

Strategic Plan

[Company Name]

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[Date Published]

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# Abstract

A brief abstract describing the salient points of the strategy, 3-5 paragraphs

Write your abstract here.

PLEASE NOTE: All instructions in the following document are provided in grey italic font like this. All instruction text should be deleted from the final document. The body text in this document uses a style called ‘Normal’ and can be modified to suit the needs of your strategic plan. This text style is called ‘Instructions’.

This is Version 7j of the Strategic Plan Template, last updated in March 2020

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# Foundation

## Vision

Add your Vision – this is a statement about the future, only a single line. It should be inspirational and unique, for example:

**“Transforming society through easy access to ultra-high-speed information services”**

## Purpose

Add your Purpose – this is a statement about how you believe your company or organisation contributes to society. Many companies use ‘purpose’ as a more potent way of combining their Mission and Core Values, for example:

**Through our business, we aim to build a connected society that enhances socio-economic progress, embraces everyone and does not come at the cost of our planet.**

## Core Values

Core values provide the foundation upon which a company or organisation is built. These are the values any staff member will sign up to when joining. They are the values that anyone looking at the company or organisation would automatically relate to. They have to be honest. If a core value that is not in keeping with the current image has no value at all (other than a negative value). Around five or six core values is optimum. Labels and descriptions are required. The label is usually used externally, the description internally. For example:

Our Core Values have been in place since the company started and only modified to take into account value changes in society. The principles we stand by are taught to every member of staff during their induction and reinforced daily through our intranet, posters in offices and refreshers via management cascade on a regular basis.

**Our Core Values:**

* Honesty – We are honest to a fault; we would rather disappoint a customer than lie.
* Integrity – Our word is our bond; we will always deliver on a promise.
* Helpfulness – We are approachable, we do not hard sell, and we wait to be asked.
* Community – We work together as a community and are willing to help each other.
* Efficiency – We strive to do everything in the most efficient way.

# Analysis

It is important to analyse both internal and external factors to help determine a strategic focus. This is turn will allow you to break down a Vision and Purpose into two or three ‘Strategic Priorities’ and therefore create a more effective set of business objectives.

There are many tools to help with strategic analysis. Tried and tested examples include SWOT, Gap Analysis, Critical Success Factors, PESTLE, Porters Five Forces or Benchmarking. All methods have their merits and a combination can be used to look at yourselves, the market, your competitors and future scenarios. Below, we have illustrated three easy to use methods.

## SWOT (Enablers and Challenges)

If you are familiar with SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), looking at **Enablers and Challenges** is a similar process. The key is to be aware of all areas of impact, both good and bad, and derive from that your strategic priorities. Typically, this exercise will generate dozens of enablers and challenges, these are usually summarised in a table. This section has a short narrative followed by the summary table, for example:

The following table is a summary of a much more extensive set of enablers and challenges that were identified using the SWOT workshop process. Through the information gained we can see that there is a need to quickly build on our current successes to develop our brand. There is also a need to focus on content supply and acquisition and to enhance our technical abilities to better utilise content and provide up-to-date user interfaces.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Enablers** | **Challenges** |
| (Strengths)   * Number 1 provider of ultra-high-speed mobile network services * Successfully launched a new handset and three new content initiatives * We own an ultra-high-speed network | (Weaknesses)   * Older company, seen as a bit stuck in the past especially by young * Content provision, especially entertainment, it is good but not the best * Leadership team has recently changed, no track record |
| (Opportunities)   * Worked closely with providers to secure exclusive distribution * Building on a successful launch, re-invigorate our brand * Capitalise on our ownership of an ultra-high-speed network | (Threats)   * Increase competition, especially from multi-play (TV, Broadband) entrants * Changes in government regulations esp. free 0800 numbers * Competition stepping up marketing and advertising rapidly |

## Critical Success Factors

When building a strategy, organisations tend to move very quickly to defining objectives or projects. This is a mistake. Having spent time authoring a Vision and Purpose, moving to the detail without determining what is important can result in a lot of wasted effort. By defining a set of Critical Success Factors an organisation can home in those things that will accelerate change and improvement.

Where a Vision can provide an overall strategic direction, Critical Success Factors provide focus on the few things that need to be done to ensure success. For example, using the Vision statement we have above, we can break this down to the actual (and implied) strategic components that this mobile network company needs to succeed, it might look like this:

For our vision:

**“Transforming society through easy access to ultra-high-speed information services”**

We considered the following critical success factors:

* Provide a set of unique information services
* Provide a set of expected information services
* Ensure the service really is ultra-high-speed
* Convince consumers that the experience will be transformational
* Attract consumers that will buy-in to the concept

And as a result, identified the following candidate activities:

* Build partnerships with content providers and contract a few exclusive arrangements
* Keep working with existing content suppliers and offer ‘innovation’ incentives
* Accelerate the roll-out of our ultra-high-speed network and keep regulators informed
* Ensure our brand awareness plan contains at least three innovations
* Deliver a fool-proof and exciting mobile interface
* Target a younger audience and build a retention plan
* Use social media to attract early adopters to act as focus groups.

Notice how the items above have utilised the SWOT analysis to good effect by taking some enablers and challenges and turning them to the company’s advantage. This section should then go on to refine the critical success factors to two or three manageable priorities:

From the above list we will focus on:

1. **Unique Content Partnerships** – Without compelling and innovative content the vision will not even get off the blocks!
2. **Tested Brand Awareness Plan** – The company aspiration is to transform society. This is a big plan. Without a big brand awareness campaign and the resourses behind it, the aspiration will not be attained.
3. **Superior Customer Experience** – Developing a fool-proof and exciting user interface to deliver unique and interesting content must be in place to provide a competitive edge.

## Customer Value Proposition

This section is all about what your customers expect from you and what you intend to give them. It is imperative that at some point you **ask your customer what they think**. This may take the form of a series of interviews, customer feedback forms or surveys or simply some informal discussions. The results, as evidence, should be written up and then consolidated in a paragraph prior to writing your proposition, for example:

Over the past year our customers were randomly selected to participate in an online survey, or a face to face interview. In total there have been 1027 interviews and responses of which 25 were high-value customers and 122 long-standing customers. This selection has been verified as being a representative sample of the total number customers.

In addition, a ‘focus-group’ of industry experts numbering 25 individuals was commissioned to take the same survey and participate in a series of meeting with the executive team. All of the results were collated and can be found here: [link to source].

In summary, the results clearly show the following:

* Above all our customers require fast network speed, they are not satisfied with the current high-speed package.
* They need these high speeds to be available wherever they are, they will not tolerate a ‘patchy’ network.
* Their mobile devices are being used more and more for large data and entertainment. Basic services such as calls, text and e-mail are considered as ‘me-too’ and simply need to be there.
* The entertainment service of choice is Sport with a strong leaning toward football

We are well placed to meet these demands, but work is required to ensure we have better coverage and better entertainment services. Therefore, the following customer value proposition seems reasonable:

The Customer Value Proposition starts with a statement that clearly describes the product or service. Firstly, in terms of its functionality and secondly in terms of the relevance, benefit and difference it makes to the customer. Do not fall into the trap of using internal jargon.

One of the most famous templates still widely used today is from Geoff Moore’s seminal book ‘Crossing the Chasm”. It goes like this:

**For** – a short description of the customer   
**Who** – a short description of the problem   
**Our** – a short description of the solution   
**So that** – a short description of the benefit derived.

The value proposition should be no longer than 30 words, for example:

**For** people **who** need fast communications **our** extensive networks provide ultra-high-speed connections **so that** they can conduct business, receive information and be entertained wherever they are located.

Typically, the statement would form the headline thinking and would be followed by a short paragraph to add more detail to specific focus areas.

While going through the three activities above, that is SWOT, Critical Success Factors and Customer Value Proposition, be sure to document the results of each. This should give you enough information to define three strategic priorities. This final Strategic Priority exercise is usually undertaken as a group workshop with the key players from areas that have most influence on strategic implementation. The summarised information from the above exercises is presented and the priorities defined.

# Strategic Priorities

Write an introduction here that summarises the previous section. It should contain a clear and compelling rationale as to how the following Strategic Priorities were determined through your analysis. The language used in this paragraph should be factual and have supporting evidence. This is not a time for rhetoric, it’s is okay to be enthusiastic but do not use jargon and bluster, the reader will want to be convinced that these are the right priorities for your organisation. For example:

Over the past two months multiple strategic analysis exercises have been undertaken and focus groups commissioned to examine our organisation and our market. There have been several themes that have come up again and again in all of the activities. The most significant of which is our lack of success in convincing the market that we are already delivering and ultra-high-speed mobile network. There are three major areas of concern related to this, the first is we cannot demonstrate the capability as we do not have any high-value content to present to our end users. The second is, and we simply have to accept this is true, our customer service has been lacking in the past and this has impacted our ability to sell high-value services. And finally, our brand, although instantly recognisable, has only recently been associated with the types of services that we want to deliver. Where we have had successes, we need to capitalise on this. Therefore, our three strategic priorities this year are:

## 1. Content Partnerships

We have a strong supply chain for content and information services, and have put in place secure exclusive arrangements

## 2. Customer Service

Our combined ultra-high-speed network and content delivery allows us to provide exemplary customer service that astonishes our customers

## 3. Brand Awareness

We have capitalised on our recent successes and reinvigorated our brand allowing us to target a wider and younger audience

Note: the above strategic priorities have descriptions that are in a ‘results-oriented’ language. That is, they describe an outcome as if it has happened. You may want to add some additional information to fully describe what is meant by these strategic priorities and provide some direction to whoever will be working on the next phase, that is, building the strategic objectives.

# Strategic Objectives

Developing Strategic Objectives from your Strategic Priorities is usually undertaken during a strategy workshop that may take one or two days.

You need to provide a concise narrative at this point as a result of the workshop. The author must not forget that many of the readers, and implementors, of this document will not have gone through the full strategic planning process and so need some background. These strategic objectives form a **key part of the strategy** and so it is well worth the effort to provide the appropriate level of detail.

Each strategic objective must have a result and must be measurable. The strategic objectives in our model follow the balanced scorecard methodology and so have been organized into four major areas: Financial, Customer, Internal Processes and Organisational Capacity. Even if you do not use these areas, it is worth placing your strategic objectives into groups.

To ensure the right outcome for an objective is obtained, a description of the result is required. The language used to describe the result should be ‘outcome based’, it should describe exactly, and in plain language what is meant by the label. In addition, each business objective must be measurable, have a target and an owner (next section). The result might look like this:

## Overview

The major thrust of our strategy is to increase the delivery of relevant and exciting content over our existing ultra-high-speed network while continually improving the end-user experience.

The following objectives have been organised into four major areas, Financial, Customer, Internal Process and Organisational Capacity. By doing this we can see how an investment in the lower levels, for example by improving our network server technology, will have a positive impact on the upper levels of customer experience and financial outcome, that is, profit.

## Financial Objectives

The following objectives are from the Financial perspective, the outcomes of the financial objectives are largely driven from the lower level strategic objectives. The major focus is on **Increasing Profit.** This will be achieved in large through better content deals especially with the Football Association. We will also look at **Decreasing Costs**. This will be the only project area in the Financial layer. We will be tightening up our contracts and invoicing processes through better automation and use of packaged software. Throughout we will be controlling our **Revenue Growth** to ensure we are not impacted by excessive customer demand.

### Increase Profit

**Result:** Increased total profit through the introduction of better content deals. Although we should not be completely prescriptive at this stage, our research indicates that football is likely to be a big revenue generator and therefore we suggest the first approach should be to the Football Association

### Increase Revenue

**Result:**

### Decrease Costs

**Result:**

## Customer Objectives

All of the customer objectives focus on how our customers perceive our products and services. Our first major thrust is to: **Improve the Clarity of our Offering**. Over the past two years our high-speed network offering has changed dramatically. Unfortunately, the information available to our customers has not been kept up to date. This has resulted in customer confusion, cancelled sales, and an unacceptable level of calls to the helpdesk. Our costs have risen by 2.6% over the past two years, a large proportion of this increase can be attributed to a lack of clarity and in many cases an absence of information about our high-speed network offering. Therefore, a team of copywriters will be engaged to work with our technical staff to produce a set of video guides, user guides and associated web pages. The project will last six months.

Even though we have the fastest next generation network in the market, and we have improved our helpdesk services dramatically, our perceived customer service value is low. The second Strategic objective is to **Improve Market Perception**. This will be achieved by – etc.

### Improve Clarity of Offering

**Result:** Our offering to market has grown organically over the past five years and has not been coordinated across the organisation as successfully as we would have liked. Therefore, all offering descriptions including print, website, mobile, e-mail and telephone will be coordinated with the same messaging controls from the central marketing team

### Improve Market Perception

**Result:**

### Improve Customer Satisfaction

**Result:**

## Internal Process Objectives

Although our internal processes are reasonably robust in some areas they focus on the wrong things. Over the next year our information delivery services to our customers will be improved. We will also concentrate on our content supplier processes to ensure we have a lightweight and agile process that will enable us to update our content frequently. Etc.

### Improve Content Supply

**Result:** Our content supply chain is robust; it is varied and includes exclusive deals

### Next Objective

**Result:**

### Next Objective

**Result:**

## Organisational Capacity Objectives

Improving knowledge and skills and improving technology are strategic objectives that have been ongoing for two years and the projects are established. The focus therefore this strategic cycle will be on improving our supply chain relationships specifically with regard to content. Etc.

### Improve our Technology

**Result:** Improved technology used to deliver content and information services

### Improve Supply Chain

**Result:**

### Next Objective

**Result:**

# Strategic Measures

This section brings together in tabular form the perspectives, objectives and measure elements of the strategic plan. This is important as it sets out in one place what you are trying to achieve, how it will be measured and who owns the activities. This table can also be used as an import form to build a ‘scorecard’ in QuickScore. The section should start with a short explanatory paragraph:

With the strategic objectives defined it is of vital importance that we describe with a high degree of accuracy how we will measure success. The following represents several workshops with stakeholders to identify the correct measures. Most of the measures already exist and have been mapped to our objectives. Several are new and will need to be added either directly to our strategy monitoring system or to the appropriate back-end system and then extracted for use in the strategy monitoring system. The result is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Objective | Measure | Target | Owner |
| Increase Profit | Net Profit in GBP (monthly) | £xxxM/month | Bill Peters |
|  | Net Profit % (monthly) | 7% | Bill Peters |
| Increase Revenue | Sales Revenue | 3% | Warren Clark |
|  | etc |  |  |
| Improve Clarity of Offering | Customer satisfaction index | 95% | Phil Parker |
|  | Market Share Index | 55% | Phil Parker |
|  | etc |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Improve our Technology | Number of customer service calls | <50/month | John Jones |
|  | Number of unsolicited compliments | >10/month | Harry Johns |
|  | Customer satisfaction survey | >90% | Anna Jessup |

# Strategic Projects

Strategic Projects provide the ‘engine’ that drives change. There does not need to be a one-one match between strategic objectives and strategic projects, in fact one good strategic project might drive improvements in several areas. The section should start with a short narrative and then describe the projects, for example:

The following projects focus on the core activities required to implement our strategy, they are in priority order and represent the corporate view. Where indicated there will be separate departmental tasks that feed into the corporate initiatives.

## Projects

### Approach the Football Association

**Time Frame:** 2020

**Owner:** Steve Goodman

**Description:** Work with the Football Association to determine which of next year’s fixtures are available for mobile broadcast next year. Build the plan to support and implement this.

### Redesign the Football Website

**Time Frame:** 2020

**Owner:** John Jones

**Description:** Completely overhaul the website utilising the latest technologies, bring in a new design company to work on the user interface, roll out by Dec 2020 at the latest

### Automate Contracts and Invoicing

**Time Frame:** 2020

**Owner:** Paul Smith

**Description:** Go to tender for a new integrated Contract and Invoicing system

## Project Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Project | Start Date | End Date | Owner |
| 1 | Approach the Football Association | Apr 2020 | Aug 2020 | Steve Goodman |
| 2 | Redesign the football website | July 2020 | Dec 2020 | Steve Goodman |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Develop criteria for offering selection | May 2020 | Sep 2020 |  |
| 7 | Automate contracts and invoicing | Aug 2020 | Nov 2020 | Paul Smith |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Financial Summary

**Please note: This is not a business plan; it is a strategic plan**. It is unlikely you will be able to quantify the exact financial impact. However, you should be able to quantify the approximate costs of the projects and state a ‘relative’ impact to the business. If you can be exact, then great, but under normal circumstances fully costed business plans are a separate exercise. This section would start with a short narrative and be followed with the costs and impacts. For example:

At this stage the exact costs and benefits of the strategic plan have not be calculated, this will be done at a later date. However, the following provides a set of estimates based on the information available. These projects have been prioritised and assigned, business cases are being produced and will be available from July 2020 onwards.

## Project Costs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project | Completion | Cost | Benefit |
| Approach the football association | Nov 2020 | £3.5 million | £10s million |
| Redesign the football website | Feb 2021 | £300k | £3-£4 million |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Develop criteria for offering selection | Sept 2020 | <£100k | £1 million + |
| Automate contracts and invoicing | Sept 2020 | <200k | £1 million + |
|  |  |  |  |

# Appendix 1 - Integrated Strategy Map

Any additional Information, for example:

A Strategy Map is a visual representation of a set of business objectives grouped using a Balanced Scorecard format. That is, business objectives related to four areas or ‘perspectives’ called Financial, Customer, Internal Processes, and Organisational Capacity. Most importantly, the strategy map also links the cause and effect relationships for the business objectives.

An integrated strategy map should be included for completeness. There should be a pointer to the actual presentation as the map in this document is too small to be useful. The section should start with a short narrative explaining what the map is and why it has been attached, for example:

The following Integrated Strategy Map has been included for reference only. The full sized map can be found [here](https://static.intrafocus.com/uploads/2018/04/Strategy-Map.png). The map shows that a full set of business objectives, measures, targets and initiatives have been identified at the company level. Many of these will be cascaded as-is, some will be refined to suit the needs of our departments. The Integrated Strategy map will appear on the public intranet and will be posted on notice boards in selected areas.

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated