



Regional Manufacturer / Distributor

Birmingham, Alabama

Strategic Planning and Operational Dashboard Development

▶ **Background.**

A proven, high-performing manufacturer and distributor that owns rights to distribute globally-recognized products desired an actionable strategic plan. The company sought a comprehensive strategy that would speak to who it is, what it does, its values, and the benefits that it provides to its key constituents – employees, owners, customers, and communities.

The company desired to link its strategic agenda with the measurable execution of corresponding initiatives. It wanted to effectively implement its strategy, and to understand how it performs over time and across the business. It planned to transform many aspects of its business, and wanted to ensure that its strategies were correct and were carried out to the benefit of its various stakeholders.

▶ **The Challenge.**

The company's management structure is relatively thin, and it relies on this group daily to carry out its mission. Previous efforts at developing a strategic plan stalled, largely due to the requirements of day-to-day operations and the execution of ongoing initiatives. In addition, the company operates a highly decentralized business, making it difficult to identify times that can be effectively set aside for strategic planning efforts.

Beyond the development of the strategic plan, the management team desired an easy-to-use measurement tool to understand, at any time, how it was executing on its strategic initiatives.

▶ **How We Helped.**

Markstein Consulting facilitated several strategic planning sessions to gain consensus on the company's corporate strategy and its supporting objectives. Numerous interviews were conducted with management throughout the company to identify specific initiatives and their optimal, quantifiable metrics.

- **Planning Sessions & Interviews.**

Markstein Consulting worked to gain consensus throughout the company around corporate strategies, objectives, initiatives, and metrics.

- **Strategic Plan Development.**

Markstein Consulting produced a strategic plan that specifically states where the company is today, where it needs to be in 5 years, and how it plans to get there. This document served as a communications tool between and among management and throughout the company.

- **Operational Dashboard Development.**

Markstein Consulting developed an operational dashboard that included specific measurements against each operational strategy, objective, and initiative. The dashboard was used by management to gauge progress on the execution of its strategic imperatives and to ensure accountability.

▶ **Results.**

The company's strategic plan was, for the first time, easily communicated throughout its footprint. Managers and associates throughout the company knew where the company was going, how it planned to get there, and what their roles were in accomplishing its long-term goals.

As the company executed against the initiatives identified in its strategic plan, the operational dashboard ensured that senior management received monthly updates indicating progress against initiatives – and areas in which progress was not being made. This process requires that the strategic plan is updated annually, and the dashboard receives monthly updates.

▶ **About Markstein Consulting**

Markstein Consulting, LLC is a management consulting firm exclusively focused on developing and implementing effective business strategies for its clients. We help companies transform their business challenges into strategic opportunities through four practice areas: corporate strategy, marketing and communications, operational effectiveness, and organizational dynamics. Markstein Consulting is based in Birmingham, Alabama, and can be reached at 205.323.8208.