

The public sector, which normally accounts for a large portion of mainframe business, has slowed down since 1984. The market, however, was made up by the banking sector which has heavily invested to computerise operations in the last five years or so. A large portion of sales in this segment of the computer market came from auxiliary components, mainly in the form of data communication networks.

To a considerable extent declining mainframe sales are due to uncertainty and changes concerning government procurement policy.

Procurement of computers costing over Baht 500,000 has to be approved specifically by the National Computer Committee (NCC) which is said to be a cumbersome and time-consuming procedure.

Approvals (based on general guidelines laid down by the NCC) for procurements less than Baht 500,000 are much easier to obtain and this has encouraged greater use of smaller systems in government agencies.

The NCC announced that 997 public sector computer purchases worth Baht 4,000 million out of 1,052 requests worth Baht 4,400 million were approved during October 1984 to September 1987. During October 1987 to May 1988, 200 projects were requested while 100 projects worth Baht 1,000 million have been approved. However, these figures include all sizes of computer systems.

Another factor which has lowered mainframe sales in Thailand is the development of the so-called super-mini computer. As the mainframe is expensive and has complicated steps in application, the market turned to favour the large mini-computer.

The value of the mainframe market was estimated at Baht 800 million in 1987. Estimated market shares in the sector are

IBM	60%
Burroughs *	10%
Univac *	8%
Others	22%

\* Now merged under "Unisys" name

Although obviously still a "guesstimate" it is believed that the corresponding figure in 1988 was in the region of Baht 900 million.

The most active mainframe dealers are IBM Thailand Co Ltd and Yip In Tsoi & Co Ltd (Unisys) which also deal in the mini and micro markets.