Foresight in a Non-profit Organisation: 
A Case of the Technology Promotion Association (Thailand-Japan)

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Abstract
This paper presents the implementation of foresight for a very successful non-profit organisation in Thailand-- the Technology Promotion Association (Thailand-Japan) or TPA in the occasion of its 30th anniversary in 2003. The methodologies used in this project were scenario planning, SWOT analysis and Balanced Scorecard. In the scenario workshop, three scenarios on TPA over the next 10 years were developed on TPA becoming a for-profit company, a non-profit foundation, and an organisation with synergies among its various departments.

Interestingly, two policy issues that had been under debate in TPA for some time were resolved during the deliberation of scenarios. It became clear that TPA would lose more than gain by becoming a profit-seeking company. Also, the threat of dwindling financial support from Japan also disappeared when it was resolved that TPA must be financially self-sufficient while the close relationship with Japan must be maintained.

In the SWOT analysis and the revision of TPA vision, the participants were then confident to develop a more ambitious vision of being a leader in creating, storing, and disseminating technology in order to increase the competitiveness of Thai industry.

The Balanced Scorecard was used to develop the 5-year strategic plan. The strategy map was fully debated and seven initiatives to achieve the vision were adopted. The most significant outcomes were that over the past 3 years TPA has been actively implementing all the programs based on the initiatives developed during the foresight exercise resulting in significant and long-lasting changes to the organisation.

Keywords: Foresight, non-profit organisation, strategic planning.
1 Background

Foresight was formally introduced into Thailand in 1998 through the establishment of the APEC Center for Technology Foresight as a project of the Industrial Science and Technology Working Group of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) which is hosted by the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Ministry of Science and Technology, Thailand. During the years, the Center has conducted a number of foresight studies, training, and consultancy at the APEC, country, sectoral, and organisational levels. Main methodologies used were scenario planning, Delphi survey, and technology roadmapping and their combinations. Experience gained through these activities led to a number of methodological refinements that was applied in this case study.

Towards the end of 2001, a very successful non-profit organisation in Thailand-- the Technology Promotion Association (Thailand-Japan) or TPA, as it approached its 30th anniversary in 2003, deemed it appropriate to rethink its vision and strategy seriously in order to elevate the Association to another level of its development. A brainstorming session between the Governing Board, the Sub-committee for Planning and Development, and executives of the Association was organised to explore ways of improving and expanding the activities of TPA. In November 2001, members of the Sub-committee for Planning and Development visited a number of public and private organisations such as Ministry of Industry, Office of Industrial Economics, Department of Pollution Control, Department of Science Services, and the Federation of Thai Industries to exchange ideas regarding the activities of TPA. In January 2002, a group of 30 stakeholders (lecturers, specialists, writers, and language teachers) was invited to brainstorm on the future of TPA by analysing the strengths and weaknesses and problems that should be urgently solved. The group also looked into the future to suggest the roles of TPA that would be most beneficial to the Thai society including resources needed. At the same time, TPA sent questionnaires to members of the Association to learn their opinions on the activities of TPA from the past to present. As for TPA’s staff which is another important group of stakeholders, their opinion was surveyed through another set of questionnaire and was used in improving personnel management, working environment, etc. to give them a better quality of life (TPA, 2003).

These activities provided valuable information and constituted the starting point for the strategic plan of TPA (see Box 1). However, in order to speed up the process, the Governing Board decided to bring in outside consultant and the APEC Center for Technology Foresight of NSTDA was contracted to lead the project. The Center proposed that in addition to the 5-year strategic plan desired by TPA, a 10-year scenario planning exercise should be conducted to broaden the view of the participants and the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan and Norton, 1996) should be used to link scenario to implementation.

This paper is not an evaluation of the foresight exercise. It only tries to analyse what happened during the 5-month foresight process in 2002 and follows up its implementation in the last 3 years through interviews and literature review.

2 Technology Promotion Association (Thailand-Japan)

The TPA was established in 1973 by a group of Thai alumni trained and studied in Japan. This group of alumni has a strong desire of using the Association as a vehicle to transfer new technology from Japan to the Thai manufacturing industry. The project received strong
Box 1  Technology Promotion Association (Thailand-Japan)

Value of TPA
- Public spirit
- Centre of practical knowledge
- Good human capital
- Differentiate through quality of service

Vision of TPA
TPA is the leader in technology transfer to support the development of Thai industrial base.
- As leader
  - who is adaptable to change and create differentiated value for the society
  - a good leader does not do everything but does things wisely by starting from upstream
- To support the development of Thai industrial base
  - the base of Thai industry consists of people with quality, knowledge and passion

SWOT analysis
- Strength
  - public minded
  - a long history with good credit
  - a large network
  - technology for production
  - a strong Japanese connection
- Weakness
  - a non-government organisation illegible for government budget
  - piecemeal developments without clear strategic target
  - no integrated planning system
  - no or few in-house experts
- Opportunity
  - government policies in education reform and in SME promotion
  - needs in human resource development and in life long education
  - policy for SME development
  - needs for sustainable industrialisation
- Threat
  - growing competition from public organisations
  - restructuring of the private sector
endorsement from prominent figures like the late Minister of Finance of Thailand, Mr. Sommai Hoontrakul and the late Mr. Goichi Hozumi of Japan. A Japan-Thailand Economic Cooperation Society (JTECS) was set up in Japan as the counterpart of TPA under the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) to channel financial assistance from METI and the Japanese industry to TPA with no string attached.

The TPA has a Governing Board composing of business executives, technical experts, and university professors who devote a lot of time and energy for TPA. A number of TPA founders remains in the Governing Board until now. Almost every member of the Governing Board heads a Sub-committee that looks after the activity of each department. Staff of TPA is headed by a full-time Director to look after day-to-day management while the policies are determined by the Governing Board and various sub-committees. The number of staff has grown to a bit over 200 and yearly revenue to roughly US$ 5 millions. Starting from the beginning with only 3 activities of Japanese language school, training, and publishing house, the activities have become much more diversified in human resource development and in providing services to industry through the departments of Languages and Culture, Publishing, Education and Training, Industrial Service, Information Technology, and Enterprise Diagnosis or Shindan in Japanese. Over 30 years of its operation, TPA (TPA, 2003):

1. Trained over 350,000 persons in quality management, production management, productive maintenance, energy technology and environment, low-cost automation, etc.
2. Trained over 100,000 persons in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Thai languages
3. Trained over 1,000 persons in enterprise diagnosis and diagnosed about 630 companies.
4. Published more than 830 titles of books in language and culture, technology, industrial techniques, engineering, and management and sold more than 4.5 million copies
5. Calibrated industrial measuring instruments, and tested products and water quality for more than 2,000 companies a year.

Despite the fact that TPA has in-house expertise only in measuring instrument calibration and enterprise diagnosis, it was possible to produce this impressive amount of work due to the support of about one thousand stakeholders mentioned above who are happy to work part-time for TPA because of the excellent service of its staff and the belief that they work for social benefits. It can be said that TPA is the most successful industrial technology training organisation in Thailand.

3 The foresight process

The project centred on three workshops but substantial amount of works were done before, in between, and afterwards. The first workshop was on scenario planning, the second on Balanced Scorecard, and the third on implementation of action plans. Participants of the three workshops consisted of members of the Governing Board, top executives, core staff and about 10 stakeholders totalling about 40. A working group of 23 people was appointed as counterpart to the consultants consisting of various heads of departments and some promising staff. A novel arrangement of this consultancy is that all reports are to be written by the working group in consultation with the consultants and not by the consultants. The thinking behind this arrangement was that TPA had many competent staff who could write reports and this was the best way to engage them in the learning process.

The consultants were briefed in study tours of TPA and by reviewing planning documents. Interviews were conducted with key members of the Governing Board, top executives, and some stakeholders to learn their thoughts and concerns. As background for the staff of TPA, the
consultants delivered a 2-day lecture on NGOs of other countries, strategic planning, and policies of relevant ministries. A session on SWOT analysis was organised to let the working group embark on SWOT analysis for TPA and for all the departments.

3.1 Scenario Planning

In the first workshop, scenario planning is used to broaden the view of the participants and to stretch their thinking to a 10-year future of TPA. It was organised over a weekend in the second premise of TPA called the Technology Promotion Institute. The workshop started with a lecture on foresight and scenario planning. Then the consultants presented their views on key strategic issues of TPA on financing, customers/stakeholders, internal processes and learning which was similar to the four perspectives of the Balanced Scorecard. The card technique was used to brainstorm on key issues in 10 years for TPA as an ice breaker. This technique has been very successful in actively engaging all the participants on the subject under discussion and is extremely useful in brainstorming as some Thai people have cultural inhibition for speaking in the public. It has been able to overcome the reluctance of some very senior persons in putting their thoughts down on paper and able to solicit sometimes very good ideas even from the shyest person.

Key drivers of change in the next 10 years were also brainstormed by using the same technique. To weed out events with low uncertainties, two prior questions were asked: What do you think would certainly happen to TPA in the next 10 years? And what do you think would never happen to TPA in the next 10 years? The third question was on events of high uncertainty. Then the consultants categorised all the key issues into 10 groups. They are:

1. Stability of TPA’s finance
2. Positioning of TPA as a non-profit organisation
3. Capability of the organisation to adapt to change
4. Policy of the next generation of leaders
5. Dwindling assistance from Japan
6. Growing competition from other organisations
7. Growth and expansion to the provinces
8. Morale of the staff
9. To be centre of excellence
10. Market opportunity

These issues were plotted on the two axes of High Impact and High Uncertainty. The result by group decision was shown below:

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FORESIGHT IN A NON-PROFIT ORGANISATION
The consultants then devised three sets of scenario logics from the key issues. The scenario logics were not necessary only those of high impact and high uncertainty. But they were designed to address the concerns of the participants on the future of TPA and to demonstrate the possible alternative futures. The scenario logics were:

**Group 1**
1. TPA uses profit as the Key Performance Index
2. Building up in-house expertise
3. Staff has high morale due to high salary
4. New leaders change the policy of TPA

**Group 2**
1. TPA is firm on the value of a non-profit organisation
2. The government becomes a strong supporter
3. Expand activities to provinces
4. Develop synergy between departments

**Group 3**
1. Relationship with Japan is replaced by China and Western nations
2. Good cooperation with other organisations both in the country and abroad
3. Consultancy service becomes the star which can support other activities
4. Develop synergy between departments

Mapping technique using each scenario logic as a central theme was recommended as the brainstorming tool. Upon elaboration, associations between themes were developed. Then participants were asked to describe the scenarios in prose.

The three scenarios were (see details in Boxes 2, 3, 4):

1. **TPA Corporation** - TPA is privatised and run like a corporation. It concentrates on profit making activities, and emphasizes result-based management. The power shifts from the Governing Board to the CEO and there is less synergy among various departments of TPA.

2. **Value of NPO** - TPA realises the value of being a non-profit organisation and has changed its status from an association to a foundation. New dimension for learning, synergy and teamwork are developed. It receives the Prime Minister's Award in International Cooperation for NPO.

3. **New Synergy** - Competition from universities is increasing, as public universities are being corporatised. TPA develops synergies among its various departments spearheaded by consultancy and practical solution provision. It expands services to the provinces and develops closer relationship with China.

Interestingly, two policy issues that had been under debate in TPA for some time: “Can TPA survive if Japan cuts off its financial support?” and “Should TPA become a private company since some of its operations are making profit?” were resolved during the foresight exercise. Though the consultants did not assign any scenario logic that Japan cuts off financial aid to TPA to any groups, the issue is very much in the participants’ mind since it appeared in every scenario. However, the threat of dwindling financial support from Japan disappeared when the Director said emphatically that TPA must be financially self-sufficient while maintaining the close relationship with Japan (note: the financial aid from Japan accounted for less than 10% of TPA budget in 2002). It also became clear that TPA would stand to lose more than gain by becoming a profit-seeking company. Though many activities of TPA like the language school,
the publishing house, training, and calibration service and environmental analysis can stand on
their own financially, their profit would quickly evaporate if all the stakeholders charged their
contributions at market rate. It would also be very difficult to attract prominent people from the
private and public sectors to sit on the Governing Board and head the Sub-committees. The
scenarios provided an opportunity for the participants to rehearse the future and examine the
consequences of the decision made today.

Box 2 Scenario 1: TPA Corporation
The election of the new Governing Board results in many new and young faces who are not
founding members of TPA. They see the present style of management as being too
cumbersome and cannot respond fast enough to the changing environment. Result-based
management is emphasised and a new full-time Director is appointed with more management
power. Though the Japanese government cuts off financial aid, a strong relationship with Japan
is maintained. Many Silver Volunteers from Japan are brought in to help develop SMEs. The
Thai government requires that all SMEs must be diagnosed (Shindan) before receiving any help
from the government. Thus the Shindan department is expanded to meet the exploding
demand. This provides opportunity for staff in developing career path in TPA. Not before long,
TPA becomes a leader in providing consultancy to manufacturing industry in customised
packages and earns the reputation of a practical solution provider. This is the area that brings in
a large amount of income to TPA which expands at the expense of other less profitable
activities.

TPA makes full use of IT to modernise its management process and to delegate authority. But a
number of old timers cannot accept the new value of going after profit. The emphasis on KPIs
results in more competitions among the departments and less synergy. The number of full-time
staff is kept low through contracting and outsourcing. TPA can now afford to pay higher salary
because of higher income per head of staff, but there is higher turnover despite higher salary.
TPA invests with other companies and establishes subsidiaries as well as expanding branches
to the provinces. One subsidiary is the International Language Institute TPA. In 2012, TPA
becomes a full-fledge private company registered as TPA Corporation and listed in the Stock
Exchange of Thailand.
Box 3 Scenario 2: The Value of NPO

In a packed hall, an elderly man gets up from his seat when his name is announced among the loud applause. He walks up to the stage to shake hand with the Prime Minister and receives the Prime Minister’s Award in International Cooperation for NPO. Then he steps on the podium for his speech.

“I…representing the Foundation for Technology Promotion of Thailand, am very much honoured in receiving the Award today. What you see in 2012 is an image of success. But many of you may not know the changes we have gone through in the past 10 years as an organisation which supports the development of Thai industry.”

“Ten years ago was a major turning point. As the Japanese government was wavering in continuing its support. I and everyone in the organisation had to find a strategy for survival. Many suggested that we changed from a non-profit to a for-profit organisation. But we asked ourselves if so then how we differ from other businesses. At the end, the majority agreed that we must maintain our value of a non-profit organisation and we became a foundation in 2004. With the status of a foundation, not only that we received tax exemption and international recognition, we were consulted in many occasions concerning industrial policy of the country. Though there were changes in governments and sometimes there were interferences, but I would say that as far as industrial development for the benefit of the country is concern we thrive in every government. A good thing is that Japan never cuts its assistance. We also have new allies in China, Malaysia, Lao and Vietnam and a number of Middle East countries who would like us to develop the skill of Thai workers in response to the need of their industries.”

“One of our prides is that we have been part of the new paradigm of learning. Now, the Foundation not only trains trainers for provincial branches, it also has a learning network through satellite which is a joint-venture between Thailand and Malaysia. Today, everybody in the provinces can study with students in Bangkok and can access the experience of experts in the local area. Eight years ago, the Ministry of Education accredited our training certificates. Many leading industries utilise our certificates in recruitment and promotion. Now the applications for training from provinces are increasing all the time. This supports the government policy in creating jobs in the provinces so that they do not have to move into Bangkok.”

“Our success today is due to having a good team. The heart of our work is to streamline the internal process. We emphasise synergy in every way: policy, planning, marketing, and communication. Our principle is that we do not want everyone to narrowly focus on the work of one’s department but link and share the benefits with others. For instance, the one who buys a book from our publisher may get a discount for training. In strategic planning, we make sure that all activities enhance each other and are not in conflict. We have transparency. That is part of organisational culture that we built in the past 10 years.”

“Some may think that the success today is because of top executives. I can confirm that it is not due to anyone in particular but because we have a strong team. The management of the Foundation is not top down and there is no dictatorship in our work. The executives who come to work for the Foundation are ready to devote themself for public benefits. The Foundation has laid regulations for inviting resource persons to the Governing Board. As for myself who is well over the age of 60, I am grateful to all of you who gave me the opportunity to contribute at the end of my life. Lastly, I would like to give this Award to all the team of the Foundation who helped to turn this organisation around 10 years ago.”
Looking back to 2002, there were a number of events which affected TPA:

1. The government policy to promote SMEs as a pillar for sustainable development.
2. The SMEs needed improvement in efficiency in order to face tougher competition.
3. The gap of technology between Japan and Thailand was widening making it more difficult for technology transfer.
4. The Japanese economy had been in continuous recession forcing JTECS to reduce financial assistance.

These events forced TPA to go through a period of readjustment in developing internal and external cooperation. However, TPA had many diverse activities. Synergy, though an announced policy of the Governing Board, was slow in implementation since it was seen that the gain of one department was achieved at the expense of another.

External cooperation might be divided into cooperation with organisations in the country and with organisations abroad. TPA cooperated with government departments in providing services to SMEs in the form of contract works. TPA was able to perform well. But government had their own autonomous institutes to look after. Therefore, TPA only got the contract when the project was beyond the capacity of the autonomous institutes.

As for international cooperation, since the assistance from Japan was on the decreasing trend, EU was interested in providing assistance to Asia and ASEAN, and China became more developed, technology from EU and China were seen as alternatives. In particular, many countries invested in and transferred technology to China. China itself had its own technology development making it a suitable source of technology for developing countries. Therefore, TPA started to bring in technology from EU countries and China.

The dual events that shocked TPA were when Japan cut off the assistance and all public universities became corporatised. Though the financial assistance from JTECS was only a small portion of TPA’s annual budget, the psychological shock was severe. As public universities became autonomous, they all have to earn extra income through training courses, consultancy, and contract research. The contribution of university professors to TPA’s activities was more restricted as the universities themselves became TPA’s competitors.

After a series of meetings, the Governing Board declared that TPA must get the house into order by developing synergy among its various departments spearheaded by consultancy and must actively develop relationships with other organisations both in the country and abroad. A new department for international cooperation was established. It also expanded services to the provinces to serve government policy.

With those drastic changes, now TPA is seen as the source of manufacturing technology from all over the world. Many activities are geared towards supporting consultancy for industry. It can provide practical solutions to SMEs and enjoy good relationships with other organisations.

### 3.2 The Balanced Scorecard

After the first workshop, the working group was asked to refine the scenarios and consolidate the SWOT analysis done earlier. In the second workshop, the scenarios were presented and the SWOT analysis and the vision of TPA were revisited. The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) was used to develop the strategy map for the next 5 years. In addition to the four standard
perspectives of the BSC (Finance, Customer, Internal Process, Learning and Growth), Partnership was added as the fifth perspective between Customer and Internal Process. As TPA has little in-house technical expertise, building partnership with Thai and Japanese organisations and expanding a strong network of specialists are crucial for the success of TPA. The results of the workshop were:

**VISION:** TPA to be a leader in creating, storing, and disseminating technology in order to increase the competitiveness of Thai industry.

**CORE COMPETENCY:** Connecting knowledge from Japan and managing networks of experts.

**STRATEGIC POSITIONING:** TPA is in the business of providing industrial knowledge and solution.

**STRATEGIC THEME:** Product excellence and proactive networking.

The workshop was able to create a strategy map with 19 objectives plus many measurements and targets, and 16 initiatives. The number of objectives and initiatives was reduced from 19 to 9 and from 16 to 7 in subsequent meetings with the working group and the Sub-committee for Planning. The seven initiatives chosen to be explored further were:

- Innovation Program
- Talent Bank Program
- Marketing Program
- IT/Knowledge Management Program
- Organisation Restructure Program
- Human Resource Management Program
- Corporate Identity Program

### 3.3 Implementation of action plans

Seven small working groups were set up to develop action plans for the initiatives with the help of the consultants. The revised strategy map and the seven action plans were presented to the third workshop. Mechanisms to drive the action plans on organisation structure, budget planning, and human resource management were also discussed. Main issues were whether there should be new departments of marketing and human resource development, how to set up the cross-functional team to promote synergy between departments, and proportion of budget for new initiatives to existing activities.

The outcomes of the foresight exercise were considerable. The present Chairman of the Governing Board stated that strategic planning has changed the way that TPA conducts business, and the change is now so ingrained that even with a change of management TPA would not make a U-turn in policy. In the past 3 years, TPA has been working on all the seven programs mentioned above. The most significant change is the increased use of IT. The Library@Company Program succeeded in inducing almost 100 companies to use TPA library management software. Books are sold on-line and trainees can register, confirm, and pay through the website. The databases of members and customers of various departments have been integrated. Web services are taking off through e-magazine, e-library, e-test, etc. A new career development program and salary structure has been implemented. More alliances were made with organisations in Thailand and Japan. The Corporate Identity Program adopted the slogan “BELIEF” which stands for Belief, Excellence, Leadership, Innovation, Effort, and Fairness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Theme</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial:</strong></td>
<td>1. Financial self-sufficiency</td>
<td>( M_1 ) : Self Reliance Index = Income/Expenditure</td>
<td>- 1.05</td>
<td>- Innovation Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Increase income from new products by investing continuously</td>
<td>( M_{2.1} ) : % of revenue from new activities</td>
<td>- Increase 10% / year</td>
<td>- Marketing Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( M_{2.2} ) : Investment /Total Budget</td>
<td>- Increase 10% / year</td>
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<td><strong>Customers:</strong></td>
<td>3. Expand the base of SME customers</td>
<td>( M_{3.1} ) : Number of members</td>
<td>- Individuals +10% / year</td>
<td>- HR Program</td>
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<td>4. Build product and service excellence to gain high level of customer acceptance</td>
<td>( M_{3.2} ) : Number of customers (individuals and companies)</td>
<td>- Corporate members +20% in the first 3 years</td>
<td>- Marketing Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Build up the image of a leading organisation</td>
<td>( M_4 ) : Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>- Increase 10% / year</td>
<td>- Corporate Identity Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) One Window Services for SMEs</td>
<td>- Through survey</td>
<td>- Innovation Program</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(2) Quality product at low price</td>
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<td>- Talent Bank Program</td>
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<td>(3) Practical solution provider</td>
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<td>- IT &amp; KM Program</td>
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<td>( M_5 ) : First brand recall</td>
<td>- 50% in the 5th year</td>
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<td><strong>Partners:</strong></td>
<td>6. Build partnership with Thai and Japanese organizations and proactively expand the network of experts</td>
<td>( M_{6.1} ) : Number of active MOUs</td>
<td>- 10 in 5 years</td>
<td>- Talent Bank Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( M_{6.2} ) : Size of projects</td>
<td>- 20 million Baht /year in the 5th year</td>
<td>- Corporate Identity Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( M_{6.3} ) : Number of active experts</td>
<td>- Increase 10% / year</td>
<td>- Innovation Program</td>
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<td><strong>Internal Business Process:</strong></td>
<td>7. Integrate all services for synergy by knowledge management with IT and through internal process alignment</td>
<td>( M_{7.1} ) : % of revenue through joint operation of more than one department</td>
<td>- Increase 30% in the 2nd year</td>
<td>- Marketing Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( M_{7.2} ) : Customer perception</td>
<td>- 80% satisfaction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( M_{7.3} ) : Shared databases</td>
<td>- Meet user expectation in 1yr</td>
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<td>( M_{7.4} ) : Database for office management</td>
<td>- Meet user expectation in 2 years</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( M_{7.5} ) : Response time for queries from customer</td>
<td>- Meet 80% customer satisfaction</td>
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<td>( M_{7.6} ) : Cost Efficiency</td>
<td>- Decrease 10% in the 5th year</td>
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<td>= Total Cost – Cost of Experts</td>
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<td>Total Income</td>
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<td><strong>Learning &amp; Growth:</strong></td>
<td>8. Reform the personnel management system to build and retain expertise in the organization through product excellence and proactive networking</td>
<td>( M_{8.1} ) : Marketing training</td>
<td>- 100% in the 2nd year, 100% of new recruits</td>
<td>- Human Resource Program</td>
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<td>( M_{8.2} ) : Career path development</td>
<td>- Less than 5% turnover/year for more-than-one-year staff with good performance</td>
<td>- Corporate Identity Program</td>
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<td>( M_{8.3} ) : Competitive salary</td>
<td>- 75% of market rate</td>
<td>- Organization Structure Program</td>
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<td>( M_{8.4} ) : % Income from in-house experts/Total income</td>
<td>- Increase to 20% in the 5th year</td>
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<td>9. Maintain the culture and value of the organisation</td>
<td>( M_{9.1} ) : New recruit trained on corporate value</td>
<td>- 100%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( M_{9.2} ) : Annual Performance Review on Corporate Value</td>
<td>- Not less than 60%</td>
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However, not everything turns out exactly as envisage in the workshops. Whether TPA should establish a university was discussed during the workshop. At that time, some participants expressed doubts whether this was feasible or desirable. But later on the Governing Board decided to go ahead in investing US$10 millions to establish the Thailand-Japan Institute of Technology which will take in the first batch of students at both the bachelor and master levels in 2007. On the other hand, a human resource management package with e-learning has been developed, but the e-learning market in Thailand is not sufficiently mature and further development is needed.

4 Discussions

This case study shows the use of foresight as a tool for substantially re-thinking an organization’s vision and strategy linking with the application of the Balanced Scorecard tool for implementing significant and long-lasting change. A likely question is if strategic planning was done without scenario planning would the outcome be the same. The author would argue that without the scenarios which help resolve the two pending policy issues, the participants may not be so confident in proposing a more ambitious vision than the previous one which only sees TPA as the technology transfer agent from Japan to Thailand. The scenarios confirmed the value of TPA as a non-profit organisation and the need to enhance synergy between departments. The inclusion of “creating technology” in the new vision paved the ways to build up more in-house expertise and perhaps that was because the leaders had the establishment of a university in mind.

The Balanced Scorecard pointed out a number of actions that TPA needed to take, in particular, enhancing partnerships, improving marketing, and utilising IT for productivity. The good thing was that TPA went into action immediately, consistently, and persistently. Kaplan and Norton (2001) emphasised the importance of execution over strategy that “In the majority of cases—we estimate 70 percent—the real problem isn’t [bad strategy but] …bad execution”.

The author would like to conclude by saying that the success of this exercise is due to TPA being a good organisation. Its leaders recognised the time to move the organisation up another level and took action in devising a plan. The participants of the workshops were fully committed since the workshops were conducted in weekends often late into the nights with full attendance. More importantly, TPA has many devoted staff that recognises the importance of the exercise and did many background works as well as follow ups that contributed substantially to the success. Its internal processes were also rather efficient. In the situation that the consultant received “authority” from the Governing Board, “legitimacy” from the enthusiasm of the workshop participants, and “credibility” for the staff to carry out the implementation, the foresight exercise is bound to be successful. (Jewell et al., 2000)

References

