

Staffless coffee shop relies on customers to pay honestly



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A cup of coffee can fluctuate in price, but customers can always expect to pay within the ball park of a few dollars. The low price means that cafés are ripe for experimentation with payment systems, and in the past we've seen [La Petite Syrah Café](#) in France charge customers more if they're rude. Now [The Vault](#) in North Dakota is a staffless venue that gets customers to make their own coffee and show some honesty when paying.

Located in a former bank in Valley City, the venue doesn't have any baristas. Instead, the café serves coffee from a Keurig K-Cup machine and a professional brewer, alongside other soft drinks and individually-packaged snacks. Customers simply take what they want and check the price board to add up their final bill. They can then place cash into a slot in the honesty box, write a cheque, or use the self-service card reader. Exact change isn't needed — it's up to customers to decide if they want to round their bill up or down, if indeed pay at all. Although the venue keeps security cameras, there's no other incentive to be honest, but the café has found that its customers have paid an average of 15 percent more than the menu prices.

Watch the video below from Fox KVRN to find out more about the concept:

The Vault also lets customers decide the price of the secondhand books it sells, with a general rule of USD 1 for a book and a few dollars for a good one. Could other retail venues get away with a model such as this?

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