Project Title: Virtual Inter-organizational New Product Development
Teams: An Integrated Model of Interface Effectiveness
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Project summary: New product development teams (hereafter, NPD teams) are integral components of firms that develop, manufacture, and sell technological offerings. Given the complexities involved in organizing face-to-face interactions between team members and, leveraging the advancements in electronic communication technologies, firms are employing virtual teams in product development activities. Virtual teams are those in which members work across locational, temporal, and relational boundaries to accomplish an interdependent task. Their advantages include greater independence from time and space constraints, reduced opportunity costs, greater flexibility in meeting market demands, and better integration of knowledge from members in remote locations.

According to industry estimates, more than half of companies with more than 5000 employees utilize virtual interfaces and approximately sixty percent of all professional employees work in virtual teams. However, very little research exists in the marketing literature on their usefulness in new product development activities. Given (a) the low success rate of even traditional, co-located teams (b) high failure rates in NPD teams, and (c) the unique challenges that virtual interactions entail, systematic research on managing virtual NPD teams is warranted to guide managers and academicians.

Accordingly, by extensively borrowing from diverse literature streams such as relationship Marketing the resource-based view, virtual team-based view, and NPD teams, the purpose of this project was to develop a conceptual framework that explains how virtual interfaces between NPD teams could be effectively undertaken.