Strategy Mapping
The Intended Effects of an Investment in Information Systems
A Case Study on Alpha AB

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Deciding where to spend the information system investment budget with respect to strategic priorities is important for companies, but it is far from every company that does it. There is no consensus in the literature on how information system investment decisions should be assessed. This case study is conducted on Alpha AB. The company consists of several department that each require different kind of information to support, improve and facilitate their area of operation. They are in the processes of deciding where to spend their investment budgets.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify the processes that will be improved by a new information system and display how it affects the overall goal of Alpha AB, using the strategy map and the balanced scorecard. This will enable decision makers to make better decisions regarding information system investment.

In order to fulfill the purpose have a review of how information systems improve companies been done, furthermore have investment issues been discussed. In order to display the effects of the intended investment will the strategy map be used, the balanced scorecard will be introduced for performance measurement.

The empirical findings are collected from four high level employees at Alpha. Through unstructured and semi-structured interviews have information about the company, its goals, customers, the internal processes and their hopes for the new information system been collected.

The empirical findings have been compiled on the strategy map with the intension to show the causal relationship that the intended investment will have on the company. In order to quantify the targets on which the investment is supposed to cause its effects, have the empirical findings also been compiled to a balanced scorecard.

The strategy map and the balanced scorecard display the intended effects that the investment causes. The decision makers at Alpha can with a holistic view follow the causal relationship from the expectations of the investments and see which of them will be a priority to invest in.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgement .............................................................................................................. i

1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
    1.1 Background .............................................................................................................. 1
    1.2 Problem .................................................................................................................. 1
        1.2.1 Case Company Problem ................................................................................. 2
    1.3 Purpose .................................................................................................................... 3
    1.4 Delimitation .............................................................................................................. 3
    1.5 Definitions ............................................................................................................... 3

2 Theoretical Framework ................................................................................................ 5
    2.1 Information Systems (IS) ....................................................................................... 5
        2.1.1 IS Investments .............................................................................................. 5
    2.2 The Balanced Scorecard ....................................................................................... 6
    2.3 The Strategy Map .................................................................................................. 8
        2.3.1 The Financial Perspective ............................................................................. 9
        2.3.2 The Customer Perspective .......................................................................... 9
        2.3.3 Internal Perspective ................................................................................... 10
        2.3.4 The Learning and Growth Perspective ....................................................... 10
    2.4 Performance Measurements .................................................................................. 11

3 Method .......................................................................................................................... 12
    3.1 The Approach .......................................................................................................... 12
    3.2 The Case Study Approach ..................................................................................... 12
    3.3 The Choice of Data Collection Method ................................................................ 12
        3.3.1 Selection of Company ................................................................................ 13
        3.3.2 Interviews .................................................................................................... 13
    3.4 Processing the Received Data ................................................................................. 15
    3.5 Quality Criteria ....................................................................................................... 15

4 Empirical Findings ....................................................................................................... 16
    4.1 First Round of Interviews ..................................................................................... 16
        4.1.1 The Company ................................................................................................ 16
        4.1.2 Vision ............................................................................................................. 17
        4.1.3 Goals and Targets ......................................................................................... 18
        4.1.4 Values and Measurements .......................................................................... 18
        4.1.5 Customers ..................................................................................................... 18
        4.1.6 Quality ........................................................................................................... 19
        4.1.7 Competitors .................................................................................................. 20
        4.1.8 IT .................................................................................................................... 20
        4.1.9 What the New Information System Should Provide Alpha with .................. 21
    4.1.10 Planning ........................................................................................................... 22
    4.2 The second Round of Interviews .......................................................................... 23
        4.2.1 Discussions About the Cause-and-Effects ................................................... 23
        4.2.2 Discussions About the BSC Metrics and Targets ......................................... 24

5 Analysis ......................................................................................................................... 25
    5.1 The Strategy Map ................................................................................................. 25
5.1.1 The Learning and Growth Perspective .................................................. 25
5.1.2 The Internal Perspective ....................................................................... 26
5.1.3 The Customer Perspective ..................................................................... 28
5.1.4 The Financial Perspective ..................................................................... 30
5.1.5 The Complete Strategy Map .................................................................. 31
5.2 The BSC for Performance Measurement .................................................. 33
  5.2.1 The Learning and Growth Perspective .................................................. 33
  5.2.2 The Internal perspective ...................................................................... 33
  5.2.3 The Customer Perspective ................................................................... 34
  5.2.4 The Financial Perspective ................................................................... 35
  5.2.5 The Complete Balanced Scorecard ...................................................... 35

6 Conclusion ................................................................................................... 37
  6.1 Contribution ............................................................................................ 38
  6.2 Criticism ................................................................................................... 38
  6.3 Further Research ....................................................................................... 38

List of references ............................................................................................. 39
**Figures**

- Figure 2-1 The Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton) .................................. 7
- Figure 2-2 A Strategy Map (Olve et al. 2003) ................................................... 9
- Figure 4-1 Alpha AB Organizational Chart (modified from Alphas Website) 17
- Figure 5-1 The internal perspective in the Strategy map .................................. 27
- Figure 5-2 The Customer perspective in the Strategy Map ................................ 29
- Figure 5-3 The Financial Perspective ............................................................... 31
- Figure 5-4 The Strategy Map ........................................................................... 32

**Tables**

- Chart 3-1 The interviewees from Alpha ....................................................... 14
- Chart 5-1 The learning and growth perspective ............................................. 33
- Chart 5-2 The internal perspective ................................................................. 33
- Chart 5-3 The customer perspective ............................................................... 34
- Chart 5-4 The financial perspective ............................................................... 35
- Chart 5-5 The BSC ....................................................................................... 36

**Appendix**

- Appendix I ..................................................................................................... 42
- Appendix II .................................................................................................... 43
- Appendix III ................................................................................................. 44
- Appendix IV .................................................................................................. 45
- Appendix V .................................................................................................... 46
Introduction

This chapter includes a background and problem statement which leads to a purpose and two research questions. In order to guide the reader further, guidelines, delimitations and appropriate definitions are provided.

1.1 Background

Companies find themselves facing strategic decisions about which investments are important to be made in order to reach their goals. The dimension of companies’ resources allocated for investments related to strategic issues vary to a high extent among organizations, but are in general limited in form of time and assets (Johnson, Scholes, and Whittington, 2008). The company’s increased complexity results in establishing different departments that each has its own area of specialization. This way of separating departments of a company and identifying their major responsibilities, improves the employees’ ability to focus on the tasks related to their area of operation (Kaplan and Norton, 2004). Motiwalla and Thompson (2009) states that the increased complexity of the company makes different departments require different kinds of information, depending upon their field of operation. The two authors state that there are no single information system that can satisfy various information needs among departments and at the different levels in the company. In addition to this, implementing information systems are complex in nature, time consuming, requires intensive resources, and the results often have a long-term future impact on the company. These characteristics are according to Johnson et al. (2008) related to strategic choices, which implies that decision have to be made through careful and appropriate evaluations, and have to involve people from various levels in the company. Kaplan and Norton (2004) state that information capital encompasses information systems. In order to get maximum return from the information capital these assets must be aligned with a company’s overall strategy, and hence support the processes that creates most value for the customers and shareholders. Evaluating which system to select and the value of the system should not only be based on the time effort and monetary investment spent. The system’s value relies on its ability to support the critical processes that create value for customers and shareholders; in a way it contributes to achieving a company’s objectives and goals.

1.2 Problem

The formulation and aim of the strategy can vary among companies, but in general the strategy has to be communicated to the different entities of the company to coordinate resources and facilitate the transformation of the strategy into action (Johnson et al., 2008). Organizations view their strategy in various ways; it can even be seen differently between departments in a single company. This narrow view of strategy is further strengthened by the background and occupation of the individuals, groups, or executive teams within an organization. Marketing and sales executives may only consider and focus on reaching the goals through customers, while financial executives might view strategy in monetary terms. The same situation might occur with different groups within the organization in which each group views the strategy from the point that is close to their operation (Kaplan and Norton, 2004). Communicating a strategy will become a complex task for executives if there is no shared understanding about it (Lindvall, 2001). The narrow view may lead to few people having a holistic view of their organization, and therefore a comprehensive description of the strategy is in need to enable executives to communicate the strategy among themselves and to employees at all levels in the organization (Kaplan and Norton, 2004). Charan and Colvin (1999) explains the reason that many strategies fail, is related to bad execution and not to the strategies being bad themselves.
Deciding where to spend the information system (from here on referred to as IS) investment budget with respect to strategic priorities is important for companies, but it is far from every company that does it (Weill & Ross, 2004). When the IS investment decisions are not based on companywide priorities, the risk of exaggerating the benefits on your department is according to Tallon, Kraemer and Gurbaxani (2000) one of the main problems when single departments in the company makes decisions and monitors the outcomes simply by the narrow views of their own department. As well as exaggerating the department benefits, a problem with not making investment decisions on a companywide level is the risk of constructing boundaries for information flows, called information silos which is likely to happen with this sub-optimizing decision making (Motiwalla & Thompson, 2009).

The value generation of information capital relies on effective management of it. An IS have to be integrated with key processes and activities, and contributing to the achievement of strategic objectives (Johnson et al, 2008). Absence of connections between the processes that create and deliver value, the offered value, and the financial objectives reflects the missing link between what is intended to be achieved and how it will be achieved (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). The missing connections between these aspects according to Kaplan and Norton, (2000) is one of the main reasons that lead to ineffective alignment and hinder value realization of information capital. The identification and alignment of information and other intangible assets is an important factor to successful strategy implementation. If not, there is a risk that these assets will not generate a positive return on its investment (Kaplan and Norton, 2004).

There is no consensus in the literature on how IS investment decisions should be assessed, but previous researchers appears to agree on the fact that investments are not evaluated in a satisfying way; Cooke and Parrish (1992) states that 70% of firms does not conduct any pre-implementation reviews before the investment. Farbey, Land and Target (1992) have found in their research that half of the firms investigated did not have a different strategy for their IS investment than for other investments. Millis and Mercken (2001) states that traditional capital investment techniques are not sufficient when it comes to IS investments. The effects on business performance from an IS is an underdeveloped research subject states Mittal and Nault (2009) and continues to argue that effects from IS investments often have indirect effects, the kind that does not affect the business right away, furthermore they state that indirect effects should be accounted for especially in the service sector where the two authors have seen indications. Tallon (2007) states that even though businesses knows that IS investment are supposed to support the strategy into reaching the goals it is hard to describe how the goals are reached.

1.2.1 Case Company Problem

Alpha AB is a service oriented company that has recognized a need for implementing a new information system to support the company’s business. The company consists of several department that each require different kind of information to support, improve and facilitate their area of operation. The company has identified that the new system have to support the critical success factors of the entire business, and stresses the importance of not only focusing on the needs of a specific department or limited area of operation, as they did with previous investments. To facilitate the evaluation and selection process of the new system, this thesis introduces a model for Alpha AB which is based on the concept of
the strategy map. The model aims to demonstrate the processes that the new system will support and show the causality relationship.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to identify the processes that will be improved by a new information system and display how it affects the overall goal of Alpha AB, using the strategy map and the balanced scorecard. This will enable decision makers to make better decisions regarding information system investment.

The author has divided the purpose into two research questions.

RQ 1: Is the strategy map a suitable tool for displaying the intended effects that an information system investment can contribute with?

RQ 2: How will the intended investment in a new information system help Alpha AB reach its goals?

1.4 Delimitation

There are according to Motiwalla and Thompson (2009) five steps in implementing a new IS, these five steps are widely accepted among researchers and practitioners: Investigate, Analyze, Design, Implement and Maintain. The investigation phase is about costs and benefits that can be derived from a new IS. During the analyze period shall functional requests be made. Design is about the architecture of the system suggested. The implementation handles the acquisition and finally maintaining is just that. This thesis is limited to the investigation phase and the analyze phase. Neither does it handle costs, since it is too time consuming

No suggestions regarding specific IS or what kind of IS will be presented. This is due to many vendors using different offerings and the time it would consume to search for relevant matches.

1.5 Definitions

Information – “The action of informing, communication of knowledge or news of some fact or occurrence” Oxford dictionary (2001)

System – “An organized or connected group of objects” Oxford English dictionary (2001)

Information System (IS) – An information system consists of five components; hardware, software, data, processes and people (Motiwalla & Thompson 2009) “The IS role is to transform data into information” (Motiwalla & Thompson)

Information Technology – It is easy to confuse IS with information technology which is the hardware and software components of the IS (Motiwalla & Thompson 2009)

Strategy – “Is the direction and scope of an organization over the long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations” (Johnson et al., p 3, 2008)
Intended – “proposed to be done or accomplished” Oxford English dictionary (2001)

Investment – “The conversion of money or circulating capital into some species of property from which an income or profit is expected to be derived in the ordinary course of trade or business” Oxford English dictionary (2001)

Effect – “Something accomplished, caused or produced, a result consequence” Oxford English dictionary (2001)
2 Theoretical Framework

In order to fulfill the purpose have a review of how information systems improve companies been done, furthermore have investment issues been discussed. In order to display the effects of the intended investment will the strategy map be used, the balanced scorecard will be introduced for performance measurement.

2.1 Information Systems (IS)

According to Beynon-Davies (2009) IS are systems of communication which is used to support activities in an organization. An IS consists of hardware, software, processes, data and people (Motiwalla & Thompson, 2009). Kadiyala and Kleiner (2005) states that the benefits of IS are many; they can provide more certainty about outcomes in decision making and provide better utilization on resources. The main function of an IS is according to Motiwalla and Thompson (2009) to provide computer automation support for different business areas, while Kadyala and Kliener (2005) implies that it simplifies business activities by managing information. Kaplan and Norton (2004) states that an IS, which is a part of the learn and growth perspective in the strategy map, should support a companies’ strategy

When companies grow and departments specialize, the information needs changes. Historically companies have filled the needs on a short term basis by giving support on a department basis (Motiwalla & Thompson, 2009). The two authors states that this have resulted in information silos, which store information that never leaves the department. Integrating this information will empower employees by having relevant information on different areas easy accessible, and it will give the company a tool to optimize planning scheduling and sequencing. Although the integrated systems have to use standardized data it also helps develop and create knowledge since it bridges the information constraints (Srivadhana & Pawlowski, 2007)

Customer retention is according to Jones and Sasser (1995) the best way of achieving long term financial benefits. Woodruff (1997) as well as Kaplan and Norton (1996) state that the customer is in focus for many companies today. Having good customer relationships is thus important for companies.

Customer relationship management (from here on referred to as CRM) system is a type of IS that supports the interaction with customers and the analysis of customer data (Hedman and Kalling, 2002) Beynon-Davies states that a CRM system helps tracking all interaction that a company have with its customers. Kim, Suh and Hwang (2003) say that a CRM will capture information about customers, enables companies to create profiles and segment the customers. Hedman and Kalling (2002) explains that by knowing how purchase patterns and what products or services are bought as a bundle, individual customer strategies can be implemented. Kadyala and Kliener (2005) sums up the CRM by stating that it improves the entire communication process a company has with its customers.

2.1.1 IS Investments

When it comes to deciding what areas in a company that needs to be improved by investing in IS there is little consensus among researchers on how this decision should be made and how the pre-implementation process should be conducted (Peppard & Ward, 2002, and Farbeys et al., 1992). Peppard and Ward (2005) state that a company needs to know that the investment is a business project with a bit of IT and not a technical project. It needs to address what kind of benefits it wants to receive from the investment and what kind of benefit that is likely. Tallon et al. (2000) states that companies receive greater rewards from their IS investments when they make a thorough review of the business beforehand. The
authors’ emphasizes that the link between strategic alignment and the benefits from IT is a necessity and that firms should try to move towards strategic oriented goals for their IT investments.

A company’s strategy is about using its resources in an efficient way to fulfill the expectations set by the stakeholders (Johnson et al., 2008). Thus, companies need to focus their investments in supporting the expectations. It has been recognized that the strategy map can be used to link separated activities in a logical way in order to achieve the desired vision (Irving, 2003). The concepts of the strategy map and the balanced scorecard is introduced in the next section. The strategy map is used in the analysis to map the separated activities in Alpha AB in order to get a holistic view of their operation and to investigate where the IS investment will have an impact. The balanced scorecard is introduced first due to the fact that the strategy map emerged from it (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Performance measurements is used to set quantified targets and for evaluation purposes.

2.2 The Balanced Scorecard

The concept of the Balanced Scorecard was introduced in 1992 by Robert Kaplan and David Norton (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). The balanced scorecard (from here on referred to as BSC) was intended to be used as a performance measurement system which included non-financial measures. A need to complement the financial measures, which consists of historical data, with drivers for future performance was recognized. The two authors added three perspectives that would balance the short-term financial measures with measures that would result in long-term profit. They identified the need for a customer perspective, an internal business perspective and a learning and growth perspective (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). These four perspectives are the most widely used (Olve, Petri, Roy & Roy, 1999), no matter if it is a manufacturing or a service company (Boulianne, 2006). These four perspectives are linked together with each other as well as with the strategy so that they will all interact in achieving the overall goals of the company. Although the perspectives are linked together the measures in the perspectives are not (Norreklit, 2000).

Olve and Sjöstrand (2006) describes the BSC logic as starting with the financial goals, and in order to reach the financial goals the company need to satisfy its customers. If the customers are not satisfied they will not buy what the company is offering. In order to satisfy the customers, the company’s internal business processes must be efficient. Finally, to get efficient internal business processes that constantly improve, a learning organization must be developed.

There are several strategies that a company can adopt and the results of them are according to Kaplan and Norton (1996) to be summed in the financial perspective. The strategies should then have appropriate measures in the other perspectives so that the organization works towards different sub-goals but the same main goal (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). As seen in figure 2.1, there are goals and measures in the perspectives that should reflect the questions stated next to the perspectives. In the financial perspective the goals and measures are supposed to reflect how the company would want their shareholders to view them.
In the information era, the focus for many companies is on the customers (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Woodruff, 1997). Kaplan and Norton (1992) recognized in their first study on the BSC that customers were in fact in focus when it came to vision and mission. However, they recognized the need to have evaluation measures for top-management so it could reflect the customer needs in a more understandable way. The measures and goals in this perspective are supposed to answer the question “how do we want customer to see us?” as shown in figure 2.1. The customer perspective will guide the internal business process perspective (from here on referred to as internal perspective) and the learning and growth perspective (Olve et al., 1999).

Although the customer based measures are important, it is hard to know what must be done to excel at them. What the customer will get is derived from internal business processes (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). The processes that are highlighted in this perspective are those that create value, direct or indirect to the company (Olve et al., 1999). These factors are often the ones which have great impact on customer satisfaction (Kaplan & Norton 1992).

Furthermore, in a competitive world, a company must ensure that it will keep its competitive advantage in the long-run; it must develop the skills to keep customers satisfied (Olve et al., 1999). This is the fourth and final perspective and shall consist of opportunity targets in employees, IT and/or the organizational structures (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). These opportunities should help the customer perspective or the internal process perspective with improvements and in long term the financial targets.

The balanced scorecard can be used to a greater extent than was recognized at first. Its original purpose was to include other areas than financial when measuring performance (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). The concept evolved over time and it was recognized that it could be used as a powerful tool for describing and implementing an organizations strategy. Kaplan and Norton (2004) called the new concept the strategy map.
2.3 The Strategy Map

The strategy map enables employees at different levels to monitor the strategic measures; not as measures in four different perspectives as the BSC, but as a series of cause-and-effect relations between and within the perspectives. Andersen, Lawrie and Savic (2004) describe the cause and effects relationships as the actions needed (cause) for the results (effects). The cause-and-effect relationship is according to Kaplan and Norton (1996) a hypothesis about the effect a cause can have, see figure 2.2. One reason behind the creation of the BSC was the need to link management control measures such as relevant targets to the strategy (Olve et al., 2003). The strategy map will work further and link the strategy formulation with the execution of the strategy (Kaplan & Norton, 2000). The strategy map supports the employees by providing a description that facilitates the understanding of the strategy as well as highlighting the process of transforming the less tangible assets into tangible results, for example by showing how the company’s IS investment results in increased revenue. Irving (2003) follows the thoughts of Kaplan and Norton (2000) and means that the strategy map is intended to link separated activities together in order for a company to achieve its vision.

The strategy map highlights the interplay between for example IS and internal processes, and according to Olve et al. (2003) along with Kaplan and Norton (2004), an IS can very seldom create value for an organization if it is not aligned with other processes that can be measured more easy. The strategy map rely to a high extent on the BSC four perspectives, but as stated before, takes the concept further. In Kaplan and Norton’s (2004) strategy map, the learning and growth perspective are to be aligned with the processes in the internal perspective that creates and deliver value for customers in the customer perspective. Value created in the customer perspective will in turn be translated into financial results in the financial perspective. The strategy map links the various perspectives and monitors the cause-and-effect relationship among them. Through mapping the cause-and-effect relationship, the organization will be able to identify the critical objectives and which processes need to be improved in order to create value for customers and shareholders (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Andersen et al. (2004) argues that the strategy map can be used to evaluate and give guidelines to the priorities concerning changes needed in an organization. Millis and Mercken (2004) states that the idea of using several metrics in evaluating an IS investment is essential in order to not fall in the trap of sub-optimization. They argue that financial metrics is just not enough in their research paper about BSC as a tool for evaluating Information and communication projects. The Four perspectives of the strategy map are now described in the following sections.
2.3.1 The Financial Perspective

According to Kaplan and Norton (2004) the first step in describing the strategy is to balance and articulate the short-term productivity enhancement or cost reduction with the long-term growth objectives. Private sector organizations have an objective to create sustainable growth in shareholder value, but organizations are at the same time often obligated to show short-term improvement of results. Public sector organizations can have different objectives. Irwin (2003) describes his strategy map implementation as starting with the goal to “support entrepreneurs and owner managers” instead of financial targets. However this does also have a conflict in time span; the long and short-term objectives for an organization might anyhow conflict (Merchant & Van der Stede, 2007). Satisfying the long-term objectives by investing usually conflicts with the short term goals since resources must be used (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Although the financial perspective should describe and state the goal for the strategy and thus needs to be addressed first, the results will come with a time lag as a consequence of what happened for example a year ago in the other perspectives (Olve et al., 2003). The next step is to identify who they need to address in order to reach their goals.

2.3.2 The Customer Perspective

Sustainable value creation depends on the customers’ satisfaction, and therefore the organization have to identify the targeted customers and the value that have to be proposed in

Figure 2-2 A Strategy Map (Olve et al. 2003)
order to satisfy them (Johnson et al., 2008). Precision in the value proposition is the main aspect of strategy according to Kaplan and Norton (2004). When the organization knows the targeted customer, the organization will be able to identify the value proposition and how to fulfill them (Woodruff, 1997). The value propositions in the customer perspective are to be linked to the selected customer groups and hence the organization must identify what the customer desire and create a differential value. Customer retention is according to Jones and Sasser (1995) the single most important driver for long-term financial performance and repeated purchases will occur if an organization can identify and create what the customer desires. The strategy in which the company attracts and retains customers has to be built around these value propositions (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

The value proposition in the customer perspective is there to guide to which selected customer groups the value is created and what differentiated value the selected customer target groups desire. The value proposition in the customer perspective will communicate what the organization intent to provide its customer with, in a way that differ from or is better than competitors (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Woodruff (1997) argues that companies needs to become better at identifying how to get customers what they want, and that sales personnel needs to be more effective in getting to know customer preferences. In order to provide customers with what they want, a company needs to address its internal processes.

2.3.3 Internal Perspective

The most critical processes that create and deliver value have to be identified, highlighted and clustered together on a strategy map (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Although Lawrie and Cobbold (2004) agree, they argue that the internal processes needs to have quantitative goals in order have the desired effect. The internal processes are to contribute and achieve two main parts in the strategy: they identify processes that create value to the financial perspective, and they create and deliver the value proposition to customers in the customer perspective, which in turn express progress in the financial perspective (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). How value is created and sustained, rely on the processes’ affectivity and direction. An organization might have a large range of processes that creates value in different ways and these processes should not be ignored, but the strategy map should only contain the most critical internal processes (Olve et al., 2003; Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

The causes in the internal processes will have their effect on the value propositions in the customer perspective and some directly to the financial outcomes, but the internal processes are in turn effected by the learn and growth perspective. Imagine that a company is evaluating what they in the future state would like to offer its customers, what internal processes must be improved in order to do so? What in turn do the internal processes need from the learning and growth perspective in order to get improved?

2.3.4 The Learning and Growth Perspective

In Kaplan and Norton’s (2004) strategy map the learn and growth perspective consists of three categories which are human capital, information capital, and organizational capital. These categories have to be aligned with the entire strategy of the organization, and their value can only be realized when they succeeds to support the company in achieving what is desired. This means that what investments are to be made in the human-, information- or organizational capital depends on the organization’s strategy. Allee (2008) states that these
resources can only receive value in the context of other resources and needs to be linked with them.

Historical groupings of activities around specific operations in order to specialize that area have in many cases lead to that departments compete about the company’s resources and investment budgets (Motiwalla & Thompson 2009). These departments will have a narrow view of the company and regard it as isolated from the rest of the company when claiming a piece of the investment budgets. Kaplan and Norton (2004) states that all assets in the learning and growth perspective should be integrated and aligned with the strategy, implying that an investment must be based on the strategy.

2.4 Performance Measurements

With the strategy map a company can overlook activities and objectives that concern the strategy (Olve et al., 2003). Employees can get an overview of the strategy and how their work contributes to other areas of the company. By setting desired performance measures and setting performance targets the employees can facilitate the actual strategy and know whether or not objectives are reached. “What you measure is what you get” is according to Merchant and Van der Stede (2007) a widely known business expression which can be interpreted as the need to address the right measures in order for the intended strategy to fall out well. When a new IS has been implemented and new activities and work tasks are to be included it is even more essential to get congruence between the goals and the processes.

A shared vision is the first building block in building the BSC. The shared vision then needs to be translated into goals and measures which are to be stated in the different perspectives (Olve et al., 2003). The measures chosen have to be in line with the true objectives of the company in order to motivate employees to make the correct actions on a day-to-day basis (Merchant and Van der Stede, 2007). There are several traps concerned with performance measurement systems besides the need for congruence between the true objectives and the measures. Likierman (2009) argues that companies should not focus on winning over oneself but should benchmark others in the industry or use indexes and other tools. Furthermore the measurements should help making decisions for tomorrow, and historical data is not the right tool for that. Although there are drawbacks with evaluating and set targets based on a company’s own historical performance, Olve et al. (2003) stress that by monitoring and comparing results the company will get a better understanding of the value creating processes, and the actual alignments between processes will be better.

The BSC building process has other advantages than motivating people into making correct actions. Using the BSC in an organization has the benefit of making discussion on the logics within the business easier and thus more people from different parts of the organization can be included in the discussions (Olve et al., 2003). The metrics or key performance indicators used in the BSC needs to balance the long-term goals and the short term. The two bottom perspectives are often the drivers for the outcomes in the top two perspectives (Olve et al., 2003). Schneiderman (1999) states that the drivers often takes so long time to become outcomes that the external environment will be changing and make the outcomes useless. With this in mind, the outcomes in the two upper perspectives have to take the changing environment in consideration when assigning long-term goals.
3 Method

This chapter includes the chosen research approaches

3.1 The Approach

Jacobsen (2002) explains the inductive and the deductive methods as two scientific approaches about how to get better understanding about reality. Jacobsen (2002) stresses the relation between theory and empirical findings. Theory and empirical observations are the essential factors in both approaches, but the difference is that each approach has different views of the starting point of the research.

Bryman and Bell (2003) states that using the inductive method implies that the researcher starts with collecting empirical observations about a specific situation, and afterward search for appropriate theory. The reason for using the inductive method is according to Jacobsen (2000) that no limitations are set up for information flows, because the researcher has no previous expectations and limits when starting the research.

On the other hand, using the deductive method implies that the researcher starts with studying theory, and afterwards search and collect the empirical data needed (Jacobsen, 2000). In contrast, through using the deductive method, the researcher creates some knowledge about the topic through reviewing the theory in advance, and then investigates the situation of interest with help of previously established knowledge.

The chosen approach for this thesis is the deductive, where the literature is examined in advance of the data collection. To start with the existing theory is in this case a necessity in order to know what information is needed from the company.

3.2 The Case Study Approach

In order to investigate the company’s problem, a case study is conducted. Single case studies have the advantage of focusing on a specific case and give a deep understanding of it (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003). Yin (2009) states that if the research question is a how or why question it is likely that the preferable approach is the case study. Case studies generally have the problem of not being able to generalize the findings and apply it to other companies (Yin, 2009).

3.3 The Choice of Data Collection Method

The choice of method used depends on the purpose of the research and what questions are to be answered (Trost, 2005). In the qualitative research method, the researcher specifies who has to be included in the research, and the information source selected has to be appropriate in order to provide the data required for the study. When using this method the researcher works with qualitative data in the sense that data collected are in form of words, for example through interviews, in contrast to the quantitative research where numerical data is in the center (Jacobsen, 2002). One reason for using qualitative method is to gain comprehensive amount of information within a specific and limited area of study (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003). For this thesis the qualitative research method has been employed. The opportunity of acquiring detailed information and flexible research process can be
provided by using a qualitative method, and the questions for the interviews can be changed through the interview (Jacobsen 2000).

3.3.1 Selection of Company

The company chosen for the thesis is Alpha AB. When first contacted, Alpha was very interested in the idea of the strategy map that was introduced to them. The company had begun the work of identifying where a new investment on an IS was best needed and hence it was a great match between Alpha and the area of inquire. Since Alpha had this specific task on hand there was no need to further search for more participants.

3.3.2 Interviews

The most widely method used to obtain qualitative research data is through interviews (Cassell & Symon, 1994). When doing the research for this thesis, face-to-face interviews with different individuals within the organization have been held. The core of the interview questions have been the same throughout the interviews, although specific descriptive questions dependent on the employees position and area of responsibility have been asked. In contrast to email or phone interviews, the face-to-face interviews give the researcher the possibility to read the interviewee and make sure there are no misunderstandings (Sekaran, 2002). A problem with the face-to-face interview (from here on referred to as merely interview) is that the researchers need to be on the same location as the interviewee which hinders flexibility due to geographical distance.

There are different sorts of interviews. Bryman and Bell (2003) states that in a qualitative study the interviews are less structured, than interviews in a quantitative. The researcher tries to get the person that is being interviewed to share his or her opinion or view of the subject. There are two major types of interviews used in qualitative studies; the unstructured and the semi-structured interview. The unstructured have the characteristics of a conversation, where the researcher might just have a topic on which the interviewee speaks freely about (Bryman & Bell, 2003). If the interviews are done in a semi-structured way, the researcher has a set of quite specific topics but will still have the ability to adapt, and decide what order and ask additional question all in accordance on how the interview develops. Despite the adaptability, it is still important that interviews are done in a similar way with similar wording if the researcher is interviewing several people for the same purpose. A combination of the two types have been used in this thesis. An initial unstructured interview was conducted in order to determine whether their problem coincided with the original purpose of the thesis. The remaining interviews were semi-structured in order to get a full description of the company and different thoughts about the decision at hand.

Johannessen and Tufte (2003), argues that the location of the interview is of importance to the researcher. The location of the interviews have all been decided by the interviewee, which have been an active choice in order to create the comfort needed.

The interview subjects have been selected in collaboration with the company. The initial meeting with Alpha was held with the company’s controller. During the first meeting the topic and his expectations about the thesis was discussed. The controller became the com-
pany’s contact person for the thesis. The contact person was given a wish list of what was needed in form of interviews. He then suggested three names and their titles, which he thought was needed to conduct the research. The controller suggested to hold interviews with the head of business area 2, the head of administration, as well as the head of operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Interview Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>2/3-2011</td>
<td>1.5h</td>
<td>Group activity room at Alpha</td>
<td>Unstructured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Business Area 2</td>
<td>15/3-2011</td>
<td>2h</td>
<td>Boardroom at Alpha</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Administration</td>
<td>17/3-2011</td>
<td>2h</td>
<td>Boardroom at Alpha</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Operations</td>
<td>17/3-2011</td>
<td>2.5h</td>
<td>The office of the interviewee</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>5/4-2011</td>
<td>1.5h</td>
<td>Boardroom at Alpha</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>29/4-2011</td>
<td>2.5h</td>
<td>Group activity room at Alpha</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-1 The interviewees from Alpha

The first interview with the controller was unstructured and had the characteristics of a conversation. The goal of the interview was to get an idea of what they wanted to achieve by being a part of the research for this thesis, as well as plan and structure for the research process.

For the interview with the head of Business Area 2, a set of questions was sent three days in advance. The questions sent where all related to the customers, the processes and other internal information that was of descriptive nature. Questions about personal opinions and vision and goals were not sent in advance due to that an important part of the balanced scorecard process is related to investigate if a shared vision exists in the organization according to Olve, et al. (1999), as well as Andersen, et al. (2004). If the questions would have been sent in advance the interviewee could find the outspoken vision beforehand. Since the strategy map is built on the same principles it is important for this thesis to investigate if the vision is shared. Although the questions sent in advance were answered, follow up questions were asked to clarify as well as to pursue interesting topics.

The interviews on March 17 and the one on April 4 had the same characteristics as the interview on March 15, although the questions sent in advance was to describe processes and other internal information and did not concern the company as a whole. Sending some of the interview questions in advance made the interviews more effective, since the interviewee could prepare the descriptive answers, and focus could be on follow-up questions and other questions.

After the first round of empirical findings were juxtaposed and the work with the analysis had begun, an important step has been to discuss the linkage and the causality between the different activities. Balanced scorecard measures and targets have also been discussed. The discussions have been held with the Controller April 29.
Beside the interviews, three documents regarding three different planning activities was obtained. Those documents were used mostly to get an understanding of the information flows regarding planning. A fourth document with notes from a strategy meeting, within one of the departments was also received in order to see how that department views strategy.

3.4 Processing the Received Data

All interviews have been conducted in Swedish, and later translated to English. Marshal and Rossman (2006) argue that the issues related to both the transcription and translation of the conducted interviews needs to be dealt with. The interviews were conducted with recorders, so the transcription could be done in a slow pace. The translation was done by the author who is fluent in English, with Swedish as the mother tongue. Since the interviews were recorded the translation could be done in slow pace and with dictionaries as aid. The reason to not conduct the interviews in English, was because much of the terminology and the conversation flows would have been lost, because it is likely that by not speaking in mother tongue will make the interviewees focus on the language and not the questions.

3.5 Quality Criteria

Yin (2009) suggests researcher in a case study to take several aspects in consideration in order to the secure quality.

The researcher needs to address the collection of data and the composition of the raw material. For this thesis the most important processes and thoughts have been described by more than one of the interviewees, which strengthens the validity according to Yin (2009). A recorder was used to secure validity in the transcription and the translation. Moreover, the composition of the interviews was sent to Alpha for approval which secures that the data is valid. The analysis has also been checked and approved in order for the author not to draw any falls conclusions about the causes and effects when the strategy map and the BSC has been compiled.
4 Empirical Findings

Since the empirical findings are comprehensive, the first round of interviews is presented with headlines describing the topics on which questions have been asked, and not questions – answers. With the purpose and the research questions in mind have questions and topics regarding the company, its customers, competitors, internal processes, the existing IS’s and what the employees hopes a new IS can provide been discussed. The second round of interviews is more direct with questions and answers. This is because it was a more structured interview.

4.1 First Round of Interviews

4.1.1 The Company

Alpha AB (From here on referred to as Alpha) creates meetings for businesses as well as individuals. The creation of meetings is their business idea, and the most widely used medium for these meetings are events. As well as handling the events, Alpha helps the participants with equipments and other things to facilitate the meetings. Although the events are the final product, the company views the events as the outcome of a project, which usually has time durations from twelve to fifteen months. The brand Alpha is unique and the strongest in the industry (Head of BA2 15/3-2011).

Furthermore, the company is divided into three business areas. These business areas have support from operations, administration and corporate functions in order to create a successful event.

Business Area 2 (BA2) is mostly handling business-to-business events. There are several events within this business area which are all viewed as quite independent by Alpha, almost as small companies in themselves. (Head of BA2 15/3-2011). The business areas are viewed as main functions. The three business areas have similar characteristics and needs, and due to time limitations BA2 will be the only one of the three to be examined.

Operations is to a big extent a support function for the business areas, although they have direct sales to customers in form of equipments (Head of Operations 17/3-2011). Operation is divided into exhibitor service and production. Exhibitor service handles direct sales and support to the business areas which also includes designing exhibitor equipment. Production is responsible to carry out and implement the sales orders, from exhibitor service. To sum up operations, they fill the events with interiors (Head of Operations 17/3-2011).

Administration handles the infrastructure for Alpha. The department consists of accounting, IT, the facilities, environment and safety as well as the reception (Head of Administration 17/3-2011). Administration is viewed as a support function; they support the needs of the entire company.

Corporate function is the expert group which helps the different departments. Corporate functions deals with planning, food and beverage, communication and human resources (Alphas Website).
The Organizational chart, Figure 4.1, shows how the company is built up with three main functions and two support functions, as well as one expert group and CEO with final responsibility.

Administration and Operations have the responsibility of supporting all the business areas, therefore the pillars are laying above the main functions. The business areas have their own customers and the sum of those customers are Alphas entire customer base, which operations and administration sees as their customers.

4.1.2 Vision

“It is a mix of public and private, our goal is to make the region more attractive, by creating events. It is definitely not only to make money, although we need to make money. A big part is to stimulate local business life by filling hotel bookings and such.” (Head of BA2 15/3-2011)

“Promote local business life and make the region a more attractive place.” (Controller 5/4-2011)
(Head of Administration 17/3-2011)

“It is complicated and stated somewhere, but to promote the local business life and the attractiveness by meetings.” (Head of Operations 15/3 -2011)
4.1.3 Goals and Targets

Alpha is to a large extent owned by the municipality; they can be defined as a mixture of a private and a public company (Head of BA2 15/3-2011). Alpha has financial targets to strive for, but their overall goal is not to create as much revenue as they possibly can for the owners. Their two financial goals are a rate of return (ROR) target and a growth target. The goals have different time limitations. The growth target is to be achieved in three years, while the ROR is an annual target. Although the company has well established financial goals it is still important that these goals are in balance with other objectives such as sustaining the region’s attractiveness and promote local business life (Head of BA2 15/3-2011, Controller 5/4-2011, and Head of Operations 17/3-2011).

The growth target is measured through the increase of the entire portfolio of projects that Alpha performs during a specific period. Alpha has identified two ways for increasing the project portfolio; either by increasing the number of projects during a period or by increasing the revenue per project (Head of Administration 17/3-2011). In turn the revenue per project may come from either more customers per project or increase the customers spending related to Alpha’s projects (Head of Operations 17/3-2011).

4.1.4 Values and Measurements

The company has outspoken core values, which are an important part of the brand Alpha. Peace of mind is the most important, customers should always feel they are in good hands when they are dealing with Alpha. Transparency is another core value which is directed not only to customers, but to other stakeholders as well. Progressiveness; Alpha should be able to try new things and have the capacity to fail with a new project every once in a while (Alpha Website).

Alpha uses sub-goals and measurements to some extent. The main measurement is contribution margins; the different projects should strive for the highest possible contribution margin from a management accounting perspective (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011). Other measures are revenue per square meter, square meter used for exhibitors, number of exhibitors, and number of visitors.

“It is important to acknowledge that these measures are different depending on the project, since there are other goals than the financial, such as sustaining the region’s attractiveness” (Head of BA2 15/3-2011)

Furthermore, measures such as quality of visitors and customer satisfaction are very important for Alpha, they use these results both for evaluation purposes but also in the advertisement for other events (Head of BA2 15/3-2011).

4.1.5 Customers

Alpha is in the meeting industry, providing meetings for everyone. But to a large extent the meetings are business-to-business. A big part of Alphas revenues are from the exhibitors participating on their events, at least in BA2 (Head of BA2 15/3-2011). These customers are important since they contribute with much of the income, but Alpha has other customers as well. Perhaps the most important, as it is today are the visitors (Head of BA2 15/3-2011). The visitors do not generate any direct income for Alpha, they can be defined as the people attending the events without having their own exhibition space. They are still im-
portant for exhibitors, when taking into consideration that the exhibitors aim of participating is to interact with the visitors and generate business. The exhibitors often rate the success of an event by the amount of visitors and atmosphere, therefore the visitors plays a significant role simply by attending. The exhibitors often invite their own visitors to join the events (Controller 5/4-2011).

Even though Alpha views all their customers as important, there are certain customers who generate more value than others. These customers can be categorized as big spenders and magnets. The big spenders are the exhibitors that purchase a lot of equipment from Alpha (Head of Operations 17/3-2011).

“It can be easier for more exhibitors to be big spenders if there is a better collaboration between the different departments. An exhibitor needs to have equipment and Alpha has a golden opportunity to provide the exhibitor with the accessories of their choice” (Head of Operations 17/3-2011)

The magnets are the customers who attract other customers by their mere presence on Alphas events (Head of Administration 17/3-2011) The magnets are often important players in the industry. Alpha is trying to attract these magnets by direct advertisement (Head of BA2 15/3-2011)

Alpha have always tried to create new project concepts in order to increase the customer base as a part of their strategy (Head of BA2 15/3-2011) When Alpha starts a new project it is within close collaboration to external partners who are related to the concept. These partners are often longtime customers. The partners are often helping Alpha to point out the magnets, which in turn have the ability to attract other customers (Head of BA2 15/3-2011)

The partners do not have to be longtime customers, often a new event can be tested on potential customers. It can be seen as a risk analysis; if the potential customers who Alpha aims to attract are not interested in the concept it is of little relevance to keep the project running (Controller 5/4-2011).

4.1.6 Quality

Quality of an event is defined as the quality of the infrastructure surrounding an event, quality of the meetings taking place during the event, and finally quality of the hosts. The infrastructure surrounding the events is amongst other things the halls where the events are taking place, the food and beverage served, and the internet connections. Although the infrastructure has a very high standard it is not seen as a competitive edge, it can be described more as a necessity (Controller 5/4-2011). It is by the quality of the meetings meant that the people attending the events should have a relationship to the event´s theme.

“It is of little relevance that non-related people is attending, since the main objective with an event is to promote business between the attending people.” (Controller 5/4-2011)

Alphas events can attract many thousands of people, and it is important that all feel welcome. This could be assured by fulfilling their food and beverage needs, greeting them at the entrance, answering their questions or simply by smiling (Controller 5/4-2011).
4.1.7 Competitors

Alpha has competition within the entire field of marketing. The income that Alpha generates are taken from the marketing spending from the exhibitors, therefore it is a wide range of competitors. In the more narrow face-to-face marketing or the meetings industry there are still several competitors. The competition have in the last decade been tougher. The industry shrank after the IT crash and can be described as mature (Head of BA2, 15/3-2011)

One of the competitive edges that Alpha has is the proximity of the market. Another edge against the competitors is the quality of the meetings; during an Alpha event the quality of meetings is about twenty percentiles better than the competitors in the event industry (Head of BA2, 15/3-2011). The strong brand, which is the strongest in the industry, gives Alpha the possibility to show the core values to the customers. To be able to portray their core values, may help in persuading customers to attend Alphas events instead of a competitor’s (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011) (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011). The brand is otherwise connected to the region, and a good event will strengthen the brand whereas a bad event will weaken the brand.

Additional competitors are external equipment providers. Even when Alpha has sold exhibition space, they still have competition from external equipment sellers (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011). The competition from external equipment providers can be minimized through better communication between the departments. Alpha has a competitive edge since they know who will be attending their events, and can therefore stay one step ahead of competitors in this field (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

4.1.8 IT

The IT department at Alpha consists of seven employees plus the head of administration; three employees at the fundamental IT, three at the competitive edge IT, and one responsible for the webpage. Fundamental IT is the kind that makes the day-to-day business run smoothly. Competitive edge IT is the special IT that is better than competitors, such as a self developed designer program. Alpha has a variety of need for IT-support, due to the big differences in activities within the company (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011). The fundamental IT consists of mostly customer relations, which handles orders and sales support. The order system is perhaps the primary function of the fundamental IT as it is today, and the sales support is a storage place where Alpha keeps contact information about their customers (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011). SharePoint is an IT-tool for gathering and spreading information between departments, amongst other things. Although SharePoint is not all integrated, it can still be viewed as a fundamental IT support. Since it is a relatively new product for Alpha it has not yet been used to its full potential. Other fundamental support tools are an external reporting program, as well as time management support. Much of planning and information sharing are otherwise done in Microsoft Office programs (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011, and Controller, 5/4-2011). When Alpha implemented their information systems, there was less integration between the projects, which meant that the information systems were not integrated, and investments was based on supporting single departments. That is a problem that still exists today.

The competitive edge IT is what makes Alpha better than their competitors
“The departments have a constant fight over resources. There are big needs for IT investments and IT support. The problem is that Alpha has very different activities” (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011).

An important feature that Alpha has identified is the customer relationship management (CRM). Although they have a CRM support, it does not support the company in a sufficient way (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011). As of today the system stores information in a way that makes it hard to find all the relevant information about the customers.

“We can only see information about a customer on a project to project basis” (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

What he means is that the employees cannot see the entire information that has been saved for a specific customer. They have to browse through all the projects and look for non-integrated information and integrate it themselves. There are several problems related to the non-integrated information about customers; employees have to spend more time searching for information and may miss important information about the customer as well as gather duplicate information (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

There is another kind of IT that Alpha uses; IT that is self made and is often seen as competitive edge IT (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011). During an Alpha event the customers can fill out contact and other important information. This information is stored and can be viewed by exhibitors by typing the visitors identification number, this in order to better follow up the meeting (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011) (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

The website is a very useful tool which so far has saved a lot of money for Alpha. Most of their printed advertisement can now be viewed as well as printed out from it. Despite being a tool for advertisement the website is to some extent used for e-commerce, where customers can order their equipment (Controller, 5/4-2011).

4.1.9 What the New Information System Should Provide Alpha with

“A new IS needs to be a tool, it needs to help us, and we must see that it helps us, we have over twenty different projects running with their own characteristics. An IS should not standardize our work too much” (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

“We are a service company which interacts with people, and we need to be flexible, but I feel that the new information system have to be able to demand that certain information is being gathered and entered in the computer, it should also handle the information as well as communicate it” (Head of BA2, 15/3-2011)

“Our sales staff asks the customers a lot of questions and receives a lot of information. Transferring information in a better way between us in B-A2 and operations would give them better knowledge on how the customer wants to deal with their equipment, that is something that I feel technology can give us a hand with” (Head of BA2, 15/3-2011)

“I would like to have some information or notes from earlier interaction with the customer, when it is our turn to interact with them” (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).

“A joint customer strategy is something we need, and something that can be supported by an IS, since our most profitable customers are not the same as the business areas” (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011).
“I think that a sale support can help integrate the different areas, but also help the different areas see what the others do. We also want to see what our customers are doing, not only on a specific event but get the total information for a customer. Some customers are attending several of our events, we would like to know if there is a customer that we may want to give special attention to.” (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011).

“Traditionally the accounting department made the forecast, the different project managers did not really have a grasp over their economy. Now we are working to make the project managers do their own budgets and forecasts. The forecasts are not as good as they could be, I see that there could be room for an information support so that everyone do them in the same way” (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011).

“The culture is such that we do not like someone telling us we are doing things wrong. The IS can help us with every situation, to makes it easier for us. But, if it is only commanding us, there is a risk that we will work against the new system” (Head of BA2, 15/3-2011)

4.1.10 Planning

It has been identified that a new IS needs to be able to support the planning process in a more integrated way. As of today the project managers are responsible for making their budgets and forecasts. The budgets and forecasts have to be approved by both the head of the business area and later by the executive group, which is very time consuming, to approve the different kinds of budgets. Hence, Alpha thinks that an IT support may help the project managers and the executive group (Head of Administration, 17/3-2011).

When a project is planned, there are several steps needed to go through in order to become an event. The first step is the preparation step. Time slots needs to be booked, in order to receive a project number. When the project numbers are at hand, the project team can start their activities. The budgets have to be set and send to the head of the business areas.

There are several risk assessments in the planning processes. If a concept is not well liked amongst potential customers it is likely that the project will get shut down (Controller, 5/4-2011).

The next step in the event process is the sales. The planning activities during the first step needs to be communicated throughout the concerned workforce (Document one). Alpha uses checklists to monitor the work progress between the different departments. The checklists are to be handed out to the support functions as well, so that all areas in the company work in accordance to the same plan. Although the checklist’s purpose are to make the company work integrated in the same direction, they are not used to their full potential today in integrating the workforces (Head of Operations, 17/3-2011). The sales step is the longest step in the event process and can be in action for more than a year, during this period there are goals and measures that keeps the processes in order. There are also risk assessments taking place, for example there have to be certain amount of exhibition space sold for the project to keep running (Controller, 5/4-2011).

The first and the second step as well as the final sixth step are the planning steps, the sixth step is evaluation and feedback, which is used to perform better during next year’s events. These three steps are the build up for the physical event

The industry has its peak during the spring and autumn months. During this period most of Alphas events are carried out, but there are no off season when it comes to the work load (Controller, 5/4-2011).
This is the period that constitutes all repairs since there are not any longer periods for this work during spring and autumn. Except for repairs the original staff does their work as usual.

“*The projects are still running there are just no events*” (Controller, 5/4-2011).

4.2 The Second Round of Interviews
During the second round of interviews has a draft of the compiled strategy map been presented, questions regarding the strategy map, targets and performance indicators have been asked. Both the questions and answers will in this section be accounted for, in order to better get an understanding of the answers.

4.2.1 Discussions About the Cause-and-Effects
After presentation of the strategy map

“*Aha, this is the idea. I definitely understand now*”

“Can more reliable and earlier early signals provide any benefits for the customers?”

“The risk of new events is high. A new event consumes ten times the resources as an event that have been performed previous year. If we can get better calculations and know early on that an event will actually be held it will be easier to attract customers since they can feel more assured that the event will actually be held and it will also be easier to make them spend money in an early stage. The risk and the purchase of equipment is related, and much so on new events.

“How do you think better information flows between departments can help the company?”

“As of today we use our fresh goggles and share our information that we receive from our different events on other existing events in another industry, since we are active with several events at the same time, I think we can find new opportunities in areas which are not exploited yet. We can in the new areas address our thoughts to our external partners and help them, and they will in turn help us to find key players or magnets in the concerned industry, I definitely think that better collaboration and information sharing can help the company reach its goals.”

“What benefits does an event get from selecting the right attendance?”

“Very much, we let our exhibitors invite their own visitors, if we can make them invite the right people and if we in turn can invite relevant people in accordance to preferences, it in turn will result in better benefits for our customers. I can see the selection being done by having customers fill out a profile survey, which we can use to match for another event.”

“What are your thoughts about the targeted customers?”

“I think that our customers are interrelated, the magnets are often the big spenders, and I would say that it is the case eight times out of ten. Furthermore, I think that the visitors are more related to the magnets and big spenders, they are often invited by the exhibitors and magnets, they give those customers an opportunity to make business deals. “

What are your thoughts about the financial perspective?

“Our main goal is definitely to sustain the regions attractiveness and promote local business life, growth is a way of achieving it. Our goal of X% rate on return doesn’t imply anything else.”
4.2.2 Discussions About the BSC Metrics and Targets

By discussing the finished strategy map with the controller some targets and relevant measures that indicates whether desired effects have turned out well been developed.

4.2.2.1 Financial Perspective

- Dividends, the goal is X%.
- Size of project portfolio, the goal is X MSEK.
- Regions attractiveness the goal is X.
- How much turnover Alpha brings to local business, the goal is XMSEK.

4.2.2.2 Customer Perspective

- How satisfied exhibitors are with the purchase procedure.
- How satisfied all customers are with the business opportunities.
- How much commerce have taken place between attendance, the goal is X SEK.
- Nr of visitor, the goal is X amount.
- Exhibitors satisfaction, the goal is X%.
- Visitor satisfaction, the goal is X%.
- Purchasing power of visitors.
- Nr of new events per year.
- Nr of new events that is seen as attractive for the region.
- Brand recognition; people knowing about Alpha and what they do.
- Brand image; is it perceived as something positive?

4.2.2.3 Internal Perspective

- How large part of the exhibitors that purchase their equipment from Alpha. The goal is X%
- How many industry leaders or magnets per event, the goal is X amount.
- How early customers purchase their equipment, the goal is an average of X days after floor space.
- Projects that turn into events, the goal is X%.
- Time between startup and shutdown of cancelled events. The goal is X days.

4.2.2.4 Learning and Growth Perspective

- Nr of solutions and innovations taken from other projects or departments.
- How many customer interactions per purchase (of both exhibitor space and equipment). The goal is X interactions.
- Standardized processes (information gathering and entering, budgets and forecasts) how many do it the same, X% is the goal.
5 Analysis

The empirical findings are compiled on the strategy map with the intention to show the causal relationship that the intended investment will have on the company. In order to quantify the targets on which the investment is supposed to cause its effects, have the empirical findings also been compiled to a BSC. The compiling on the strategy map starts with the IS and the way it will cause its effects all the way up to the goals, which will make the company have better insight about the intended investment. The BSC uses the same logic and starts with the measures in the learning and growth perspective and continues up to the goals, in order to know what is required.

In order to know what the intended effect the IS investments will have, and how to align it with Alphas goals, a strategy map is presented. According to Johnson et al. (2008) a strategy is about using a company’s resources in order to fulfill stakeholders’ expectations. The investment needs to address those key processes that deliver value for the customers, and ultimately the targets set by the owner. Kaplan and Norton (2004) stress the need for the causality to be presented in an understandable way. A strategy map, as in the case of Alphas, can be used to evaluate and give guidelines to priorities concerning changes needed in the company. By using the Strategy map in that sense, the company will have a better chance of making the right investment decision (Andersen et al., 2004). There are other benefits with the strategy map and the balanced scorecard. Even though a strategy map will be presented, the main benefit of constructing a strategy map and a BCS for Alpha will be the new way of thinking regarding investment decisions. According to Olve et al. (2003) the strategy map can give the company insights about how individual employees and the different departments can improve and contribute to the goals. The learning and growth perspective will show what help they can get by demonstrating causes and effects to the other perspectives. This will, amongst other things, facilitate conversation starters concerning the different processes. In Alpha’s case the learning and growth perspective will consist of the IS investment.

5.1 The Strategy Map

The vision of the company must be shared within the company before the balanced scorecard process can start (Olve et al, 2003). Since the strategy map uses the same principle, it too needs to confirm a shared vision. Alpha AB has an outspoken vision and during the gathering of empirical data it was confirmed that the different departments had a shared vision. The vision was described as ‘promote local business life and make the region sustain its attractiveness’. The investment must ultimately strive to fulfill the vision and the other goals. The following sections will describe the perspectives.

5.1.1 The Learning and Growth Perspective

There are several aspects that need to be taken into consideration for Alpha when they are to invest in an IS. Alpha has been described as a mixture between public and private company, which is shown by the different goals set by the municipality. They also sell both products and services. Deciding which IS to invest in should rely on how well it supports the strategy towards reaching the goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

The investment must support the processes that contribute to the overall goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2004) meaning that the IS needs to support the processes which will have an impact on the targets in the financial perspective.
A problem that came up during the interviews was the lack of information sharing between the different departments. Motiwalla and Thompson (2009) argue that the non-integrating data due to historical groupings have made companies focus investments on specializing certain departments. This is what Alpha has done as well, by basing investment decisions on single departments. The information sharing and the not-so-integrated collaboration is something that the company hopes that an IS can help with. Alpha hopes that a more integrated IS can help them with better information and interaction with their customers. They also see the need to integrate the information silos that have emerged historically. When taking the investment decision, Alpha has requested that the information silos need to disappear. According to Motiwalla and Thompson (2009) this supplies departments with relevant and accessible information from all over the company. It is therefore important that storage and distribution of information is done on a companywide basis. The IS should have a priority to integrate the silos that exists, and by doing this, giving people in different departments easy access which will empower employees and allow for better planning and scheduling (Motiwalla & Thompson, 2009). By integrating the information that has been project-and department-based will improve information flows. Integration also requires standardization of data gathering and entering according to Srivadhana and Pawlowski (2007).

But the new IS needs to be a tool and cannot demand too much standardization from the company. If the work will get too standardized, and command too much change the company risk to face resistance amongst the employees and might find it hard to reap any of the benefits from the implementation. Srivadhana and Pawlowski (2007) argue that having companywide information requires that data is entered in the same way on a companywide basis. This is something that Alpha feels is important to them and wants some standardization, as long as it does not hinder employees from meeting customer demands. Although integrated data requires standardization, Srivadhana and Pawlowski (2007) emphasize that it boosts development and creates knowledge. Alpha must keep in mind that to realize the value of the IS to its full potential, they need to find a common practice on information gathering and entering; without the information being stored in accordance to a standard it will be hard to distribute it to other areas. Alpha have identified that the new information system needs to allow flexibility, but still help with standardizing certain tasks that is not seen as a competitive edge, such as planning and budgeting. Kadyala and Kliener (2005) imply that an IS will simplify certain business activities by managing information.

Furthermore, the empirical findings show that the main contribution of the investment is that it should support Alpha’s interaction with customers, enable the employees to create individual sales strategies, and facilitate and ease the interaction between departments in the sales processes. Kim et al. (2003) states that a CRM support will help capture information about customers, and hence create customer profiles and segment customers. After the implementation, the sales teams should be able to have a joint sales force. Furthermore, Hedman and Kalling (2002) argue that by knowing purchase patterns and what products and services specific customers have bought will enable a company to know its customers better and address them with individual customer strategies.

5.1.2 The Internal Perspective

The internal process is used to describe what the company needs to do in order to create and deliver value for the customer perspective or directly to the financial perspective (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). In Alphas case, will the strategy map highlight the processes that the company wants to have an impact by the investment. However, there are of course other processes that will be impacted and are important, they should not be ignored by the com-
pany. Still, these should not be put on the strategy map according to Kaplan and Norton (2004) and Olve et al. (2003).

**Joint sales forces:** Alpha’s operations department and the business areas sell products and services to the same customer. Collaboration exists today but can be further developed. If Alpha has companywide profiles on customers by using the different departments’ information, they can make the purchase process easier for customers. Although many customers want to purchase their equipment separated from when they buy exhibitor space, the option of purchasing the package should be suggested to them. Furthermore, by enabling customer profiles Alpha will know during other events which customers who are big spenders, as well as be able to identify the customers who are popular and attract others. By having a better collaboration between the sales teams, Alpha can create profiles shared amongst all projects and get a better understanding about who are the best customers for the entire company and not merely for each department.

An integrated sales force with information sharing will make Alpha recognize purchase patterns of the customers. By knowing when a customer wants to purchase the different products and services, individual sales plans can be addressed for customers, which will have an effect on easy purchase. By making the purchase easy and fast for customers, more accurate prognoses can be made, it will decrease the time external equipment provider have to ‘steal’ Alpha’s customers.

The customer profiles should help the departments enter and share information about customers preferences, needs and other important information, which will help the company address and focus their sales effort on those customers who are best fitted for the event.

**Improve information flows:** By sharing information the different projects can get influenced by other projects. By introducing information that has been stored by project managers for specific projects on a companywide basis, ideas can be shared and reused which will improve innovation and ideas of new features and new concepts.

**Share standards:** Having the same framework for budgets and forecasts will make them more understandable and the accuracy will be improved which will give indications for early signals of failure. Sharing standards will cause an effect on early signals.

**Early signals:** By improving information flows and sharing standards between different projects certain key indicators can be identified on why new projects have failed. Although Alpha currently is working with signals on project failure, and have criteria for keeping a
project running, sharing standards will make them easier to identify. As signals get identified the company can identify patterns on what early success factors a project need in order to turn into a successful event.

5.1.2.1 Connection between Internal Perspective and Customer Perspective

Joint sales forces. Using customer profiles will make it easier for customers to purchase both exhibition space as well as equipment. If the concerned customers have the possibility to choose purchase dates they will be more reluctant to use external equipment builders. Moreover, the time between the two purchase opportunities will be monitored and measured, which will result in knowing the purchase patterns for next year. Joint sales forces will be the cause for the effect ‘easy purchase’ in the customer perspective. It will also be the cause for selecting better participants in the effected value proposition selection. If important information regarding customers is saved and shared, it will help selecting the right customers.

Improving the information flows between departments will make the projects find better solutions by borrowing ideas from other projects. Inspiration for new events will occur by sharing solutions, thoughts, and ideas. Better information flows will thus be the cause for new events.

Early signals on whether a project will turn into a successful event implies that the company can start more new events, but expire them early on in the process so that the amount of resources allocated for testing new concept events can be lowered. Early signals is therefore one of the causes for New events.

5.1.3 The Customer Perspective

Continuing the path of the investment, companies needs to know what customers they are targeting and how these customers will be satisfied in order to reach the goals in the financial perspective, in accordance to Kaplan and Norton (2004). Having satisfied customers that come back time after time, is the most important factor for long-term financial performance (Jones & Sasser, 1995).

Companies have to identify which customers to target. When they know the targeted customers they need to define the value propositions that will attract and make these customers satisfied. There are several important factors that could be taken into consideration when compiling the strategy map, but it is important to only highlight the most important aspects (Olve et al, 2003). Since Alpha’s strategy map is intended to highlight relationships to facilitate the investment decision, the customer perspective will address those value propositions that can be enhanced by the processes that has been improved by the IS investment, but only the most important ones.

The targeted customers and value propositions are shown in figure 5.2. Value propositions have the white background while the targeted customers have blue background.
The targeted customers for Alpha should be the **big spenders**, **magnets** and **visitors** (figure 5.2). The big spenders are the exhibitors who not only purchase space on Alpha’s events but also a lot of equipment. The magnets are the customer who by their presence on one of Alpha’s events attracts others to attend. The visitors are the customers who do not contribute directly to the income, but creates atmosphere and business opportunities for the two other target customer groups. The triangular linkage between them is a way of showing their interrelationship; if there are more magnets, it is likely that big spenders are among them, but also the fact that visitors are invited by the exhibitors and are more likely to attend if the exhibitor is a big player in the concerned industry. The relationship continues, where visitors create business opportunities for the exhibitors and a good atmosphere which is one of the criteria that exhibitors use to rate the success of an event.

The main value proposition that Alpha can offer to potential and already existing big spenders is easy purchases. Today the purchase process has several steps for the customers where there is a time span between the purchase of exhibition space and equipment. The time span gives competing equipment providers the possibility to take much of Alpha’s potential revenue. It is not only the potential revenue from the big spenders, but easy purchase provides several benefits directly to the customer. Customers’ time spent on interacting with sales staff at Alpha can be lowered by the IS, which in turn will lower the costs.

The quality during the events is of importance for Alpha. Although the value proposition **selection** have strong similarities to one of the three quality aspects. The author has chosen to separate quality meetings, and broadens it to not only include related customers but also set a higher standard and select the *best fitted* customers. The value proposition is called selection. The reason for doing so is because the right customers are according to all interviewees the most important quality aspect. The targeted customers want to make business when they attend an event. If the company can attract customers who are both in the concerned industry as well as likely to generate business, it is a good possibility that the event will be a success, the IS investment will make it easier for Alpha to know who to select. The value proposition selection will give value to other propositions as well as directly to
the targeted customers. By attracting right visitors and exhibitors the brand will get positive associations.

The value propositions are used to guide what value the company gives to the target customer group (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). The selection of exhibitors will attract magnets, big spenders as well as visitors.

Alpha has identified two ways to achieve growth, either by arranging more events or by increasing revenues on existing events. Increasing the revenue is done by making more money on their customers or by having more paying customers.

**New Events:** New events give targeted customers a new forum, and thus attracts new customers as a value proposition, thus it is of importance to acknowledge. This value proposition is dependent on a strong brand directly from the customer perspective.

In order to have the credibility to create a new concept event Alpha needs to have a strong **brand** that will convey their core values; peace of mind, transparency and progressiveness. These core values reduce the risk that exhibitors have and make it easier to persuade them to join a new concept event. As well as reducing the perception of risk, visitors are easier to attract with a strong brand. A strong brand will not only ease the attraction of customers for new events, but attract new customers for existing events as well. A strong brand will also cause an effect directly to the financial perspective and sustain the regions attractiveness, since the brand Alpha is by some directly linked to the region. As well as affecting new events, brand gets effected by new events e.g. if the company starts an unsuccessful event it will damage the brand.

**5.1.3.1 Connection between Customer Perspective and Financial Perspective.**

The ROR goal will be reached through having profitable events and by increasing the amount of big spenders. Through this, the company will make more money and therefore have a greater possibility of achieving the goal. Increasing the amount of big spenders is the primary source of revenue, but since the three targeted customer groups are interdependent, the visitors and the magnets have an impact as well. New events will have a direct alignment with the growth goal, since no matter if big spenders and magnets join the new events there will still be growth in the project portfolio. Although new events might not bring Alpha short-term profit, the business life in the region will get a short-term lift by having more events. The decision of a new project needs to balance short-term local business life with long-term attractiveness of the region as Alpha cannot just start any new project that would promote local business at the cost of bad publicity. Attracting more magnets will affect the growth goal in a positive way, since magnets bring others along with them. One of the identified ways of achieving the growth goal is through more people per event, and thus increasing the portfolio’s value.

**5.1.4 The Financial Perspective**

The first step in making the strategy map is to get a balance between long and short-term goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Alpha has to show a specific **rate of return** as well as a **growth** goal. These two goals are of contradicting natures, since the dividend will hinder new investments and thus growth. Sustaining the region’s attractiveness and promote local business life are two other objectives that Alpha needs to consider. As shown in figure 5.3 the ROR goal is an end station as a goal; it is only the municipality’s money that is affected.
Growth is a goal in itself since the company has specific targets to reach. But growing by enhancing the project portfolio through projects that give glance to the region will enhance or sustain the attractiveness as well. As the portfolio grows it will stimulate the local business life in form of hotel bookings and other commerce. It could also be to promote local business life in the form of simply more events, which stimulates business. Even though it is called the financial perspective it should reflect the shareholders needs (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). Since two of the goals are not measured in monetary terms directly, Alpha should view the perspective as the perspective that satisfies the main owner, the municipality. The ROR goal is of short-term nature while growth is long term. Sustaining the region’s attractiveness and promoting local business life can be done both on a short and long time span. It is important to have in mind that a balance between short and long-term is needed (Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

5.1.5 The Complete Strategy Map

The learning and growth perspective improves or develops the processes in the internal perspective, which in turn gives better value propositions for the customers, which makes them more satisfied and thus makes them easier to retain, or makes the customers spend more money. This in turn will lead to fulfilling the growth goal, and the rate of return. The growth will in turn lead to business opportunities for the local business life, and by growing with the right events will enhance or sustain the regions attractiveness. This is shown in figure 5.4

![Diagram of The Complete Strategy Map]

Figure 5-3 The Financial Perspective

Rate of Return

Growth

Promote the Local Business Life

Sustain the Region’s Attractiveness

5.1.5 The Complete Strategy Map

The learning and growth perspective improves or develops the processes in the internal perspective, which in turn gives better value propositions for the customers, which makes them more satisfied and thus makes them easier to retain, or makes the customers spend more money. This in turn will lead to fulfilling the growth goal, and the rate of return. The growth will in turn lead to business opportunities for the local business life, and by growing with the right events will enhance or sustain the regions attractiveness. This is shown in figure 5.4
Figure 5-4 The Strategy Map
5.2 The BSC for Performance Measurement

5.2.1 The Learning and Growth Perspective

In order to succeed with the processes that will deliver the value for the customers and ultimately the goals it is important to address the skills needed from the IS, as Olve et al. (1999) describes it. The BSC should state the targets that need to be reached in order to do so.

![Chart 5-1](image)

Chart 5-1 the learning and growth perspective

5.2.2 The Internal perspective

Lawrie and Cobbold (2004) states that one need to quantify what is needed, in order to achieve the effects. In the internal perspective the drivers for the two top perspectives should be stated (Olve et al., 2003). The processes stated are the ones that is effected by the intended investment, and in turn create value for the propositions in the customer perspective in accordance to Kaplan and Norton’s (1996) thoughts.

![Chart 5-2](image)

Chart 5-2 the internal perspective
5.2.3 The Customer Perspective

Alpha need to address what kind and how many customers they want for an event in order to reach their goals in the financial perspective. The known saying “What you measure is what you get” (Mearchant & Van der Stede, 2007) is relevant to keep in mind here. It is important that the measures and targets will be in line with the targets in the financial perspective. These targeted customers that have been displayed in figure 5.2, need value propositions, which are also displayed in figure 5.2. The value propositions need to be quantified in order for Alpha to know what they need to achieve to attract the targeted customers. Olve et al. (2003) states that the customer perspective can be used as outcomes for the two bottom perspectives. The targeted customers also need to be assigned quantified goals in order to know how much is needed in order to contribute to the goals. It is important to keep a balance between long-term goals and short term goals (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Brand recognition and brand image does not get affected on a short term basis, while satisfaction regarding the visitors can be achieved more quickly. Schneiderman (1999) states that the outcomes in the customer and financial perspectives takes time to reach and there is a risk that the environment is changing, it has therefore been essential to not include measures that is based on propositions that can easily be changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X%</td>
<td>How large part of the exhibitors purchase their equipment from Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>How many magazet do we have on the event?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Nr of visitors without exhibition space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X%</td>
<td>Satisfaction regarding visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X%</td>
<td>Customer SATISFACTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X SEK</td>
<td>Purchase power per visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Nr of new events per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Nr of new events per year with attractiveness of the region in mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X%</td>
<td>BRAND RECOGNITION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>Perceived brand image</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 5-3 The customer perspective
5.2.4 **The Financial Perspective**

Alpha need to address what they and the owner find to be sufficient and quantify it in order to know what they are striving for. With the strategy map they know what they want to achieve but the BSC will address how much they need to achieve (Olve et al., 2003). It is important when Alpha is evaluating the investment to acknowledge that the results for the measures will come with a time lag (Olve et al., 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X%</td>
<td>Dividend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XMSEK in 20xx</td>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX % find that Alpha enhance the regions attract</td>
<td>Regions attractiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XMSEK in turnover for Local business life</td>
<td>X turnover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 5-4: The financial perspective

5.2.5 **The Complete Balanced Scorecard**

By quantifying the objectives will Alpha know how the intended investment will cause its effect all the way to the financial perspective.
Chart 5-5 The BSC
6 Conclusion

In the conclusion the author will answer the purpose and the research questions from the first chapter. Further, this chapter includes the contribution from this thesis and suggestions for further research.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify the processes that will be improved by a new information system and display how it affects the overall goal of Alpha AB, using the strategy map and the balanced scorecard. This will enable decision makers to make better decisions regarding information system investment.

The author of this thesis argue that decisions regarding IS investments should be based on overall goals, and not single departments needs. By using Alpha AB and their expectations on an investment in IS, the strategy map and a balanced scorecard have been compiled. The strategy map shows in an understandable way what processes that will be affected by the investment and how these in turn provides the customers with value, which in turn makes the company a step closer to reach the goals.

Decision makers can, by using the strategy map, link the propositions from different departments and see whether or not the investment will affect the goals. By setting targets on how much the investment will cause even more detailed alternatives can be matched with each other. The strategy map and the BSC will enable decision makers with better knowledge regarding the investment.

RQ 1: Is the strategy map a suitable tool for displaying the intended effects that an information system investment can contribute with?

The strategy map shows the relationship between the processes that the company wants to improve or develop through the IS investment. The strategy map in figure 5.4 illustrates how improved processes contribute to Alpha’s goals. For example; by investing in improved information flows, will the value propositions selection, and new event be affected, these two value propositions will contribute to the satisfaction and retention of customers, which will turn into better rate-of-return and growth, growth in turn will promote local business life and sustain or enhance the region’s attractiveness. The strategy map shows these intended effects caused by the investment in an understandable way.

RQ 2: How will the intended investment in a new information system help Alpha AB reach its goals?

The strategy map shows the relationship between the processes that the company wants to improve or develop through the IS investment. The strategy map in Figure 5.4 illustrates how a future investment affects the internal processes, which enhances the value propositions to satisfy customers which spends more or will be easier to retain, and thus affects the economical goals in the financial perspective. Despite the brand, which contributes directly to sustaining the region’s attractiveness, the growth goal will affect the two non-financial goals. The BSC in Chart 5.4 further strengthen how the investment intends to result in affecting the goals, by quantifying the targets needed, and the targets wanted.

In addition, another conclusion can be drawn despite answering the purpose. The author has during the meetings at Alpha AB recognized that the simple logic of the strategy map and the discussions about the targets and the expectations in the BSC, have given the company an insight regarding the cause-and-effect relationships tied to the investment.
6.1 Contribution

The case company has unique characteristics, which means that the results cannot be generalized. However, the main contribution is that this thesis have taken two management control models and put them in a new context. This can be done in all companies facing an investment decision regarding IS. Apart from companies, consultants hired to investigate and analyze where an investment is best needed can use the models for that purpose.

There is little or no consensus among researchers regarding how decisions on IS investments should be made. This thesis contributes to a new approach. Furthermore, the thesis has answered the question how the intended investment will help Alpha AB reach their goals. This has been presented in Figure 5.4 and Chart 5.4 in the Analysis chapter. Alpha AB have been provided with a tool for understanding how the thoughts and expectations regarding the IS from the employees, contribute to the goals, and can base their decisions with regards to their strategic priorities.

6.2 Criticism

Due to time limitations, the second round of interviews have only been conducted on a single person, to avoid biasedness it would have been appropriate to include all interviewees from the first round. Although all have approved the final version it would have been good with another in depth round of interviews, to further strengthen the linkage. This is especially true on the BSC, since it is harder to hypothesise about quantified targets.

6.3 Further Research

The balanced scorecard and the strategy map recognize organizational benefits, but other aspects such as monetary costs must be considered in order to complement the models for the IS investment decision.

Specification of specific systems and specific vendors will complement this thesis.

A post-implementation study on Alpha AB, investigating their investment choices and the method on which the choice of IS was decided upon.
List of references


Oxford English Dictionary (2001)


List of references


Appendix I

Questions to Head of BA2

Questions sent in advance

1. What does business area 2 do?
2. How do you use the evaluation phase? What IS support exist?
3. How do the time slot works?
4. How does the development of budgets look like?
5. What demands does the owner have on an event?
6. What is a sales plan? Can you describe some goals and sub goals on the sales plan?
7. Who do you consider partners?

Question on location

8. What is Alphas Vision?
9. What industry is Alpha in?
10. Who are your customers?
11. How do you generate new customers?
12. How would you like the customers to view Alpha AB?
13. Why do your customers choose you?
14. How do you view your customer strategies
15. What do you see as Alphas critical factors from the customer point of view?
16. What are the factors that Alpha can influence?
17. How much does an event differ from another?
18. In what way do you think you can be more involved in the process of achieving customer satisfaction?
19. How long have you been working for Alpha?
20. Is it important for you to have a technical support that could provide the tools for knowledge storing and distribution?
21. To what extend does the evaluation phase have an impact on next year’s Event?
22. How do you think that an IS can help with the evaluation face?
23. Which KPI:s or measurements do you use to evaluate if an event has been a success?
24. Who are your competitors?
25. What steps are involved in making a event?
26. Who builds the equipment?
27. How do you make your budgets? Who is responsible?
28. Do you use outsourcing?
Appendix II

Questions to Head of Administration

Questions in advance

1. What does the administration department do?
2. Can you describe the accounting and management accounting at Alpha? What IS support exists?
3. How does existing IS’s support the different business areas?
4. Do you use any KPI:s?
5. What costs can be related to IS?
6. What cost savers and incomes can be related to IT?

Questions on Location

7. Is accounting a part of admin?
8. How long have you been working at Alpha? And at your present position?
9. What is Alphas Vision?
10. What is the business idea of Alpha?
11. How does IT support the different business areas as of today?
12. Can you describe the management accounting?
13. Is there any IT support for the management accounting?
14. To what extent does IT support the strategy?
15. Is IT viewed as an enabler to formulate and develop the strategy?
16. Do you have established measures for evaluate the performance of administration department.
17. To what degree does the different business areas differ from one another, in terms of IT needs?
18. In what way has the sales process IT-support?
19. What can IT help with as a sale support?
20. What other parts of the organization can you see a need for an IT solution?
21. What parts do consist in the current portfolio of IS and are they integrated?
22. In what way does the portfolio help the customer relation?
23. Who have access to the IS’s?
24. What are the financial targets for the next period?
25. Are there any other targets?
26. How do you measure or evaluate customers when selecting them?
27. Do you use Outsourcing?
Appendix

Appendix III

Questions to Head of Operations

1. What does Operations do?
2. How much do a project differ from another, in planning, execution and evaluation?
3. What measures and goals do operations use?
4. How do you set your budgets?
5. Can you see a need for Information support in any areas?
6. In what areas do you use hired workers?
7. Can you describe the marketing?
8. Who are your competitors?
9. How do contacts with suppliers look like?

Questions on location

10. Can you describe some of the important processes at operations?
11. What do you hope a future IS support may help with?
12. What needs do Alpha satisfy for their customers?
13. What industry are you in?
14. Why do customers choose Alpha?
15. Who do you consider partners?
16. What is Alphas vision?
17. How do you spread information today?
18. Can IT support help with anything during an event for Operations?
19. What measure do you use at operations?
20. Do you have any IT support for evaluation purposes?
21. How do you set your budgets?
22. What critical success factors do operations have?
23. What measures and goals do operations use?
24. Can you see a need for IT support?
25. How do you view your customer strategies?
26. How often do you have strategy meetings?
27. Can you see that there is a problem with the integration of a new IS among the employees?
Appendix IV

Questions to the Controller

All questions was asked on location

1. What is Alphas vision?
2. What does Corporate functions do?
3. What does quality of an event mean?
4. Is there any need for an IS?
5. What is planning and control?
6. Can you see a need for an IS?
7. How do budgets get set?
8. Who are your customers?
9. What industry are you in?
10. How is the booking done?
11. How would an improved IS benefit customers?
12. Can you explain the documents which I have received?
Appendix

Appendix V

Second round of interview questions to the Controller

1. Can more reliable and earlier early signals provide any benefits for the customers?
2. How do you think better information flows between departments can help the company?
3. What benefits does an event get from selecting the right attendance?
4. What are your thoughts about the financial perspective?
5. How do you think the financial perspective can be measured? What are the goals?
6. What are your thoughts about the targeted customers?
7. How do you think the customer perspective can be measured? What are the goals?
8. How do you think the internal perspective can be measured? What are the goals?
9. How do you think the learning and growth perspective can be measured? What are the goals?