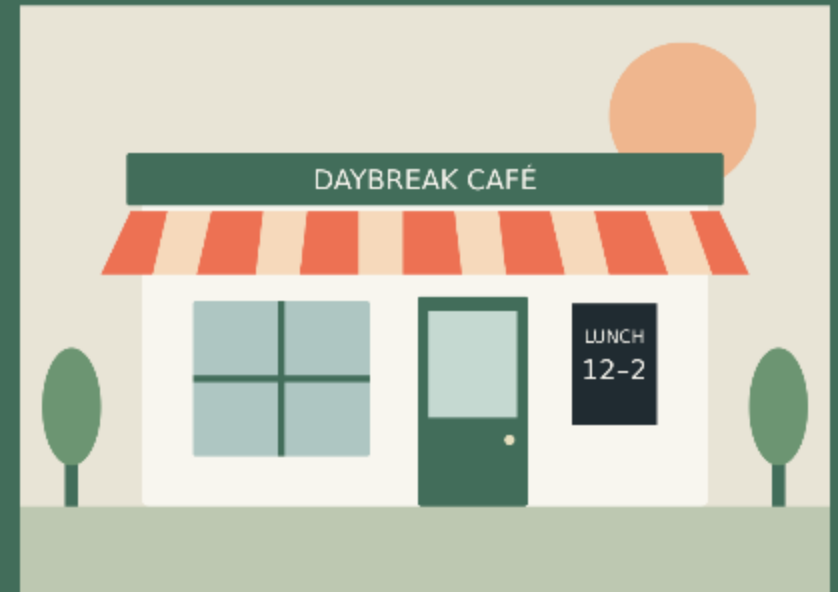


BRIEFWORK STUDIO

A \$4 lunch worth serving?

Daybreak Café
Commercial assessment

A fictional decision case / 28 October 2026



A test needs cost and capacity checks before approval

Decision: whether to add a \$4 sandwich-and-drink offer to the existing lunch service.

Choice	Commercial consequence	Assessment
Keep the current menu	No setup cost or new operating burden	The reference case for every comparison
Launch a standing lunch menu	Commits to supply and service before demand is known	Premature on the information available
Run a bounded service test	Buys evidence on demand, switching and workload	Conditional recommendation

Approval now: validate quotes and kitchen capacity.

Setup spending follows only after the owner agrees a maximum acceptable loss. The \$170 model allowance is not an approved cash budget.

\$560 of offer sales leaves –\$28 after setup and switching

Illustrative period: 20 selling days, 140 offers sold and 40 regular orders displaced.

Measure	USD	Calculation
Offer revenue	560	$140 \times \$4.00$
Offer contribution	238	$140 \times (\$4.00 - \$2.30)$
Lost regular-order contribution	–96	$40 \times \$2.40$
Incremental recurring contribution	142	$\$238 - \$96$
After one-time setup	–28	$\$142 - \$170$

The final figure is incremental economic contribution, before unchanged rent and income tax. It is not accounting profit or a cash-flow forecast.

A switched order gives up \$0.70 of contribution

A new order adds \$1.70. An offer replacing a \$2.40 regular margin reduces contribution.

Offer price and unit costs	USD
Selling price	4.00
Ingredients	1.40
Packaging	0.25
Labour allowance	0.55
Payment allowance	0.10
Total variable cost	2.30
Offer contribution	1.70

100 new orders

add \$170

40 switched orders

give up \$28

Labour values 3 minutes at \$11/hour. Verify payroll effects separately. Waste and unbudgeted fees reduce the result further.

At 30% switching, 180 offers leave just \$6.40

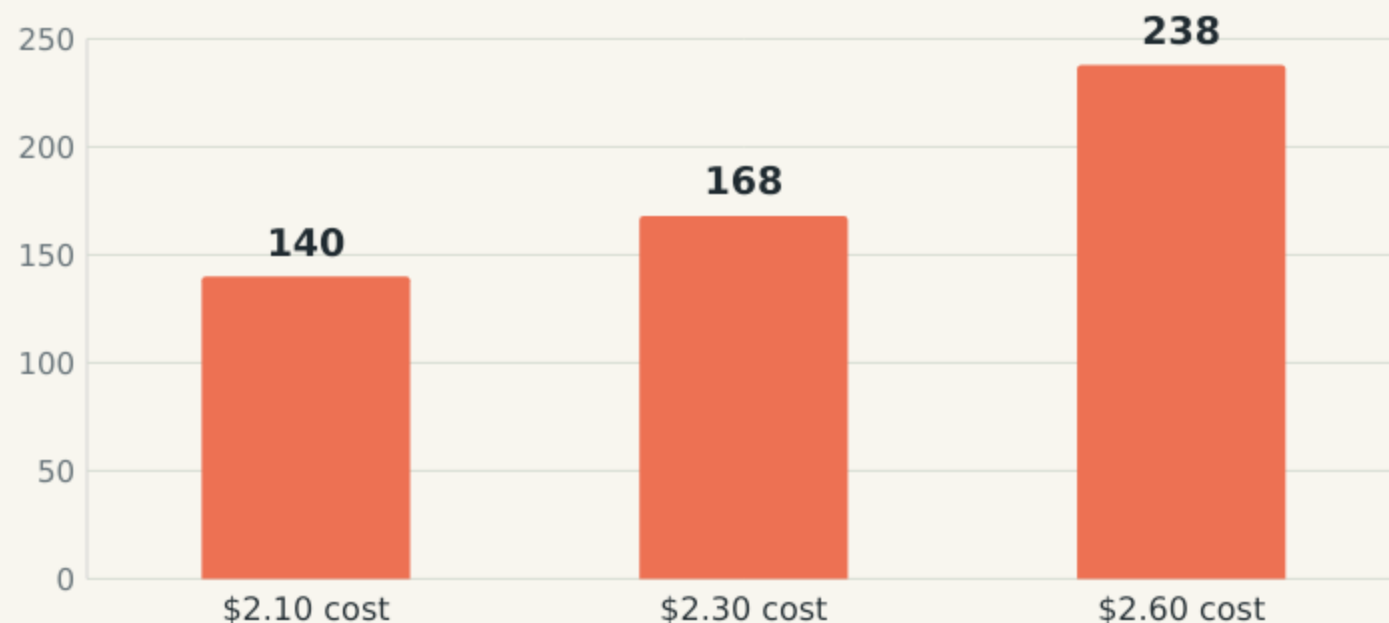
Contribution after \$170 setup, in USD. Columns show the share replacing regular orders.

Offers / 20 days	0%	15%	30%	45%
100	0.0	-36.0	-72.0	-108.0
140	68.0	17.6	-32.8	-83.2
180	136.0	71.2	6.4	-58.4
200	170.0	98.0	26.0	-46.0

A busy till can coexist with a weak launch result. Volume has to compensate for the regular margin that the offer replaces.

A \$0.30 cost increase pushes recovery beyond 200 offers

Left: offers needed to recover \$170 setup at the base switching share of 40/140 (28.6%).



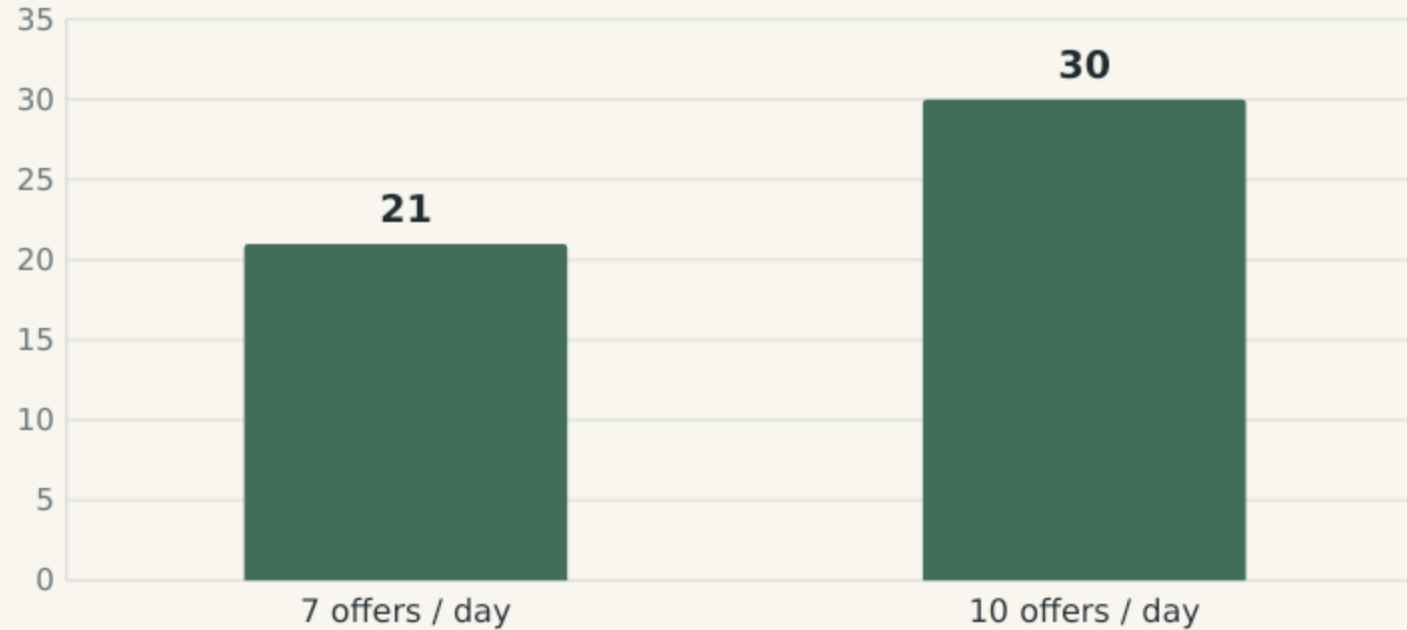
At \$2.30 unit cost

Switching share	Offers needed
0%	100
28.6%	168
45%	275

The planning ceiling is 200 offers over 20 days. Higher requirements need more capacity or a longer recovery period.

Ten daily offers use the assumed prep capacity

Illustrative capacity: 30 usable staff-minutes at lunch, with 3 minutes of work per offer.



10 offers / day

planning ceiling: $30 \div 3$

Daily spare time can conceal a peak-time bottleneck.

Time the busiest intervals. The cap must protect regular orders and the café's existing service promise.

The test must compare the whole lunch service

The model's 20 selling days represent four five-day trading weeks, not a prescribed test length.

Question	Evidence to collect	Decision use
Does lunch earn more?	Offer and regular contribution, waste, extra payroll and avoidable service costs	Compare total lunch contribution on comparable offer and non-offer services
How much demand switches?	Balanced weekday comparisons and brief customer questions about the alternative purchase	Use a range. Neither a till code nor a customer answer observes the counterfactual
Can the team deliver?	Preparation and handover times in peak intervals, queue abandonment and staff minutes	Set interval-specific caps against the existing service standard
Do customers return?	Repeat demand across comparable opportunities	A short launch spike cannot justify a standing menu

Interleaving comparable services can strengthen the comparison. Weather, local events and carryover still limit a single-café estimate.

The 20-day recovery target leaves little room for error

At the planning ceiling of 10 daily offers, the period can contain at most 200 offers.

\$2.46

maximum unit cost, approximately

Holding switching at the base 28.6%

35.4%

maximum switching share,
approximately

Holding unit cost at \$2.30

Each boundary changes one input at a time. Combining both limits would overstate what the offer can support.

Setup recovery and continuation are different decisions

Base case recurring contribution: \$142 per 20 selling days, before any new fixed operating cost.

Additional recurring fixed cost	Contribution after that cost
\$0	\$142
\$100	\$42
\$200	-\$58

-\$28 at launch

includes the initial \$170 setup

Once spent, setup does not belong in the next period's incremental cost.

An extension still requires repeat demand, actual costs and service reliability. Positive contribution does not establish total business profitability.

Demand, cost and capacity assumptions need separate checks

None of the inputs below is an observed result from a client business.

Illustrative input	Model value	Required check
Demand and switching	7 offers/day; 40 of 140 replace regular orders	Whole-service comparisons and repeat purchases
Unit margins	\$4 price; \$2.30 offer cost; \$2.40 regular margin	Supplier quotes, ingredient yield, waste, payroll and the same cost basis for regular orders
Setup allowance	\$170: \$50 printing + \$120 preparation	Actual expenditure and owner/staff time recorded separately
Usable prep capacity	30 minutes/day; 3 minutes per offer	Timed work in peak intervals and safe food-handling capacity

The companion CSV contains the inputs, formulas and every sensitivity value. A verified calculation does not validate the assumed demand.

A bounded test is the next commitment

Launch conditions

Quotes support positive incremental margins. A timed service check protects regular trade. The owner approves a loss limit and a review date.

Pause or stop conditions

Conservative costs and switching imply no recurring gain, the loss limit is reached, or the offer breaches the existing service standard.

A standing menu requires evidence of repeat demand and whole-service contribution.