



Cooperative Education Report

From Business Development to Immigration Consulting: Building Digital Immigration Infrastructure at Issa Compass

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**This report is submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for Cooperative Education
Faculty of Business Administration
Academic Year 2/2025
Siam University**

Title: From Business Development to Immigration Consulting: Building Digital Immigration Infrastructure at Issa Compass

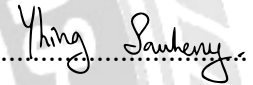
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We have approved this cooperative education report as partial fulfillment of the cooperative education program semester 2022-2026.

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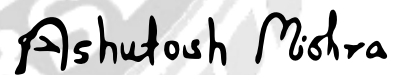
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Major: Marketing

Faculty: Business Administration

Semester/Academic Year: 2/2025

Abstract

The report entitled “From Business Development to Immigration Consulting: Building Digital Immigration Infrastructure at Issa Compass” focuses on how Issa Compass, a Bangkok-based immigration technology startup, has been building a real-time platform to simplify Thai visa applications for international clients. This cooperative education report contains the working experience of different tasks carried out first as a Business Development Associate and later as an Immigration Consultant, primarily involving client acquisition, case management, and operational support for the company's visa application process.

The objectives of the study include: (1) to implement theoretical knowledge learned in the field of marketing and business administration, (2) to gain a deeper understanding of client acquisition and case management strategies in the immigration technology industry, and (3) to analyze the effectiveness of business development and operational processes in improving client conversion and satisfaction. Working as an intern, the main duties performed included conducting client and partner conversations, designing growth experiments, managing immigration cases from intake to resolution, and coordinating with cross-functional teams.

All the duties and responsibilities assigned during the cooperative education are explained in detail in this study. The internship period involved working under high-pressure situations, especially during the transition between the Business Development and Immigration Consulting roles, where accuracy and quick turnaround were critical to maintaining client trust. These challenges were managed effectively with close supervision and continuous learning. The experience significantly improved skills in client communication, case management, problem-solving, and cross-cultural collaboration. This practical cooperative education program also helped in understanding the dynamics of the immigration technology industry, client behavior, and the growing importance of digital infrastructure in modern immigration services.

Keywords: Business development, immigration technology, client acquisition, case management, digital infrastructure



Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Issa Compass for providing me with the opportunity to undertake my cooperative education internship within its Business Development and Operations teams. My heartfelt appreciation goes to my Academic Advisor, Prof. Yhing Sawheny, for her valuable guidance, encouragement, and continuous support throughout this period.

I am deeply thankful to my Job Supervisor, Ms. Katalaeya Hewett, and my Head of Business Development, Mr. Jeremie Long, and the entire team at Issa Compass for their mentorship, cooperation, and for creating an engaging learning environment that greatly enriched my professional knowledge and skills.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends, particularly my peers back home in Nepal, and faculty members at Siam University for their constant motivation and support during this learning journey. This report stands as a reflection of their collective encouragement and belief in my potential.

Mr. Sameep Rajkarnikar

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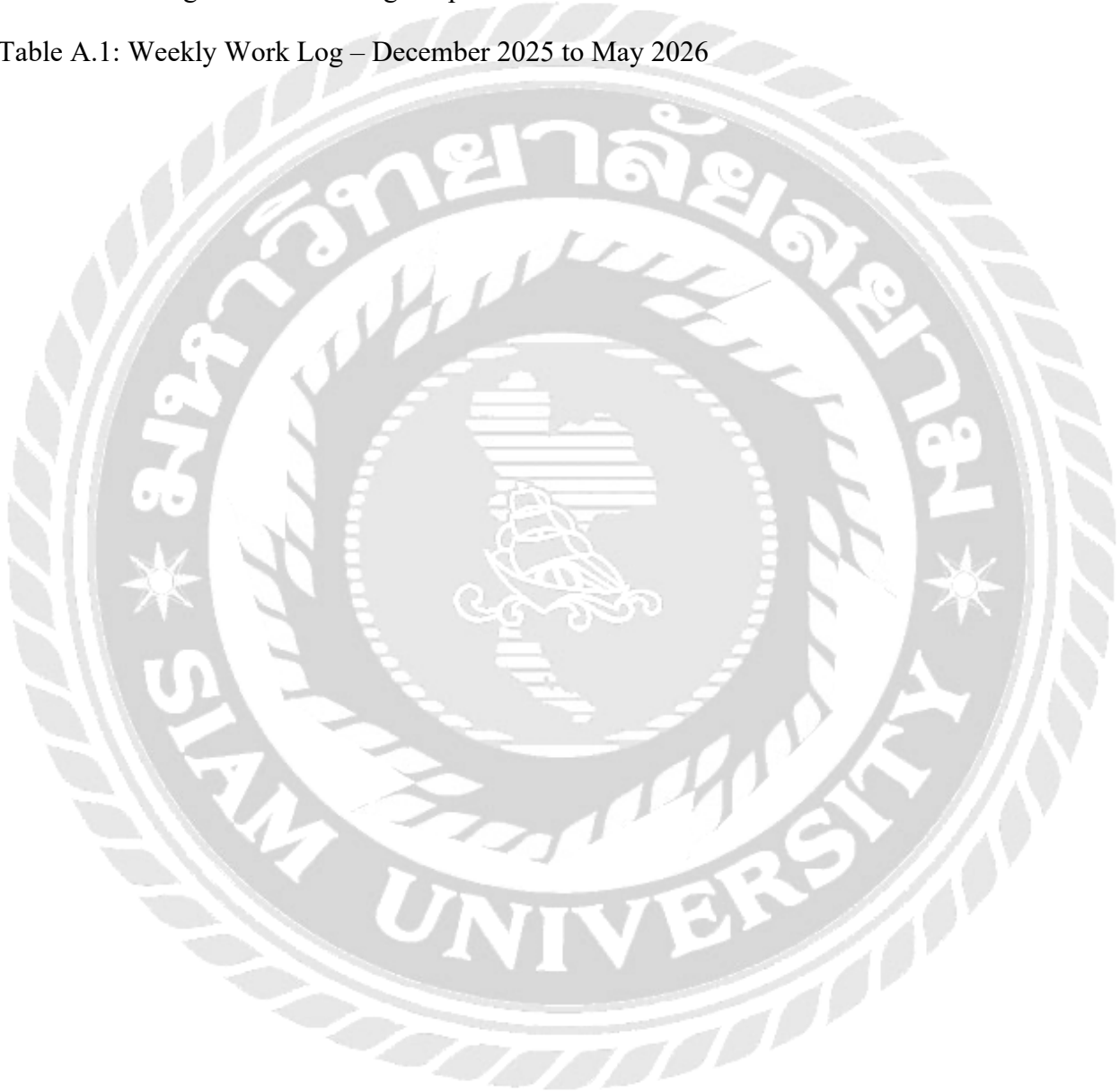
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List of Abbreviations

APAC: Asia-Pacific

BD: Business Development

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

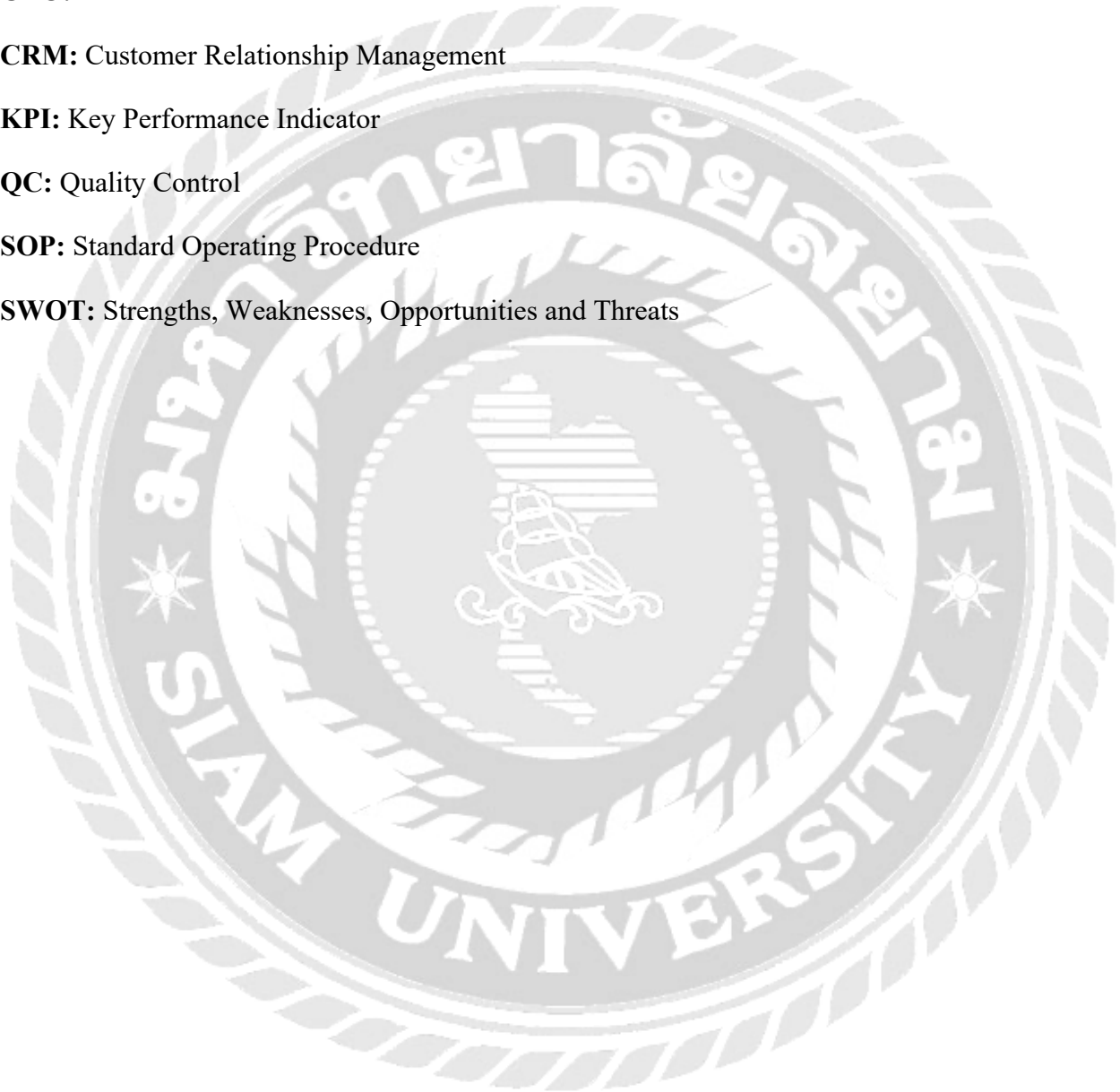
CRM: Customer Relationship Management

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

QC: Quality Control

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats



CHAPTER 1: COMPANY PROFILE AND ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND



Fig 1: Issa Compass Logo

1.1 Company Overview

Issa Compass is a technology-driven startup headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand, focused on building digital infrastructure for immigration in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region. The company was founded with the conviction that international mobility — the ability to live, work, and relocate across borders — should be as seamless and accessible as booking a hotel or shopping online. By leveraging technology and streamlined processes, Issa Compass aims to disrupt the traditionally opaque, expensive, and bureaucratically complex immigration services industry.

Operating across multiple APAC jurisdictions, Issa Compass provides end-to-end immigration solutions, including visa applications, work permit processing, business registration, and residency pathways. The company serves both individual clients and corporate clients — particularly startups, SMEs, and multinational companies — looking to navigate the complexities of relocating talent or establishing cross-border operations.

The company distinguishes itself through three core competitive differentiators: a technology-first approach to case management and documentation, transparent and competitive pricing relative to traditional law firms, and a unique money-back guarantee for visa rejections. These features position Issa Compass as a disruptive player in a market traditionally dominated by high-cost legal professionals and consultancies.

1.2 Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission:

"The infrastructure for a free world."

Issa Compass is committed to building the systems, processes, and technology that make international freedom of movement a practical reality — not just an aspiration — for individuals and businesses alike.

Vision:

A world where living anywhere is as easy as shopping online or booking a hotel — frictionless, transparent, and accessible to everyone.

Core Values:

Technology-first: Automate and optimize wherever possible to eliminate human error and reduce processing times.

Client success: A client's success in obtaining their visa or permit is the only acceptable outcome, backed by the company's money-back guarantee.

Transparency: Clear, upfront pricing and honest communication about timelines and outcomes.

Growth mindset: Continuous iteration on processes, products, and services to remain at the forefront of the industry.

1.3 Business Portfolio and Products

Issa Compass offers a portfolio of immigration services currently focused on the Thai market, with plans to expand across the APAC region, including:

Individual Immigration Services: Personal visas (tourist, business, retirement), long-term residency applications, and citizenship pathways in Thailand.

Corporate Immigration Services: Work permit and employment pass applications for companies relocating international talent, including documentation management and government liaison.

Business Setup Services: Assistance with foreign business licensing and regulatory compliance for companies establishing operations in Thailand. (Note: Business registration and SME incorporation services are currently in the pipeline and not yet operational.)

Digital Platform: A proprietary case management platform enabling clients to track the status of their applications in real time, upload documents securely, and communicate with their immigration consultant.

Advisory Services: Strategic immigration advisory for businesses expanding into Thailand and, with planned future expansion to Bali, Korea, Japan, and the broader APAC region, including country-specific regulatory assessments and pathway planning.

1.4 Business Objectives and Strategies

Business Objectives:

Issa Compass operates with a set of clear, high-growth objectives aligned with its disruptive positioning in the immigration technology market:

1. Scale revenue through acquisition of both individual and corporate clients across APAC.
2. Build and refine a proprietary digital platform that reduces manual effort and improves client experience.
3. Expand geographic coverage to cover all major immigration corridors in APAC.
4. Establish Issa Compass as the most trusted and transparent immigration brand in the region.

Strategies:

Technology-first approach: Invest in automation of document processing, case tracking, and client communication to reduce cost-per-case and improve turnaround times.

Competitive pricing: Offer services at significantly lower price points than traditional legal firms, targeting the underserved segment of price-sensitive individual and SME clients.

Risk reversal: The money-back guarantee on visa rejections reduces barriers to client acquisition and differentiates Issa Compass from risk-averse competitors.

High-growth sales model: Prioritize rapid customer acquisition through BD activities, digital marketing, and strategic B2B partnerships — including with Muay Thai gyms, Thai cooking schools, and digital nomad communities (in relation to the Digital Nomad Visa/DTV programme) to build a strong client pipeline.

1.5 Organizational Structure

Issa Compass follows a flat organizational structure typical of early-stage technology startups, enabling fast decision-making and cross-functional collaboration. The organizational hierarchy is as follows:

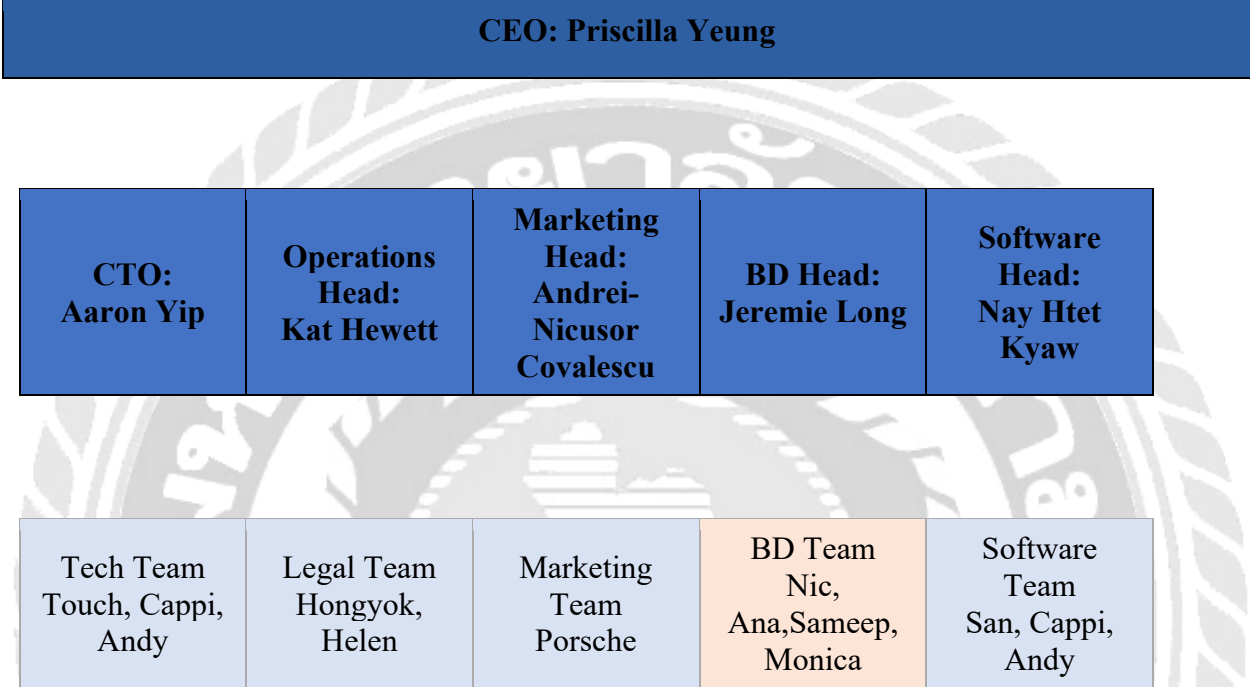


Figure 1.1: Issa Compass Organizational Structure

Note: The intern (Sameep Rajkarnikar) initially joined the BD Team under Jeremie Long (BD Head) and subsequently transitioned to the Legal Team under Kat Hewett (Operations Head), as highlighted in orange and blue respectively in the diagram above.

1.6 Job Position

The intern held two successive positions at Issa Compass over the course of the internship:

Phase 1 — Business Development Associate (December 2025 – February 2026):

Reporting directly to Jeremie Long (BD Head), the intern functioned as a Business Development Associate responsible for supporting client and partner outreach, conducting growth experiments, contributing to sales funnel optimization, and executing cross-functional BD initiatives. The role required strong communication skills, a data-driven mindset, and the ability to coordinate across teams.

Phase 2 — Immigration Consultant (March 2026 – May 2026):

Following an internal evaluation, CEO Priscilla Yeung and Operations Head Kat Hewett identified the intern's exceptional eye for detail and analytical capability, leading to a lateral transfer to the Legal/Immigration Consulting team. In this capacity, the intern was responsible for managing end-to-end immigration cases, developing case strategies, maintaining documentation quality standards, and contributing to the design of internal immigration processes and systems.

1.7 Motivation for Choosing Issa Compass

The decision to pursue a cooperative education placement at Issa Compass was driven by a confluence of personal, professional, and environmental factors.

Coming from Nepal, a country where the professional landscape is generally more traditional and hierarchical, the prospect of joining a young, growth-oriented startup in Bangkok was especially compelling. The startup environment at Issa Compass — with its flat hierarchy, young and ambitious founders, and data-driven culture — represented exactly the kind of progressive professional experience that felt both challenging and energizing.

The company's vision of making international mobility as effortless as an online transaction resonated deeply on a personal level. As someone who has navigated the complexities of international education and work permits firsthand, the mission of Issa Compass felt both meaningful and urgent. Furthermore, the strategic clarity of the company — its well-defined goals, growth targets, and technology roadmap — provided confidence that this would be an experience characterized by purpose and learning, rather than ambiguity.

Bangkok itself as a base of operations was also a significant draw. The city is a regional hub for Southeast Asian business and increasingly a launchpad for APAC-focused startups, making it an ideal environment for gaining exposure to the broader regional market.

1.8 Strategic Analysis (SWOT)

The following SWOT analysis examines the internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats facing Issa Compass:

Table 1.1: Issa Compass SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech-first platform with proprietary immigration infrastructure • Competitive pricing model and money-back guarantee on rejections • Pan-APAC coverage and multi-country expertise • Agile startup culture enabling rapid iteration and adaptation • Strong leadership team with international industry experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early-stage startup with limited brand recognition • Small team size constrains operational scale • Dependence on a concentrated client portfolio initially • Limited marketing budget compared to established players • High variability in immigration regulations across APAC countries
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing cross-border talent mobility in Southeast Asia and APAC • Increasing demand for digital-first immigration solutions post-pandemic • Underserved SME and startup market seeking affordable immigration services • Potential for B2B partnerships with HR tech and relocation firms • Regulatory digitization trends in APAC immigration systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established immigration law firms with large client bases • Sudden regulatory changes disrupting service workflows • Economic downturns reducing international business travel and mobility • Data privacy and compliance risks in handling sensitive documents • Geopolitical tensions affecting cross-border movement

A basic strategic analysis of Issa Compass can be understood through the following:

Strengths

- Tech-First Platform with Proprietary Immigration Infrastructure

Issa Compass has built a proprietary platform that checks every application against a continuously updated database of embassy-specific requirements before it is submitted. This technology-first approach gives the company a competitive advantage over traditional immigration consultancies, as it reduces human error and significantly increases the likelihood of approval on first submission.

- Competitive Pricing Model and Money-Back Guarantee on Rejections

Unlike traditional law firms that charge high consultation fees regardless of outcome, Issa Compass offers a transparent, competitively priced service backed by a money-back guarantee on pre-qualified applications that are rejected. This pricing and risk model builds trust with clients and differentiates the company from costlier, less transparent alternatives in the market.

- Pan-APAC Coverage and Multi-Country Expertise

While the company's primary market is Thailand, its underlying infrastructure and immigration knowledge base are designed to extend across the broader Asia-Pacific region. This multi-country orientation positions Issa Compass to scale its services beyond a single jurisdiction as demand grows.

- Agile Startup Culture Enabling Rapid Iteration and Adaptation

As a lean and relatively young organization, Issa Compass can adapt quickly to regulatory changes, client feedback, and shifting market conditions. This agility allows the company to refine its product and processes far faster than larger, more bureaucratic competitors.

- Strong Leadership Team with International Industry Experience

The company's leadership brings prior experience from global strategy consulting and technology backgrounds, lending credibility and strategic clarity to the organization's growth plans. This experienced leadership has helped Issa Compass build a clear roadmap for both product development and market expansion.

Weaknesses

- Early-Stage Startup with Limited Brand Recognition

As a relatively new entrant in the immigration services space, Issa Compass does not yet have the brand recognition of long-established law firms and consultancies. Building public trust and awareness remains an ongoing priority as the company competes for visibility among potential clients.

- Small Team Size Constrains Operational Scale

With a lean internal team, Issa Compass must carefully balance growth in client volume against its current operational capacity. This constraint can create pressure during periods of high demand and requires continuous process refinement to maintain service quality.

- Dependence on a Concentrated Client Portfolio Initially

In its early growth phase, the company's revenue has depended on a relatively concentrated base of clients and visa categories. Diversifying the client portfolio across more visa types and nationalities will be important for long-term stability.

- Limited Marketing Budget Compared to Established Players

Compared to established immigration law firms with larger marketing budgets, Issa Compass has fewer resources to invest in brand-building campaigns. This requires the company to rely more heavily on word-of-mouth, organic growth, and targeted digital marketing to reach new clients.

- High Variability in Immigration Regulations Across APAC Countries

Immigration rules can differ significantly between countries and change with little notice, which creates ongoing complexity for a platform built to serve multiple jurisdictions. Keeping the underlying requirements database accurate and current demands continuous monitoring and rapid updates.

Opportunities

- Growing Cross-Border Talent Mobility in Southeast Asia and APAC

As remote work and international hiring continue to rise, more professionals are seeking to relocate across Southeast Asia and the broader APAC region. This growing mobility trend directly expands the addressable market for Issa Compass's immigration services.

- Increasing Demand for Digital-First Immigration Solutions Post-Pandemic

The shift toward digital and remote-friendly services has accelerated since the pandemic, with clients increasingly expecting to manage visa applications online rather than through in-person law firm visits. This shift plays directly into Issa Compass's core strength as a technology-first platform.

- Underserved SME and Startup Market Seeking Affordable Immigration Services

Small and medium-sized enterprises and startups often cannot afford the high fees charged by traditional immigration law firms, leaving this segment underserved. Issa Compass's competitive pricing model positions it well to capture this growing market segment.

- Potential for B2B Partnerships with HR Tech and Relocation Firms

There is meaningful potential for Issa Compass to form partnerships with HR technology platforms and corporate relocation firms that require reliable immigration support for their own clients. Such partnerships could open a valuable new B2B revenue stream alongside the company's direct-to-consumer business.

- Regulatory Digitization Trends in APAC Immigration Systems

Many governments across the APAC region are gradually digitizing their immigration and visa processes, creating an environment more favorable to technology-driven platforms like Issa Compass. This regulatory shift toward digitization could further streamline the company's integration with official systems over time.

Threats

- Established Immigration Law Firms with Large Client Bases

Long-established immigration law firms retain large, loyal client bases and significant institutional credibility, which makes client acquisition more difficult for a newer entrant like Issa Compass. Competing against this incumbency requires sustained investment in trust-building and service quality.

- Sudden Regulatory Changes Disrupting Service Workflows

Immigration regulations can change abruptly and with limited advance notice, which can disrupt active cases and require rapid adjustments to internal workflows. Such changes pose an ongoing operational risk that the company must continuously monitor and plan around.

- Economic Downturns Reducing International Business Travel and Mobility

Broader economic slowdowns can reduce corporate hiring and international business travel, which would in turn lower demand for work visas and relocation services. This makes the company's growth trajectory somewhat sensitive to macroeconomic conditions beyond its control.

- Data Privacy and Compliance Risks in Handling Sensitive Documents

Because the platform processes large volumes of sensitive personal and legal documentation, Issa Compass faces ongoing data privacy and compliance obligations. Any lapse in data security could damage client trust and expose the company to regulatory risk.

- Geopolitical Tensions Affecting Cross-Border Movement

Shifts in geopolitical relationships between countries can affect visa policies and the ease of cross-border movement, introducing a layer of uncertainty outside the company's control. Such tensions could affect specific client segments or visa categories more than others.

The SWOT analysis reveals that Issa Compass is well-positioned to capitalize on the growing demand for digital immigration solutions in APAC, particularly through its technology-first platform and competitive pricing. However, the company must continue to build brand recognition and operational capacity to withstand competitive pressures from established legal firms and navigate the regulatory complexities inherent in multi-jurisdiction immigration work.

1.9 Internship Objectives

The following objectives were established at the commencement of the internship:

1. Gain practical exposure to business development processes in a tech startup environment, including client acquisition, funnel management, and growth experimentation.
2. Develop a working understanding of immigration law, case management procedures, and compliance requirements across APAC jurisdictions.
3. Contribute meaningfully to organizational processes, knowledge systems, and operational excellence at Issa Compass.
4. Build professional competencies in cross-cultural communication, client management, and technology-enabled service delivery.
5. Apply theoretical knowledge gained during academic studies to real-world business challenges.

CHAPTER 2: CO-OP STUDY ACTIVITIES

2.1 Job Description

The internship at Issa Compass encompassed two distinct but complementary roles, each contributing to different aspects of the organization's growth and service delivery objectives.

Business Development Associate (Phase 1):

In the first phase, the intern served as a Business Development Associate under the direct supervision of Jeremie Long, Head of Business Development. This role was fundamentally focused on revenue generation and market expansion. The primary mandate was to identify potential clients, initiate and nurture client relationships, and convert qualified leads into paying customers. The role also required close collaboration with the operations, legal, and marketing teams to ensure alignment between sales promises and service delivery capabilities.

Immigration Consultant (Phase 2):

In the second phase, following the internal role transition, the intern assumed the responsibilities of an Immigration Consultant, reporting to Kat Hewett, Head of Operations. This role required a shift from outward-facing business development activities to more detail-oriented, process-driven work. The core mandate was to manage individual immigration cases from intake to resolution, ensuring accuracy, compliance, and client satisfaction at every stage of the process.

2.2 Responsibilities and Duties

Table 2.1: Business Development Responsibilities

Responsibility Area	Description
Client & Partner Conversations	Conducted discovery calls, needs assessments, and follow-up communications with potential individual and corporate clients. Built and maintained relationships with potential strategic partners.
Growth Experiments	Designed and executed small-scale experiments to test new acquisition channels, messaging strategies, and outreach approaches. Analyzed results to inform future BD decisions.
Funnel Improvement	Identified bottlenecks in the client acquisition funnel and proposed actionable improvements. Tracked conversion rates at each stage and flagged anomalies for review.
Product & Process Feedback	Relayed client feedback to the product and operations teams, enabling continuous improvement of Issa Compass's platform and service offerings.
Cross-functional Execution	Collaborated with the marketing, legal, and software teams to ensure cohesive execution of BD initiatives and timely resolution of client issues during the pre-sales phase.
Website & Dashboard Contributions	Supported content updates on the Issa Compass website to ensure service descriptions and client-facing information remained accurate. Contributed to developing and maintaining internal work dashboards used to monitor BD pipeline metrics and conversion performance.
Weekly KPI Meetings & Presentations	Participated in weekly all-hands KPI review meetings covering business metrics, future plans, and company updates. Presented at these meetings on a rotating basis, contributing to strategic brainstorming sessions and actively proposing ideas for growth and process improvement.

Table 2.2: Immigration Consulting Responsibilities

Responsibility Area	Description
End-to-End Case Management	Managed individual immigration cases from initial intake through final outcome, including document collection, application preparation, submission, and post-submission follow-up.

Responsibility Area	Description
Case Strategy & Quality Control	Assessed client eligibility for various visa and permit pathways, determined optimal case strategies, and reviewed all documentation for accuracy, completeness, and compliance before submission.
Operational Excellence	Developed and maintained SOPs for recurring case types, contributed to the standardization of internal processes, and ensured consistent service quality across all assigned cases.
Product & Systems Design	Contributed to the design and improvement of internal case management systems and client-facing digital tools by providing operational insights and identifying process inefficiencies.
Knowledge Ownership	Maintained and updated the company's internal knowledge base on immigration regulations, country-specific requirements, and procedural changes across APAC jurisdictions.
Embassy & Immigration Database	Built and maintained a structured database of embassy contact information, visa requirements, processing fees, and immigration procedures across multiple APAC jurisdictions. This database became a critical internal resource, significantly reducing case research time and improving service accuracy for the entire team.
Slack Client Thread Management	Managed dedicated client communication threads on Slack, providing real-time responses to client queries, tracking case progress, and coordinating with team members within the same thread to collaboratively resolve complex immigration scenarios and help clients achieve their visa outcomes.
AI Model Implementation	Towards the final phase of the internship, contributed to the integration of AI-powered models within the Issa Compass platform. These models were designed to automate key steps in visa application review — including document completeness checks and eligibility pre-screening — significantly reducing manual processing time and advancing the company's digital infrastructure mission. This contribution involved hands-on rule setting and prompt engineering to configure AI pre-screening logic, process design and documentation for the automated review workflow, and the development of feature ideas and UI/UX recommendations for the internal dashboard — helping streamline operations and improve efficiency across the team.
BD & Marketing Collaboration	Participated in regular BD and marketing meetings, contributing ideas and insights based on direct client experiences and feedback. Communicated observations about client pain points, service expectations, and market trends to the marketing team to help inform outreach strategies and messaging.

Responsibility Area	Description
Public Relations Support	Contributed to the company’s PR efforts by sharing ideas, perspectives, and feedback with the external PR agency Issa Compass partnered with. Provided input on brand positioning, service narrative, and client-facing communications.
Networking & Industry Representation	Attended multiple networking events representing Issa Compass, engaging with the Bangkok and Thai start-up community and building connections across diverse industries. Gained valuable industry insights and expanded the company’s network within the entrepreneurial and digital nomad ecosystem.

2.3 Coordination and Teamwork

Due to the startup nature of Issa Compass and its relatively small team size, cross-functional coordination was a daily operational reality rather than an occasional exception. The intern interacted extensively with multiple teams throughout both phases of the internship.

During the BD phase, the intern coordinated closely with the Legal/Immigration team to ensure that client expectations set during the sales process were realistic and aligned with actual service delivery capabilities. This required a solid understanding of the immigration process and regular communication with immigration consultants regarding case feasibility and timelines.

During the Immigration Consulting phase, coordination with the Software team was essential, particularly when reporting platform issues, requesting new features, or providing feedback on the case management system. Regular communication with the Operations Head ensured that all cases were progressing on track and that any regulatory updates or process changes were promptly incorporated.

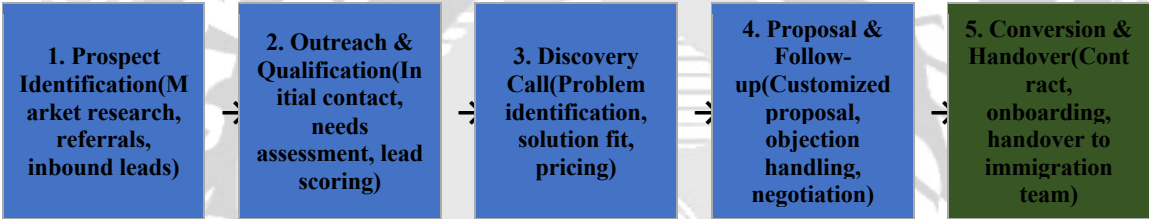
The team primarily used Slack for internal communication, with dedicated channels for different functional areas and projects. Client cases were managed through dedicated Slack threads, where team members would collaborate in real time to address client queries, share case updates, and ensure seamless service delivery. This thread-based approach allowed all team members working on a case to maintain full context and contribute from their respective areas of expertise.

Case management and tracking were handled through the company's proprietary platform, supplemented by shared documentation in cloud-based tools. Weekly all-hands KPI meetings —

in which team members took turns presenting metrics and updates on a rotating basis — served as the primary forum for strategic alignment, performance review, and collaborative ideation. The intern presented at several of these meetings, developing confidence in communicating data-driven insights to a cross-functional leadership audience.

2.4 Job Process

Figure 2.1: Business Development Process Workflow



The BD process followed a structured five-stage funnel: beginning with prospect identification through market research and inbound leads, moving through qualification and discovery calls, and culminating in proposal development, negotiation, and client handover to the immigration team upon conversion.

Figure 2.2: Immigration Case Management Workflow

PHASE 1: CASE INTAKE	PHASE 2: DOCUMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client intake form review - Eligibility assessment - Visa pathway determination - Case strategy development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document checklist creation - Document collection from client - Quality review and completeness check - Translation and notarization coordination
PHASE 3: SUBMISSION	PHASE 4: FOLLOW-UP & CLOSURE

- Application preparation and review	- Status monitoring and follow-up
- Submission to relevant authority	- Handling queries from authorities
- Confirmation and tracking	- Outcome communication to client
- Client communication on submission	- Post-approval support and documentation

The immigration case management process was structured into four phases: Case Intake (eligibility assessment and strategy development), Documentation (collection, review, and preparation), Submission (application filing and confirmation), and Follow-up & Closure (monitoring, outcome communication, and post-approval support).

2.5 Contributions to the Organization

Over the course of the internship, the intern made several notable contributions to Issa Compass:

BD Phase Contributions:

Contributed to the generation and qualification of new client leads, supporting the company's revenue pipeline. Designed and ran growth experiments that provided data-driven insights for refining the company's acquisition strategy. Participated in the development of improved outreach templates and communication scripts that were subsequently adopted as standard BD tools.

Immigration Consulting Phase Contributions:

Successfully managed a portfolio of immigration cases, achieving high client satisfaction through meticulous attention to detail and proactive communication. Developed internal SOPs for high-frequency case types, reducing processing time and improving consistency. Contributed to the company's knowledge base by documenting regulatory information for multiple APAC jurisdictions. Provided actionable product feedback that informed improvements to the case management platform.

Cross-Phase Contributions:

Beyond the formal responsibilities defined by each role, the internship involved a number of cross-functional contributions that enriched both the company and the intern's professional development. These included: building a comprehensive embassy and immigration

information database that became a key reference tool for the entire team; contributing to the Issa Compass website with updated service descriptions and accurate process information; developing and maintaining internal dashboards to track business metrics and case performance; and presenting at weekly company KPI meetings on a rotating basis. Towards the final phase of the internship, the intern contributed to the implementation of AI models within the company's application platform, designed to automate visa eligibility screening and document review — a project that combined immigration domain knowledge with applied technology to advance the company's core digital infrastructure mission.

AI Document Review Contributions:

Played a significant role in the development and launch of Issa Compass's AI-powered document pre-screening system. Contributions spanned multiple dimensions: defining rule sets and logic for document eligibility checks, conducting prompt engineering to optimise AI accuracy, mapping and documenting the automated review process, and proposing feature enhancements and UI/UX improvements for the internal operations dashboard. These efforts helped streamline the document review pipeline, reduce manual workload, and lay the groundwork for a more scalable and efficient case management system.

Marketing, PR, and Stakeholder Engagement:

Contributed to the company's business development and public relations efforts by regularly attending BD and marketing meetings, where client feedback and on-the-ground observations were shared with the marketing team to refine outreach and messaging strategies. Also collaborated with the external PR agency engaged by Issa Compass, providing ideas and feedback on the company's public-facing narrative and brand positioning.

Networking and Community Representation:

Represented Issa Compass at numerous networking events across Bangkok, engaging with a wide range of professionals from the start-up, entrepreneurial, and digital nomad communities. These experiences provided rich industry insights into the evolving landscape of immigration, remote work, and international mobility in Southeast Asia, while also expanding Issa Compass's presence and reputation within these communities.

CHAPTER 3: LEARNING PROCESS

3.1 Problems Encountered

Throughout the internship, several challenges were encountered that required problem-solving, adaptability, and professional maturity.

Problem 1: Role Ambiguity During the BD Phase

In the early weeks of the internship, the scope of the BD role was not fully defined, resulting in uncertainty about priorities and deliverables. As a startup, Issa Compass operated with a high degree of flexibility, which, while intellectually stimulating, occasionally created confusion about what was expected on a day-to-day basis.

Problem 2: Steep Learning Curve in Immigration Knowledge

The transition from a BD role to an immigration consulting role required rapid assimilation of complex regulatory information across multiple APAC jurisdictions. Immigration laws, visa categories, documentation requirements, and processing timelines vary significantly between countries, and the internship demanded a high level of accuracy in all case-related work.

Problem 3: Cross-Cultural Communication Challenges

Working in a multicultural team with colleagues and clients from across Southeast Asia, South Asia, and beyond required sensitivity to different communication styles, professional norms, and expectations. Misalignments in communication occasionally led to delays or misunderstandings in case processing or client relations.

Problem 4: Managing Client Expectations

A recurring challenge, particularly during the immigration consulting phase, was managing clients who had unrealistic expectations about processing times or approval probabilities. Delivering balanced and honest information while maintaining client confidence and trust required careful communication.

3.2 Solutions and Approaches

Solution to Problem 1 — Role Ambiguity:

To address the lack of clarity in the BD role, the intern proactively requested a structured weekly check-in with the BD Head to align on priorities, review progress, and identify upcoming tasks. This initiative was well-received and helped establish a more consistent workflow. Additionally, the intern took the initiative to document their own role description, which was subsequently used as a reference for onboarding future BD team members.

Solution to Problem 2 — Immigration Knowledge:

To accelerate the learning process, the intern developed a personal knowledge management system, organizing immigration regulations and procedures by country into a structured internal reference document. This document was later formalized and incorporated into the company's official knowledge base. Regular knowledge-sharing sessions with senior team members further bridged the information gap.

Solution to Problem 3 — Cross-Cultural Communication:

I adopted a more explicit and structured communication style, including written follow-ups after verbal discussions to confirm understanding. When interacting with clients, particular attention was given to cultural context — adjusting tone, formality, and communication frequency based on the client's cultural background and preferences.

Solution to Problem 4 — Client Expectations:

A structured approach to client communication was developed, including standardized expectation-setting templates at the case intake stage that clearly outlined realistic timelines and potential scenarios. This proactive approach reduced reactive communication later in the process and improved overall client satisfaction scores.

3.3 Recommendations to the Organization

Based on observations during the internship, the following recommendations are offered to Issa Compass:

1. Structured Onboarding: Develop a comprehensive onboarding program for new interns and employees that includes clear role definitions, process documentation, and a structured learning roadmap for the first 30/60/90 days.

2. Knowledge Management System: Invest in a robust, centralized knowledge management platform to house immigration regulatory information, SOPs, and case templates. A well-maintained knowledge base would reduce the learning curve for new team members and minimize errors.

3. CRM Integration: Implement a dedicated CRM system to track the BD pipeline and client interactions more systematically, enabling better forecasting, follow-up management, and handover documentation.

4. Client Feedback Loop: Establish a formal mechanism for collecting and analyzing client feedback at the end of each case, creating a data-driven foundation for continuous service improvement.

3.4 Learning Outcomes

The internship at Issa Compass delivered substantial learning outcomes across both professional and personal dimensions:

Professional Learning Outcomes:

Practical BD skills: Gained hands-on experience in lead generation, client communication, proposal development, and sales funnel management in a real commercial environment.

Immigration domain expertise: Developed a foundational understanding of immigration law, visa categories, and processing procedures across key APAC markets including Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Operational process design: Learned to design, document, and implement operational SOPs that standardize service delivery and reduce process variability.

Technology platform experience: Gained practical experience working with SaaS case management tools, communication platforms (Slack), and digital documentation systems.

Personal Learning Outcomes:

Cross-cultural competency: Developed a significantly enhanced ability to work effectively with colleagues and clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Professional adaptability: The mid-internship role transition from BD to immigration consulting demonstrated and strengthened the ability to pivot quickly, acquire new skills, and perform effectively in unfamiliar domains.

Self-directed learning: Became more proactive in identifying personal knowledge gaps and taking initiative to address them through independent research and mentorship.

3.5 Application of Academic Knowledge

The internship provided numerous opportunities to apply theoretical frameworks and knowledge acquired during the Bachelor of Business Administration program at Siam University:

Marketing and Sales Principles: The BD phase directly applied core marketing concepts including the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), customer segmentation, and value proposition design, all of which had been studied in marketing courses.

Strategic Management: The SWOT analysis framework applied in Chapter 1 and the strategic thinking required in the immigration consulting role drew directly on strategic management coursework.

Business Communication: Academic training in professional and cross-cultural business communication proved directly applicable in daily interactions with colleagues, clients, and government authorities.

Operations Management: The work in designing and documenting SOPs during the immigration consulting phase applied operations management principles studied in the operations and supply chain management course.

International Business: Coursework in international business environments, trade regulations, and cross-border market dynamics provided a valuable theoretical foundation for understanding Issa Compass's multi-jurisdictional operating model.

3.6 Special Skills Gained

In addition to reinforcing academic knowledge, the internship facilitated the development of several specialized skills:

Immigration Case Management: Practical proficiency in managing immigration cases end-to-end, including eligibility assessment, document review, and application submission in multiple APAC jurisdictions.

Regulatory Analysis: Ability to research, interpret, and summarize complex immigration regulations in accessible language for both internal and client-facing purposes.

CRM and Sales Tools: Practical experience with digital sales tracking and client relationship management tools.

SOP Development: Skill in drafting clear, detailed, and actionable standard operating procedures for service delivery processes.

Startup Operations Mindset: An enhanced understanding of how early-stage tech companies operate — the importance of speed, iteration, frugality, and cross-functional ownership — which is distinct from the structured corporate environments covered in traditional business education.

AI-Assisted Process Automation: Gained introductory practical experience contributing to the implementation and testing of AI models for document review and visa eligibility screening. This cross-disciplinary skill bridges immigration domain knowledge with applied technology and reflects the direction in which the immigration services industry is rapidly evolving.

Client Communication via Digital Channels: Developed proficiency in managing end-to-end client relationships through Slack-based communication threads, including real-time problem-solving, case updates, and multi-party coordination — a workflow increasingly common in distributed and remote-first organizations.

Database Construction & Knowledge Architecture: Gained experience in designing, populating, and maintaining structured information databases for operational use — specifically an embassy and immigration database that improved team efficiency and service quality.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary

This cooperative education report has documented the five-month internship experience of Sameep Rajkarnikar at Issa Compass, a Bangkok-based APAC immigration technology startup, during the second semester of Academic Year 2025-2026. The internship was divided into two distinct phases: a Business Development phase (December 2025 to February 2026) and an Immigration Consulting phase (March 2026 to May 2026).

In the BD phase, the intern contributed to client acquisition, growth experimentation, sales funnel optimization, and cross-functional coordination. In the Immigration Consulting phase, the intern managed end-to-end immigration cases, developed operational SOPs, contributed to the company's knowledge base, and provided feedback for product development.

Throughout both phases, the intern encountered and navigated challenges including role ambiguity, a steep regulatory learning curve, cross-cultural communication dynamics, and client expectation management. Each challenge was addressed through proactive problem-solving, mentorship, and continuous self-improvement.

The experience provided comprehensive exposure to startup operations, APAC business environments, technology-driven service delivery, and the immigration industry — an unusual and highly valuable combination that complemented and extended the academic training received at Siam University.

4.2 Evaluation of the Internship

Overall, the internship at Issa Compass is evaluated as an exceptionally valuable cooperative education experience. The opportunity to transition between two distinct roles within the same organization was uniquely instructive, providing a broader perspective on the company's operations and a deeper appreciation for the interplay between sales and service delivery.

The startup environment, while occasionally presenting structural ambiguities, offered unparalleled opportunities for ownership, initiative, and direct impact. Working directly with company founders and senior leadership on a daily basis accelerated professional development in ways that would not have been possible in a larger, more hierarchical organization.

The exposure to the immigration industry — a sector at the intersection of law, technology, and human mobility — opened new professional pathways and provided insights into a rapidly growing market. The combination of BD and immigration consulting experience is a rare and differentiating credential that will serve as a strong foundation for future career endeavors.

On a personal development level, living and working in Bangkok as an international student and professional was transformative, building confidence in navigating unfamiliar environments and working across cultural boundaries.

4.3 Limitations

While the internship was broadly positive, several limitations are acknowledged:

1. **Limited Depth in Legal Expertise:** While the immigration consulting role provided substantial exposure to immigration case management, it did not provide formal legal training. The intern operated under supervision and within defined competency boundaries, which appropriately limited the complexity of cases independently handled.
2. **Startup Instability:** The fast-moving nature of startups means that processes, priorities, and even organizational structures can change rapidly. Some processes and systems encountered during the internship may have evolved or been replaced by the time this report was written.
3. **Scope of Geographic Coverage:** Despite Issa Compass's APAC focus, the cases handled during the immigration consulting phase were concentrated in a subset of APAC jurisdictions, limiting exposure to the full breadth of the company's geographic coverage.
4. **Short Tenure in Each Role:** The approximately 10-week duration of each phase meant that the depth of expertise developed in both BD and immigration consulting was limited. A longer tenure in either role would have enabled more advanced skill development.

4.4 Recommendations for Future Interns

For students considering a similar placement at Issa Compass or a comparable immigration technology startup, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Research the immigration industry before joining:** A foundational understanding of immigration concepts, visa categories, and the regulatory landscape in key APAC markets

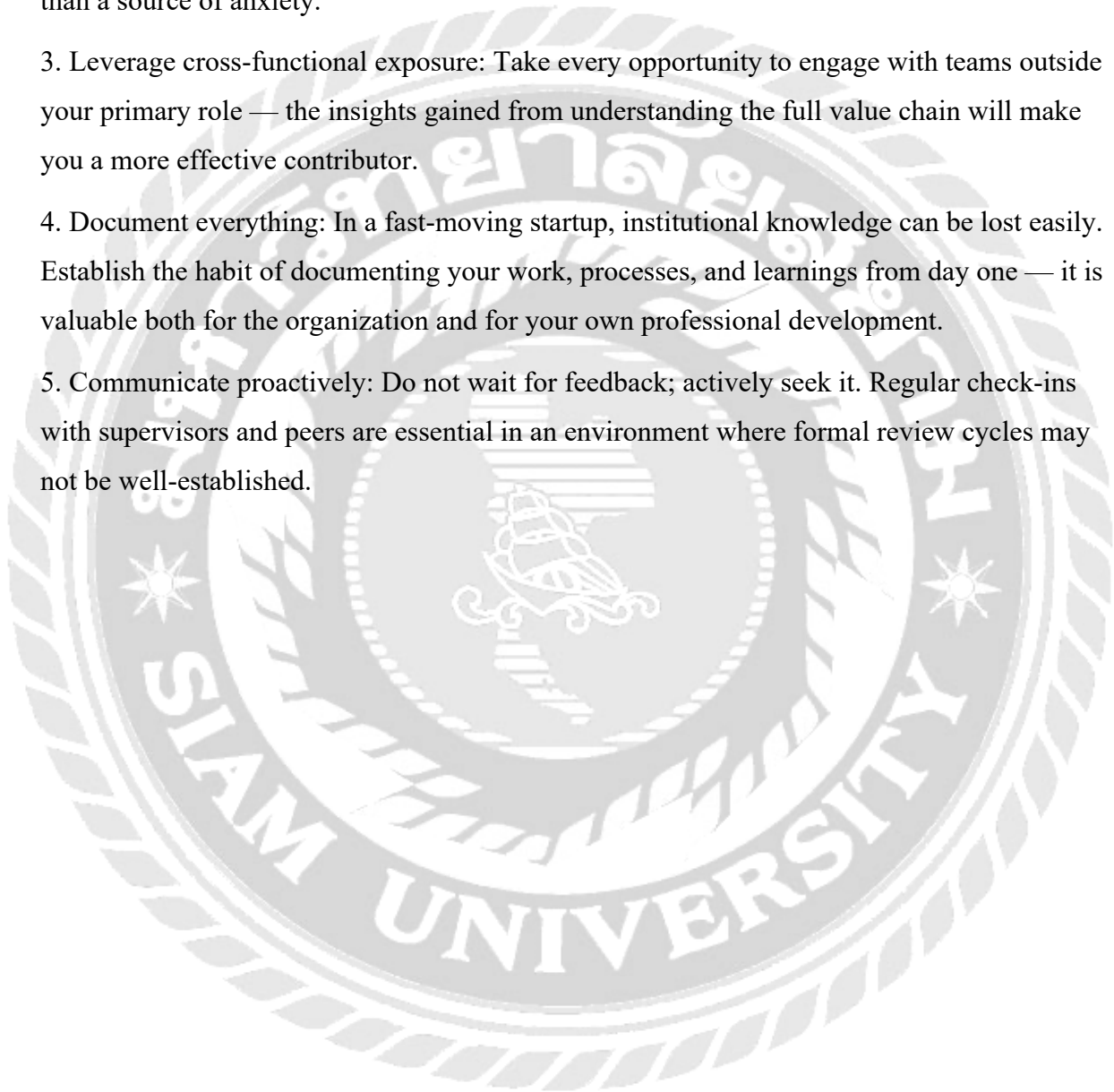
(particularly Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan) will significantly accelerate the onboarding process.

2. Embrace ambiguity: Startup environments are inherently less structured than traditional organizations. Treat ambiguity as an opportunity to take ownership and create value, rather than a source of anxiety.

3. Leverage cross-functional exposure: Take every opportunity to engage with teams outside your primary role — the insights gained from understanding the full value chain will make you a more effective contributor.

4. Document everything: In a fast-moving startup, institutional knowledge can be lost easily. Establish the habit of documenting your work, processes, and learnings from day one — it is valuable both for the organization and for your own professional development.

5. Communicate proactively: Do not wait for feedback; actively seek it. Regular check-ins with supervisors and peers are essential in an environment where formal review cycles may not be well-established.



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APPENDIX A: WEEKLY WORK LOG

Company: Issa Compass

Department: Business Development / Immigration Consulting

Internship Period: December 22, 2025 – May 2026

Name: Sameep Rajkarnikar

Registration No.: 6508040061

Note: Rows highlighted in **yellow** indicate weeks containing Thai public holidays, shown in **red**. These days are not counted as working days.

Week	Period	Work Activities	Supervisor Initials
1	Dec 22 – Dec 26, 2025	Had a one day job trial where I learned about the company	PY
2	Dec 29 – Jan 2, 2026	● Jan 1 – New Year's Day (Public Holiday)	
3	Jan 5 – Jan 9, 2026	Had my onboarding and training about tools, CRM systems and dashboard as well as team communications on Slack	JL
4	Jan 12 – Jan 16, 2026	Started Dealing with Clients in Chats under supervision of BD Head Jeremie	JL
5	Jan 19 – Jan 23, 2026	Started Shadowing seniors during their in-person and in-call consultations with Clients	MO
6	Jan 26 – Jan 30, 2026	● Jan 29 – Chinese New Year (Observed)	
7	Feb 2 – Feb 6, 2026	Learned how to do my own in-call consultations	MO
8	Feb 9 – Feb 13, 2026	● Feb 12 – Makha Bucha Day (Public Holiday)	
9	Feb 16 – Feb 20, 2026	Started taking in-person consultations	KH

Week	Period	Work Activities	Supervisor Initials
10	Feb 23 – Feb 27, 2026	Started learning more about Legal frameworks and document checking in Legal Dashboard	HO
11	Mar 2 – Mar 6, 2026	Started Checking Emails for Updates from Immigration Office/ Embassy	KH
12	Mar 9 – Mar 13, 2026	Shift to legal team and document review and bridging communication between BD team and Legal team	KH
13	Mar 16 – Mar 20, 2026	Handling more complex cases and taking charge of clients on my own	PY
14	Mar 23 – Mar 27, 2026	Visited Networking events representing Issa Compass	AC
15	Mar 30 – Apr 3, 2026	Contributions to company growth ideas and lead generation	KH
16	Apr 6 – Apr 10, 2026	● Apr 6 – Chakri Day (Public Holiday)	
17	Apr 13 – Apr 17, 2026	● Apr 13 – Songkran Day 1 (Public Holiday) Apr 14 – Songkran Day 2 (Public Holiday) Apr 15 – Songkran Day 3 (Public Holiday)	
18	Apr 20 – Apr 24, 2026	Started Training and helping onboard new members joining the Issa Compass team	KH
19	Apr 27 – May 1, 2026	● May 1 – National Labour Day (Public Holiday)	
20	May 4 – May 8, 2026	● May 4 – Coronation Day (Public Holiday)	
21	May 11 – May 15, 2026	Started working on AI Doc Review Project; implementing AI in legal work within the dashboard	AY
22	May 18 – May 22, 2026	Brainstorm Ideas to streamline Legal work further and add tools to the Legal Dashboard	AY
23	May 25 – May 29, 2026	Continuations of Legal Team work	KH

APPENDIX B: PHOTO GALLERY

The following photographs document key moments from the internship experience at Issa Compass, Bangkok, from December 2025 to May 2026. Images include the office environment, company events, and day-to-day professional activities.

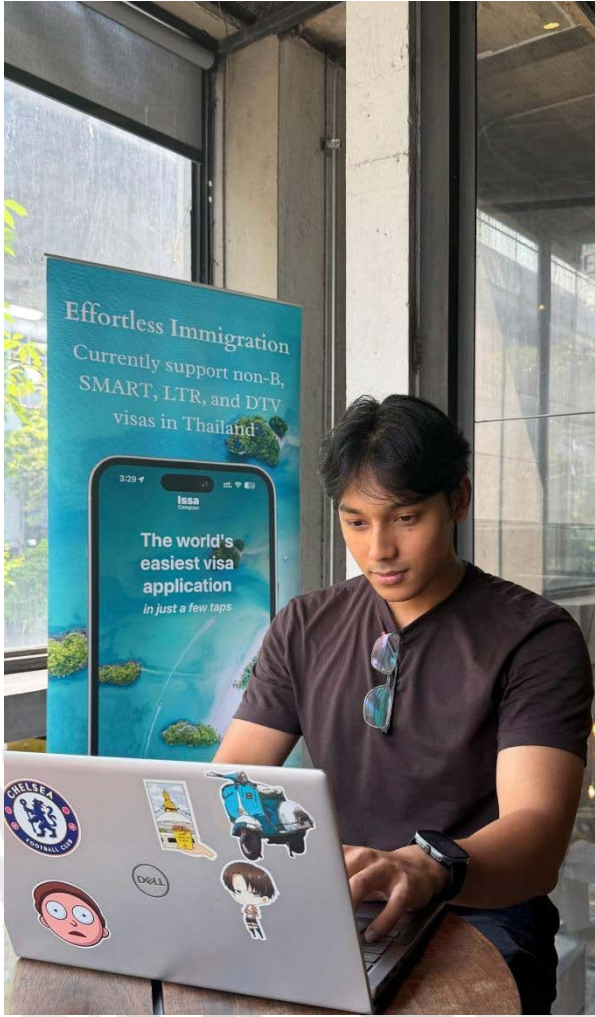


View from the Issa Compass Phrom Phong office, Bangkok — the city skyline as seen from the workspace. (April 2026)



[Photo 2]

With Academic Supervisors; Ashutosh Mishra and Yhing Sawheny and Internship Supervisor: Katalceya Hewwet at an Issa Compass, Bangkok.



[Photo 3]

At work during an Issa Compass, with the company banner in the background.



[Photo 4]

Outside the Issa Compass Sukhumvit office, pointing to the company signage.



[Photo 5]

Sameep with Andrei (Marketing Head) during work — a moment of collaboration and team spirit at Issa Compass.



[Photo 6]

At Community event in The Hive Thonglor with Issa Compass Team