

# Strategic Success Story: Silver Fern Farms



“Every day, we hear about another strategic initiative that failed. There is no question that strategy execution is complex, as companies attempt to manage goals, projects, initiatives, Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s), targets and teams. But, if you can easily visualize what is going on, you have increased your odds of being successful”.

— Barry Wilderman, *Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research*



## About Silver Fern Farms

Silver Fern Farms is New Zealand’s leading procurer, processor and marketer of sheep, lamb, beef and venison.

As a leader they are setting new standards in industry innovation, technology and marketing. They are constantly exploring improvements in quality and yield through processing and engagement with farmers. Silver Fern Farms believe the best place to test and demonstrate new technology is in a commercial arena.

Their vision is to be a fully-integrated market-led company investing in consumer products that add value to farmers, their customers and people.

To execute this vision they use StrategyBlocks.

## Strategic communication:

Industry-standard strategy maps are often confusing (Figure 1).

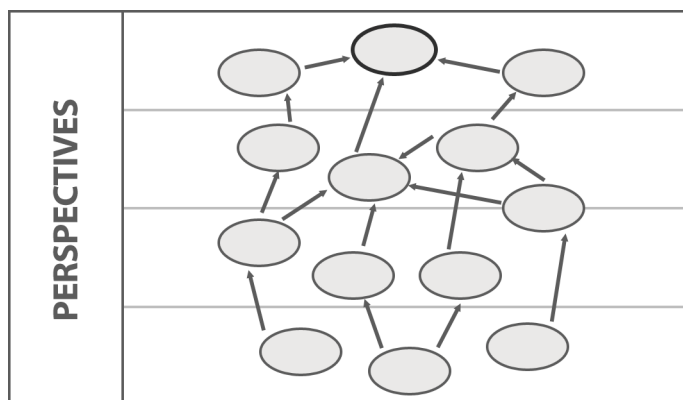


Figure 1: Strategy map

It is useful to show goals by perspective or focus areas (customer, financial, internal processes and learning and growth). And, some goals link to other goals. However, this doesn’t tell the “story” of strategy. Its intention is to guide the actions of people through summarising their individual purposes into 1 or more key performance indicators (KPI’s) and to link these actions into the broader vision of the organisation.

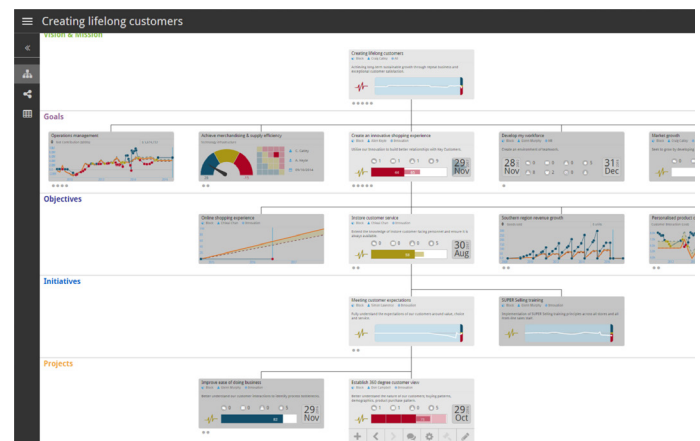


Figure 2: StrategyBlocks strategy map view

StrategyBlocks has an approachable visual representation. It monitors a number of key strategic variables (each of equal importance) to give senior management the full strategic picture, while at the same time engaging and motivating operational personnel.

This success story will take you through parts of the StrategyBlocks approach, and listen to the words of Kevin Winders, COO of Silver Fern Farms.

**” Many strategies fail not because they are poorly planned or implemented without enthusiasm, but because they are poorly expressed.”**

— **Stephen Cummings** *Professor Strategic Management Victoria University Management School*

# About StrategyBlocks

## Get quality information

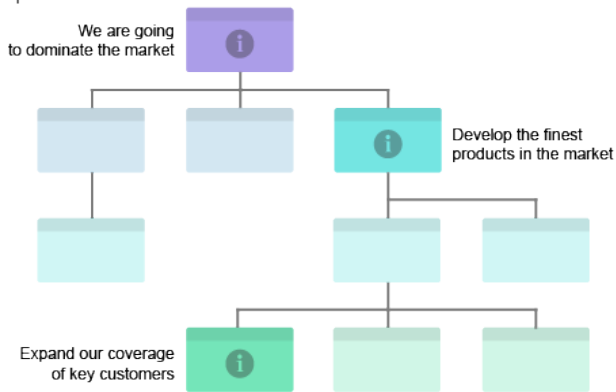
To be successful, a strategy must be supported by relevant information. Quantitative measures such as KPI's have been the only visible means of monitoring execution. Although these are important, StrategyBlocks adds qualitative information. By providing the whole picture, StrategyBlocks makes meeting strategic goals more science than art.

## How it works

In (figure 2) we are representing four levels of detail, but any number of levels are possible. Unlike strategy maps, every block in the diagram inherits its characteristics from the block above it, and the aggregated progress below it. There is clarity at all levels of a StrategyBlocks map, but the real power comes from what can be understood about the block itself.

## What is a Block?

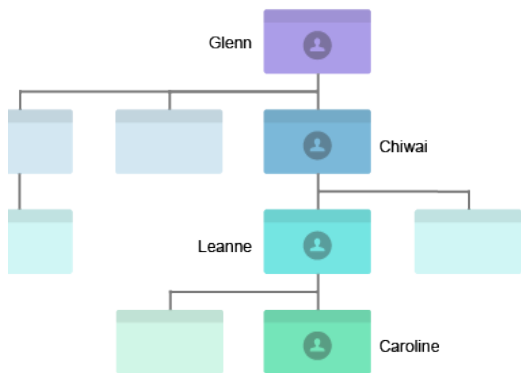
A Block describes exactly what needs to be achieved and who is responsible for it.



Built on layers or 'blocks', key strategic focus areas can be added with ownerships and associations as required to build a complete structure. By assigning ownership to individual activities, progress towards the end goal can be continuously monitored, updated and communicated at all levels.

## Delegate Ownership & Responsibility

StrategyBlocks creates a clear linear path of responsibility.



StrategyBlocks is a complete, fully integrated software-as-a-service that allows for the consistent communication of ideas. It encourages participation at all levels, and guides participants towards the best use of their time and the organisation's strategic goals. By recognising that successful strategic initiatives can emerge at any level within an organisation, StrategyBlocks can be easily tailored to fit the way your business is structured.



*I can see the entire strategy on a single page. I can send the first 3 levels of the strategy to the Board. Then,*

*we concentrate on the next 3 levels of the strategy, which also helps us answer Board questions. For us the 4th - 6th levels of the strategy are: Initiative, Project and Sub-project. We always have snapshots of what activities are going on because of the visuals – we can get in front of issues. Looking at each block provides a great deal of insight, new activities are dropped into StrategyBlocks. As a result we have a full appraisal of what is going on.*

*We have no regrets. Visual strategy is the way to go, and we made the right choice with StrategyBlocks.*

— Barry Wilderman, Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research

## Moving forward

All companies should begin with a clear statement about Mission, Vision and Values. With this in place the company is ready for strategy formulation and goal setting. This is where StrategyBlocks can begin to provide the necessary visual clues. A strategy that can be visually disaggregated into blocks is a strategy that can be understood.

At this stage, the strategy has been formulated, and teams have been assigned to achieve each goal in the strategy. This is a critical junction. Assigning teams and gaining commitment is crucial to the success of the goal. This is a corporate priority and having the visual representation of goals is beneficial to achieve this.

Finally, there comes the crucial stage of strategy execution. Goals must be linked to KPI's, risks, financial plans and targets. Performance of team members must be constantly monitored. StrategyBlocks helps management visualize how each goal is proceeding.

Scorecards and strategy maps have value; they have been around for quite some time. But, clarity has value too, and we encourage companies to examine the components (and simplicity) of the StrategyBlocks approach to strategic execution, monitoring and communication.



*Bottom Line: The complexity of strategy management should be complemented by highly visual approaches for formulating and executing strategies. We believe that StrategyBlocks adds an important addition to the achievement of successful strategies."*

— Barry Wilderman, Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research



## StrategyBlocks

For more information on StrategyBlocks, please visit [www.strategyblocks.com](http://www.strategyblocks.com) or email [info@strategyblocks.com](mailto:info@strategyblocks.com). If you would like an online demonstration please click the "Request an online demo" link from the website and we would be delighted to show you how StrategyBlocks can have a positive effect on your business.

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