

Strategic Value Architecture (SVA): A Practitioner-Developed Management Methodology and Its Position within Strategic Management Literature

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Abstract

The persistent gap between strategic formulation and operational execution remains a primary challenge for modern enterprises and continues to erode a substantial share of potential value creation. V.M. Benignus Grero's Strategic Value Architecture (SVA) methodology is a practitioner-developed, architectural approach designed to address this "strategy-execution gap", conceptualized as a systemic "Value Gap" between strategic intent and realized outcomes. SVA is built on three interconnected pillars—a Value Capture Model using algebraically constrained KPI trees, a Competitive Advantage Model structured around strategic flywheels and Hamilton Helmer's 7 Powers, and a Value Delivery Model focused on quantifiable customer outcomes—integrated through an AI-supported synthesis layer.

This paper situates SVA within established research on performance measurement (MBO, CSFs, BSC, OKRs), value creation, value capture, value delivery, and strategic and enterprise architecture. It critically examines the terminology, novelty, and prior art surrounding key components, including Bernie Smith's KPI Trees and component-based business model patents, and clarifies how SVA reframes and integrates these concepts. The analysis finds that SVA's primary contribution lies not in the invention of isolated concepts but in its holistic architectural synthesis: the insistence on algebraic KPI relationships, the explicit coupling of competitive advantage mechanisms to measurable drivers, and the use of AI to manage systemic complexity within a unified management methodology. The paper concludes by outlining assumptions and limitations of SVA and proposing avenues for empirical research to test its claimed performance impacts in diverse organizational contexts.

Keywords: Strategic Value Architecture (SVA), Strategy-Execution Gap, Value Gap, Value Capture, Value Delivery, Performance Measurement, KPI Tree, Strategic Alignment, Enterprise Architecture.

1 Introduction

In the contemporary business environment, characterized by hyper-competition and rapid technological change, effectively translating strategic intent into tangible results is a cornerstone of sustainable success. However, many organizations confront a persistent “strategy–execution gap”—a systemic disconnect between high-level objectives and the daily activities of the workforce. V.M. Benignus Grero (2025) describes this disconnection as a “Value Gap”, an invisible barrier silently eroding 15–30% of an organization’s potential value creation capacity annually. It manifests as resource misallocation, slow innovation, employee disengagement, and a failure to deliver quantifiable value to customers.

For decades, management science has sought to address this challenge through various frameworks. The evolution of performance measurement systems—from Peter Drucker’s (1954) Management by Objectives (MBO), through the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) (Kaplan & Norton, 1992) and Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) (Grove, 1983)—reflects a continuous effort to create a clear line of sight between individual actions and corporate goals. Concurrently, academic disciplines have developed robust theories around value creation (Porter, 1985), value capture (Brandenburger & Stuart, 1996; Gans & Ryall, 2017), and value delivery (Lanning & Michaels, 1988) to explain how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage.

Against this backdrop, Grero (2025) proposes the Strategic Value Architecture (SVA) methodology as a comprehensive, architectural solution. SVA is presented as a unified framework designed to systematically bridge the Value Gap by integrating three core models: a Value Capture Model, a Competitive Advantage Model, and a Value Delivery Model. The methodology purports to replace intuition-based decision-making with mathematical precision, most notably through the use of “Algebraic KPI Trees”, and to create a unified strategic intelligence through an AI-powered synthesis engine.

The author of this paper is also the originator of the SVA methodology. To mitigate potential author bias, this analysis distinguishes between (1) the descriptive exposition of SVA, (2) its comparison with established frameworks and prior art, and (3) open questions and limitations. Claims about SVA’s impact should therefore be interpreted as practitioner-level hypotheses that require empirical validation rather than as established empirical facts.

The primary objective of this paper is to situate SVA within the existing body of academic and practitioner literature to evaluate its novelty, theoretical underpinnings, and potential contributions. This is achieved by:

1. Conducting a thorough literature review of foundational concepts, including performance measurement frameworks, value gap analysis, value capture theory, value delivery systems, and the historical use of the term “strategic architecture”.
2. Systematically deconstructing the SVA methodology as presented by Grero (2025) to understand its core components and logic.

3. Performing a comparative analysis to contrast SVA's pillars with established theories and frameworks, identifying both overlaps and points of distinction.
- 4. Investigating prior art and intellectual property claims related to SVA's core components, such as the KPI Tree and the concept of a component-based business model, to assess its originality.

2 Literature Review

To properly assess the Strategic Value Architecture (SVA) methodology, it is essential to ground it in the rich history of management theory and practice. This review explores the evolution of key concepts that form the intellectual bedrock upon which SVA is built, examining performance measurement, the academic conceptualization of value (gap, capture, delivery), and the notion of strategic architecture.

2.1 The Evolution of Performance Measurement Frameworks

The quest to measure and manage performance is as old as management itself. The 20th century saw the formalization of several influential frameworks. Peter Drucker (1954) introduced Management by Objectives (MBO) in his seminal work, *The Practice of Management*. MBO proposed a process where managers and subordinates jointly set objectives, shifting the focus from activities to results (Thomson, 1972; LaFollette, 1977). However, MBO was later criticized for often becoming a bureaucratic, top-down exercise that could ignore employee subjectivity and fail to align individual goals with true corporate objectives (Levinson, cited in Peoplelogic.ai, n.d.).

In 1979, John F. Rockart introduced the concept of Critical Success Factors (CSFs), defining them as the “limited number of areas in which results, if they are satisfactory, will ensure successful competitive performance for the organisation” (Rockart, 1979, p. 85). The CSF method provided a way for executives to define their own data needs, focusing management attention on what was truly vital for success (Bullen & Rockart, 1981). This was a significant step toward linking information systems with strategic priorities.

The 1990s brought one of the most influential frameworks: the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), developed by Robert Kaplan and David Norton (1992). The BSC argued that financial measures alone were insufficient for the information age and proposed a “balanced” set of measures across four perspectives: Financial, Customer, Internal Business Processes, and Learning and Growth. The BSC aimed to translate strategy into a comprehensive set of performance measures that provided the framework for a strategic measurement and management system (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). The later introduction of “Strategy Maps”

further enhanced the BSC by visually representing the cause-and-effect relationships among the strategic objectives across the four perspectives (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

Emerging from Intel in the 1970s under Andy Grove and later popularized by John Doerr, Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) gained widespread adoption in the 21st century, particularly in the tech industry (Grove, 1983; Doerr, 2018; What Matters, n.d.). OKRs are an evolution of MBO, designed for a more agile and fast-paced environment. The framework links an inspirational, qualitative Objective with several specific, measurable, and time-bound Key Results that track progress toward that Objective (Troian et al., 2022). OKRs are praised for fostering alignment, transparency, and a focus on outcomes in shorter, more frequent cycles compared to the typically annual cycle of the BSC (Wodtke, cited in Peoplelogic.ai, n.d.; Quantive, n.d.).

This evolutionary trajectory—from MBO’s results focus, to CSF’s strategic prioritization, to BSC’s balanced, causal framework, to OKRs’ agile goal-setting—provides the direct context for SVA’s measurement component.

2.2 The Concept of the “Value Gap”

While Grero (2025) defines the “Value Gap” as a broad, systemic disconnect between strategy and execution, the term “value gap” has appeared in academic literature with more specific meanings. Eriksson et al. (2025) explore value gaps in value chain management by extending the service quality gap model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985). In this context, value gaps arise from misalignments between consumer expectations and the delivered value, caused by poor communication, manufacturing constraints, or coordination failures across the value chain. This perspective focuses on the external customer-facing gap in product/service delivery.

Another related concept is the “value-action gap” (VAG), prominent in sustainability research. The VAG describes the disparity between individuals’ stated values or beliefs (e.g., concerning environmental protection) and their actual behavior (Grunwald et al., 2025). This research stream focuses on the psychological and social factors that prevent espoused values from translating into action. While different in scope, both of these academic uses of “value gap” share a common theme: a disconnect between intent and outcome, whether at the level of customer perception, individual behavior, or organizational strategy.

2.3 Theories of Value Creation, Capture, and Delivery

The SVA methodology is explicitly structured around the concepts of value capture, competitive advantage (a means of sustaining value), and value delivery. These are well-established domains in strategic management.

2.4 Value Creation

The foundation of strategy is value creation. Michael Porter’s (1985) Value

Chain framework deconstructed a firm into a series of discrete “value activities” (e.g., inbound logistics, operations, marketing) to understand the sources of cost and differentiation. Value chain analysis provides a systematic way to examine how a firm creates value for its buyers that exceeds the cost of creating it.

2.5 Value Capture

Value capture theory, heavily influenced by cooperative game theory, was formally introduced to the strategy field by Brandenburger and Stuart (1996) and further developed by Gans and Ryall (2017). Their “value-based business strategy” defines the total value created in a transaction as the difference between a customer’s willingness-to-pay and a supplier’s opportunity cost. A firm’s ability to “capture” value is then determined by its “added value”—the value created by all players in the game minus the value that would be created without that firm. This stream of research conceptualizes value capture as a function of a firm’s bargaining power and strategic position relative to customers, suppliers, and competitors.

2.6 Value Delivery

The concept of a Value Delivery System was articulated by Lanning and Michaels (1988) in a McKinsey staff paper. They argued that “a business is a value delivery system” and emphasized the need for a clear “value proposition”—a statement of benefits offered to a target segment. The value delivery system encompasses all the activities required to make good on that proposition, from sourcing to post-sale service. More recently, the concept has evolved in project management literature with the proposed shift from Project Management Offices (PMOs) to Value Delivery Offices (VDOs), which prioritize aligning project outcomes with strategic business value rather than just process compliance (Moghaddasi et al., 2025).

2.7 Strategic and Enterprise Architecture

The term “Strategic Architecture” is not new. Hamel and Prahalad (1990) described it as a “road map of the future that identifies which core competencies to build and their constituent technologies”. Mansfield, Fourie, and Gevers (2005) also developed the construct, defining it as a complex measure of organizational competitive behavior reflecting management’s philosophy. This prior use is distinct from, but conceptually related to, the field of Enterprise Architecture (EA).

EA emerged as a discipline to manage the complexity of organizational IT and align it with business goals. Frameworks like TOGAF and Zachman provide methodologies for modeling the enterprise across business, data, application, and technology layers. A central promise of EA is to bridge the strategy-execution gap by creating a coherent link between business strategy and the underlying processes and systems that support it (Beese et al., 2023;

Iacob et al., 2012). The SVA methodology, with its focus on architectural models and systemic linkages, shares a philosophical kinship with the goals of Enterprise and Business Architecture.

3 The Strategic Value Architecture-(SVA)Methodology

The Strategic Value Architecture (SVA) methodology, as detailed by Grero (2025), is presented as a comprehensive framework to systematically resolve the “Value Gap” by architecting sustainable value. It is composed of three mathematically interconnected models, synthesized by an AI-powered intelligence layer, and implemented via a five-phase transformation process.

3.1 Core Tenets and the “Value Gap” Diagnosis

SVA begins with the diagnosis of the “Value Gap”, defined as the systemic disconnection between an organization’s strategic outcomes and its daily operational activities. This gap is characterized as a multi-layered phenomenon (Grero, 2025):

- Strategic Layer: A chasm between leadership’s vision and organizational understanding.
- Operational Layer: Misalignment between departmental goals and overarching company objectives.
- Individual Layer: A disconnect between employees’ daily tasks and a sense of meaningful impact.

Grero (2025) posits that this gap is the default state for most organizations due to complexity, measurement problems, and communication breakdowns, leading to a loss of 15–30% of potential value creation capacity annually.

3.2 Pillar I: The Value Capture Model and Algebraic KPI Trees

The first pillar, the Value Capture Model, aims to establish mathematical precision in strategic execution. Its core tool is the “Algebraic KPI Tree”. The foundational principle is that every parent metric must be a direct algebraic function of its child metrics. This is intended to eliminate ambiguity and create a predictable, quantifiable causal chain from frontline activities to top-level strategic outcomes (Grero, 2025).

For example, a tree might be structured as:

- Total Revenue = (Number of Closed Deals) \times (Average Deal Size)
- Number of Closed Deals = (Qualified Leads) \times (Conversion Rate)
- Qualified Leads = (Individual Activities \times Activity Effectiveness)

This structure is designed to transform abstract goals into concrete, actionable metrics that provide transparency and accountability, allowing for dynamic optimization and data-driven resource allocation.

3.3 Pillar II: The Competitive Advantage Model and Strategic Flywheels

The second pillar focuses on building sustainable market dominance. It employs the concept of “Strategic Flywheels”—reinforcing loop systems that compound a company’s market position over time. The methodology explicitly integrates Hamilton Helmer’s “7 Powers” framework (Scale Economies, Network Effects, Switching Costs, Brand Power, Cornered Resource, Process Power, Counter-Positioning) to systematically identify and strengthen these competitive advantages (Grero, 2025). The key is to map how strengthening one power creates conditions that amplify others, and to connect these flywheel components directly to the metrics within the Value Capture Model’s KPI tree, ensuring that moat-building activities drive measurable business outcomes.

3.4 Pillar III: The Value Delivery Model and Customer Success Architecture

The third pillar is an external-facing framework designed to ensure that internal optimizations translate into tangible, measurable customer outcomes. It advocates for a shift from product-centric feature selling to outcome-centric value consulting. The model proposes building a “Customer Success Architecture” that systematically maps how the organization’s solutions drive quantifiable business results for the customer (e.g., revenue growth, cost reduction). This involves moving beyond “value selling” (articulating potential benefits) to “value delivery” (ensuring and documenting realized benefits post-sale). The insights from this model, such as customer outcome metrics, feed back into the Value Capture Model as leading indicators of retention and growth (Grero, 2025).

3.5 The AI-Powered Synthesis

The capstone of the SVA methodology is the use of Artificial Intelligence to synthesize the data and relationships across the three pillars. Grero (2025) argues that the complexity of modern business makes it impossible for human analysis alone to track the hundreds of interdependencies. The AI engine is designed to perform multi-dimensional analysis by integrating data from all three models, applying machine learning for advanced pattern recognition, running “what-if” scenario analyses, and generating recommendations for optimal resource allocation. This transforms static strategic planning into a dynamic, real-time “strategic intelligence” system.

3.6 Assumptions and Limitations of the SVA Methodology

As a practitioner-developed methodology, SVA makes several explicit and implicit assumptions that shape its applicability and potential limitations. First, the Value Capture Model and its “Algebraic KPI Trees” assume that key relationships between metrics can be specified as reasonably stable algebraic functions. In many organizations, however, data quality, inconsistency in definitions, and structural changes over time may limit the precision of these relationships. In practice, algebraic KPI trees may therefore operate as calibrated approximations that require periodic refinement rather than as perfect representations of causal structure.

Second, SVA’s focus on algebraic decompositions emphasizes metrics that are directly quantifiable and decomposable. Important strategic drivers that are qualitative, lagged, or emergent may be under-represented unless explicitly modeled through proxy variables or separate qualitative mechanisms. This implies that SVA is best suited for organizations that already possess, or are willing to build, a reasonably mature performance measurement and data infrastructure.

Third, the AI-powered synthesis layer presupposes access to sufficient historical and real-time data for pattern recognition, scenario analysis, and recommendation generation. The methodology assumes that AI will augment, rather than replace, managerial judgment, and it requires governance mechanisms to ensure interpretability, avoid over-reliance on opaque models, and align recommendations with ethical and strategic constraints. In data-sparse or highly volatile environments, the AI layer may need to operate more as a decision-support and hypothesis-generation tool than as a fully optimized decision engine.

Finally, SVA’s architectural integration of value capture, competitive advantage, and value delivery reflects a specific design philosophy: that the strategy–execution problem is best addressed through a systemic, model-driven architecture. Organizations with highly informal cultures, minimal process discipline, or low tolerance for structured measurement systems may find full implementation challenging. Future empirical research should therefore examine not only the performance outcomes of SVA but also the organizational conditions under which it can be successfully adopted and sustained.

4 Analysis and Comparative Discussion

This section critically analyzes the SVA methodology by comparing its components to the concepts identified in the literature review. It assesses the framework’s novelty, its synthesis of existing ideas, and investigates the landscape of prior art and intellectual property.

4.1 SVA’s “Value Gap” in Context

Grero’s (2025) conceptualization of the “Value Gap” is a broad, practitioner-oriented

construct that synthesizes multiple sources of organizational friction into a single, compelling problem statement. It encompasses the strategic-to-individual alignment challenge that frameworks from MBO to OKRs have tried to solve. While it shares a name with more specific academic concepts, its scope is different. Unlike the customer-centric “service quality gap” (Parasuraman et al., 1985) or the behavioral “value-action gap” (Grunwald et al., 2025), SVA’s Value Gap is an internal, systemic diagnosis of the entire strategy-to-execution value chain. Its strength lies in its intuitive, multi-layered framing (strategic, operational, individual), which makes the abstract problem of misalignment tangible for business leaders.

4.2 Analyzing the Three Pillars

4.3 Value Capture: Operational Model vs. Strategic Theory

In established strategic management theory, Value Capture Theory (Brandenburger & Stuart, 1996; Gans & Ryall, 2017) is an external-facing, game-theoretic concept concerned with how a firm appropriates value from the market ecosystem relative to its customers, suppliers, and competitors. It is about dividing the economic pie.

In contrast, SVA’s “Value Capture Model” is an internal-facing, operational framework. It is not about bargaining power but about ensuring that internal activities efficiently and effectively contribute to the firm’s own financial goals (e.g., revenue). It uses KPI trees to model the mechanisms of internal value generation and realization. Therefore, SVA’s model is more akin to a sophisticated performance measurement system, like an advanced form of the Balanced Scorecard’s strategy map, than to the academic theory of value capture. Grero (2025) re-purposes the term to describe the process of capturing the value of internal efforts for the firm’s benefit, which is a valid but distinct application of the phrase.

4.4 Competitive Advantage: Application of Existing Frameworks

The Competitive Advantage pillar of SVA is transparent in its adoption of established strategic concepts. The use of “strategic flywheels” builds on the concept popularized by Jim Collins, and the explicit integration of Hamilton Helmer’s “7 Powers” framework demonstrates an application, rather than an invention, of a well-regarded typology for competitive moats. The contribution of SVA here is not the creation of new strategic theory, but the integration of these concepts into a measurable and actionable system by linking them directly to the KPI metrics in the Value Capture pillar. This provides a structured way to ensure that efforts to build a competitive moat are not just theoretical but are driving quantifiable results.

4.5 Value Delivery: An Evolution of Customer-Centricity

SVA’s Value Delivery Model aligns well with the historical evolution of customer-centric strategy. It echoes the sentiment of Lanning and Michaels (1988) that a business is a “value delivery system” and emphasizes the need for a clear “value proposition”—a statement of benefits offered to a target segment. The model’s strong emphasis on moving from “value selling” to “value delivery” and on building a “Customer Success Architecture” reflects the modern evolution of business-to-business relationships, particularly in software-as-a-service and professional services contexts. Its insistence on quantifying customer outcomes and feeding them back as leading indicators for internal performance tightly couples external value delivery with internal value capture.

4.6 Novelty and Prior Art Investigation

A central part of this analysis is to investigate the originality of SVA’s core components and terminology.

4.7 The Term “Strategic Value Architecture”

As noted in the literature review, the term “Strategic Architecture” has been used previously, notably by Hamel and Prahalad (1990) to describe a future-oriented roadmap for building core competencies. The term also appears in other academic contexts (e.g., Mansfield et al., 2005). Furthermore, the broader field of Enterprise Architecture has long focused on creating architectural models to align strategy with execution (Beese et al., 2023). Therefore, the name “Strategic Value Architecture” itself is an evolutionary combination of existing terms rather than a wholly novel invention. The novelty claimed by Grero (2025) lies in the specific, integrated three-pillar methodology and the associated principles (e.g., mathematical precision, AI synthesis) that are attached to the name.

4.8 The “KPI Tree”

The investigation into the “KPI Tree” reveals a clear history of prior art. The KPI Tree method was invented by Bernie Smith in 2011 and first published in his book *KPI Checklists* in 2013. Smith’s methodology provides a visual hierarchy to break down strategic goals into granular results and candidate KPIs, serving as a tool for “longlisting” potential metrics in a collaborative workshop setting (Smith, 2013; Made to Measure KPIs, n.d.). His approach expands on driver trees from the Toyota Production System and the strategy maps of Kaplan and Norton.

Grero’s (2025) contribution appears to be a specific refinement of this concept, termed the “**Algebraic KPI Tree**”. The defining characteristic of Grero’s version is the strict mathematical constraint: “Every parent metric

must be calculable as a direct algebraic function of its children.” While Smith’s KPI trees show causal relationships and drivers, they are primarily for brainstorming and alignment. **Grero’s algebraic rule transforms** the tree from a qualitative mapping tool into a quantitative, predictive model. This mathematical rigor is the key differentiator and the specific contribution SVA claims in this area.

4.9 Patents, Trademarks, and Similar Methodologies

The intellectual property landscape for business methods is complex. While abstract ideas are not patentable, a specific method or system that produces a “useful, concrete and tangible result” can be. A relevant example is the patent US8326665B2, granted to IBM for a “System and method for using a component business model to organize an enterprise”. This patent describes partitioning a business into non-overlapping components and applying different organizing strategies based on attributes like market differentiation and industry standardization. While this does not imply infringement, it demonstrates that methodologies for component-based strategic analysis have been patented. The name “Strategic Value Architecture” and its acronym “SVA” could potentially be protected as a service mark to identify Grero’s specific consulting and software services, with defensibility depending on distinctiveness and market recognition (R.K. Dewan & Co., 2025).

In summary, SVA is not built in a vacuum. It stands on the shoulders of giants in performance management and strategy. Its primary claim to novelty is not in the invention of its individual parts (KPIs, flywheels, value delivery), but in their architectural synthesis into a single, mathematically driven, and AI-integrated system designed for practical implementation.

5 Conclusion

The Strategic Value Architecture (SVA) methodology proposed by V.M. Benignus Grero (2025) presents itself as a robust and integrated response to the enduring strategy–execution gap. This paper has sought to critically evaluate SVA by situating it within the rich landscape of strategic management literature and by clarifying where it synthesizes existing concepts and where it proposes distinctive contributions.

The analysis confirms that SVA draws deeply on established work in performance measurement, competitive advantage, and value delivery. It incorporates the goal-setting lineage of MBO and OKRs, the causal logic of the Balanced Scorecard and strategy maps, the strategic typology of Helmer’s 7 Powers, and the customer-centric focus of value delivery systems and customer success architectures. Its framing of the “Value Gap” provides an accessible diagnosis of a problem that many leaders recognize but often lack the vocabulary to fully articulate.

SVA’s primary contribution lies in its architectural and systemic integration rather than in the invention of wholly new theoretical constructs. The insistence

that every parent metric in an Algebraic KPI Tree be calculable as a direct function of its child metrics represents a notable refinement of existing KPI tree concepts, transforming them from qualitative mapping tools into quantitative, predictive models. The explicit coupling of competitive advantage mechanisms to measurable drivers, and the inclusion of an AI-supported synthesis layer to manage cross-pillar interdependencies, are forward-looking features that reflect the data-rich reality of modern enterprises.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge SVA's intellectual debt to prior work, including Bernie Smith's KPI Trees, established theories of value capture and competitive advantage, and the broader fields of strategic and enterprise architecture. The terminology of "Value Capture" in SVA differs from game-theoretic value capture theory, and this distinction should be kept clear in academic discourse. Claims about SVA's impact on decision speed, strategic alignment, and financial performance should be treated as practitioner-level hypotheses rather than as empirically verified results.

Future research is needed on several fronts. Longitudinal case studies could investigate the extent to which Algebraic KPI Trees improve transparency and decision quality in different organizational contexts. Comparative studies could examine how SVA's architectural integration performs relative to more traditional frameworks when implemented at scale. Research into the governance of AI-supported strategic systems would also help clarify how SVA's synthesis layer can be deployed responsibly. In this sense, Strategic Value Architecture is best understood not as a replacement for existing strategic management theories but as a novel architecture built from proven components, intended to connect the engine room of daily operations to the north star of strategic intent in a disciplined, data-driven manner.

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