**Level 3: Future Proofing - Social Strategies Worksheet**

**Built on Trust: Why Independent Wrap Delivers When It Counts**

**Teacher Note:**

This worksheet provides an example of a social strategy.

**Level 2:** Future Proofing - Social Influence Worksheet based ***on “Built on Trust: Why Independent Wrap Delivers When It Counts”*** can be used as **prior learning.**

**Built on Trust: Why Independent Wrap Delivers When It Counts**

<https://www.ruralcontractor.co.nz/blog/built-on-trust-why-independent-wrap-delivers-when-it-counts#:~:text=In%20an%20industry%20where%20downtime,how%20they%20treat%20their%20customers>.

In an industry where downtime can be the difference between a good season and a bad one, contractors and farmers need more than just reliable products - they need reliable people behind them.

That is the gap Independent Wrap has been filling since 2004. Built from the ground up with a commitment to service, integrity and quality, Independent Wrap has grown into one of New Zealand’s most trusted suppliers of crop packaging products, with a reputation that is firmly rooted in how they treat their customers.

From its base in Taranaki, the company has expanded carefully, establishing five permanent depots and setting up temporary sites during peak periods to ensure product is always within reach. And when urgency calls for it, they’ll get it to you personally. This blend of scale and agility has allowed Independent Wrap to operate with the efficiency of a national player and the attentiveness of a local operator - a rare combination in today’s agricultural supply chain.

The company’s founder Lydia Dickinson knows what it means to start small and grow the right way. More than twenty years ago, she saw a need in the contracting world for a supplier that didn’t just sell bale wrap, and pit covers but actually stood behind them. Since then, she’s turned a small regional operation into a respected national supplier. The business now employs a team of seven across the country, including a strong field team backed by a meticulous and customer-focused office operation. Lydia still remains actively involved, even as she balances her time with other passions and family life.

For Lydia, success was never just about product, it was about building a business that customers could count on through the pressure of a silage season. It’s why the motto "The Honest Choice" anchors everything the business does. Whether it’s sending a pallet of wrap to a contractor who’s running low or taking responsibility for a rare product fault, the team takes pride in getting things sorted - and fast.

Jason, owner of Forage Services Ltd in the Manawatū, has been working with Independent Wrap for more than a decade. His operation focuses entirely on bulk silage, grass, maize and some cereals - and with 20 years of business under his belt, he’s seen plenty of products come and go. But he keeps coming back to Independent Wrap, not because they’re the cheapest, but because they’re consistent, responsive and their gear stands up to real-world pressure.

“We use the 15 by 300 rolls mostly,” Jason says. “That size works well for our customers stacks. And we also use a few of the 2-in-1s - the clear film combined with the black and white sheet. It is practical and saves time.”

For him though, it’s the durability that makes the real difference.

“You can pretty much drive on the stuff with a load of tyres when you are covering the stack, and it does not bother it. If the stack is compacted properly, you can drive on the plastic, and it holds up. That is huge.”

It is feedback like this that speaks volumes about Independent Wrap’s product sourcing. Their primary crop packaging partner is Barbier, a family-owned company in France that shares the same values: quality, innovation and reliability. Barbier manufacture a broad range of polyethylene films and have worked closely with Independent Wrap to adapt their offerings for New Zealand conditions. Regular collaboration and site visits ensure product consistency, and the long-standing relationship has allowed for steady supply even during volatile seasons.

But even the best products are only half the story. Jason’s quick to point out the strength of the team behind the brand.

“Their service is just as good as their quality. You ring Paul up and he’s there with half a dozen rolls before you know it. That kind of responsiveness is hard to find these days.”

He’s also seen how they respond when something is not quite right.

“We have had a couple of small faults over the years, nothing major - but they were happy to credit it and sort the issue. That stuff matters.”

Across the country, Independent Wrap’s sales team brings decades of combined experience in agriculture, contracting, machinery and technical sales. Richard Howard the General Manager, lives in the Manawatū and has first-hand experience as an agricultural contractor. Sales team members like Shane Bennett, Shaun Langford, Wayne Treymane and Paul Peetoom each cover their own territories, drawing on backgrounds that range from manufacturing and contracting to agribusiness and machinery sales. They’re not just salespeople - they’re problem solvers and their understanding of local needs gives them a practical edge when helping customers choose the right solution.

The products themselves are varied, catering to the full range of crop packaging requirements. Their bale netting is made from high-quality raw materials to ensure maximum tensile strength and minimal tearing. Contractors frequently comment on the even coverage and clean cuts, making the net easy to handle and stays secure in the paddock.

Net replacement film has also seen strong uptake, especially among those looking to improve silage quality. With tighter wrapping and less oxygen ingress compared to traditional netting, it results in better feed and longer storage. The Isolstar Press range, in particular has been well received. Manufactured using advanced pre-stretch technology, it runs smoothly through a range of machines and delivers consistent results, with stretch rates of 10-15% and superior strength.

Twine is another cornerstone product, with imports from Juta and Sicor supplying the high-density baler market. Manufactured in the Czech Republic and Portugal, these twines are known for tight knots, high tear resistance and low wear on machinery - all features that contractors value when turnaround time matters.

Then there are the pit covers - an area where Independent Wrap has earned particular praise. Available in a wide range of sizes, these single-sheet covers are built with high impact resistance and clarity of measurement, with large clear metre markings printed every metre. Customers like Jason rely on them to perform under pressure.

“We have used other covers in the past,” Jason says, “and you walk on it with your gumboots and put your heel straight through it. Not with this stuff. That 150-micron cover is just tougher. It is a strong product, and you need that when you’ve got people walking all over the stack during covering.”

Independent Wrap also provides vacuum films and 2-in-1 pit covers with built-in oxygen barriers, which help reduce spoilage and feed value loss in silage stacks. Their superior oxygen barrier film, which boasts up to 99% effectiveness has been shown to reduce top-layer feed value loss by up to 80% compared to single-layer covers. It’s a more premium option, but one that contractors are increasingly adopting for better returns on investment.

Silage bags are also part of the offering, with 10-foot bags held in stock and other sizes available on request. Sourced from European companies, these bags are reinforced for strength and capacity and come with stretch indicators to make placement and loading more accurate and efficient.

Behind all of this is a genuine commitment to both the environment and the wider community - one that stretches well beyond the paddock. Independent Wrap is not content to simply provide quality products; the business is also deeply engaged in supporting a more sustainable future. Its backing of the circular economy reflects a broader vision, one that sees value in materials beyond a single-use lifespan and understands the importance of designing systems that reduce waste and improve resource efficiency. This commitment is more than just a marketing angle, it’s a practical, considered approach and the team spends real time and energy thinking about how best to implement it across their operation and supply chain.

That integrity carries through to how the company handles challenges. Independent Wrap has never claimed to have all the answers or get it right every time - but it has built a reputation for showing up, taking responsibility and putting things right when they don’t go to plan. That kind of accountability, rare in an era of finger-pointing and deflection, has not gone unnoticed. It’s helped the company build strong, long-term relationships with contractors and suppliers alike.

That ethos of transparency and service has been recognised beyond the farm gate too, earning Independent Wrap a string of business accolades including Best New Business and Service Industry Excellence at the Taranaki Business Awards - testament to a company that puts people, performance and principles at the heart of what it does.

In a market where many suppliers focus on volume and margin, Independent Wrap has carved out a space by focusing on the one thing that matters most - trust. Whether it’s making sure a pallet arrives on time, recommending the right product for a specific machine or application, or backing a customer through a tough season, the company’s approach remains grounded, personal and honest.

As Jason sums it up: “They just go that extra mile. Quality and service - that’s what you want, and that’s what they deliver.”

In a business where word-of-mouth still carries more weight than any advert, that kind of endorsement counts. And it’s the reason Independent Wrap continues to grow, not by shouting the loudest, but by showing up, getting it done and doing it right.

**Future Proofing Strategy Questions**

1. What are the future needs of Independent Wrap?
2. What is Independent Wrap doing or planning to do to meet these future needs?
3. What are the influences impacting the Independent Wrap?
4. Using one of the social influences, explain one strategy that the Independent Wrap has used to mitigate that influence?
5. Using another strategy that the Independent Wrap has implemented, explain how that has mitigated a different influence for the business?
6. How have these strategies ensured Independent Wrap long-term viability?
7. For one other influence named in Question 3, explain a new strategy that would mitigate or solve the influence, to ensure long-term viability of Independent Wrap.

**Answers**

1. What are the future needs of Independent Wrap?

Independent Wrap will need to:

* Maintain a steady and reliable supply chain, especially during busy silage seasons.
* Keep up with the growing demand for sustainable and high-quality crop packaging.
* Adapt to changing environmental regulations and customer expectations around sustainability.
* Continue building strong relationships with customers by offering responsive service and product support.
* Expand their customer base while maintaining personal, reliable service.

1. What is Independent Wrap doing or planning to do to meet these future needs?

Independent Wrap is:

* Partnering with trusted suppliers like Barbier (France) to ensure consistent quality and supply, even during challenging seasons.
* Investing in sustainable packaging solutions like oxygen barrier films and reusable silage bags.
* Expanding their network of depots and temporary sites to keep product close to where it is needed.
* Continuing to build a knowledgeable sales and support team with real agricultural experience.
* Supporting the circular economy and focusing on reducing waste and improving resource efficiency.

1. What are the influences impacting Independent Wrap?

Key influences include:

* Social: Customer expectations for reliable service, trust, and honesty.
* Environmental: Demand for sustainable, eco-friendly products and waste reduction.
* Economic:
  + Cost pressures from competitors and fluctuating demand in the agriculture sector.
  + Supply Chain: Risks of product shortages or delays during peak seasons.
* Technological: Need for modern, high-performance packaging that works with newer machinery.

1. Using one of the social influences, explain one strategy that Independent Wrap has used to mitigate that influence.

Social Influence: Customers expect trustworthy service and fast response, especially during the critical silage season.

Strategy: Independent Wrap built a strong, responsive customer service team with staff who have hands-on farming and contracting experience. This means when customers call with urgent needs, someone who understands the job responds quickly, sometimes delivering product personally.

This builds trust and long-term customer loyalty, even when Independent Wrap is not the cheapest option. Their motto “The Honest Choice” reinforces this strategy.

1. Using another strategy that Independent Wrap has implemented, explain how that has mitigated a different influence for the business.

Environmental Influence: Growing concern about single-use plastics and feed waste.

Strategy: Independent Wrap offers advanced, high-quality oxygen barrier films that reduce silage spoilage by up to 80% and support better feed value retention. They also support reusable solutions like glass bottles where applicable and silage bags with stretch indicators.

This reduces environmental impact and supports sustainability, which is increasingly important to customers and regulators.

1. How have these strategies ensured Independent Wrap’s long-term viability?

These strategies:

* Build strong, loyal customer relationships that last through seasons.
* Position the company as a leader in sustainability, helping them stand out in a competitive market.
* Support consistent product quality and supply, even in challenging years, which protects their reputation.
* Ensure flexibility and responsiveness, key traits for long-term success in the agricultural sector.
* Maintain trust and transparency, which keeps customers coming back and recommending them.

1. For one other influence named in Question 3, explain a new strategy that would mitigate or solve the influence, to ensure long-term viability of Independent Wrap.

Technological – The need for packaging products that work with modern, high-tech baling and wrapping machinery.

New Strategy: Independent Wrap could partner with machinery manufacturers to co-develop or test crop packaging products that are specifically designed for newer machines. They could also offer training or support resources for customers using new balers, helping them get better results.

This would ensure their products remain compatible with advancing technology, making them a go-to choice for modern contractors and farmers. It also strengthens their reputation as a problem-solving, forward-thinking business which will help them remain competitive ensuring the long-term viability of the business.