Illustrative Example of an Enterprise Network
With three types of inter-firm relationships

- Internal production
- Collaborative relationship
- Arms length relationship

Opportunities to Participate
We are seeking organizations interested in participating in research phases 2 - 4. Phases 2 & 3 will involve collection and analysis of enterprise network data. Phase 4 will involve guided enterprise improvement efforts using enterprise network diagrams as a change tool.

Phech Colatat
pcolatat@mit.edu
Lean Aerospace Initiative
PhD Candidate, Engineering Systems Division, MIT

Literature Being Consulted
- Supply chain practices of Japanese firms
- Network forms of economic organization - the influence of a social logic of exchange
- Boundary objects - enabling organizational change
- Social network analysis

Planned Research Phases
1. Characterize network links by conducting case studies of supplier relationships
2. Develop quantifiable measures & begin collecting data on inter-firm relationships
3. Graph and structurally analyze enterprise networks
4. Guide and study change efforts enabled by enterprise network diagrams

Summer 2007 Summer 2008 Summer 2009 Summer 2010

Intellectual & Practical Impact
- Understanding the development and change in relationships among firms cooperating in organizational networks
- Development of measures for inter-firm relationships; testing the enterprise network as a relevant unit of analysis
- Analysis, assessment, and graphing of enterprise networks
- Theory, methods and tools for promoting improvement and change across sets of collaborating firms

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Which relationships are appropriate under which conditions?
Is there an optimal set of inter-firm relationships?
What types of network structures improve enterprise performance?
How do firms within an enterprise change an established network structure?