

The growth in the number of training companies is however expected to slow down because of the addition of computer courses in school curricula.

There are a few large companies, both Thai and foreign-owned, with firmly established businesses in Thailand such as IBM Thailand Co Ltd and Datamat Co Ltd which are active in selling and leasing computers direct to users as well as engaging in the other three business categories.

These large firms are achieving steady growth in their business as opposed to others in much larger numbers which appear to be facing difficult times.

A list of major suppliers is presented in Exhibit 1.

An increasing number of foreign manufacturers began to move their production to Thailand which has a low cost labour base but where technology is relatively developed.

Thus, for instance, a major computer accessories manufacturer in Thailand is Seagate Technology (Thailand) Ltd, a subsidiary of Seagate Technology Corp of USA. Possessing the Thai Government's Board of Investment promotional privileges, the company manufactures and exports sub-assemblies for hard disc drives.

Micropolis (Thailand) Co Ltd, a subsidiary of Micropolis of USA, a manufacturer of hard-disc drives branded "Mini-scribe", has set up in Thailand to manufacture sub-assemblies for hard disc drives.

Tavon Computer Co Ltd, established in 1982, is a major Thai computer assembler. It recently planned to invest Baht 20 million for the assembly of 32 bit computer with micro-processor type 80386 under the brand name "Tavon Turbo 386" developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy, Kasetsart University and King Mongkut's Institute of Technology. The project received promotional privileges from the Board of Investment.

Due to the import duty structure (mentioned later in this study) presently prevalent in Thailand, the local assembly of computers would not appear feasible without promotional privileges from the Board of Investment.

At present, there are 20 manufacturers of computer accessories and related products approved by the Board of Investment. Their production is largely export oriented.