

# Family business that's thriving

■ Peter Klinger

Just as lawns and gardens thrive with the right fertiliser, family businesses prosper when succession planning is well considered and amicably executed.

Just ask Kim Bailey, whose family retailing business in Spearwood soon after returning from World War II, before setting up his own general store, in nearby Hamilton Hill. It marked a split in the Baileys' family business that began in 1927 serving a neighbourhood dominated by market and flower gardeners and poultry and dairy farmers.

Charlie's split, because of disagreement with brother Jack, did not prove a setback for long as the Baileys' business focus gradually shifted from supplying third-party product to producing and distributing its own lawn and garden fertilisers.

Today Baileys Fertiliser, with Kim as managing director and his children taking on senior

roles in the Kwinana-based operation, is growing nicely. Turnover is \$13 million a year and, importantly for Kim, succession planning well advanced courtesy of a mix of internal and external help, something he says was clearly not available for his dad.

"It (succession planning) is undervalued," the third-generation Baileys leader says to mark the start of an occasional *West-Business* series on members of

the Family Business Australia (FBA) organisation.

"The beauty of Baileys is my three children all want to be in the business and they all want the business to progress. That's the pleasing aspect from the family's side. The point was then to get everybody's intentions out and form them into some sort of strategy of succession as we go forward, and we have done that."

His daughter Genevieve, Bai-

leys' general manager, quips the best aspect of working in a family business "is seeing my mum and dad every day" but also concedes "the dynamics of family business can be the best but also the worst of it".

"If you don't go through processes like succession planning properly, there can be a lot of turmoil, also with your family, even through we try to be as professional as possible," she said.

**Succession success: Baileys Fertiliser boss Kim Bailey with his daughter Genevieve and son Richard at their Kwinana operation.** Picture: Bill Hatto

**BAILEYS  
FERTILISER**

**F B A**

- Est 1927
- 3rd generation in charge
- Based in Kwinana
- Turnover \$13 million
- 40 employees

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