

when decisions matter ...

STRAD

the strategic adviser

SOFTWARE TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC CHOICE

STRAD - short for Strategic Adviser - is a revolutionary yet easy-to-use software package that offers fast, flexible support to managers and informal planning groups. Its unique capability is to enable users to chart a more confident course through a tangle of tough decisions, while contending with daunting uncertainties and fast-moving events.

The screenshot displays the STRAD software interface with the following components:

- STRAD - PROJECT PRJ** window title and menu bar (File, Window, Customize, Help).
- Focus** panel: A graph showing decision nodes like 'INVEST!', 'RELOCATE?', and 'PARTNER'.
- Process** panel: A table with columns for 'NOW' and 'FUTURE', and rows for various sectors and actions.
- Overview** panel: A decision tree diagram with nodes like 'RELOCATE?', 'TRAINING!', 'PARTNERS?', 'INVEST!', 'TRANSPORT!', and 'FUNDSOURCE?'.
- Schemes** panel: A list of 7 schemes with columns for 'Reconfigure', 'Show', 'Count', and 'Lock'.
- Balance** panel: A scale for 'Scheme No. 6 of 7' with options for 'far site', 'local', 'phased!', 'RELOCATE?', 'PARTNERS?', 'INVEST!', 'near site', and 'none phased!'.
- Balance** panel: A scale for 'Scheme No. 3' with options for 'RELOCATE?', 'PARTNERS?', 'INVEST!', 'near site', and 'none phased!'.
- Balance** panel: A scale for 'CASHFLOW:', 'REPUTATION:', 'CAPACITY:', and 'Combined' with 'Extreme', 'Considerable', 'Significant', 'Marginal', and 'Significant' markers.
- Balance** panel: 'Exclude this scheme?' buttons for 'Yes' and 'No'.

The interactive approach to strategic choice that underpins the design of the software has its roots in ground-breaking research into group decision processes by management scientists in the UK's Tavistock Institute. From these beginnings came practical methods for sharing perspectives on interrelated areas of choice and sustaining progress towards decisions. A world wide body of experience has now built up in the use of these tools to facilitate workshops for decision-makers in business, government and partnership or community settings, with or without software support.

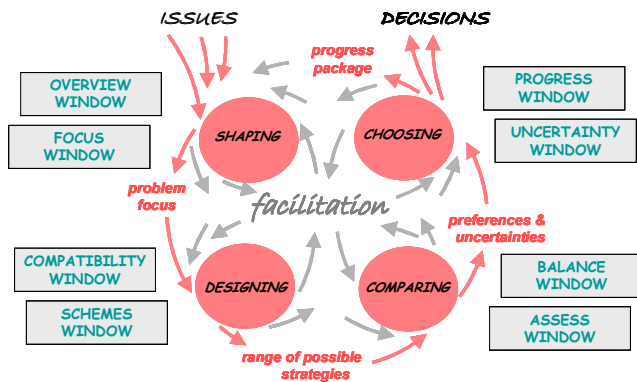
STRAD's user base in over 30 countries includes managers in commercial, governmental and voluntary organisations; planners, co-ordinators, consultants and policy advisers; and teachers, students and researchers in leading schools of management, planning and public policy.

for more details see over 

STRAD – the strategic adviser: *details and order form*

The Software. The STRAD software is designed for interactive use with computers operating under any currently supported edition of Microsoft Windows. The latest version, STRAD 2.3, released in 2002, is distributed on CD-ROM with printable user manual.

The design of STRAD is built on a set of eight linked *process windows*, intended to support people in four complementary aspects of their decision making – *shaping, designing, comparing and choosing*. You can either visit each window in sequence or, as you become more familiar with their functions, you can start using them in a more selective and adaptive way, working at whatever pace you judge to be appropriate to your current strategic agenda. You will find examples of five of STRAD's eight process windows in the screen shot reproduced overleaf.



How STRAD can help in handling a flexible strategic agenda

In essence, STRAD is a tool for helping people to make more confident and sustained progress towards actions and policy agreements in circumstances where the decisions that they make now may shape the important choices open to them in the future.

Managing Uncertainty in a Strategic Way. In such a *developmental* decision process, your choice of strategy for coping with current sources of uncertainty can become crucial to success. Among these sources may be uncertainties not only about present circumstances and future trends; but also about the intentions of other parties and about how to strike a balance among competing interests or goals.

Uniqueness. What is unique about STRAD is that it enables you to respond to all kinds of uncertainty in an adaptive and resource-effective way. Through the design of a balanced *progress package*, you can build a basis for more confident future decisions while agreeing early actions in other areas that cannot wait.

Users can quickly grasp the potential of STRAD even without any experience of other software packages to support decision-making. Yet, if you are familiar with more specialised packages designed for such purposes as project planning, risk management or multi-criteria decision analysis, you should find that STRAD can provide added value by embedding the use of such tools in a dynamic, evolving view of the choices that lie ahead.

The Range of Applications. STRAD invites you to express the issues currently ahead of you in terms of three basic types of element - decision areas, uncertainty areas and comparison areas (or criteria). So it is unusually diverse in its range of applications, extending from the level of personal career development to that of national policy planning. Among the many areas of application so far are:

- organisational change;*
- small business strategy;*
- product marketing;*
- relocation choices;*
- regional development;*
- environmental policy;*
- transportation planning;*
- urban regeneration;*
- co-ordinating community services;*
- educational management;*
- design of new projects;*
- information systems strategy;*
- inter-agency agreements;*
- production systems redesign*

STRAD is also in use as an aid to interactive learning in schools of management, planning and policy in many parts of the world.

Further Information. You can read more about the principles, methods and applications of STRAD – or download a demonstration version – on the Stradspan website www.stradspan.com. The underlying approach is presented more fully in the book *Planning under Pressure* by Friend and Hickling: 3rd edition Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann 2005. Also published in Japanese and Spanish translations.

STRAD 2.3: PRICE INFORMATION and ORDER FORM

Prices: Single user licence for STRAD 2.3:
or: US Dollars: \$450 (\$360 academic)

UK Pounds: **£300*** (£240 for academic users)
or: Euro: €375 (€300 for academic users)

Price for academic network licence = single academic user licence x 2. All prices include postage (airmail outside the UK)

*VAT will be added as applicable for UK orders

Address for orders and enquiries: Stradspan Limited, 9 Croft Drive, Millhouse Green, Sheffield S36 9NE, UK
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Discounts on these prices apply to participants in training workshops in the Strategic Choice Approach