Interorganizational Partner Selection as Negotiation: A Study of Two Distance Education Consortia

by

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

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Abstract

The choice of appropriate collaborative partners has consistently been reported as a key issue for contemporary managers. This study reports findings from a study which explored the process and criteria of partner selection - how and why partners are chosen. The results show multiple cycles of deal-making, partnership roles and organizational approval. Partner choice criteria focused on partnership requirements, but was influenced by additional factors. These results suggest that partner selection may be much more complex than previously recognized and could be better described as partner negotiation.

The researcher reviewed recent literature on partnerships, decision-making, and partner selection. Concepts from this previous work were updated with data from three initial interviewees experienced in university-industry partnerships. A conceptual Partner Negotiation Model was developed including three cycles of Deal-Making, Organizational Approval, and Partner Role/Selection. Our hypothesized Partner Choice Criteria centred on requirements, but were influenced by resource availability, social network, reputation, politics, and ambiguity. Two Canada-wide distance education consortia were identified as large-scale case studies for investigation of the research theory. A total of 34 informants were contacted. Written business plans, contracts, documents, partner network diagrams and 231 archival e-mails from 36 correspondents were collected and analysed for the two consortia.

The results showed strong support for partner selection included in negotiation cycles of deal-making and organizational approval. Partner choice criteria supported the need to meet documented requirements, but was also strongly influenced by resource availability, social network, and reputation. Additional issues of interest to the interviewees were motivation, operations, unit of partner, self-sustaining income, and integration to one consortium. As well, the Case Study Narratives offered deep, interesting insight into two specific cases of Canadian consortia.

The findings suggest that the formation of partnerships and the process of partner selection are both very complex. This research has provided new insights linking business negotiation concepts with partner selection. A model has been developed for viewing partner selection as negotiation. Three negotiation cycles of deal-making, organizational approval, and partner role/selection have been proposed. The research has identified four criteria that influence why specific partners are chosen – requirements, resource availability, social network, and reputation. Finally, based on the complexities and issues from this work, a number of ideas for future research have been summarized.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Objectives

The goal of this research is to provide a framework to improve the understanding of partnerships. Given limited resources, organizations want to select the best partners for their purposes. This research explores the partner selection process in business partnerships. Through this exploration, the researcher discovered cyclic processes of deal-making, organizational approval and partner negotiation. This research also identified critical influences that may have contributed to partner selection such as reputation and social network.

The research explores an understanding of how and why partners are chosen for business partnerships. This entails a description of the partner selection process as well as the underlying causes. Research questions are:

1. How do organizations choose collaborative partners?
2. Why do organizations choose a particular partner?

Current literature on alliances, on partner selection and on decision-making were reviewed. The researcher then informally interviewed key people who had been involved in partner selection for business alliances. From this literature review and the initial interviews, a conceptual model of partner selection was developed. To assess the model and to provide case study material, formal interviews were conducted with people from a number of Canadian universities involved in distance education collaborations. From the formal interviews, the researcher documented two case studies. Interview material was also analyzed with respect to the conceptual model and the model was adjusted accordingly. Finally a number of propositions were suggested from the data.

In particular, the researcher investigated:

- Partner selection processes
- Specific partnership requirements
- Resource availability
- Social network
- Reputation
- Organizational politics

- Ambiguity

The overall research objective was to understand the partner selection process in interorganizational relationships, including the choice of specific partners for a particular organization. Results of this research have produced three main deliverables. First, a partner selection model was developed, which may help practitioners and researchers better understand the conceptual process. Second, the researcher identified key criteria used to choose partners in the partner selection process. This provides a foundation for future partner searches. Third, the specific partner selection process was documented in two case studies, which may serve as learning tools for new partnerships.

Specific short and long-term objectives included:

Short-term Objectives

- Document theoretical alliance literature
- Document partner selection theory
- Document key decision-making theory
- Document actual decision-making patterns and process
- Develop a partner selection model
- Identify and categorize decision factors
- Relate theory and actual partner selection

Long-term Objectives

- Understand the partner selection process in business alliances
- Understand how to choose among a number of partners
- Create decision criteria to aid in partner selection

For the purposes of this research, a partnership is defined to be any interorganizational relationship, such as an alliance, consortium, joint venture and so on. The researcher observed that the academic literature is rife with formal definitions for these categories of partnership (Hagedoorn 1993; Kanter 1994; Doz and Hamel 1998; Barringer and Harrison 2000), but interviewees in academia and industry seldom used the terms with precision in accordance with these definitions. Rather than add confusion with academic definitions used inappropriately in practice, this research includes all forms of partnership.

1.2 Methodology

The researcher used multiple-case studies for this work. Data were collected using written documentation, archival data and personal interviews of key Canadian university personnel involved with distance education partnerships. Analysis of the data provided the basis for a conceptual partner negotiation model.

The researcher identified a small number of Canadian distance education consortia to be potential cases for study. Two small university partnerships served as initial interviews. Open-ended semi-structured interviews were conducted with personal contacts at each of these organizations. The data collected from these interviews allowed the researcher to revise interview questions and methodology, so that significant information about partner selection could be identified. Data were analyzed based on organization and alliance characteristics identified from management literature. The results of the initial interviews provided the basis for the conceptual model described in Chapter 3. The model was modified as additional data were collected and analyzed from the distance education consortia.

This study is divided into two distinct phases. The first deals with the 'inductive' process of identifying a conceptual categorization of organization and partnership characteristics. The second explores the 'deductive' process of defining the relationship between those characteristics. This two-stage 'inductive/deductive' approach is consistent with research with similar goals (Powell and Dent-Micallef, 1997; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993) and conceptual foundations (Hall 1992).

The first phase was the development of a conceptual partner negotiation model. This model has been documented in Chapter 3 and was used to focus the formal interviews of phase two. The model identifies three cycles of deal-making, organizational approval and partner selection. As well, partner roles are identified and a number of criteria for specific partner selection.

The second phase consisted of in-depth interviews with twelve senior managers of distance education organizations. This number is in line with similar studies in the literature (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). Since this phase of the research is essentially concerned with conceptual development of issues of importance in partner selection, a variety of alliance experiences is desirable. For example, it was important to sample both large and small universities, Canadian and international consortia, at different geographical locations, and so on (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). By obtaining a sample that reflects a diverse set of respondent organizations, the study obtained a rich set of ideas and insights (Parkhe 1993). In order to strengthen internal validity, care was taken to interview marginal organizations and, where possible, failures in addition to successful consortia. Resources identified from the field were compared to those in the research literature.

1.3 Research Problem and Questions

Alliances, collaborations and consortia are becoming ubiquitous in today's competitive environment. (Doz and Hamel 1998; Barringer and Harrison 2000; Das and Teng 2000) The current problem is not whether to partner, but to decide among a variety of collaborators. (Beamish 1987; Angeles and Nath 2000; Dussauge, Garrette et al. 2000) How do organizations find and choose among a number of potential partners? How do organizations choose the best partner for a particular situation?

> You don't want to be left standing alone, but you also want to secure the best partners you can and avoid being pulled down by someone else's poor partnering.
>
> (Kanter 2001, p. 138)

The researcher observed a number of organizations involved in partnerships. Many organizations knew they needed to be involved in such alliances, but they had no idea how to go about establishing partnerships or choosing appropriate partners.

This study seeks to answer two main research questions. They are:

1. How do organizations choose collaborative partners?
2. Why do organizations choose a particular partner?

Question 1 can be answered by looking at an organization's actual decision-making process. Question 2 can be answered by extending the process data to include specific factors of interest and the selection criteria. Question 2 can be further refined with additional questions such as 'Is there an optimum partner? What qualities does each partner look for in the other?'

This research studied the *process* of partner selection through interviews, written artifacts, contracts, e-mails and so on. What do people *really* do compared to what they *say* they are going to do? The process described could be a proactive list of characteristics, criteria, and use of a formal Decision Support System. Conversely, it could be the sending of a large number of blanket e-mails and a selection of organizations from the e-mail replies. If the latter is true, then particular partners may have been chosen only because they expressed interest rather than because they are appropriate partners.

Because of the worldwide, shared nature of the current business environment, firms have no choice but to cooperate and even collaborate with their suppliers, customers and competitors.

Firms such as General Motors are establishing electronic supply chains with their suppliers. Airlines are establishing large repositories of shared airplane parts. Software companies see the need for shared banks of software components, although actual sharing of components among firms is not widespread today. Universities and other teaching organizations are sharing teaching materials, overheads, lecturer's notes, assignments, examinations, and so on. Textbook publishers are making their books available online, plus overheads and test materials for instructors, additional case studies, CD ROM materials, and interactive study resources for students.

The problem for organizations is that they must engage in interorganizational relationships to survive in the current market. They must choose from a variety of firms who want to partner. They must choose the type of partnership that will be best for them in particular circumstances. They must choose the number of partnerships they can handle. This work provides a framework for partner selection; that is, the choice of the best partner for a particular organization in a particular situation.

Some research questions of interest were found in (Saltiel, Sgroi et al. 1998), adapted from (Baldwin and Austin 1995):

- How do partners find each other and initiate their work?
- What qualities does each partner look for or find in the other? Why is this important? How does it contribute to the dynamic?
- What factors from the particular setting or context affect the success of the partnership?
- How do partnerships change over time?
- What stages do they pass through?

The above questions were related to research on faculty collaboration, using individual researchers as the unit of analysis. The researcher adapted some of these questions to interorganizational relationships, using the organization as the unit of relevance. This research is interested in particular in 'Why do partners choose each other?' and 'What qualities does each partner look for or find in the other?'

Technology and the widespread use of the Internet are supporting this collaborative move among traditional competitors. As well, the notions of 'reuse' and 'connectivity' and the global shortage of information technology workers support this partnership effort. This study is about helping organizations with collaborative decisions, assuming that most organizations must be collaborative in today's economy. The results of the study provide several examples of working collaborations, extend the results of these working collaborations and add modeling and theory literature to help organizations to choose their cooperative partners, to organize their relationships, to communicate with their partners, to establish a collaborative marketplace or repository, and to create maximum synergy from their partnerships.

1.4 Research Significance

Interorganizational relationships help firms create value by combining resources, sharing knowledge, increasing speed to market, and gaining access to foreign markets. (Yan and Gray 1994; Doz and Hamel 1998; Dussauge, Garrette et al. 2000) Since 1987, the number of strategic alliances worldwide has grown by 25 percent annually. (Bleeke and Ernst 1995; Harbison and Pekar 1998) Partner selection is of significant importance in the success of these collaborative interorganizational relationships. (Beamish 1987) There are thousands of articles in a wide variety of academic and practitioner literature (management, psychology, economics, business ethics, sociology) on alliances in general and on various aspects of alliances, such as alliance type and formation. Despite this plethora of alliance literature, there does not appear to be a general theory on partner selection. The small numbers of partner selection articles are limited to specific locales or domains: Electronic Data Interchange (Angeles and Nath 2000), high touch partnering (Duysters, Kok et al. 1999), web browsing (Payton 1999), Turkish firms (Tatoglu and Glaister 2000), or selected North American and European firms (Hitt, Dacin et al. 2000). This existing research, adjusted by the initial interviews and field study data, was extended to a general theory that will be useful both for managers and researchers.

The study of partner selection, defined here as finding and choosing good matches for interorganizational relationships, is important for several reasons. First, understanding relationships among different types of organizations can help to reveal individual organizational characteristics and help organization members to evaluate the underlying logic of partnership strategies. Second, a fundamental decision confronting most organizations concerns the type of institutions to involve for joint work. Knowledge of one's own and a potential partner's organizational characteristics can serve as input to that decision. Third, this model permits multiple alliance types unlike most existing research which includes only one of consortium, joint venture, strategic alliance, and so on. Finally, the Canadian distance education field cases used as the domain provide deep, narrow research that can be extended and generalized into a partner selection theory in combination with the existing literature noted above.

This study will be of interest to organizations that need to establish worldwide partnerships in order to thrive in today's worldwide markets. It will also be of interest to universities that want to know what existing partnerships are in place by providing a summary of existing consortia. It will be of interest to specific industry groups that need to collaborate for reuse and people shortage issues, such as the software development and component industries. The study will be of interest to governments in establishing standards and limitations for collaborations, so that they can better define acceptable and unacceptable alliance behavior.

One contribution of this study to the practice of management will be to provide managers with an aid in partner selection decisions. The list of partnership issues and organizational and alliance characteristics resulting from this study will assist managers in implementing, or considering, interorganizational relationships. The study provides both a rich description of

partner selection issues in the final model and an analysis of the relationship between these issues and real-world consortia with field interview data.

At an individual firm level, the results of this work will save time and aid the decision-making process in terms of partner selection. This work will allow firms to choose among potential collaborators more easily, more fairly and in a more structured manner than an ad hoc approach by providing a list of partner characteristics most important for partnerships. Organizations may even decide not to join a particular consortium if the available partners are not suitable.

This report makes a number of research contributions. Perhaps the most important is an increased understanding of partner negotiation and selection from a firm perspective. An understanding of this area is, as yet, extremely limited (van der Heijden, 2000). This study provides a model and list of resources that can lead to more successful partner selection. This research is unique with the focus on partner selection, processes, and multiple partnership types. The Canadian distance education field cases also provide a distinguishing perspective for this research. Finally, the conceptual partner negotiation model is distinctive in the literature.

1.5 Research Overview

Chapter 2 of this paper reviews recent work in a number of fields related to partnership. The research examines interorganizational relationships as a whole, followed by alliance motivation, decision-making and partner selection, and finally organizational and partner characteristics. Chapter 3 describes the work involved in development of the Partner Negotiation Model. First the initial cases are described, providing the context for the model. Next, the variety of models are presented leading up to the final model. Third, the researcher describes the processes and cycles of the model, and the chapter concludes with four propositions from the final model. Chapter 4 details the overall research design and methodology. Qualitative design and case study research are identified first, including a discussion of rationale, limitations of the methodology, and the researcher's resolution of the limitations. Reliability and validity in general and in terms of this research follow as well as a review of the researcher's role. Data collection includes a choice of cases or research domain, rationale for the choice, development of interview materials, research methodology, and details of data collection and recording. A list of data used in the research and an overview of data analysis complete this chapter. Chapter 5 presents a descriptive narrative of the two case studies. This provides an initial data analysis and gives a general high-level view of the data. Chapter 6 documents detailed data analysis with coding including the data analysis software used for coding of interview materials. The data analysis method was described and detailed analysis with coding identified the major issues pulled from the interviews. Chapter 7 communicates results as major findings tied to an appropriate proposition. Other findings are also noted as well as an interpretation and discussion of the results. The overall work concludes with Chapter 8 providing a summary, conclusions, contributions, limitations, and future research.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Business alliances for cooperative or competitive advantage have become ubiquitous over the past ten years. (Davidow and Malone 1992; Landay 1996; Barringer and Harrison 2000) Firms are purchasing in bulk from each other, manufacturing cooperatively (Chen and Ross 2000), servicing each other's customers, and so on in reciprocal agreements that are meant to increase revenue and profit for both partners. Strategic alliances encourage alliance partners to become customers too. (Perks and Easton 2000) Airline alliances, some formed in the early 1990's, are providing customer benefits worldwide. (Economist 2000) Recently, a new fraud analysis and protection alliance was developed to protect against Internet deceit. (InfoWorld 2000) Indeed, alliances are becoming so prevalent and important that formal academic models are being developed to aid in trading partner selection (Angeles and Nath 2000).

This work encompasses a number of subcategories within management sciences literature. In *information systems*, the work includes business partnerships sharing information or technology. Such partnerships can be included in electronic commerce, in particular in supply chain partnerships where companies are buying and selling from each other electronically. On the technology side of information systems, the work may include decision support systems or expert systems to aid in partner selection. *Organizational behavior* incorporates organizational decision-making, interpersonal communication, global diversity and organizational culture and change, each of which can be part of the collaborative partner selection process. Finally, in *strategic planning*, this work is part of strategic decision-making, outsourcing, collaboration, and international strategies.

The organizational literature, including strategic management, organizational learning and knowledge management theories, investigates factors leading to corporate success. As these theories are very broad and all encompassing, they are discussed only in the context of interactions among firms, a subset of this literature. Alliances and consortia are two types of interorganizational relationships that are of particular interest to us. The issues of interest within alliances and consortia are partner selection and alliance performance. How does one firm choose another firm from a number of potential partners? Is this choice significant in the success of the partnership? Because of the large number of factors impacting success, this research does not attempt to prove success based on partner selection.

The domain of interest is the field of education, in particular distance education in Canadian universities. This research investigated alliances and consortia among distance education providers. There is an abundance of educational literature on collaborations and partnerships, but

the majority is personal learning and mentoring relationships. Some of this literature has been explored for factors that may be extended to the organizational relationships of interest in this study.

This chapter is organized into sections on Interorganizational Relationships, Alliance Motivation, Decision Making and Partner Selection, and Organizational and Partner Characteristics. Section 2.2 discusses Interorganizational Relationships, including their advantages and disadvantages. Section 2.3 on Alliance Motivation looks at an organization's goals for partnership formation. Section 2.4, Decision Making and Partner Selection, reviews general decision-making theory, as appropriate for partner selection. This section also included recent literature on domain-specific alliance partner selection. Section 2.5, Organizational and Partner Characteristics, provides organizational and partner characteristics of interest in partnerships. The chapter concludes with a summary of the relevant literature for the conceptual framework.

2.2 Interorganizational Relationships

Alliances are formed as firms seek new market opportunities under conditions of increased uncertainty and competition. (Beverland and Bretherton 2001) 'Alliance' and 'strategic alliance' terminology is often used to mean a wide range of different partnership types. (Porter 1990) A strategic alliance is an enduring interfirm co-operative agreement for the joint accomplishment of individual goals. (Parkhe 1993) The notion of a strategic alliance may include strategic outsourcing and global strategic alliances in particular to gain access to new markets.

A number of authors have identified positive reasons for becoming involved with other companies. The initial advantages are economic – gain access to a particular resource, economies of scale, and risk and cost sharing, particularly in a large venture. (Barringer and Harrison 2000) Alliances can provide access to foreign markets, can enable corporate learning, and can pool resources for the development of new, better, bigger products and services. Speed to market, structural and regulatory flexibility, lobbying power, and market power for competitive advantage all add to the potential advantages of partnerships. (Barringer and Harrison 2000, Table 3) There are four alliance categories: equity joint venture, minority equity alliance, bilateral contract-based, and unilateral contract-based. There are four types of alignment: supplementary, surplus, complementary, and wasteful. (Das and Teng 2000)

Many articles suggest that there is a concrete 'alliance lifecycle' which describes the processes and tasks involved in alliance creation. The process includes a number of issues and activities, such as motivation, formation, structure, and performance. Some models include cycling back to begin the alliance process again or to revise the alliance that has been started. Most models, however, propose a straight-line alliance process with each activity clearly completed before a move to the next one.

Overall, most articles suggested a simple alliance process such as that described in Figure 2.1, Current Alliance Theory. The scope of this research is Alliance Formation only, as noted on Figure 2.1. This research concentrates on how partners are chosen and why particular partners are chosen. Motivation, however, affects Alliance Formation since particular partners may be necessary to meet particular goals. Similarly, Alliance Formation affects Alliance Structure since some partners because of their reputation and power may produce more hierarchical rather than peer networks. Each of these issues plus many more may affect Performance.

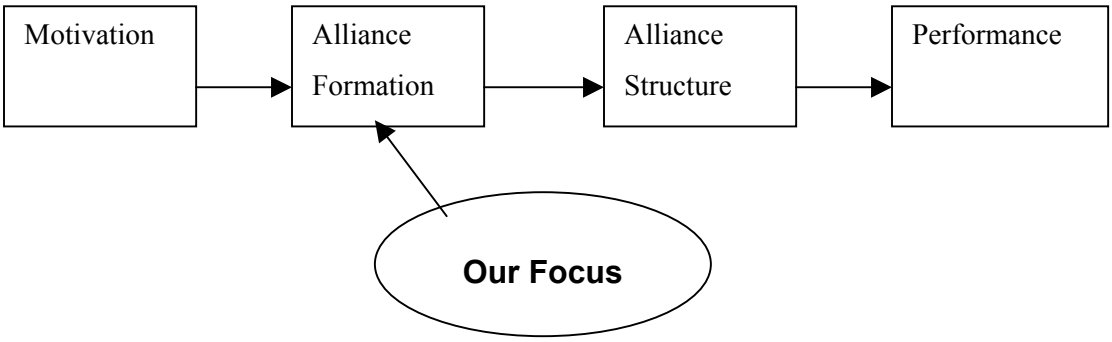

Figure 2.1 Current Alliance Theory

Kogut (Kogut 1988) first proposed three simple sequential stages of alliance formation, operation and termination. Lorange and Roos (Lorange and Roos 1992) altered the Kogut model to alliance formation, implementation, and evolution. This added a dimension of active rather than passive process, moving from operation to implementation. This also suggested that alliances could move on and change rather than just stop completely when the original alliance was finished. A slightly more complex and lengthier process was that of Murray and Mahon (Murray and Mahon 1993) who extended the three phases to five, with their ideas of courtship, negotiation, start-up, maintenance, and two possible endings. The endings could be either amicable separation or an extension of the alliance, combining the ideas of Kogut and Lorange and Roos.

Ring & Van de Ven (Ring and Van de Ven 1994), Gulati, (Gulati 1995), Gomes-Casseres (Gomes-Casseres 1996) and Doz, Olk and Ring (Doz, Olk et al. 2000) have proposed more complex alliance frameworks. Alliances can be social entities, useful for personal and political motivations. Alternatively, they can be serious, rational business relationships, meant only to create wealth and increase profit. Finally, they may include alliance constellations, groups of alliances competing against each other and other firms.

Recently, Das and Teng (Das and Teng 2000) showed a straight-line process of resource-based rationale, alliance formation, structural preferences and alliance performance. Reid, Bussiere, and Greenaway (Reid, Bussiere et al. 2001) altered the Das and Teng model to include partner characteristics, structural choice, operating structure and norms, and performance for knowledge-

based enterprises. Other similar straight-line alliance processes are given in Das and Teng (Das and Teng 2002) (single direction, single dimension alliances and constellations), Koch (Koch 2002) (straight-line process, formation and life cycle) and Varis and Conn (Varis and Conn 2002).

Alliances have limited lifespans. (Ajami and Khambata 1991) The median lifespan of alliances is about seven years, failure rate is high, and seven out of ten joint ventures fall short of expectations and thus disband. (Kanter 1994; Bleeke and Ernst 1995) In spite of the disadvantages, "…factors such as dependence on external resources or pressure for legitimacy can lead organizations into difficult alliances…" (Barringer and Harrison 2000, p. 369) Alliances between competitors require a fair balance of skills, market access and capital between the companies. (Bleeke and Ernst 1994)

The single most critical concern about corporate partnerships "is the risk of loss of proprietary information." (Barringer and Harrison 2000, p.369) Firms want to be involved in alliances and joint ventures, but are concerned about corporate secrets, finances and other vital information getting into either the wrong hands or into the public domain. Other concerns are management complexity, financial and organizational risks, the risk of becoming dependent on a partner, and partial loss of decision autonomy. Less common concerns include conflicting corporate cultures, loss of organizational flexibility, and antitrust implications.

2.3 Alliance Motivation

"Firms tend to have a portfolio of reasons for alliance formation, such as cost minimization, risk sharing, and learning, rather than just one reason." (Barringer and Harrison 2000, p.369) Consequently, just one theoretical paradigm does not appear to be sufficient to explain alliance formation. Some other issues involved in alliance formation include firm legitimacy, perceived fairness of a potential alliance partner, organizational and people issues, and corporate culture.

Combining economics and resource dependence views, alliances are a means to reduce market uncertainty while obtaining needed resources. (Beverland and Bretherton 2001) Strategic alliances are formed primarily to take advantage of new market opportunities. Uncertainty drives the formation of an alliance. The most common motivation for forming an alliance is the "joint maximization of complementary assets". (Koza and Lewin 1998) Other motivations from the same research are to seek new knowledge and to explore new market opportunities.

A large number of theoretical principles have been proposed attempting to explain why organizations want to participate in alliances. Theories come from a wide variety of management, economic, and sociology journals, as well as practitioner literature.

Some of these principles are:

- Maximize ability to offer excellent products and services; produce better quality products (synergy)
- Strong synergistic opportunity to extend existing scope of operations (Bleeke and Ernst 1995)
- Competitive strengths, additional sources of capital, access to new technology, opportunities for rapid expansion into new markets, products or locations (Cateora 1996)
- Increase efficiency
- Decrease costs; cost minimization
- Gain fast access to new technologies or new markets (Powell 1990)
- Market dominance (Harrigan 1985; Tallman and Shenkar 1994); decrease competition
- Gain economies of scale in joint research, production, purchasing and lobbying
- Tap into knowledge outside of the firm (Inkpen and Beamish 1997); organizational learning
- Share risks that are beyond the scope of the individual firm (Buckley and Casson 1988)
- Expansion of business operations (Sankar, Boulton et al. 1995)
- Social exchange theory, the study of relationships among organizations
- Access complementary marketing skills, quick access into foreign markets, cost reduction of doing business in foreign markets, circumvention of tariff and non-tariff barriers (Contractor and Lorange 1988; Kotabe and Swan 1995)
- Obtain legitimacy
- Exert power or control
- Fill a perceived internal resource need

Barringer and Harrison (2000) provide a broad overview of six theoretical paradigms used to explain interorganizational relationship formation. Their work is summarized in Table 2.1 below, from their Table 1, p. 370. For each of the six theoretical paradigms of interest, they provide a short description, a rationale for interorganizational relationships, and a list of representative research.

THEORETICAL PARADIGM	AREA OF EXPERTISE	ALLIANCE MOTIVATION
Institutional Theory	Sociology	Obtain legitimacy Conform to social norms
Organizational Learning	Organization Theory	Absorb as much knowledge as possible from partners
Resource Dependence	Social Exchange	Exert power or control Obtain needed resources Sell desired resources
Stakeholder Theory	Business Ethics	Align interests with stakeholders Reduce environmental uncertainty
Strategic Choice	Strategic Management	Make a profit Increase product delivery Grow the organization Decrease competition
Transaction Costs Economics	Economics	Minimize production and transaction costs Reduce market uncertainty

Table 2.1 Alliance Formation Theories

2.4 Decision Making and Partner Selection

This section contains literature on decision-making theory and partner selection theory. The former assumes that the choice of an alliance partner is just another decision that must be made by business people every day, so provides a broad context and process for the partner selection decision. The latter includes a summary of the rather sparse existing work on partner selection in very narrow interorganizational domains. The focus of this existing partner selection theory is on partner selection criteria or desirable partner characteristics rather than the process of choosing a partner. Both sets of theory were used in Chapter 3 to develop the Conceptual Framework.

2.4.1 Decision-Making Theory

Traditional theory identifies three phases of decision-making: *intelligence*, *design* and *choice*. (Simon 1960; Simon 1977) In this model, there is a continuous flow of information from one stage to the next, and at any phase there may be a return to a previous stage. The *intelligence* phase is the information gathering, problem identification and classification stage. *Design* involves the development of a model by setting criteria for choice and searching for alternatives. The *choice* phase selects a solution, plans for implementation and designs a control system around the choice.

In all decision-making models, there are three basic components: decision variables, uncontrollable variables and result variables. (Turban, McLean et al. 1999) Result (dependent) variables indicate how well the system attains its goals. Decision (independent) variables describe the alternative courses of action. Uncontrollable (independent) variables or parameters often come from the environment surrounding the decision-maker and are therefore beyond his control. Intermediate (independent) variables are any other variables that are necessary to link the decision and result variables.

Decision-making is comprised of a number of interacting elements including a goal, decision type, alternative options, evaluation criteria, evaluation process, and selection process. (Moorhead and Griffin 1998) No single theory can explain the entire range of organizational theory. (Lutz 1982) The Rational Model is probably the most widely accepted decision-making theory. Evolutionary versions of the same model are the Behavioral and the Practical Models, varying the rationality with shortcuts and personal input. Personal approaches, including the Conflict and the Garbage Can Models round out the discussion of decision-making theory. A number of decision-making theories are summarized in Table 2.2.

Rational Approach

Rationality is central to the existing practice and ideology of management. (Pfeffer 1992) Most decision-making theories are based on the notions of purpose, consistency and rationality. (Cohen and March 1992) The rational model requires exhaustive searching for all possible alternatives. In fact, human mental exhaustion puts cognitive limits on the rational model. (Eisenhardt and Zbaracki 1992)

Rational approaches are quantifiable, easy to understand and discuss, and therefore pervasive in the literature. This causes researchers to implicitly ignore the two irrational processes of *intuition*, doing things without fully understanding why, and *tradition or faith*, doing things because that is the way they are done or have always been done. (Cohen and March 1992) Bureaucratic organizations rely on rules, *precedent*, and standard operating procedures for their decision-making. (Pfeffer 1992) This combines the *rational* model of rules and regulation with the *tradition* of following long-standing methods.

Behavioral and Practical Approaches

A person's limited cognitive capabilities coupled with limited resources cause most decision makers to stop looking for alternatives once one or two satisfactory alternatives have been found. (Simon 1957) The practical approach to decision making combines the steps of the rational approach with the conditions in the behavioral approach to create a more realistic process for making decisions in organizations. (Moorhead and Griffin 1998)

Personal Approaches

The Conflict Model (Janis and Mann 1977) provides a personal approach to decision making for important decisions, including issues such as conflict, choice, fear, morality, and commitment.

Public and private organizations may make decisions in different ways. The anarchic view of decision-making, as espoused in the Garbage Can Model (Cohen, March et al. 1972), is appropriate in a complex, political public organization such as a university or government agency. (Pinfield 1986) More rational models are appropriate or expected in a private organization, attributing structure and legitimacy.

The higher the management level, the less structured the decision-making process. (Gorry and Scott Morton 1971) This theory led to the development of Management Information Systems and Decision Support Systems to handle semi-structured and unstructured management decisions.

THEORY	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
Classical Decision-Making	Intelligence, design and choice	Simon 1960; Simon 1977
Rational	Goal, problem, criteria, all possible alternatives, select	Moorhead & Griffin 1998
Behavioral and Practical	Choose from 1 or 2 possibilities Limited cognition, timing, luck	Turban et al 1999; Simon 1957; Eisenhardt et al. 1992
Personal	Irrational, intuition, faith, tradition Social psychology conflict model	Cohen & March 1992 Janis & Mann 1977
Garbage Can	No goals, organized anarchy, inconsistent, ill-defined preference	Cohen et al. 1972
Decision Support	Higher management, less structure Decision support tools	Gorry & Scott Morton 1971

Table 2.2 Decision-making Theories

2.4.2 Partner Selection Theory

Partner selection literature is very limited and focused on the *criteria* for choosing partners rather than on the *process* of partner selection. Most articles assume a rational decision-making process based on very specific selection criteria. In fact, computers, search engines and pattern matching are now being used for partner selection. For example, potential collaborators can be found through a software program that compares individual patterns of Web browsing. Access logs are graphed and compared, so that similarities and differences can be discovered. Mechanisms to overcome privacy concerns are noted. Visual designs are used to enable users to explore possible matching interests with other users. (Payton 1999)

Existing partner selection literature assumes a straight-line start-to-finish selection process, such as that shown in Figure 2.2, Rational Partner Selection. (Duysters, Kok et al. 1999; Angeles and Nath 2000; Barringer and Harrison 2000; Hitt, Dacin et al. 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000) Depending on the motivation of the alliance as a whole, particular partner characteristics will be

more or less valuable. A logical selection criteria is developed, often prioritizing the partner characteristics of interest. Finally, a partner is rationally selected meeting all of the criteria.

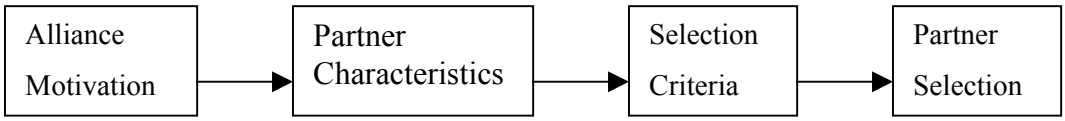

Figure 2.2 Rational Partner Selection

Some business alliances form as a result of personal ties between key decision makers. (Barringer and Harrison 2000) Conversely, some alliances may be avoided because of mistrust or personal differences among firms or decision-makers.

Angeles and Nath (2000) used questionnaires to gather data from 152 respondent firms on their trading partner selection criteria. Six factors appeared to be most important for both customers and suppliers, although they were more important for the customers. The factors were strategic commitment, trading partner flexibility, joint partnering for EDI, readiness for high-level EDI, EDI infrastructure, and communications. The focus for this article, however, was EDI and technology rather than just alliance partner selection. For the purposes of this work, factoring out the technology, the issues of interest are strategic commitment, trading partner flexibility, and communications.

High Touch Partnering theory stresses a balanced approach to alliance strategy, capability and partner selection. (Duysters, Kok et al. 1999) The authors of this study believe that a new perspective on partnership is needed to handle recent rapid economic and technological developments. They propose a more personal approach to partnership.

A number of articles and theories have been developed regarding partner selection in international alliances. Resource-based and organizational learning theory support observed partner selection among emerging and developed markets in North America and Europe. (Hitt, Dacin et al. 2000) Emerging market firms from Mexico, Poland and Romania looked for financial assets, technical capabilities, intangible assets and a willingness to share expertise in their selection of partners. The developed market firms from Canada, France and the U.S. chose their partners based on unique competencies and local market knowledge and access. Potential contributions that universities could bring to their alliances are quality products, reputation, expertise, financial resources, and access to overseas markets. (Saffu and Mamman 2000)

Similar results were obtained in a study of Turkish firms in international joint ventures with western partners. (Tatoglu and Glaister 2000) This study not only identified some criteria used to

select partners, but they also tied the criteria to motive. That is, as the motive for the alliance changed, so did the relative importance of some selection criteria.

Based on the preceding theories, Table 2.3 identifies a variety of partner selection criteria for a successful alliance in a specific domain.

PARTNER SELECTION CRITERIA	SOURCE
Personal contact and previous knowledge of partner	Barringer and Harrison 2000
Strategic commitment and support	Angeles and Nath 2000
Flexibility and willingness to adjust to change	Hendrick and Ellram 1993; Angeles and Nath 2000
Communications including willingness to talk and make the alliance work	Angeles and Nath 2000; Hendrick and Ellram 1993; Moody 1993
Personal interest in the alliance	Duysters, Kok et al. 1999
Financial assets available to put into the partnership	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000
Technical capabilities, people or machines needed for the alliance	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000
Intangible assets; other items of interest	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000
Willingness to share expertise and teaching resources	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000
Unique competencies	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000
Local market knowledge, access	Hitt, Dacin et al 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000

Table 2.3 Partner Selection Criteria

2.5 Organizational and Partner Characteristics

From the foregoing literature on alliance motivation and partner selection criteria, a number of organizational and desirable partner characteristics have emerged. Traditional organizational literature includes issues such as firm size, industry sector, corporate (organizational) culture and so on as firm differentiators. Alliance literature also notes perceived fairness, innovation, agility, speed to market, decision-making speed, and similar or complementary distinctiveness. The Das model of alliance success (Das and Teng 2000) contains mobility (ability to move resources from one firm to another), imitability (ability to imitate competitors), and substitutability (ability to substitute equivalent products). Even more extensive is the Reid model (Reid, Bussiere et al. 2001) for knowledge partners which mentions ability to develop and sustain valuable resources, absorptive capacity (ability to recognize the value of external knowledge, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends), combinative capability (ability to synthesize and apply knowledge to generate new applications), alliance experience, and appropriate design for knowledge exchange (ability to share knowledge, be flexible and responsive, non-bureaucratic, rapid decision-making, innovative, entrepreneurial).

From the above criteria, the following issues were identified as potential organizational and partner characteristics of interest for an alliance. These characteristics were used along with the previously identified alliance motivations to discover the 'best' partner in a particular situation. The list of characteristics was revised based on case study feedback.

- Firm Size (number of employees)
- Industry Sector (type of business)
- Corporate culture (informal, formal)
- Perceived fairness (honesty)
- Innovation
- Agility
- Speed to market
- Decision-making speed
- People (compatibility, time)
- Similar firm (supplementary value)
- Different firm (complementary value)
- Commitment to the Alliance (personal, strategic)
- Flexibility (willingness to adjust as necessary to make things work)
- Communications

- Assets (financial, technical, unique competencies, market knowledge)
- Willingness to share skills and expertise
- Mobility (ability to move resources from one firm to another)
- Imitability (ability to imitate competitors)
- Substitutability (ability to substitute equivalent products)
- Ability to develop and sustain valuable resources
- Absorptive capacity (ability to recognize the value of external knowledge, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends)
- Combinative capability (ability to synthesize and apply knowledge to generate new applications)
- Alliance experience
- Appropriate design for knowledge exchange (ability to share knowledge, be flexible and responsive, non-bureaucratic, rapid decision-making, innovative, entrepreneurial)

2.6 Summary

This Literature Review included sections on Interorganizational Relationships, Alliance Motivation, Decision Making and Partner Selection, and Organizational and Partner Characteristics. Section 2.2 discussed Interorganizational Relationships, including their advantages and disadvantages. Section 2.3 on Alliance Motivation looked at an organization's goals for partnership formation. Section 2.4, Decision Making and Partner Selection, reviewed general decision-making theory, as appropriate for partner selection. This section also included recent literature on domain-specific alliance partner selection. Section 2.5, Organizational and Partner Characteristics, provided organizational and partner characteristics of interest in alliances. The chapter concludes with a summary of the relevant literature for the conceptual framework.

Related work on partnership types and partnership success has been omitted, so that this research can focus on partner selection. Partnership types identify common definitions and terminology for alliances, joint ventures, consortia, and so on. Partnership success identifies two measures of success: the strength of the ongoing relationship and the outcomes of the alliance. Power and trust were also deliberately not included as major issues since they are both widely covered in the literature. (Pfeffer 1992) Finally, time has also deliberately not been included as a major factor in this work so that the research could concentrate on issues solely related to partner selection.

This is the state of related work in decision-making and partner selection today. This research extends existing work with the development of a partner negotiation model, documentation of

case study materials, and evidence supporting a number of propositions. Currently, there are no partner selection or negotiation models including both decision-making and choice. The researcher has developed this new model by combining existing partner selection and decision support theory with initial interviews to prepare a conceptual framework. The research then investigated actual partner selection methods through interviews, and compared the actual methods to the proposed theory to iteratively develop a reality-based model.

Chapter 3
Partner Negotiation Model

3.1 Introduction

Analysis of the existing alliance formation and partner selection literature identified a simple rational straight-line decision-making process for partner selection. To verify these academic theories, the researcher interviewed people from two university-industry partnerships. Their experience refuted the literature, showing cycles of partner selection, rationalization, organizational approval and a much more complex process than expected. Contrary to established alliance literature, the observed partner selection decision process was irrational and better described as *negotiation* rather than *selection*. Many partner choices were very personal, based on friendship, prior relationships and reputation. Contrary to accepted resource dependence theory, preliminary research also suggested that similar organizations made better partners than firms with complementary characteristics.

Initial partner selection models were developed from analysis of the literature, gaps found in the literature, documentation of organizational characteristics, and from information gathered from initial interviews. The researcher developed eight preliminary models based on rational frameworks, reputation, decision-making, waterfall and entity-relationship models. Over a number of months, the models were discussed with the initial interviewees and with other faculty members and graduate students in Computer Science and Management Sciences. After a great deal of thought and many revisions, the researcher finalized the Partner Negotiation Model. This final model was used as the basis for propositions and formal interview questions.

3.2 Initial Mini-Cases

To verify and supplement the partner selection information from the Literature Review, the researcher interviewed people who had been involved with two university-industry partnerships. Names of the consortia and people have been changed for privacy.

3.2.1 Mini-Case One, Computer Education

The first organization studied was Computer Education (CE). CE is affiliated with the University of Waterloo and provides continuing education courses in computer science to technical personnel in the software industry. Customers include various levels of government and

corporate clients such as banks and insurance companies. Students are employees who have not had formal technical education in 20 years or more. Programs are available in person and by distance education. At the time of this study, CE had six alliances: two universities in western Canada, a community college in Toronto, and three computer study institutes in Toronto, Halifax, and Denmark.

CE has three methods of course delivery: lectures using Waterloo teachers, distance education with CD ROMs and Waterloo tutors, and lectures with other personnel. As the Waterloo teachers and tutors were getting overloaded, CE decided that they needed to partner with other institutions in order to spread their courses to a broader audience and in order to get more instructors. Demand for courses was greater than the Waterloo instructors could handle, and the program was spreading geographically as well. The first alliance was Humber College in Toronto, followed by the Technical University of British Columbia.

A Steering Committee of experienced Waterloo professors approved the alliances as they were made. This committee was looking for publicly funded organizations as partners since they felt that private, for-profit organizations would have fewer scruples, taint Waterloo's reputation and would accept any student who could pay his tuition regardless of the student's suitability for the program. Since private companies are driven by profit, more students would make more profit.

The problem with this philosophy for CE's Director is that the public organizations work on a much slower timeframe than the for-profit sector. The Director would present CE information to a group or committee and be told that it would be 'considered' at the next meeting in three months or six months. The Director was a former IBM executive and expected to see things happen much faster than that. So an interesting issue in partner selection already is that the committee was looking for a 'similar' partner (non-profit) while the Director was looking for any good partner at all, preferably one who would sign up quickly.

Another interesting issue from the previous description is that the Director as the head of CE and the person making alliances has some clout in terms of which firms will be allies. He doesn't have as much clout as the committee, at least on paper, but since there are now for-profit alliances, he must have some influence. So this may be another organizational characteristic: personal drive of the contact person.

The Director started looking around in Canada for alliances. He started on the west coast with a Community College recommended by Software Human Resources Canada (SHRC). The Director investigated the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), a polytechnic organization, as an alliance partner. It was not as acceptable to the Steering Committee as the Technical University of British Columbia, however, and CE only wanted one alliance in British Columbia. Simon Fraser and the University of British Columbia were not interested because they had their own possibly similar organizations and courses and didn't have enough staff to handle CE too.

When the alliance was formed with Tech BC, the organization had no permanent physical campus and a minimal course calendar so they were eager to set up this CE alliance to build capability. The President of Tech BC pushed the alliance on their side. A professor with a PhD in Education was running the courses for Tech BC, but there were no solid policies in place for how to deliver the CE courses. This alliance gave them some real courses to offer. Now that they have a campus in Surrey, B.C. and their own courses, they are less likely to push the CE offerings.

Durham College was to have been the first alliance, but things did not work out. Durham College found out about CE at a large community college conference in Halifax where the Director gave a presentation. Durham College is close to General Motors in Oshawa, so the Director thought that this would make a good partner as they could draw GM employees and get GM to finance their CE education. Durham put a large advertisement in the Toronto Sun, featuring a beautiful woman, and thus attracted 140 potential students to an Information Session. Durham funded their own teacher to oversee the alliance and set up a lab with 16 workstations for the CE course. They got a number of students to sign up and went ahead and started teaching before the CE contract was signed.

As the above was happening, an article appeared in the Toronto Sunday Sun about a student suing Durham College for unfilled promises regarding technology courses and teachers. All technology courses at Durham then became suspect. Several students dropped out of the CE course because of the bad publicity. A Durham teacher cancelled all CE courses over a long weekend. Finally, Waterloo had to take over the CE offering at Durham. A total of 11 students graduated eventually.

Centennial College in Toronto wanted a partnership, but the Director said no because they were too close to Waterloo and Durham. In retrospect, Centennial might have been a good partner as they have a large market in Scarborough and probably lots of employers who would pay to have their employees study with the CE program.

An alliance with Humber College was started from the Director's personal friendship with the President of Humber. They trained and certified a number of instructors. They had just hired a teacher from TV Ontario and he understood the business world so was a good contact and salesperson for CE.

Control Data Institute hired a public relations firm to make a big splash of the CE alliance. It was reported that the public relations company forged the signature of the President of the University of Waterloo on an announcement. Needless to say, the announcement was pulled and the alliance was temporarily stalled. All advertising and public relations information must now go through CE.

The Broadleaf Institute alliance started in Halifax in the fall of 1999. A professor from Prince Edward Island heard about CE after the Director's conference talk. The professor, affiliated with Broadleaf at the time, then approached the Director to take on this alliance. The federal government was supplying funding for students to take the CE courses plus a number of other technical courses being offered by Broadleaf, such as Microsoft certification. Broadleaf now has the CE jurisdiction and territory for all of the Maritimes.

The Director first met IBS personnel when he presented CE at a Softworld conference in British Columbia. They met again at Softworld in Newfoundland and formed an alliance shortly thereafter. IBS jurisdiction is Denmark, and a few other European countries. This alliance started with government funding in Denmark for unemployed workers.

Mini-Case One issues are summarized in Table 3.1.

Partner Selection Process
Cyclic, depending on partner availability
Organizational approval needed on an ongoing basis
Director influencing the partners to be chosen

Organizational Characteristics
Good reputation because of affiliation with the University of Waterloo
Technical course modules ready to be delivered
High quality standards
An administrative structure in place to offer professional courses
Personal drive of the Director

Desirable Partner Characteristics
Publicly-funded (per Steering Committee)
University level rather than Community College or private organization
Quick decision-maker (per Director)
Good geographical location, related to sales territory
Resource dependency (partners must 'need' the alliance too for whatever reason)
Personal friendship between peers (Director and President) at the partner organizations

Alliance Motivation
Increase geographical reach
Increase numbers of students
Increase revenue
Increase numbers of instructors while maintaining quality
Obtain external funding
Expansion of any kind
More power for the Director
Legitimacy for the non-CE partners
Access to markets
Profit for the private companies

Table 3.1 Mini-Case One Summary

3.2.2 Mini-Case Two, Software Alliance

The Software Alliance (SA) was formed in 1992 and continued to 1996. The alliance was made up of eight companies in four cities plus the University of Waterloo plus a project manager. Open Text Corporation and Fulcrum Technologies founded the SA to get Strategic Technology Program (STP) funding from Industry, Science and Technology Canada (now Industry Canada). A primary motivation then was research funding.

The two major partners (Open Text Corporation, Waterloo and Fulcrum Technologies, Ottawa) were competitors. Both companies were full-text database vendors, built text search engines, were dominant in their field, and had an interest in expanding to structured text, SGML, and relational databases (RDB). They decided to work together to do joint research, to promote research with the University of Waterloo, and to get government funding. This indicates multiple motivations then for their partnership. The initial agreement was between the two Presidents, based on personal contacts.

The focus of the SA alliance was text search in relational databases. The partners felt that if they could get just a tiny piece of the RDB market, their organizations would acquire huge revenues. The two companies wanted to build on existing RDBs, such as those provided by IBM and Oracle. The text searching could either be built on top of the databases or built right in. The RDB market was big enough for both Open Text and Fulcrum, even if one got IBM and the other got Oracle, for example. They felt that their work would go faster and better, however, if they worked together. Another long-term motivation then was company expansion into new markets.

Project Objectives as later defined by the group included the following:

1. Complete core research extending database management technology to text-intensive data
2. Produce working prototypes
3. Apply technology to real-world problems
4. Present results to appropriate standards bodies, publications and third parties

Major deliverables included HQP prototypes, add-ons and applications, standards, newsletters, and a SA website.

Start up issues included finding the ‘right’ members, getting past their competitive natures (getting everyone to work together), defining a project where all partners win, financing, intellectual property rights, taxation issues, and agreeing on the mechanics. A formal joint venture agreement was put in place defining ownership interests, intellectual property, management, and scope of work and deliverables. Formal planning was done annually or semi-annually from 1993 to 1996, to keep the project on track and up-to-date with changing members and technology.

The University of Waterloo is a large, research-based university. It is known for industry contact, spin-off companies and for joint research with industry. The University of Waterloo was a necessary partner for the alliance as the funding *required* a university partner, Waterloo provided neutral ground for meetings and joint work, Waterloo researchers provided research expertise, the University of Waterloo was glue for the partners, and the university connection was a draw for Fulcrum and some of the smaller partners.

As noted previously, the two major partners (Open Text and Fulcrum Technologies) were competitors. Both companies built text search engines, were dominant in their field, and had an interest in expanding to structured text, SGML, and relational databases (RDB). Since the research funding was from Canadian government sources, all partners had to be Canadian to get this funding. Partners were from Waterloo, Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal. The Montreal partner may have been chosen because a Quebec partner was needed.

The large RDB companies – IBM and Oracle - were invited to join the SA, but were not interested. Open Text and Fulcrum needed RDBs, but IBM and Oracle didn't need text searching at that time. The alliance found additional partners by word of mouth, previous personal contacts, and suppliers to Open Text and Fulcrum.

The two other groups in the alliance were SGML (document format) developers and system integrators. The SGML developers were pretty much the only ones in the world at that time. They were small companies, and were tied closely to Open Text or Fulcrum. SoftQuad Inc., Toronto, InContext Corporation, Toronto, and Software Exotica were the SGML tool developers. All are now out of business or have been bought out by larger companies.

Any number of system integrators could have been chosen. These particular small firms had personal contacts with Open Text or Fulcrum. Open Text or Fulcrum may have been concerned that a large system integrator, such as Andersen Consulting, would take over the alliance. Graphnetix Systems Ltd., Montreal, Public System Software (PSS) Limited, Ottawa and Megalith Technologies in Ottawa were the system integrators. PSS is now owned by Open Text.

The SGML developers and the system integrators knew nothing about text, so were overwhelmed in the early stages of the alliance. One of the partners left after six months (Software Exoterica), perhaps because they were overwhelmed or they didn't know the text searching area enough or they had to put up a large amount of their own money to get the government funding. Open Text and Fulcrum had to put up about $3 to $4 million in order to get matching government funding. The smaller partners needed about $500,000 to get their matching funds.

A contractual joint venture was established with a 36-page document approved by the Boards. The document covers ownership, intellectual property, management structure and responsibilities,

legal issues, and a statement of work and deliverables. Intellectual Property belonged to the individual companies, but the other companies could share object code, see demonstrations, and get exposure to each other's successes. The companies jointly developed specifications and standards for text searching, but then individually developed prototypes and competing products. They were the biggest and best in the world, if not the only companies doing this work. Ontario has world domination in text searching. The alliance didn't own anything because the specifications and standards were public. The smaller companies got great exposure to big projects being done by Open Text and Fulcrum. Open Text and Fulcrum got the smaller companies to develop SGML code for them, to integrate parts, to build front ends, and so on. The larger companies also got more customers from contacts with the smaller firms.

Project management was also absolutely necessary. A consultant was hired to do all of the paperwork and arrange meetings and generally make the partnership work. The project plan was fully documented with schedule, cost and effort, statement of work, architectural diagrams, and so on. The project manager established planning rules as follows:

- Every activity must have a tangible deliverable
- Each team must deliver at least one result every 6 months for peer review
- All schedules must be supported with forecasts of effort and cost
- Executives of each partner must commit in writing to its part of the implementation

Public specifications and standards were the major output of the alliance. Each firm also had individual deliverables as a result of this work. The Alliance concluded its work in 1996. In 1997, the SA received a Conference Board of Canada and an NSERC award for outstanding university-industry research collaboration. (University-Industry R&D Partnerships Award) The lead Alliance people from Open Text and Fulcrum Technologies have both gone on to be recognized world wide for their contributions to XML. As they were key personnel involved in the SA, their personal success may be identified as another indicator of positive alliance performance. The companies' combined income at the start of the project was only about $3 million annually. All of them grew immensely during the tenure of this alliance though, so all succeeded very well. Some of Kenichi Ohmae's (Chairman, McKinsey & Company, Japan) suggestions for a positive collaboration include personal commitment, allocation of management time, mutual respect and trust, mutual benefit (win-win), flexibility to change over time, and establishment of a tight legal contract. (Bleeke and Ernst 1994) The SA partners did all of these things and produced a very high-performing consortium.

Some lessons documented by the project manager and partners:

- Devote about 5% of the project cost to centralized coordination and management
- Document the alliance management structure and put it in place early
- Ensure face-to-face contact early in the alliance
- Ensure that leaders are objective and unbiased in this alliance work

- Obtain one strong team leader per partner
- Obtain strong leaders for all working groups
- Establish small dedicated teams rather than large part-time groups
- Differentiate business and technical management
- Define intellectual property rights before work begins
- Be flexible; expect change
- Focus work on specific end results, but be prepared for these to change
- Specify plans, schedules, deliverables, and so on in writing
- Schedule deliverables every 6 months or less to stay on track
- Ensure that work is distributed equally among partners
- Communicate regularly

Mini-Case Two issues are summarized in Table 3.2.

Partner Selection Process
Key partners were sought first
Compromises were made when first choice partners were not available
Ongoing search for partners as needed

Organizational Characteristics
High-tech industry
Young: less than 10 years old
Aggressively growing
Strong research links to the University of Waterloo

Desirable Partner Characteristics
Some similar firms
Suppliers were smaller, so power and control issues in the alliance
Small system developers meant that OT and Fulcrum could remain in control of the alliance
Non-profit research facility: The University of Waterloo provided a large, research-oriented university with many industry contacts, spin-off companies, and joint research with industry. It also provided neutral ground, research expertise, glue to bind the industry partners, and a legitimacy draw for the smaller partners.
IBM and Oracle were invited, but declined. They didn't need text searching at the time, and there would have been big power and control issues if they had joined.

Alliance Motivation
Obtain research funding
Develop new products
Increase revenue
Obtain legitimacy (smaller companies in particular)
Company expansion into new markets
Resource dependence (Open Text and Fulcrum *needed* SGML developers and system integrators)
Do joint research
Promote research with the University of Waterloo

Table 3.2 Mini-Case Two Summary

3.2.3 Analysis of the Initial Mini-Cases

Referring back to the research questions, some answers from the mini-case studies may be identified as follows:

1. **How do organizations choose collaborative partners?**

CE found its collaborative partners through *prior relationships*, *networking* and *advertising*. In general, CE had a particular territory of interest for expansion and found partners through personal contact initiatives.

In the SA, collaborative partners were found through *prior relationships*. Open Text knew the University of Waterloo researchers since the company was founded from the university. Open Text knew Fulcrum Technologies as a competitor and the presidents knew each other on a personal level. The other smaller partners were all suppliers to Open Text or Fulcrum.

It should be noted that neither IBM nor Oracle joined the partnership although invited to do so. Since there was no prior business or personal relationship and no clear motivation for these companies to join, they didn't. The consortium would have certainly been much different if IBM or Oracle were involved, as the goals of these companies may not have aligned well with the smaller firms. As well, there would have presumably been *power* issues in that the larger companies may have wanted to *control* the alliance.

2. **Why do organizations choose a particular partner?**

CE chose particular partners based on the partner characteristics identified as important from its board. This selection was tempered, however, by the availability of partners and by the decision-making speed required by CE's Director.

Several factors affected the SA partnership. The strong relationship between Open Text and the University of Waterloo made Waterloo a prime candidate to be the university partner required for research funding. The personal relationship between the presidents of Open Text and Fulcrum made Fulcrum a good candidate as another major player. Even though the companies were competitors, their executive leaders were moving the companies in the same direction so it made sense to have them work together as collaborators in new research.

The smaller companies were also chosen because of previous relationships with Open Text or Fulcrum. Because the SGML developers were pretty much the only ones in the world at that time, they were necessary for the alliance. The system integrators all had worked previously with the larger partners. Larger companies, such as Andersen, were *deliberately* not chosen, as they would have upset the balance of power.

Additional similar questions may be answered as follows:

3. Is there an optimum partner?

From the previous discussion, the University of Waterloo certainly seemed to be an ideal university partner because of its experience with industry and its founding role with Open Text. Similarly, the SGML developers were optimum as they were the only such firms in the world. Fulcrum Technologies and the system integrators could have been chosen from a number of competitors, but again all seemed optimum for this alliance because of their positive prior relationships.

4. What qualities does each partner look for or find in the other?

The qualities of interest for the SA related to the research funding requirements and to the type of new research that Open Text and Fulcrum wanted to explore. Specific qualities for the partners of this consortium were that they were Canadian, had research experience, and expressed interest in text searching in relational databases.

5. Why is this important? How does it contribute to the dynamic?

The joint effort to develop new text searching software for relational databases overcame the differences amongst the partners. One partner, the University of Waterloo, was very large, but non-profit. Two of the industry partners, Open Text and Fulcrum, were relatively large. The other industry partners were very small. Each partner, however, brought a particular expertise to the consortium – research experience, knowledge of text searching, SGML capability, and so on. The combination of talents plus the desire to work together to develop new standards and products jointly allowed the consortium to succeed.

6. What factors are important in collaborative partner selection?

Alliance motivation, personal connections and similar organizational characteristics affected the partnerships made by both of these mini-case studies. Alliance motivation is the trigger for a serious search for a partner. The final choice, however, is often based on prior knowledge of the potential associate and on a strong synergy among the partners.

3.3 Model Development

Preliminary Partner Selection models were built on the basis of rational decision-making and straight-line processes as documented in the partnership literature. As the models matured, however, it became obvious that they could not explain much of the empirical evidence gathered from initial case study interviews. For example, both of the case studies indicated that they had 'first choice' partners who had not worked out for whatever reason, leading to a new search for 'second choice' partners. The cases also implied the notion of 'key partners', which were not identified in the partnership literature.

A variety of issues and data models were explored. Linear and reputational frameworks were developed as shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. Figure 3.1, a Linear Framework for Partner Selection, combines Alliance Motivation and Organizational Characteristics and compares them to the Characteristics of the potential Partner. Then, moderated by Resource Availability and depending on Selection Criteria, a balanced Partner Selection can be made. Similarly, Figure 3.2, a Reputational Framework for Partner Selection, compares Organizational Reputation to Potential Partners' Reputations and makes a reasoned Partner Selection.

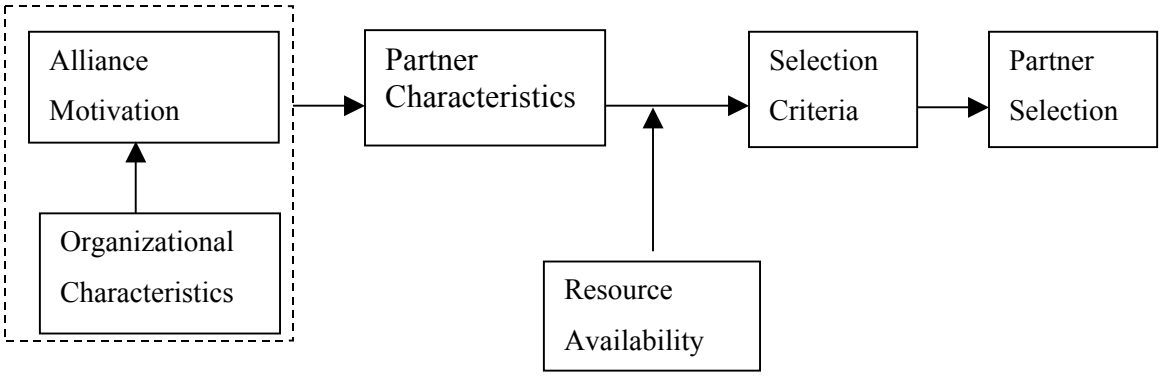

Figure 3.1 A Linear Framework for Partner Selection

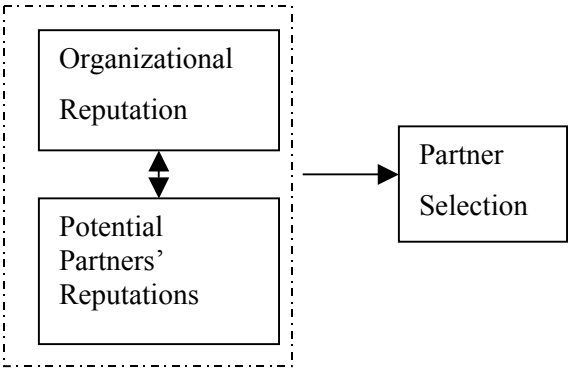

Figure 3.2 A Reputational Framework for Partner Selection

Once it became obvious that the status quo models were not appropriate, other issues and models were considered that might be able to better explain the 'real-world' partnerships that had been observed.

Two concerns that needed to be considered were 'cycling back' or negotiation and 'key partners'. Engineering and Computer Science use a number of standard models, such as finite state machines, entity-relationship, waterfall, and spiral models. Finite state machines are excellent for describing products that can be modeled in terms of states and transitions between states. The method appeared to be too rational and mathematical, however, to explain partner selection. Similarly, the spiral model did not appear to be appropriate because it does not allow for cycling back or negotiation. It models just one circular motion, adding more and more detail. Entity-relationship and waterfall models were therefore left for further review.

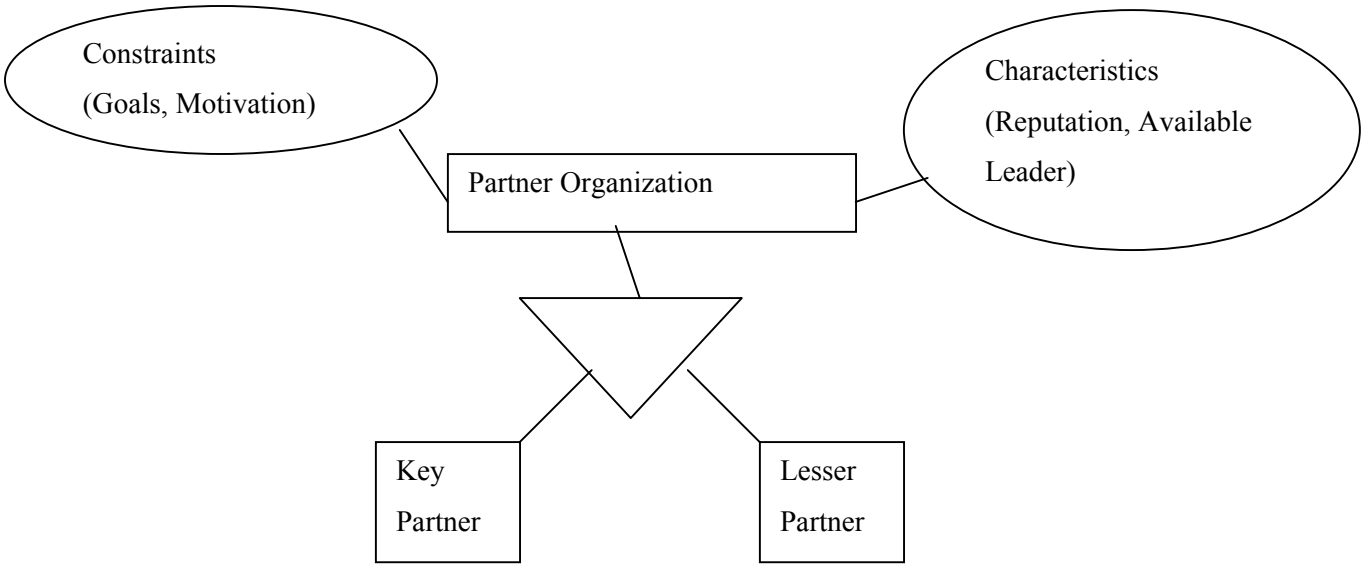

Figure 3.3 Entity-Relationship Model 1 (Partner)

Three variations of Entity-Relationship Models were developed. Model 1, shown in Figure 3.3, describes a Partner, Model 2, Figure 3.4, describes a Partnership, and Model 3, Figure 3.5, describes the beginnings of a Partnership Process. While the models described the notion of different types of partners, such as a Key Partner very well, overall they appeared to be too open and uninformative. As well, entity-relationship models are meant to describe data 'at rest' so again the model fit did not seem to be quite right to describe an active process.

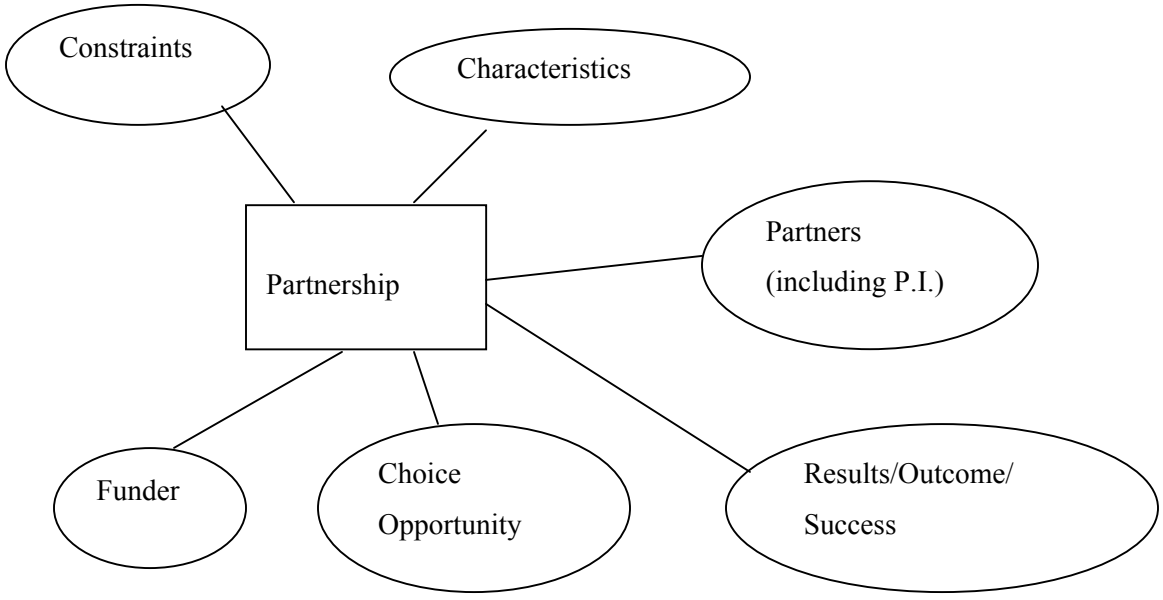

Figure 3.4 Entity-Relationship Model 2 (Partnership)

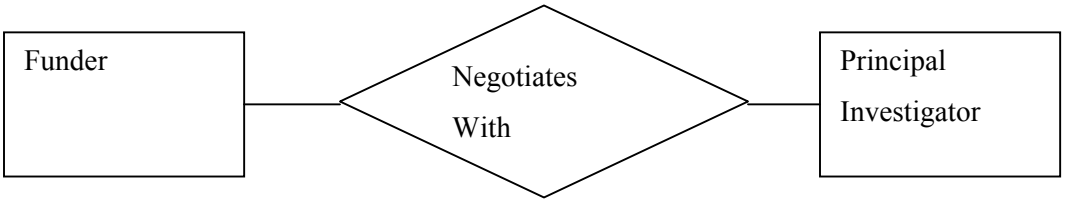

Figure 3.5 Entity-Relationship Model 3 (Partnership Process)

The Waterfall Model, illustrated in Figure 3.6, began with the idea of a rational top-down choice of partner, but allowed cycling back from the Desired Outcome. That is, once a partnership was formed, new funding could be obtained and new partners could be selected if necessary. This model begins with negotiation between the Government and Principal Investigator (or any Funder and Partnership Driver). Once the preliminary negotiation is done, the Key Partners are chosen by the Principal Investigator. Lesser Partners are later chosen by both the Principal Investigator and the Key Partners. All of the partners work together to achieve a Desired Outcome and then the process can be repeated for a new partnership.

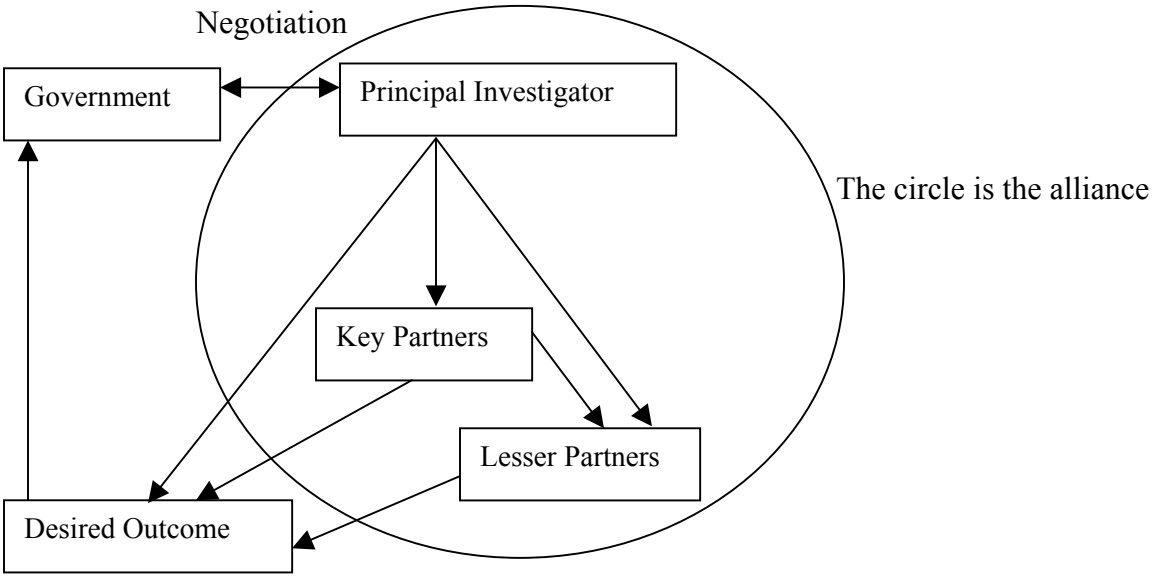

Figure 3.6 Waterfall Model

The Waterfall Model became the template for the final Partner Negotiation Model. In considering the model, however, several questions came to mind. Where does the partner

negotiation process begin? With the partnership motivation, the government (or other funder), the principal investigator, or some synergetic combination of the three? What do the lines in this model represent?

The original Partner Negotiation Model only had two cycles – one for deal-making and the second for partner selection. In a second version, connections from all partners to their organization were noted. Finally, an Organizational Cycle was added after empirical confirmation from data collection and analysis.

Naming conventions also evolved with the model. The original model began with the notion of a Funder and Principal Investigator in the deal-making cycle since these are terms commonly used in university partnerships. The terminology was changed to Sponsor and Driver as the work progressed to broaden the range of people or organizations involved in deal-making on both sides.

3.4 Process and Model

3.4.1 Partner Negotiation Process

As noted in Section 3.2, research indicated that several elements were incorrect or missing from many academic partner selection models. In particular, the following assumptions of existing models could be better described.

1. Existing work assumes a straight-line start to finish selection process. In practice, there appeared to be a back and forth negotiation process.
2. The straight-line partner selection process was more likely a cycle.
3. Existing literature did not differentiate among partners, other than perhaps the suggestion of an alliance ‘driver’. Many differences were observed in partners and there appeared to be many different roles.
4. Existing models did not differentiate informal personal negotiation (deal-making) among a small number of people from formal organizational documentation.
5. There was no mention of organizational approval, negotiation or involvement.
6. Choice of partners was often not a simple rational decision. Social network, reputation and other factors could be key indicators of choice.

1 Partner Negotiation

This research suggests that 'partner selection' is a misnomer; what is really happening is 'partner negotiation'. Academic literature describes a partner 'selected' based on a number of specific characteristics using a seemingly rational decision-making process. If that partner is not available for whatever reason, however, partner negotiation (and rationalization) takes place for a second or third best partner. Depending on the alliance and the various goals of each party, it may not be a simple task to just *select* a desirable partner.

Negotiation also takes place when some partners are chosen before others. The first or second partner may influence the choice of subsequent partners.

Partner negotiation can begin with a partner, a funding agency, a principal investigator and/or each of their goals or motivations. For one partner, the goal may be to find a partner or funder to achieve a specific goal. Simultaneously, the funders are looking for partners to work for them. Government funders, for example, may have a goal of connecting Canada electronically or supporting higher education or getting re-elected. By supporting graduate students or a research project, the funders can say that they are supporting higher education and distance education and connectivity Canada-wide.

The funders cannot achieve their goals, however, without someone in higher education to help them. Similarly, the university community cannot support its work without research money. It appears that there must be at least one reciprocal goal to initiate a partnership.

The process then is negotiation between principal investigator (organization or person) and funder for a tentative deal. The deal is finalized. Final partners are negotiated, depending on resource availability, constraints, and other issues. The partner negotiation cycles back to the principal investigator as additional partners are added.

2 Cyclic Process

Partners are not rationally chosen one at a time. The sponsor and driver may initially have particular partners in mind for key partners. Once those partners are approached, however, they may not be interested or they may have previous commitments. As first choice partners are eliminated, the team will approach second and third choice candidates until suitable key partners have been found. Once these critical partners have joined the partnership, they may have their own input regarding additional partners. This cycle of partner negotiation and selection will continue until the partnership stabilizes.

3 Different Kinds of Partners

Once the funding and terms of agreement are met, key and other final partners are negotiated. Some tentative partners may have been proposed during the proposal and negotiation stages, but final partners now need to be cemented. The final partners would ideally be the tentative partners, but this is not always possible. One or more of the tentative partners may now have another project underway and therefore not have time for this project.

Different partners have different roles to play in the partnership. The sponsor and driver make an initial informal deal and get the alliance underway. The key partners form the cornerstone of the alliance and help determine its focus and strength. Additional partners are added as needed to round out the partnership, but generally have less critical functions. Partners are therefore not necessarily either equal or similar.

Different kinds of partners may lead to diverse partnership structures, establishing hierarchies or peer-to-peer relationships. Some networks, such as Amazon or Barnes & Noble, operate with a central star structure. Others like Reuters Greenhouse Fund established networks of networks. A large social network is built of companies working with other companies. (Kanter 2001)

4 Deal-Making Cycle and Choice Opportunity

There were several levels or phases of partnership formation, including an early deal-making cycle and real or anticipated choice opportunity. The deal-making typically takes place between a small number of people and is very informal until a tentative deal is reached. Once that happens, the initial contacts may have to verify the terms of the deal or seek approval or provide benefits to others in their organization. Formal organizational documentation may follow.

Barnes & Noble has the manager who signs a deal for them also manage the deal. (Kanter 2001) The manager therefore becomes both the Sponsor and the Driver in the model.

5 Organizational Negotiation

Ongoing organizational negotiation was observed at all stages of partner selection. During the initial deal-making cycle, the sponsor and driver may work one-on-one until they find a partnership template that is suitable for both sides. At this time, both parties may need to negotiate with their organizations to obtain agreement in principle for the deal. Similarly, as key partners and additional partners are added, the partnership is solidified and the partner negotiation continues. At that time, various parties will need to seek organizational or administrative approval.

Also, when a negotiator moves to another organization, two forms of organizational negotiation may be needed. There must be a new negotiator at the first organization who may or may not want to be in the partnership. Second, the original negotiator may want to bring his or her new organization into the partnership.

6 Partner Choice

Existing models assume rational decision-making, based on a rigid set of characteristics or criteria. In fact, criteria may change depending on resource availability and other factors. For example, current work offers no sense of 'time' or 'timing'. Once the partnership was established, there was more decision-making and less negotiation. Some things were already set in stone, so the longer the partnership was in place, the less flexible or adaptable it was.

3.4.2 Partner Negotiation Model

The original view of a Partner Selection Model has instead become a Partner Negotiation Model, describing a group of three negotiation cycle processes. Observations showed that partners were not being selected at all, but rather negotiated depending on a number of constraints. Figure 3.7, the final Partner Negotiation Model, outlines the processes producing a final selection of alliance partners. These processes include a Deal-making Cycle, an Organizational Cycle, and a Partner Selection cycle. The result of negotiations is the selection of a number of appropriate partners.

There is negotiation and adjustment throughout the partnership process. First there is negotiation and adjustment of initial goals until a compatible match is found between the Funder and the Principal Investigator. Since both sides generally will want to make a deal, there is good reason to believe that they will find common ground. As part of this process, there is negotiation of the particular Choice Opportunity between the two sides. A second negotiation with each Organization will finalize the specific deal and identify constraints. Third is the negotiation and adjustment of Key Partners as first, second and sometimes third choice partners are approached and accepted or rejected. Finally, negotiation of lesser Partners with both the Key Partners and the Principal Investigator will complete the partnership.

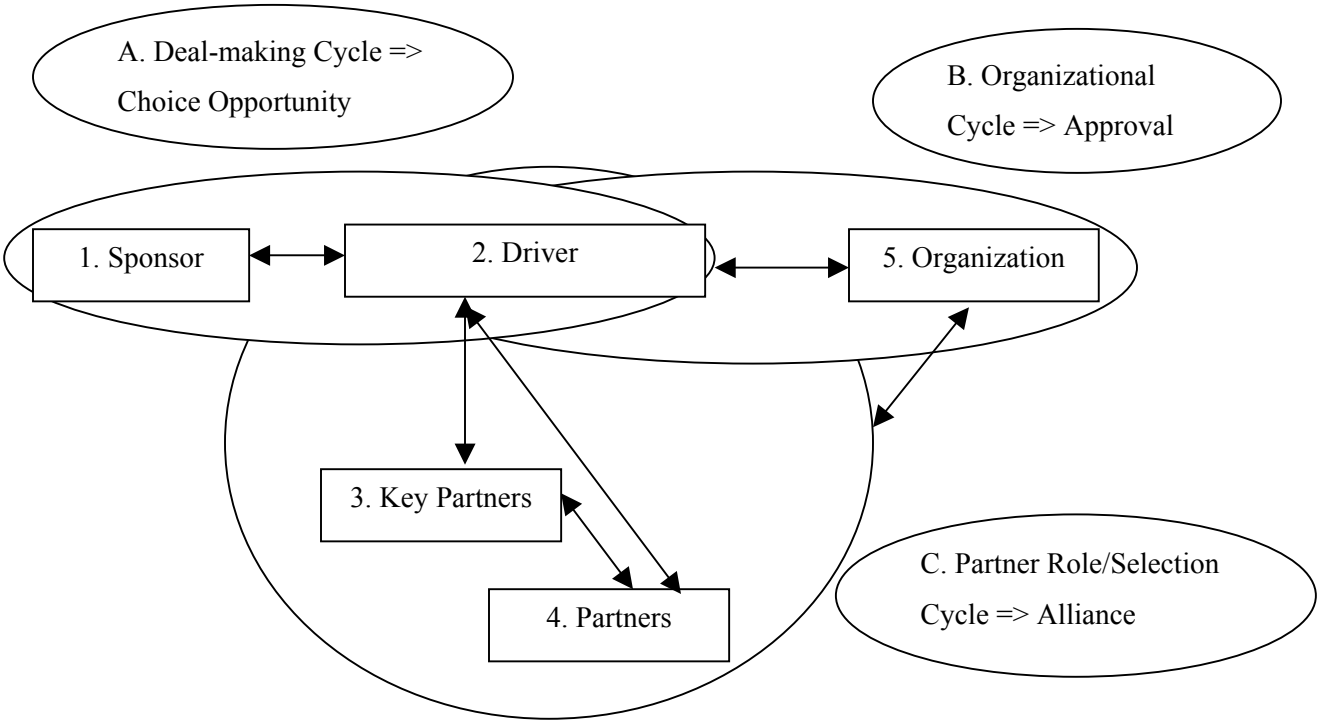

Figure 3.7 Partner Negotiation Model

Rectangles represent basic elements (people or organizations) in the model.

Lines with double-arrows represent the two-way back and forth negotiations.

Ovals represent the three negotiation cycles.

3.4.2.1 Model Elements

1. Sponsor

The Sponsor is the person, organization or sponsor who has control over financial and other resources to allow the partnership to go ahead. This terminology was deliberately changed from Funder to Sponsor to indicate a broader view than monetary resources.

2. Driver

The Driver is the person who is the motivating force behind the action and implementation of the partnership. This person doesn't necessarily do the work, but makes sure that the work gets done.

3. Key Partners

Key Partners are the necessary partners with critical skills, access to resources, or other highly desirable traits. They form the core of the partnership and help to attract other partners, to increase the visibility and reputation of the partnership and add to its status.

4. Partners

These are the people or organizations who round out the partnership to a suitable size or structure.

5. Organization

This represents the administration in each partner organization. Approval is needed from at least one level of administration and often several levels, depending on the nature of the partnership.

3.4.2.2 Model Cycles

A. Deal-Making Cycle

The first negotiation process is the Deal-making Cycle. This identifies work back and forth between two negotiators to finalize a concrete Choice Opportunity (CO). The two negotiators are people representing the Sponsor (i.e. government) and a Driver (i.e. a university). The Sponsor is the organization or person with the financial or other resources to support the partnership. The Driver is the person who will organize and control the work to be done, including gathering partners as needed. The Sponsor and the Driver will both have sets of goals to be met and these will need to be mutually agreed and negotiated as part of this Deal-Making Cycle.

The Choice Opportunity is a vague hypothetical deal that can be made between them. The partnership exhibits a synergy of events, timing, and so on leading to a Choice Opportunity. The two negotiators want to make a deal, based on their individual Organizational Goals. The Sponsor, for example, might want to have universities using CANARIE, a Canadian government research network. The Driver might want to bring research funds into the university. The two negotiators work together until they find a suitable positive concrete CO, such as delivery of Online Course Materials using the CANARIE network. During this initial negotiation, the Driver may propose a number of potential alliance partners for the Online Course Materials work.

B. Organizational Cycle (1)

Once the two people or organizations have agreed that a deal is possible, they may have to check back with others in their organizations for final approval or authorization. The two negotiators return to their respective organizations to obtain input and approval from the organization. The higher the negotiators are in the organization, the less approval will be needed. The better the CO for a particular organization, the less approval will be needed. This second set of negotiations between the negotiators and their organizations is the Organizational Cycle. Both the Sponsor and the Driver need to negotiate with their organizations to get corporate buy-in on the potential CO. After organizational approval, the final deal is reached. A critical mass of potential partners may need to commit to the partnership before a deal can be confirmed.

C. Partner Role/Selection Cycle

Once the CO approval is finalized, the deal can be signed and go ahead. This begins the Partner Selection Cycle where actual alliance partners are chosen. The Partner Selection Cycle is a process of negotiation to achieve mutually satisfactory partners. Depending on the size of project, the Driver will choose Key Partners first. Key Partners are those partners absolutely needed to make for a good alliance. They might be better quality or better reputation partners, or the Sponsor might mandate them. As the Key Partners sign on, they become part of the Partner Selection Cycle themselves by providing input on additional partners. For example, a Key Partner may absolutely want or not want another Partner proposed by the Driver. The Key Partners and the Driver will negotiate mutually acceptable goals, check with their organizations for approval, and then finalize their agreements. There may be some minimal set of partners needed to establish feasibility, making the role of Key Partner significant in advancing the process.

Similarly, other Partners will be chosen after Key Partners, negotiating their own goals and obtaining their own organizational approval. At this stage, the Driver and the Key Partners may not need to obtain any further organizational involvement since presumably they have already obtained a high-level blanket approval to go ahead with the partnership as appropriate.

B. Organizational Cycle (2)

As the above Partner Selection Cycle is going on, another round of Organizational Cycle negotiation begins. This time, all of the partners, including the Driver, the Key Partners and the other Partners, must negotiate with their organizations to obtain input and approval for the partnership. Once again, the higher the negotiators are in the organization, the less approval will be needed. Once again, the better the CO for a particular organization, the less approval will be needed. The higher profile the partnership, the less approval will be needed. The higher the quality and reputation of the other partners, the less approval will be needed.

3.5 Propositions

It was hypothesized in the early stages of this research that partner selection would be rational, straight-forward and simple. Results were expected to include a linear process of partner selection based on rational decision-making. Instead, there was a complex process of negotiation cycles, including funders, drivers, different types of partners, and organizational approval. Further, observation showed that decision-making was not only based on specific (or ambiguous) partner requirements, but also on resource availability, social network, reputation, and politics.

Initial interviewees described a process of partner negotiation rather than selection. Both of the initial case studies had potential partners that they would have liked to have in their partnership, but ended up without. The potential partners perhaps were over-extended with other partnerships or they were too busy for a partnership at this time or they were not interested in a partnership with this particular group. For each of these excuses and for each missed partner, the partnership team would just regroup and go out to find another appropriate partner. The second partner would perhaps not be quite as good as the potential first, but they would provide some advantage for the partnership. Drivers of the partnerships spent a good deal of time negotiating with potential partners to convince at least some to sign on. There was a sense of discussion, conferencing, compromising, cooperation and collaboration. The partnership drivers would have liked to have selected their first choices, but that often was not possible. Partner selection is an interactive, dynamic process.

Propositions were developed from the initial mini-case studies and the Partner Negotiation Model. Four major issues were identified.

3.5.1 Deal-Making Cycle

P1: The process begins with a *Deal-making Cycle* of *informal negotiation* between a Sponsor and a Driver, leading to *formal documentation* of a Choice Opportunity.

The first cycle described by the initial interviewees was one of deciding exactly what the partnership would encompass, who might be appropriate partners, how much money would be involved, the main focus of the collaboration, and so on. This informal negotiation between the partnership catalysts later led to formal documentation of a final agreement. During this cycle, the project details are negotiated, specific hard constraints are defined and funding is quantified. Once the detail is agreeable to both parties, a formal Partnership Agreement is documented.

This proposition was measured by the number and nature of the preliminary negotiations identified in interviews and archival data. As well, the number of instances of terms such as formal, bureaucratic, conventional, choice, opportunity, prospect and so on were counted.

3.5.2 Partnership Roles

P2: Partners are chosen to play different *Partnership Roles*, both partner negotiation and operational roles.

There are at least four partner negotiation roles. The Sponsor provides the money, motivation or choice opportunity for the partnership to exist at all. The Driver gets the partnership started and keeps the momentum going. Key partners are chosen based on experience or reputation to build a strong foundation for the partnership and as bait for future partners. Other partners are chosen to round out the partnership and fill in gaps in requirements.

Initial interviewees described different work to be done and different roles both in partner negotiation and operationally in the partnership. In particular, in the Partner Selection process, they described the four roles which were noted previously:

1. A Sponsor to provide resources
2. A Driver to get the alliance going
3. Key Partners to build the alliance and attract other partners
4. Other Partners as needed to build the alliance

Operationally, partners also have various roles and responsibilities, different amounts of time spent on the alliance, different influence in decision-making, different control issues, and different amounts of funding. In terms of partnership development, the people involved vary from the Presidential level of the organization through middle management to the line workers in the organization who actually make the partnership work. Similar roles often emerge within the partnership itself, depending on its size and structure.

Since the research focus is partner negotiation and selection, the measurement of this proposition concentrated on the identification of the four roles of Sponsor, Driver, Key Partner and Partner. Interview material, archival data and partnership documentation was searched for words such as role, responsibility, task, part, job, title, position and function. The operational roles were separated from the partnership roles as needed.

3.5.3 Organizational Approval Cycles

P3: The process includes cycles of *Organizational Approval*.

During partnership negotiations, observations showed that organizations and organizational approval are part of the negotiation process. Many players checked back with their organization

periodically to ensure that the current deal was suitable for them. This organizational approval cycle occurred during the initial deal-making, as key partners were negotiated, and even as lesser partners were added, depending on the partnership structure and the impact of the partnership on an organization. Partners appeared to need more or less organizational approval depending on their position in the organization. Those at an upper management level could single-handedly make decisions and approve partnerships with much less organizational approval than people at lower levels in the organization. Similarly, people in more open, less-hierarchical organizations were able to negotiate with less approval needed.

This proposition was measured by the number and nature of data related to organizations and approval. Data were scanned for terms such as organization, institution, university, department, dean, manager, approve, endorse, support, grant, consent, sanction, allow, authorize, and so on.

3.5.4 Criteria and Rationale

P4: Partner choice is not a *simple rational* decision; it may be based on specific (or *ambiguous*) *partner requirements*, but also on *resource availability*, *social networks*, *reputation*, and *politics*.

Partner negotiation, selection and choice is a very complex decision. Many factors may be part of this decision, including personal relationships and previous knowledge of a partner or its reputation. Partner selection literature and theory describe a simple rational process of decision-making based on predetermined partnership criteria. In fact, many partner selection processes and rationale were observed that were informal, undocumented, and irrational. In some cases, changes in composition of the decision-making group changed the choice of partners. If the process was indeed rational and firm, the choice of partners should not change.

Initial interviews suggested that partners are selected based on a combination of the following criteria:

(a) Specific requirements

(b) Resource availability

(c) Social network

(d) Reputation

(e) Organizational politics

(f) Ambiguity

(a) Key partners must meet one of the specific requirements, which may relate to resources, geography, reputation or other criteria. Other partners are identified based on the choice opportunities. Specific requirements are often established as part of the Deal-making Cycle described in Proposition 1.

(b) The more available potential partners, the more likely the partners will match specific constraints exactly.

(c) Potential partners are identified and negotiated through a social network. This suggests that the partnership may be among *People* more than among *Institutions*. The social network is work-related and provides first or second-hand knowledge of people. The more I've chosen you for a partnership (or the more experience I have with you), the more likely you will be to choose me for subsequent partnerships. As well, the alliance process is more efficient because of a social network. This ties to both how and why partners are chosen. The partner selection goes faster or more efficiently because the decision-makers already have some knowledge of the potential partners. There is an efficiency of finding people or organizations. Past experience makes the deal-making easier and faster. People trust each other and assume honest behaviour.

Partner selection works with specific hard constraints first. Once minimum criteria are met, however, the social network kicks in. Story-telling can justify the choice of any partner by justifying the goal and the partner and the process. That is, selectively telling the 'good' reasons why this partner was chosen rather than telling the real, underlying reason, which is that the partner is a friend and a favour was owed.

People moving from one organization to another support this social network because all players now have the second-hand knowledge of the person who moved. When partners move, they often get their new institution involved as a new partner. The previous institution of such partners may leave the partnership, but often remains in the partnership with a new contact person. The partnership and the social network have therefore both grown with a new institution and a new person.

(d) Organizational reputation is key to partner selection. (The term 'reputation' is used here as expressed by interviewees. Brewer, Gates and Goldman (2002) use the term 'prestige' in their discussion of U.S. higher education.) The higher the organizational reputation, within limits, the more likely the organization will be selected to be a partner. Organizations are more likely to choose partners with similar reputations rather than those that are much higher or much lower than others in the partnership. Significantly higher reputation partners are more likely to control both the partnership and the lower reputation organizations. Higher reputation partners provide a lower partnership risk and therefore less justification to management. Higher reputation partners can also provide more positive publicity for the partnership, thereby increasing the reputation of the partnership and attracting better subsequent partners. These issues are illustrated in Figure 3.8.

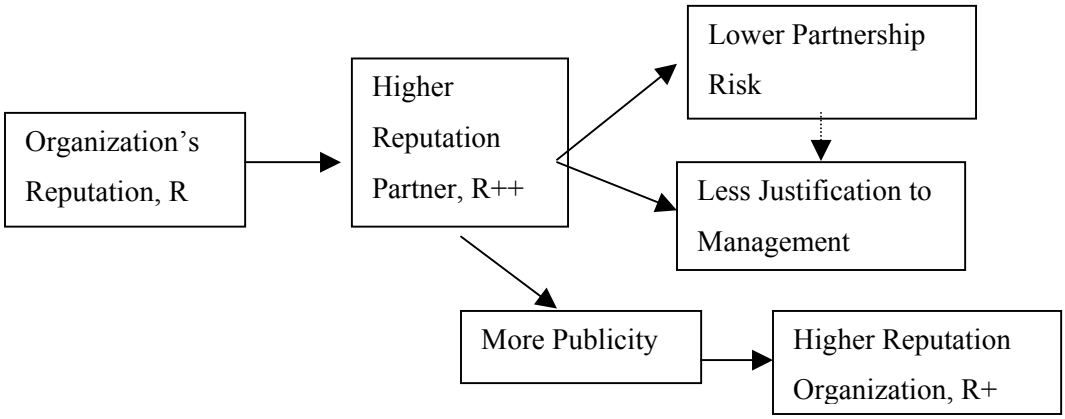

Figure 3.8 Partner Reputation Issues

(e) Politics may play a role in terms of whether a partner is selected or not. The word 'politics' may be used in a number of ways. In this context, the politics could be through government agencies such as the inclusion of a partner from Quebec or partners from across Canada. The word could also be used, however, in terms of people who were in favour or not depending on past experiences. In this regard, the politics is tied very heavily to the social network. The more positively your organization or you as a person are perceived by the partner selection group, the more likely you will be chosen to be a partner. The more past positive experience you have had with existing partners, the more likely you will be chosen to be a partner.

(f) The extent to which a partnership agreement can contain ambiguous language determines how flexible partners can be in interpreting their obligations. The more ambiguous the partnership agreement, the more likely that partners will feel that they are able to fulfill the terms. As the flexibility increases (constraints are loosened or eased), then partner choice (variability) increases.

An ambiguous Project Title or fuzzy language in the contract can allow a number of meanings for the same wording. This ambiguity is part of the communication structure in formal documents, contracts, reports to government, and requests for proposal from government. The more ambiguous the wording, the more likely that any partner will meet the criteria.

Similarly, work to be done is constrained at different universities and other organizations, depending on their time and expertise. The institutions may have a current focus on education, collaborations, wireless technologies, and so on. Government constraints are tied to funding priorities, such as distance education, higher education, Canadian networks, and coast-to-coast coverage. Ambiguous partnership agreements can allow many projects to appear to fit appropriately to the criteria. Often partnerships are undertaken between existing university

projects and existing government programs, both of which have been adjusted slightly to meet the ambiguous partnership criteria.

On the other hand, if organizational constraints prevent ambiguity in wording for flexibility in interpretation, partner selection will be constrained. This can be particularly problematic in an innovation project where some degree of open-endedness in requirements may be necessary to limit the partners' risk.

This proposition was measured through observation of the decision-making process and specific criteria and issues noted in interviews, e-mail correspondence and other data.

3.6 Summary

The Partner Negotiation Model was developed over a long time period, including information from a variety of sources. The process began with the existing models from recent academic writings, expecting that partner selection would be very simple and rational. After initial interviews with people involved in industry-university partnerships, it appeared that partner selection was not as straight-forward as it has been proposed in the literature. Information from these initial cases was summarized and analyzed to begin the thought processes for development of the model. A variety of models were developed and explored – rational, reputational, entity-relationship and waterfall models. The final Partner Negotiation Model included two cycles of deal-making and partner selection. A third cycle of organizational approval was added later. The partner negotiation process and the elements of the final model were described. From the model, four propositions were suggested related to deal-making, partnership roles, organizational approval and partner choice criteria and rationale. The next chapter describes Research Design and Methodology, including the testing of this model.

Chapter 4
Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

To understand how and why organizations choose collaborative partners, the researcher looked at the actual decision-making process described in interviews, documents, self-reporting and partner reflection. Descriptions of this process were compared to the decision-making theories presented in the Literature Review. This method provided data on factors considered in partner selection, on selection criteria, and on steps or procedures followed to arrive at a decision. Two Canada-wide education consortia were the main focus for this case study. Interview materials and additional data provided input for a description of the case, the partner selection process, selection criteria and subsequently a revised model.

A quantitative research design was deliberately not used in this work. Quantitative research is objective, singular, unbiased, formal, and static. (Merriam 1988) Results require a large sample size and focus on numbers and statistical studies using quantities, amounts, counts, and frequencies. Experimental designs, statistical studies, survey research and other quantitative methods did not appear to be appropriate since the work included only a small sample size and very deep, rich data. Quantitative research emphasizes the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. This work was more process-based, descriptive and exploratory. Quantitative results such as tables, figures, frequencies, counts and so on are included as supplemental data to reinforce the qualitative results.

A qualitative design approach was chosen for this research beginning with a focused literature review to identify key issues. Early in the work, three people who had been involved in software development or distance education partnerships or both were informally interviewed . These initial interviewees were known to the researchers and provided valuable insight into how their partner selection had worked. This limited empirical view was compared to the theoretical ideas of the literature and both were used to develop a Partner Negotiation Model. The Model was used as a lens to view partner negotiation and selection, and provided the basis for propositions and additional formal interview questions. The work was continued with a Multiple Case Study approach, using two Canadian education consortia as the cases. An additional eleven subjects from universities and government offices across Canada were interviewed formally about these two partnerships. The subjects were chosen based on their knowledge of the partner selection process at their location. Official documentation, contracts, e-mail correspondence and other paper and electronic records were collected to supplement the formal interviews. The interview and archival data were analyzed, both by interviewee and by consortia. Later NVivo, a qualitative research tool, was used to help with the organization of the final results. Comparing

the actual data with expected patterns from the model and propositions, significant issues for partner negotiation and selection were identified and the model was revised accordingly.

4.2 Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative design with a case study focus was employed for this work. This method allowed consideration of a large number of chaotic factors, unlike experimental or survey approaches. (Galliers and Land 1987) The first phase included an extensive literature review of alliances, partner selection issues and decision-making theory. The literature was supplemented with data from three informal interviews of colleagues experienced in forming alliances. Analysis of the Literature Review and initial interviews led to development of a proposed Partner Negotiation Model and related propositions. Next, an Interview Question Guide was developed and eleven personal interviews were completed with key players in the targeted domain of Canadian distance education consortia. Data from these additional interviews were collected, as well as archival data such as e-mail correspondence, contracts, web pages and other paper documents. Data collected were analyzed and used to produce descriptive results and to update the conceptual model. Finally, these research findings were translated into aids for future partnership negotiations.

Qualitative research is appropriate when how and why questions are asked. (Perry 1999) The researcher always "moves from a research question to a paradigm or perspective, and then to the empirical world." (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p. x). This research began with two research questions – one 'how' and one 'why'. A model was developed, which became the perspective used for the research study. Finally, a number of interviews were completed. Preliminary model designs were presented at a supply chain conference as well to gather further empirical evidence.

The problem of partner selection in alliances is well suited to a qualitative study as there is a serious lack of theory and previous research in this area, although there is extensive research on alliance formation and typology. The available literature, discussed in Chapter 2, is focused on specific domains and specific types of alliances. This research focuses on the two consortia in the one domain of education consortia in Canada, but future research could propose a general partner selection theory based on alliance motivation. A personal field study approach, such as a one-on-one interview as part of case study research, is more appropriate than surveys or experiments to gather the process, meaning and understanding required for this work.

Qualitative research emphasizes processes and meanings that are not rigorously examined in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers "study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p. 2). Qualitative research is concerned with *process* and *meaning* rather than products or outcomes. Instead, qualitative research emphasizes

interpretation and naturalistic enquiry. The qualitative researcher is the *primary instrument* for data collection and typically goes out to do *fieldwork* in the study setting. According to several recent studies, there is a need for more field research in the management sciences. (Clark and Payne, 1997; Haynes, 1999) This research was concerned with the process of partner selection and the meaning behind particular partner choice. The researcher collected all of the data for this study. Fieldwork included individual interviews in university offices, one conference to perform multiple interviews, and a second conference to present preliminary results and gather reaction to the model.

Qualitative research is *descriptive* using an *inductive* approach as the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, propositions, and theories from the details of the study. (Merriam 1988, pp. 19-20) Qualitative work allows reality to be subjective with multiple viewpoints, evolving decisions, and emerging design categories identified during the research process. (Firestone 1987; Marshall and Rossman 1989) These results began with a detailed description of the initial two case studies. The cases provided evidence for development of a preliminary model. The model was revised with additional data from e-mails, contracts, interviews and other material on the two larger case studies. Propositions and models evolved as data were collected. A number of viewpoints were found from the personal interviews, archival e-mails, contracts and additional data. Detailed data analysis in Chapter 6 reveals a complex process of coding and recoding until the categories appeared appropriate for this work.

Qualitative research may include ethnography, unstructured interviews, textual analysis, historical studies, participant observation, visual methods, or cultural and interpretive studies. Qualitative researchers collect and study a wide variety of empirical materials, such as case studies, personal experience, introspection, interview and so on, always hoping to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand. Case studies were deliberately chosen for this study. The case studies provided an opportunity for informal and formal interviews and data collection with a number of partners in existing alliances. The theoretical model approach also allowed the researcher to analyze existing theory and to propose a new model from this work.

Qualitative research is inherently multimethod in focus, involving broad interpretation of data. (Brewer and Hunter 1989; Denzin and Lincoln 1994) Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach. (Nelson, Treichler et al. 1992, p. 2). The use of multiple methods allows the researcher to triangulate and better understand the data. Multiple methods, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study can add depth, rigor, and breadth to the study. (Flick 1992) This work included case studies, interviews, fieldwork, textual analysis, historical studies of e-mail and existing theories, and archival data collection of contracts and statistical studies.

Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary approach. It crosscuts the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Common qualitative research methods come from a variety of disciplinary fields. Some

approaches include ethnography from anthropology, case studies from political and social sciences, grounded theory from sociology and phenomenology from psychology. (Lancy 1993; Creswell 1994) This work is based in management sciences (deal-making, decision-making, organizational approval, partner roles, reputation), but includes elements of sociology (social networks, role-playing), psychology (deal-making, ambiguity), political science (politics), education (the detailed cases) and technology (online course offerings, networks of institutions). Table 4.1 summarizes the characteristics of qualitative research and their instantiation in this research.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	THIS RESEARCH
'How' or 'Why' research questions	How were collaborative partners chosen? Why were particular partners chosen?
Research questions lead to one perspective and then to empirical study	Research questions led to Partner Negotiation Model followed by interviews
Exploratory process and meaning	Partner selection process and criteria
Researcher is the primary instrument	Researcher collected all data
Fieldwork	External interviews and two conferences
Descriptive	Detailed descriptions of case studies
Inductive approach	Model and propositions evolved with data Complex data analysis and coding
Multiple viewpoints	Personal interviews, archival e-mails, contracts and additional data
Multiple methods	Case studies, interviews, archival data
Interdisciplinary	Management sciences, sociology, psychology, political science, education, technology
Large number of chaotic factors	Many motivations for new partnerships Multifaceted partner negotiation process Multiple, complex reasons for partner selection
Small sample size	Two initial case studies Two detailed large case studies
Deep, rich data	Multiple detailed interviews Archival e-mails and statistical studies Contracts and other written documentation

Table 4.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Research

4.3 Case Study Research

4.3.1 Characteristics

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. (Yin 1989) There can be single- and multiple-case studies. Case studies can include quantitative evidence. Case studies can be used in evaluation research to *explain* causal links, to *describe* a real-life context, to *comprehend* a phenomenon, or to *explore* a variety of outcomes from the same phenomenon. Case study research allows *detailed understanding of the case* rather than conclusive generalization beyond.

Table 4.2 summarizes case study research and its relevance to this research.

CASE STUDY RESEARCH	THIS RESEARCH
Single or multiple objects	Two education consortia
Time boundary	Six years: Start-up to 2005
Activity boundary	Formation and subsequent partner selection
Variety of data collection procedures	Interviews, e-mails, documents
Multiple sources of evidence	Partners, administrators, government, web
May include quantitative evidence	Numbers of universities, consortia, partners and criteria
'How' or 'Why' research questions	How were collaborative partners chosen? Why were particular partners chosen?
Investigator has little control over events	No control over partner choice
Focus on real-world current phenomenon	Alliances and consortia are ubiquitous
Empirical inquiry	Interviews of key and supporting partners
Describe a phenomenon	Description of case history and partner selection issues

Table 4.2 Characteristics of Case Study Research

This research studies how and why alliance partners are chosen. The case study approach was selected for this study as there are a small number of specific distance education alliances of interest. This provided data for a multiple case study. This method is suitable for this research as it provides a convenient method of data collection from known contacts in the Canadian partnerships of interest. The multiple case study approach has also provided triangulated data to verify new theories for the development of a final Partner Negotiation Model.

A case study focuses on a program, an event, an activity, a process or one or more individuals that are explored in depth by the researcher. The scope of the case is bounded by time and activity. Information is collected using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. (Stake 1995; Creswell 2003) Interest in the use of case study research increased in business schools in the United States in the late 1980's. (Yin 1989)

Case studies often involve the study of just one entity or phenomenon for a specific time period. (Creswell 1994) Detailed information is gathered through a variety of data collection procedures. (Merriam 1988; Yin 1989) Case study research can be extended with multiple cases and the comparison and triangulation of data. A case may use single or multiple items for observation. It may be simple or complex. The study may be long or short-term. The case is a specific, unique thing that can be clearly delineated. In *intrinsic case studies*, the researcher wants to better understand this specific case. The case itself is of interest. The immediate focus is not to understand some larger problem, such as literacy or teenage drug use, nor is the purpose theory building although theories may evolve as the study progresses. In *instrumental case studies*, a case is studied to shed light on specific issues or theories. A *collective case study* studies a large number of cases to shed light on general theories or phenomena. A *teaching case study* is used to illustrate a point in class rather than for research purposes. This work is best described as an instrumental case study since the case studies are being used to better understand partner negotiation and selection.

4.3.2 Rationale

The use of only one case study with three organizational theories and three key research questions can still explain events. An example in (Yin 1989) describes three theories that were compared with actual events to see which theory best explained what happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Case studies are preferred when *how* or *why* research questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on some real-world current phenomenon. (Yin 1989) In this study, the primary research questions focus on '*how'* and '*why'* collaborative partners are chosen. There is no control over the number or nature of interorganizational relationships under study. Finally these partnerships are ubiquitous in

universities and most other business organizations today, so the case study method appears to be appropriate under all three conditions.

"Case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of object to be studied. Case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used." (Stake 1994, p. 236). A doctor examining a sick child will have both quantitative and qualitative records, probably more quantitative. A social worker examining a neglected child will also have both quantitative and qualitative records, but probably more qualitative. The *object* being examined makes this a case study, not the way that the object is studied.

Case studies include what is common and what is particular about the case and they always provide a unique result. (Stouffer 1941) The uniqueness may include:

1. the nature of the case
2. its historical background
3. the physical setting
4. other contexts, including economic, political, legal, and aesthetic
5. other cases through which this case is recognized
6. those informants through whom the case can be known

Although each case is unique, the complexity of its history and environment and other similar cases can make its results useful for a broader audience. Because of this complexity, the case may be very difficult to delineate. Examination of diverse issues and contexts allows a broad study of this complexity. Methods and items of study are chosen based on their potential to improve understanding of the issue or problem at hand.

4.3.3 Limitations

Potential problems with the case study method are lack of rigor, biased views either from the researcher or the case participants, and very little basis for scientific generalization. There are practical limitations on the number of people interviewed, the time available to interview and the amount of paper and e-mail data collected. (Parkhe 1993) A further complaint is that case studies take too long and produce massive, unreadable documents.

Standardized guides, protocols and a formal data collection and analysis process can help to provide thoroughness and reduce researcher bias. Participant bias may be reduced with multiple interviews, multiple interviewers or several ways of asking the same question. Case studies may provide theoretical results rather than large-scale evidence of a phenomenon. "Case studies are

generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes." (Yin 1989, p. 21) The restriction on people, time and materials, although constricting in itself, will help to minimize the length of time and volume of documents produced in a case study. Comparison of results with known theories and multiple data collection methods allow triangulation and breadth.

To increase the rigor and reliability of the data collection, a standardized Interview Protocol Form, Interview Question Guide and a pattern-matching matrix for data collection were developed. Field study data was also formally compared with existing partner selection theories. This allowed a focus on very specific issues of interest. Biased views from the researcher were reduced with the structured methodology. Biased views from the case participants were tempered through the collection of multiple mini-cases from a number of participants in the same partnership. The researcher does not intend to generalize this data to a universal population, but only to a potential partner selection theory. Finally, since the fieldwork is very focused on the specific issue of partner selection, a limited number of university partners were interviewed. Concentrating on the particular partner selection characteristics identified in existing theory minimized the time for data collection and the volume of data.

Table 4.3 summarizes the limitations of case study research and the researcher's resolutions for this research.

LIMITATIONS	RESOLUTION
Lack of rigor	Standardized Interview Protocol Form, Interview Question Guide, formal data collection and analysis process
Researcher bias	Standardized processes as above
Participant bias	Multiple interviewees, similar questions
Minimal generalization	Generalized to a model, not to a population
Practical restrictions	Limited time, people and materials to use
Lengthy process	Restrictions above will limit the process
Vast documentation	Limited to thesis length plus appendices

Table 4.3 Limitations of Case Study Research

4.4 Reliability and Validity

Common strategies used to check the accuracy of findings in qualitative research include the following ideas (Creswell 2003), which were used in this work.

1. Triangulate the data with a variety of interviewees and a variety of data sources
2. Take the major findings to an interviewee or another knowledgeable source and have them verify its accuracy (member-checking)
3. Provide a rich, thick description of the case studies
4. Clarify researcher bias
5. Present negative or discrepant information

To ensure that this work is accurate, generalizable, and able to be replicated, it is important to discuss the notions of *reliability* and *validity* in the context of qualitative research. (Miles and Huberman 1984; Merriam 1988; Creswell 1994) Reliable and replicable work can be achieved through multiple cases, a variety of data sources, multiple interviewers, and multiple data analysis methods. Interviews may be tape recorded to maximize accuracy. Inter-rater reliability can confirm coding accuracy.

In this study, the multiple case study approach with multiple interviews, contracts, and other documentation provided triangulated data for the development of a Partner Negotiation Model. Two large-scale cases were used plus initial case studies of other partnerships. A variety of data collection types were used, including interviews, document collection, e-mails, government websites and contracts. Written Cases and interviews were sent back to verify information with interviewees and the Consortium 1 Executive Director. Reliability and three types of validity are discussed below.

Reliability is being able to demonstrate that the operations of a study, such as the data collection procedures, can be repeated with the same accurate results. In a case study setting, case study protocols can be used and a case study database can be developed during the data collection phase. The documented interview protocols and interview question guide should allow replication of study results, with the same or different interviewees. The case study database will provide a standardized format for data reporting. Reliability will give researchers accuracy and consistency over time. (Yin 1989) The results of the interviews provided comparable answers from different interviewees at different times and locations, indicating reliability for this work.

Three types of validity will be discussed. *Construct Validity* is establishing appropriate operational definitions for the concepts being studied. In a case study setting, multiple sources of evidence can be used, a chain of evidence can be established, and key informants can review the draft case study report during the data collection and composition phases. (Yin 1989) For this study, the researcher chose the specific partner selection criteria that were to be studied in relation to the original objectives of the study and demonstrated that the selected measures of these criteria did indeed reflect the specific criteria that have been selected.

For example, the research could begin by saying that a prior personal relationship is one reason that an organization might partner with another. Then the researcher could provide a standard measurement for such a relationship by saying that two executives, one in each organization, must have known each other for a minimum of three months. The time limit establishes the notion of a 'prior' relationship and the one-on-one between two executives establishes the 'personal' relationship. Alternatively, the researcher could have established limits of 'anyone in the organization knowing anyone else in the other organization for a minimum of a year'.

Table 4.4 summarizes issues around reliability and validity and identifies solutions for this research.

ISSUE	THIS RESEARCH
Reliability - replication - accuracy	Multiple cases Multiple interviewees, similar questions Multiple sources of data Standardized interview guide and interview protocol Interviews tape-recorded for accuracy Standardized format for data collection, reporting and analysis
Construct Validity - operational measures	Multiple cases Multiple interviewees from each consortia Proposition measurement Expert review of results
Internal Validity - causal relationships	Standardized processes Multiple cases Multiple interviewees Both positive and negative experiences Compare multiple data sources – interviews, e-mails, contracts, government documents Multiple data analysis methods
External Validity - generalizability	Multiple cases Generalized to a model, not a population Perhaps applicable for Canadian Distance Education consortia Results compared with known theories from Literature Review

Table 4.4 Reliability and Validity Summary

Internal Validity establishes patterns or a causal relationship whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as opposed to spurious relationships. (Yin 1989) For this work, the researcher does not want response bias based on prior personal relationships with the subjects. The research includes both successes and failures. Responses come from more than just the one organization under study, but also its partners to confirm the answers. In a case study setting, pattern matching, explanation-building, and time-series analysis in the data analysis phase of the work can provide internal validity. For this study, standardized processes were used as well as multiple cases and interviewees, both positive and negative experiences and a variety of data sources and analysis methods.

External Validity identifies the domain for which the results can be generalized. In a case study setting, replication logic can be used in multiple-case studies during the research design. (Yin 1989) For this study, the research should be generalizable to other distance education partnerships in Canada as this is the basis of the two case studies. Research data has been used to develop the Partner Negotiation Model, but field results should not be expected to be appropriate for universal populations.

4.4.1 The Researcher's Role

To prevent potential confounds or bias and to increase internal validity, it is important to discuss any impact of the researcher's prior knowledge. The researcher has not done previous work in alliance motivation, partner selection or the distance education domain. Subjects for the initial interviews, however, were known as peers at the University of Waterloo. Some informants for the study were known at other Canadian universities. The topic of corporate alliances has been of great interest to the researcher for a number of years. Some research was done in 1999 on interorganizational structures, identifying a number of types of networks of organizations. Local software development companies in particular have identified interest in theories of partner selection as they are rapidly moving in and out of a number of interorganizational relationships. The researcher deliberately chose not to study these firms, however, because of the rapid turnover of organizations and partnerships.

For the initial interviews, the interviewees were approached personally and agreed to discuss their partnerships. Since they knew the researcher and offices were nearby, there was no problem getting together and gathering data. For the main study, informants were spread across Canada. Informants attending a 2003 conference in St. John's, Newfoundland were interviewed there. Other local contacts in southern Ontario were interviewed as possible. Long distance data were collected through telephone consultation, supplemented with written material by e-mail and fax. Finally, the Partner Negotiation Model was presented to business people and academics at a supply chain management conference in Toronto in 2004. Empirical evidence was collected from the audience in terms of their reaction to the model in the real world and their positive or negative experiences related to partner negotiation and selection.

4.5 Data Collection

4.5.1 Choice of Cases (Research Domain)

This research is limited to Canadian universities in distance education partnerships. This non-profit domain was deliberately chosen because the speed of alliance formation and dissolution is much slower than the for-profit sector, allowing for time to perform research. The domain also provides a convenient base of potential subjects accessible to the researcher. This university realm differs from the traditional business environment in that individual success is measured less in profit and more in research funding, innovation, and numbers of students or courses. Measures such as knowledge created or gained, fast access to critical resources, and opportunities to extend the existing scope of operations are important for both sectors. (Contractor and Lorange 1988; Powell 1990; Bleeke and Ernst 1995; Kotabe and Swan 1995; Sankar, Boulton et al. 1995; Cateora 1996; Inkpen and Beamish 1997) Since the focus of interest is not on the measure of partnership success but on initial partner selection, this domain meets these needs.

The specific partnerships studied were two Canada-wide education consortia. Consortium 1 included thirteen Canadian universities during the study period in 2003. Consortium 2 is made up of eight Canadian universities. Table 4.5 summarizes the consortia and universities included in this study. These two consortia are discussed in further detail in Sections 4.5.1.1 and 4.5.1.2.

Other university consortia, such as Global University Alliance and Universitas 21, came up in discussion but were not a main focus. The Global University Alliance included ten international universities in 2003 and includes six universities in 2004. Universitas 21 is a network for international higher education including sixteen universities with McGill and the University of British Columbia in Canada. The University of Toronto was a partner, but pulled out in April 2001 over operational concerns. Examples of the large number and wide variety of educational consortia are included in Appendix A.

In summary, there were a total of 21 universities between the two consortia. Ten contacts were interviewed from eight universities: Athabasca, Laurentian, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Alberta, Dalhousie, Guelph, Saskatchewan, and Waterloo. E-mail and telephone interviews were conducted with another five contacts from BCOU, UCCB, UNB, Calgary, and York. As well, an Education Director from the University of British Columbia was interviewed, a member of neither consortium. The University of British Columbia was approached by both consortia, but declined to join either, so was of interest for this partner selection study.

Of the universities with no interviewees, all but Manitoba and Simon Fraser University were ‘provider’ universities. That is, they ‘provided’ courses through the consortium but otherwise were not considered to be nor considered themselves to be a real partner. The contact person for

Manitoba was at the 2003 conference, but not available for an interview. The contact at Simon Fraser University did not respond to requests for information or meetings.

CONSORTIUM 1	CONSORTIUM 2
Athabasca University	University of Alberta
Brandon University	University of Calgary
University College of Cape Breton	Dalhousie University
Laurentian University	University of Guelph
University of Manitoba	University of Saskatchewan
Memorial University of Newfoundland	Simon Fraser University
University of Moncton	University of Waterloo
Mount Saint Vincent University	York University
University of New Brunswick	
Open Learning Agency (now BCOU)	
Royal Roads University	
Tele-Universite du Quebec	
University of Victoria	

Table 4.5 Consortia in 2003 and Universities of Interest

4.5.1.1 Consortium 1

Consortium 1 is a partnership of universities across Canada, committed to delivery of education anytime anywhere. Partner universities in 2003 were Athabasca, Brandon, Cape Breton, Laurentian, Manitoba, Memorial, Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent, New Brunswick, Open Learning Agency, Royal Roads, and the Tele-Universite du Quebec. The University of Victoria was not a full partner, but provided complementary distance education programs. As of 2004, there are eleven partner universities - Acadia and the Royal Military College have been added as new partners and the Open Learning Agency has changed its name to the British Columbia Open University. As well, Brandon, Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent and Victoria have left the partnership.

Consortium 1 is funded by its partners and by Industry Canada. The consortium identifies accredited courses, provides access to courses developed by partner universities, provides a

clearing house for students wanting to mix and match courses from various universities, facilitates transfer credit and generally creates sharing efficiencies.

There was a three-stage process of partner selection in Consortium 1. The 'early birds' who were organizing the consortium got in first, set the partnership criteria, and selected the educational areas of interest for themselves. Then the alliance was opened up to other universities who would take the educational areas that had not yet been covered. Finally, when the partnership needed to grow, it was opened to anyone who wanted to join.

There are significant membership fees to be a partner in Consortium 1. For this reason, some partners have been 'associate' partners or 'provider' universities. The universities have been allowed to provide their educational offerings without paying full consortium fees.

Depending on theoretical definitions, this consortium may well be considered to be a joint venture since partners purchase shares in Consortium 1. Five original members paid $10,000 for a seat on the Board of Directors: BCOU (SFU, UBC, UVic), Athabasca, Brandon, Manitoba and Laurentian.

Some universities deliberately did not join Consortium 1 because of the exorbitant membership fees and because of a number of other factors discussed in the Consortium 1 Case Study Narrative in Chapter 5. In particular, the Universities of Alberta, British Columbia, Guelph, Waterloo and York chose not to join Consortium 1.

4.5.1.2 Consortium 2

Consortium 2 includes Dalhousie University, Simon Fraser University, York University and the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, Saskatchewan, Waterloo, and Guelph. The focus of Consortium 2 is more research and development around online teaching rather than just production and development of online courses and programs. Pedagogical and quality issues, for example, are important with a long-term view to improved online educational offerings.

Dollars were committed from Waterloo, Guelph and York to get the alliance operational in the first place, making them the original partners. Certain principles and issues were agreed to as the partnership was being formed. This impacted who might be appropriate as a partner. An Agreement in Principle and a Memorandum of Understanding documented the results.

Two partner selection issues in the development of Consortium 2 were that Industry Canada required Canada-wide coverage and that the west coast partners were worried that Ontario may be

overly controlling the partnership. Details of the partnership formation are documented in Chapter 5.

4.5.2 Development of Interview Materials

The interview materials were developed over a number of months, initially based on the 'how' and 'why' partner selection issues of the research questions and eventually based on the Partner Negotiation Model and propositions. Interview materials include an Interview Protocol Form, Data Collection Matrix, Interview Question Guide, and Probe Questions. These materials are attached in Appendix B.

The Interview Protocol Form provided a template for multiple interviewers to get a sense of the purpose and format of the interviews. In this research, only one interviewer was used so this information provided structure for the interview. The Data Collection Matrix established organization for data collection and analysis based on propositions. The final questions used in formal interviews on the Interview Question Guide focused on the partner's current situation, motivation, and partner selection issues. This Guide includes a section which asks the interviewees to represent the partners in their consortia with a diagram. The researcher originally considered asking them to arrange circles on paper to represent the partners, but this more open model allowed for a much more interesting view. Probe Questions covered other topics if time permitted. These extra questions were not used formally in any of the interviews.

4.5.3 Research Methodology

Data were gathered through interviews with key decision makers from the universities in Consortia 1 and 2. Interviewees were asked their views about decision making and partner selection in the consortia. This subjective data were supplemented with appropriate objective written documentation, including contracts, government documents, e-mail correspondence and web pages. The collection of data was used to develop insight and recommendations on partner selection, both on a practical and a theoretical level.

A limitation with this design is that the cases of interest are not finished cases: the consortia are still active, so may change further over time. As partners are added and dropped, the nature of the alliance will change and this may well affect additional partner selection decisions.

The research design consisted of four phases:

Phase 1: Review of Previous Work

Existing literature was identified concerning alliances, partner selection, and decision-making theory, documented in Chapter 2. This provided a baseline for potential issues of importance in choosing particular partners for particular relationships.

To supplement the literature, three colleagues with alliance experience were informally interviewed . These interviews provided empirical data not necessarily in agreement with academic theory. Further information on these interviews was provided in Chapter 3.

Phase 2: Model Development

From an analysis of the literature and a comparison with initial interviews, several Partner Selection Models were developed, eventually leading to the final Partner Negotiation Model described in Chapter 3. Propositions were also developed from the model related to a Deal-making Cycle, Partnership Roles, Organizational Approval, and Partner Choice Criteria.

Phase 3: Data Collection and Recording

Two existing education consortia were identified to study – Consortia 1 and 2. The universities were documented and key contact individuals to interview. Progressive refinements of an Interview Protocol Form, Data Collection Matrix, Interview Question Guide, and Probe Questions were developed to match the final Partner Negotiation Model. (See Appendix B) Ten interviews were conducted as noted in Table 4.6, gathering information on existing collaborations and partners, reflections of partner selection decision-making, organizational and partnership characteristics, and selection criteria. Initial interviews in 2002 were less structured as the research developed its focus, followed by more formal interviews in 2003. As well as the interview transcripts, the researcher kept interview notes, which provided descriptive data about the interviews. Archival data were collected from the interviewees as possible, including e-mail correspondence, contracts, web pages and other paper documents. Finally, government and web-based information was gathered.

Phase 4: Data Analysis and Reporting

The theoretical expected model and propositions were compared with actual data gathered in Phase 3. Findings were clearly verified with data from multiple sources to support or refute theories. Data were coded, sorted and displayed manually and with the use of NVivo, a qualitative research data analysis tool. The researcher investigated patterns in the interview

and other data, tested the final model and propositions against the data, and considered explanations for the research findings. Results were reported in tables and written form.

4.5.4 Data Collection and Recording

Data collection and recording was done for two initial case studies described in Chapter 3 and ten formal interviews noted in Table 4.6. Standardized protocols, interview questions, and a case study database were used. In spite of this built-in structure, the interviews were open-ended and interviewees were encouraged to identify any issues of interest about their partner selection process and about their partnerships. This methodology allowed a focus on partner selection, but provided opportunity for other interesting factors to emerge.

The interviews conducted in 2002 were done with key players in distance education consortia. The interviews were deliberately open-ended and general to encourage discussion of any issues that seemed important to the interviewees. Issues that emerged were partner negotiation, social network, reputation and other topics, which have been reflected in the Partner Negotiation Model.

TITLE	UNIVERSITY	INTERVIEW LOCATION	INTERVIEW DATE
Director, Learning	Waterloo	Waterloo	2001 to 2004
Director, Education	British Columbia	Waterloo	April 16, 2002
VP Academic	Athabasca	Waterloo	August 16, 2002
Vice President	Waterloo	Waterloo	October 30, 2002
Director, Computing	Dalhousie	Halifax	June 5, 2003
Dean, Extension	Saskatchewan	St. John's	June 8, 2003
VP Academic	Athabasca	St. John's	June 8, 2003
Associate VP	Laurentian	St. John's	June 9, 2003
Director, Technologies	Memorial	St. John's	June 10, 2003
Director, Learning	Guelph	Guelph	September 26, 2003

Table 4.6 Interviewees

Informants were purposefully selected for their knowledge of alliances or consortia in the distance education domain. All interviewees were at a Director level or higher, generally in a group related to Education, Teaching, Learning and Technology. Some subjects were previously

known to the researcher, which added a dimension of informality and potentially additional depth of understanding for the study. (Miles and Huberman 1984) proposed four parameters for data collection: setting, actors, events, and process. In this study, the research is taking place at a conference or the subject's workplace (onsite interviews) or in the researcher's office (telephone calls). The actors are the interviewees chosen specifically as noted above. The events of interest for this study are the motivation behind the distance education partnerships and the process and final choice of partners for the alliance. The process studied was the ongoing or previous alliance motivation and partner selection. The formal Interview Materials in Appendix B document the data collection procedures.

Formal interviews were done before and during a 2003 education conference in St. John's, Newfoundland. The researcher contacted at least one key informant from each partner in Consortia 1 and 2 (See Appendix B) before the conference. The purpose was discussed with them so that they had a good idea of the interview focus, partner selection within Consortium 1 or 2. For those partners willing to be interviewed, an Interview Schedule was established to verify the day and time for an interview. Some contacts asked for questions ahead of time and these were provided only if requested. Interviews occurred in a variety of settings: university offices, hotel lobby, hotel bar, park bench on a busy street, and hotel meeting room. Researcher observation notes on the settings and other descriptive data were also recorded. Some partners who were not attending the conference provided information by telephone or e-mail. (BCOU, UCCB, UNB, Calgary, York)

The researcher contacted 34 people by phone or e-mail – 23 people associated with Consortium 1 and 11 associated with Consortium 2. Of those potential interviewees, 6 set up a formal interview, 6 met the researcher informally in person at the 2003 conference, 5 provided e-mail or telephone information, and the balance suggested other partners to interview. Some information was gathered by e-mail but most came from personal interviews. Telephone interviews were considered for those in Alberta and British Columbia but were not done because the work appeared to have sufficient data. The proposed method and interview questions were discussed with three experienced researchers to minimize problems with setting or leading questions. Problems were considered with an interviewee not mentioning something and the researcher discussed how to *prompt* them without *leading* them. It was deliberately decided not to show the interviewees current research diagrams or models, so as not to bias their responses. Similarly, the Probe Questions and additional interview materials were not discussed unless necessary.

Interviews were recorded on a computer memory stick and then copied to a laptop computer. They were then e-mailed to a stenographer who transcribed them into Microsoft Word. The entire transcript was copied verbatim, omitting coughs, 'ums', 'ahs' and other extraneous noise. Finally interview material was put into NVivo software for data analysis.

Key people who were not interviewed were a Director from the University of Calgary and an Academic Vice President from York University. The Calgary contact is very busy and physically distant from the researcher. The York contact declined to be interviewed as he has a very busy work schedule in his role as Academic Vice-President of York University. Overall, only ten people were interviewed formally, which is a fairly small sample size. Since the same partner stories were repeated in later interviews, however, the number seems to be large enough to provide the data needed for this research. There does not appear to be a non-response bias.

Data collected were interviews, transcripts, e-mail correspondence, contracts, web pages, other paper documents and hand-drawn visual network diagrams. Unstructured, open-ended interviews were held in conference meeting rooms and university offices. Interviews were tape-recorded and written interview notes were also taken. This was useful to gather personal and historical context, but the information may be biased by the interviewee's experience. Also, different interviewees may be more or less articulate and perceptive, so comparisons of data may be difficult. (Merriam 1988) Public documents as available from the informants or from web pages or other written material were read, included and analyzed to extend the interview data. This additional documentation may be incomplete, inaccurate or unreliable depending on the source. (Bogdan and Biklen 1992) The combination of various types of data collected from multiple sources, however, reduces bias and adds depth to the final study results.

The researcher tape-recorded the interviews and also recorded written notes as they were done, loosely following the questions identified in the Interview Question Guide. Interview focus with respect to a history of events was on motivation for the alliance, optimum partner characteristics, and final choice of partner perhaps based on necessary compromises. As well as freehand notes from the discussion, sections of the recording form were provided for the following observations. Descriptive notes identified the informant, the dialogue, the physical setting and so on. Reflective notes recorded the researcher's personal thoughts such as "speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions, and prejudices". (Bogdan and Biklen 1992) Demographic information describing the date, time and place of the interview was also recorded. Documents were identified as to name, key categories of interest to this study, and primary or secondary source. Interviews were tape-recorded, recorded by hand and later transcribed to a computerized narrative. The narrative was subsequently re-ordered and categorized into the issues of interest: partner selection process, negotiation, alliance motivation, partner selection criteria or rationale, organizational issues and so on. Finally, data were entered into the case study database.

4.5.5 Data

To validate these findings, multiple sources of data, multiple consortia, multiple people and locations, and multiple data collection types were deliberately sought. Formal taped interview transcripts were gathered, as well as collaboration (network) diagrams, informal researcher observations, written documents, and archival e-mail correspondence. In particular, the following information was available for analysis.

1. Interview transcripts:
   (a) Three initial (contacts from Cases 1 and 2)
   (b) Four informal (Interviewees 1 to 4 from Table 4.6)
   (c) Six formal (Interviewees 5 to 10 from Table 4.6)
2. Collaboration (network) diagrams from formal interviews
3. Interview field notes from the researcher
4. E-mail correspondence between the researcher and 14 university contacts at BCOU, UCCB, UNB, York, Mount Saint Vincent University, Quebec, Athabasca, MUN, Manitoba, Calgary, SFU and Alberta
5. Archival E-mails

   There are 231 e-mails and 36 correspondents, excluding administrative assistants and other unrelated staff. The e-mails range from February 21, 2000 to April 1, 2003.
6. Consortium 1 Documents
   (a) Consortium 1 Introductory Letter, January 10, 2000
   (b) Consortium 1 discussion paper
7. Consortium 2 Documents listed next page
8. Industry Canada Documents
   (a) Contribution Agreement (Contract) between Information Highway Branch of Industry Canada and Consortium 2, May 7, 2001
   (b) Statement of Work (Appendix A of Contract), May 2001
   (c) Statement of Work Costing (Appendix B of Contract), May 2001
9. Webpages for Consortium 1, Consortium 2, Industry Canada, and partner universities
10. Anecdotal evidence from conference comments on preliminary model and propositions

4.5.5.1 Consortium 2 Documents

Memorandum of Understanding, March 2001

Overview of UW Involvement in National/Regional Initiatives for Learning & Teaching through Technology, March 2, 2000

Consortium 2 Draft, April 10, 2000

Letter from the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, April 27, 2000

Proposal for the Development of Consortium 2, May 25, 2000

Overview of the Consortium 2 Project, June 16, 2000

STELAR (Stimulating Technology-Enhanced Learning with Action Research) Proposal Summary, January 5, 2001

Background Information for the Consortium 2 Project, January 27 to March 12, 2001

4.5.5.2 Data Stored in NVivo

Eleven documents were stored in the NVivo data analysis computer package, as shown in Table 4.7 below. The six interviews were stored and analyzed first. This allowed time to return to the field for further information if necessary. E-mail correspondence and contract documents were gathered and analyzed later to supplement the interview data.

CONSORTIUM	NAME	TYPE	SIZE
1	Interview 7	Interview	120 KB;15,469 words; 51 pages
1	Interview 8	Interview	60 KB; 4747 words; 15 pages
1	Interview 9	Interview	91 KB; 6869 words; 24 pages
2	Interview 5	Interview	54 KB; 5905 words;18 pages
2	Interview 6	Interview	92 KB; 6350 words; 24 pages
2	Interview 10	Interview	76 KB; 5655 words; 19 pages
2	E-mail	E-mail	787 KB; 231 e-mails; 36 people
2	C2 Draft	Contract	44 KB; 6670 words; 26 pages
2	MOU	Contract	23 KB; 445 words; 1 page
2	SOW	Contract	124 KB; 1158 words; 6 pages
2	SOW Cost	Contract	121 KB; 1293 words; 6 pages
	Total		1592 KB 54,561 words plus 231 e-mails 190 pages plus 231 e-mails

Table 4.7 NVivo Data

4.5.5.3 Consortia Network Diagrams

Diagrams were collected from the six formal interviews. The interviewees were asked to draw a picture of their perception of the consortium. Results were expected to include power issues, lines of collaboration, and so on. In fact, many of the interviewees drew Canadian national diagrams, showing the connections from British Columbia to Newfoundland with little discussion of power or control.

The Dalhousie contact drew a picture with Dalhousie as a circle off on one side and the Provost and the Consortium 2 representative within the circle. He drew seven additional circles, labelling one as Calgary. This is significant because this was the one partner that Dalhousie needed before they decided to join Consortium 2. As well, the Dalhousie person noted on the bottom of his diagram that the teleconferences were personal contacts professor to professor, provost to provost and dean to dean.

The Saskatoon contact drew a picture with Saskatoon and Waterloo as circles connected directly at the centre. The Waterloo circle was connected directly to York as well. Off to the side were other circles – Dalhousie, Guelph, SFU, Alberta and Calgary – drawn vaguely cross-Canada.

The Guelph contact drew her diagram as a hierarchy with the Provosts at the top, Consortium 2 Directors at the second level and the final level as university Project Directors and other members depending on the Project. She also noted Online, Online Research and Faculty Development on her diagram, as examples of specific Consortium 2 projects. She noted that her Manager of Distance Education would be involved in Consortium 2 working groups to make sure that the information was up and they were solving issues of cross-registrations and letters of permission and so on. Research projects, depending on the project, might be a Learning Specialist or it might be faculty in specific research areas.

The Athabasca contact drew a very detailed network diagram of a large number of circles tightly arranged around Athabasca University and the Consortium 1 Executive Director as the centre circle. Immediately around Athabasca University were the University of New Brunswick, UCCB, MUN, Laurentian and Manitoba. Slightly outside of the inner circles were Tele-Universite, Moncton, Brandon, Royal Roads, MSU, the University of Victoria and the OLA. Words written on the side of the diagram were Complementary, Unique Set, All Current Programs, and Case by Case, indicating original requirements to join Consortium 1.

The Laurentian contact drew a large circle labelled Consortium 1 in the centre. Around this circle and directly connected to it were all of the universities that were part of Consortium 1, including Athabasca, Memorial and Laurentian. A direct line was also shown between Memorial

and Laurentian, marked B.Ed. to indicate a joint Bachelor of Education program between the two universities but not part of Consortium 1.

The Memorial contact drew a geographical diagram from BCOU in the west through Athabasca University, Manitoba, Laurentian, Teluq, Moncton, UNB, MSVU, UCCB and to Memorial in the east. The Athabasca circle is larger and bolder than the others, indicating its importance in the consortium. Dates were noted on the bottom of the diagram, August 2001, then February 2002, meeting, and then August 2002, Quebec City.

4.6 Data Analysis

4.6.1 Introduction

Data analysis is an ongoing process with open-ended data for broad data collection. In this study, initial data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection, interpretation and report writing. This allowed an early sorting into potential categories and the shifting and development of these categories as work progressed. The large volumes of interview data were reduced to identifiable patterns or categories and then interpreted according to existing theories identified in the Literature Review and the Partner Negotiation Model. Issues around alliance motivation and partner selection were taken out of their specific distance education context, sorted, evaluated, and represented as potential theories for a number of new domains. "While much work in the analysis process consists of 'taking apart' (for instance, into smaller pieces), the final goal is the emergence of a larger, consolidated picture." (Tesch 1990, p. 97)

The researcher must be comfortable developing categories and making comparisons and contrasts. "Empirical research advances only when it is accompanied by logical thinking." (Yin 1989, p. 12) The analysis must also be open to possibilities and consider contrary or alternative explanations for the findings. (Tesch 1990) The information was sorted and displayed in figures, tables and charts as much as possible to ease readability and understanding. These displays can show the relationship among categories of data, display categories by type, show time ordering, and provide a number of other possibilities. (Miles and Huberman 1984) For this study, data were organized by alliance motivation, negotiation process, selection criteria, organizational or partner characteristics and combinations of this information.

The coding procedure began with the variables and categories identified by previous researchers, such as alliance motivation, selection process and criteria. This initial segmentation allowed the information to verify existing theories and categories or alternatively to suggest new patterns. The focus of data analysis was on the meaning and understanding in the interview data whether it matched preconceived theories or not. Categories and codes emerged from clustering and organization of one or more interviews. (Tesch 1990) Recoding and rework was necessary as

new categories and patterns developed. For example, the term 'geography' was used in two different ways by interviewees so required recoding to 'Canada-wide' and 'isolation'. Significant quotations from subjects and 'contrary' data provided particular areas of new interest as suggested by Creswell. (1994)

Specific data analysis procedures are appropriate for qualitative research. For case studies, Yin (1989) suggests the search for 'patterns' by comparing results with previous literature, 'explanation building' in a search for causal links, and 'time-series analysis' tracing changes in patterns over time. In theory development, researchers can saturate coding categories by coding, recoding, generating a conditional matrix, and constantly comparing incidents with incidents until categories emerge. (Strauss and Corbin 1990) All of these suggestions are appropriate for this study.

The researcher worked with the University of Waterloo Statistics Consulting Director, Dr. Jeanette O'Hara-Hines, to enrich the current research design, data collection and analysis procedures. Specific suggestions from Statistics Consulting included:

- Clearly tie the theory to the research questions and to the data analysis
- At the start of the alliance, show a clear tie to partner selection
- Compare successful alliances to failures
- Code the data, give each category a number, put information in tables
- Describe the data clearly with two-way tables or charts
- Graph the number of partnerships with a particular motivation, type, and so on

Overall, the Data Analysis phase tested existing models, propositions and proposed causal links, and reported theory inconsistencies. This supported or refuted particular alliance and decision theories. Findings were clearly verified with data from multiple sources across Canada.

4.6.2 Data Analysis Method

4.6.2.1 Data Organization

Data were analyzed following the procedures suggested by Creswell (2003). First, the data were organized for analysis. Interviews were transcribed from audio to Word and then text files, hard copy contracts were scanned to computer text format, and e-mail correspondence was converted to rich text format files. Hand-written field notes were typed into Word and then converted to text files. All of the text files were copied into NVivo, the data analysis software package. In

NVivo, the files were sorted and arranged into different types or sources of information – E-Mails, Interviews, Notes, and Contracts. NVivo also allowed organization by person, consortium, institution, and so on.

Original interviews were recorded and saved on the electronic memory stick of a digital voice recorder. The voice recordings were then transferred to the hard drive of a laptop computer. A secretary was hired to transcribe the audio to Word documents. Once the Word documents were ready, they were checked by the researcher against the voice recordings so that errors in names and blurred speech could be corrected. The transcripts were edited by the researcher as necessary for spelling and other minor errors. The final corrected Word documents were converted to rich text format files for use with NVivo. Each interview was entered as a document and given a name corresponding to the number of the interviewee. (interview7.doc, for example)

The hard copy network diagrams that were collected during interviews were analyzed manually since they didn't fit the computerized mould. Information on the diagrams was documented in text and that text was compared later with other written data sources.

4.6.2.2 Initial Data Analysis

The second step was to read all of the information through at a high level to get a general sense of the data. At this point, data from every source were read, organized chronologically, and written into the two case study narratives. As expected, there was a definite sense of *community and social network* contact in order to find appropriate partners. *Reputation* was mentioned several times as an issue in partner selection. Unrelated to the specific issue of partner selection, many of the interviewees expressed concern that there were *two distance education consortia* in Canada and they would prefer to see only one. Since the two consortia are separated somewhat by level of education and research (or quality of both), the issue actually is relevant to the partners chosen or not chosen for each partnership. Also tied to this issue was the notion of *government funding*. Both sides seemed to feel that funding would be easier to get for one united consortium.

The Consortium 1 partners seemed very close to each other and very specific in terms of the good that the Consortium 1 partnership was doing for their organizations. All of the interviewees could name specific things that had been accomplished through Consortium 1. They could all identify collaborative distance education course offerings that had been developed with Consortium 1.

Consortium 2 partners were less sure of the need for and benefit of the partnership for their organizations. Since this partnership operates at a higher level, related to collaborative research rather than specific distance education offerings, this should not be surprising. Several

collaborative research projects were mentioned that were ongoing or that were at the proposal stage. Because collaborative research had been going on before Consortium 2, however, the interviewees were unsure of the positive impact of Consortium 2 on this work.

4.6.2.3 Detailed Analysis with Coding

Step three was a detailed analysis of the data with coding. The text and diagrams were scanned by word, phrase, sentence and paragraph for ideas to be put into categories. A structured approach to coding, as proposed by Rossman and Rallis (1998) and Tesch (1990), formalized this work. A small number of short documents were coded individually first. Topics were then gathered into one list, organized and regrouped as appropriate. A few additional documents were then coded with the new master list and additional codes and topics were added and reworked as necessary. As this base list of codes was being developed, topics were also grouped into larger categories to allow a general idea of issues that could be split into further detail with lower-level codes. Lines were also drawn between categories to show interrelationships. All data were coded and recoded as necessary with newer categories. Fortunately, the NVivo software made this job easier than hand-coding.

This coding and re-coding step was done twice on the data – first very open-ended, relying strictly on the text and a second time with preconceived codes from the Partner Negotiation Model and propositions. No noticeable differences showed up, probably because the interviews and other data collection had been based on issues from the model. Data were analyzed for codes that addressed topics that the researcher would expect to find (reputation), codes that were unexpected or surprising (multiple funding issues), and codes that addressed a larger theoretical perspective (joining the two consortia). This method follows the theoretical proposal that a qualitative study should generate categories of information (open coding); select one category and position it within a theoretical model (axial coding); then explain a story from the interconnection of categories (selective coding). (Creswell 2003) Further detail on this step is provided in Chapter 6.

4.6.2.4 Documentation of Results

In step four, the results of the Data Analysis were documented. A comprehensive narrative description of the two case studies had been generated from the raw data to begin the initial data analysis. Further results related to the propositions were generated next from the coding process, e-mail correspondence, partnership structure diagrams, detailed interview transcripts and other data. Themes were analyzed for each individual case and across the two cases. The codes were used to generate the themes of the Major Findings, which were Deal-making, Roles, Organizational Approval and Partner Choice Criteria. These categories displayed multiple perspectives and were supported by diverse quotations and specific evidence provided in Chapter

7. The information identified here was compared to the original Partner Negotiation Model to test its ideas and propositions. Themes were compared to each other and connected as appropriate. The discussion covers a chronology of events in the two cases, a detailed discussion of the themes which emerged and a discussion of interconnecting themes. Visuals, figures and tables are also included to better express some of the data analysis. For completeness, Other Findings were also noted, which were unexpected and unsolicited. Since these issues were identified by a number of interviewees, they were obviously felt to be of some importance to them.

4.6.2.5 Data Interpretation and Discussion

The final step in data analysis was the interpretation of the data into something meaningful, documented in Chapter 8. The *lessons learned* (Lincoln and Guba 1985) included the researcher's interpretation of the data, a comparison of this data and previous literature, and future questions to be researched.

4.7 Summary

The research design and methodology are based on qualitative case study work. Two case studies were chosen and data were gathered from interviews, archival e-mail documentation, contracts, diagrams, web pages and so on. Data were analyzed initially through documentation of detailed case study narratives, provided in Chapter 5. Detailed data analysis followed with coding and re-coding of written materials in Chapter 6. Finally, all of the information was compared to the Partner Negotiation Model and original propositions. Results are documented in Chapter 7 and discussed in Chapter 8.

This chapter has described qualitative and case study research in general and in terms of the work in this research. Rationale, limitations, reliability and validity also were documented in theory and tied to the research design. Data collection issues, such as choice of cases and interview materials, were noted as well as the process of data collection and recording. Data and interviewees were identified. Data analysis methods were documented at a high level. Initial data analysis is presented in further detail in Chapter 5, Case Study Narratives.

Chapter 5
Case Study Narratives

5.1 Introduction

Information about the two case studies, labelled Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 for privacy, was organized first by documentation of a simple narrative for each partnership. The partnerships are Canada-wide consortia concerned with education, including online and technology issues. Consortium 1 is a partnership of universities across Canada, committed to delivering university-level programs that can be completed from anywhere in the country or beyond. As of April 2005, it had 11 institutional partners across Canada. Consortium 2 has 8 partner institutions and its focus is more research and development around online teaching rather than just production and development of online courses and programs.

Case study information was gathered from a number of sources. The most significant resources for Consortium 1 were Consortium 1 organizational documents, Consortium 1 web pages, government RFP and funding documents, e-mails and discussions with four university contacts, and formal interviews with three Consortium 1 partners. For Consortium 2, the majority of the information came from historical e-mails, Consortium 2 documents, press releases and web pages, informal discussions with two university contacts, and formal interviews with three Consortium 2 partners.

The case studies provide a written commentary of what happened during the formation and later development of the two consortia as told by this data. These case studies were documented as an integrated chronology from web page data, interview transcripts, e-mail correspondence, contracts, diagrams, and other information provided by the interviewees. The narratives created from the case data are focused on the partners selected and when, how and why they were chosen. Case study documents were provided to interviewees for their comments and minor changes were made accordingly. This member-checking strengthens the validity of the case study results. Interviewee quotations were later intertwined with researcher interpretations during the data analysis in Chapter 7, as proposed by Creswell (2003, p. 197).

5.2 Consortium 1

5.2.1 Formation

Consortium 1 started with discussions in Edmonton in December, 1999, spurred by initiatives of John Daniels from The Open University in the United Kingdom and others. Daniels had started an Open University in the United States and was perceived as having his sights set on Canada next. At that time, there was also the University of Phoenix Online and the Western Governors Virtual University trying to recruit Canadian members and students. The general feeling was that "unless we have a consortium of Canadian universities that get together, the likelihood of several of us joining either American or European or even Asian consortiums was increasing." (Interview 8) Athabasca already had the rights to the name, Canadian Open University, and Daniels was trying to get title. That interest, as well as world-wide collaborative efforts, inspired the Canadians to start their own online distance education collaboration.

The three original discussants were Athabasca University (AU), the Open Learning Agency (OLA) of British Columbia, and Tele-Universite (Teluq) from Quebec. Athabasca University was Canada's leading distance education specialist according to their website, www.athabascau.ca. The Open Learning Agency was a 'leader in the delivery of life-long learning opportunities'. Tele-Universite was the major online distance education provider in Quebec. Teluq had a collaborative relationship with AU in distance education. In accordance with provincial policy, it could not be seen to be part of a Canadian collaboration, however, so eventually declined to be part of the original Consortium 1 organization. Funding was in place in the form of a 'commitment in principle' from the Alberta and federal governments before Consortium 1 began. The Drivers (AU and OLA) had prearranged for funding for a potential Canada-wide consortium.

The Consortium 1 name had already been registered as a trademark by Athabasca University. AU and the OLA 'collaborated in the development of the Consortium 1 concept' and were now ready to approach other Canadian universities to join them. The organizing committee deliberately chose to only include universities with complete distance education *programs* rather than just individual *courses*. This allowed Consortium 1 to establish a list of programs from which students could choose. The program offerings of AU and the OLA, and indirectly Tele-universite du Quebec and the BC University Consortium made up the nucleus of Consortium 1 at its outset.

Other potential Consortium 1 partners needed strong distance education *programs*, programs that could be offered *nationally* and something *unique* that everyone else didn't have. The original direction was that only one university could offer a program. That is, only Athabasca could offer a Psychology program for example. If another university came along later and wanted to join Consortium 1 with their own Psychology program, they could not do that. The

other university could add their distance education program in Sociology, but Psychology was already taken. That single program issue was a concern for many later universities considering a collaboration with Consortium 1.

On January 10, 2000, a letter was sent from the President of AU and the President and CEO of the OLA to the presidents of 12 Canadian universities known to have distance education (DE) programs. The invited institutions were Open Learning Agency, Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, Technical University of British Columbia, Athabasca University, Brandon University, University of Manitoba, Laurentian University, Nipissing University, University of Waterloo, York University, and Memorial University. The letter invited the universities to become a 'founding member' of Consortium 1 (official name already trademarked!) and to attend a meeting in Vancouver on January 27, 2000.

The letter noted that regional Canadian consortia or portals already existed, such as TeleEducation New Brunswick and Campus West, an initiative of the Western Deans of Continuing Education, but none were program-based. The focus of Consortium 1 will be 'program-based' rather than just listing distance education courses as was done with the regional consortia. A 'structured, pre-arranged curriculum plan' was proposed in the letter, suggesting that perhaps Athabasca University and the Open Learning Agency had already developed such a plan. Indeed, the 'core' of Consortium 1 would be the combined programs of AU and OLA. AU also had a strategic partnership with Tele-universite du Quebec, so Teluq course offerings would indirectly be part of the Consortium 1 curriculum. This once again confirmed that at least part of the Consortium 1 curriculum was already set. Although indirectly involved, 'political concerns have not made it possible for Teluq to sign on as an independent founding member'. Distance offerings of the BC University Consortium would also be indirectly involved as a result of OLA's association with that group.

The letter concluded with a 'practical and inclusive' Consortium 1 approach that:

a) advocates a learner-centred model that recognizes and respects the differing needs of learners;

b) recognizes the value of various delivery systems and pedagogical models that can combine to offer complete programs to learners;

c) assigns significant importance to the provision of a complete set of on-line student services;

d) anticipates expansion as future entrants make value-added on-line programs available to learners.

According to this letter, the focus of Consortium 1 at this point was very learner-centred and practical.

A six-page Consortium 1 document, prepared by the two Presidents, was attached to the letter. The Context section of the Consortium 1 document notes increased interest in distance education within Canada and outside. It also notes 'out-of-country providers' as a risk to Canadian

Distance Education. (A veiled reference to the UK Open University threat.) The document goes on to discuss the characteristics of a Virtual University as well as Canada's Strengths, with a strong bias to Athabasca, British Columbia and Alberta. The Consortium 1 Vision very broadly identifies 'the appropriate use of ICT', 'quality assured, distance delivered university-level programs', 'on-going research' and programs that are 'current and related to labor force requirements.' Fifteen more specific Outcomes were noted, including an 'enhanced potential to jointly seek public and private funding'.

Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles, included in the six-page document, emphasized the two presidents' very restrictive view of what Consortium 1 could be – only complementary programs with openness and flexibility. The first point of the Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles stated that a Consortium 1 member must make its distance delivered program and its courses available to any eligible student registered in any Consortium 1 sponsored program. Open enrolment was a key philosophy of the original organizing partners. Athabasca University, for example, will accept any student who applies to any program. Many of those students (30%) will end up not even completing their first course. Another 30% will not complete their program. (Estimates from Interview 7) Other universities have very high entrance standards and will only accept one student in six or one in 10 or only students with averages above a certain threshold, such as 80%. This second set of universities was not keen to have to accept any student who came along to their distance education courses through Athabasca's open policy. This became a major stumbling block for several potential Consortium 1 partners. Others, such as Laurentian and Memorial are not open themselves but will accept Athabasca students through their Consortium 1 connections.

Point five of the Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles said that all Consortium 1 courses should qualify as residency requirements. This meant that a student registered in Consortium 1 at the University of Waterloo could potentially take all of his or her courses at Athabasca University, have them all count as equivalent-to-Waterloo credits, and obtain a degree from the University of Waterloo without taking any Waterloo courses. Once again, this was not a popular idea at the Vancouver meeting.

Point ten noted that Consortium 1 member institutions could control their own individual admissions. This was contradictory to point one, however, which had said that all students from all universities needed to be accepted into at least one Consortium 1 program.

5.2.2 Initial Partners

In January 2000, potential Consortium 1 partners met in Vancouver. Twelve universities had been invited - Open Learning Agency, Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, Technical University of British Columbia,

Athabasca University, Brandon University, University of Manitoba, Laurentian University, Nipissing University, University of Waterloo, York University, and Memorial University – but many did not join the partnership. The University of British Columbia attended the meeting, but declined to join Consortium 1 since it already had a number of distance education collaborations of its own world-wide.

The Universities of Alberta and Calgary were not invited, Calgary through an oversight and Alberta because it was thought that they did not have complete distance education programs. When the Alberta universities heard about the Consortium 1 meeting, they were very concerned that they had not been invited. The University of Alberta later became part of the organizing committee for Consortium 2, the second Canadian education collaboration.

At the Vancouver meeting, Consortium 1 organizers made it clear that they were in charge and had already made the rules so invitees could either join with their rules or not join. "We were pretty firm about don't come and join us if you're not willing to play this game." "If you don't think you can abide by these principles, then don't join." (Interview 7)

Many of the larger, more research-intensive universities chose not to join. The single program approach was a serious concern. Also, the open enrolment philosophy meant that many universities with very high, tight enrolment standards might end up with sub-standard students in individual courses if not in entire distance education programs. The 'core' of Consortium 1 was to be the combined programs of AU and the OLA. This left very little for other potential members to contribute.

It was going to cost $10,000 to join and $5000 per year to stay in Consortium 1. For that money, the partner universities would have their distance education programs advertised through the collaboration. They would also have access to students entering through Consortium 1. Some of the smaller and mainly undergraduate universities found this idea attractive, but the larger research-based institutions did not. External funding was not identified as a major concern for partners at the initial meeting. Each interested university just wanted to promote their distance education courses and consolidate into a Canadian consortium.

After the organizational meeting in Vancouver in January 2000, Consortium 1 incorporated with Athabasca University, Brandon, the British Columbia Open University, Laurentian, and Manitoba as founding members. These five institutions had a seat on the Board of Directors. Since the BCOU included UBC, Simon Fraser and the University of Victoria, these institutions indirectly had a voice in Consortium 1.

The University of Waterloo and the University of Alberta told the Consortium 1 organizers that they could not sell Consortium 1 principles in their institutions because research universities had different pedagogies than open universities. They thought that the idea of a Canada-wide

distance education consortium was a good idea, but needed more focus on research. This smacked of elitism to the Consortium 1 planners and angered them. Consortium 2's tone was "insulting" – "we (Consortium 1) are a consortium of research universities." (Interview 9)

5.2.3 New Partners through Campus Canada Connection Funding

Industry Canada started talking to Athabasca University about the Campus Canada Connection, now Campus Canada, in 2000. A Request for Proposal (RFP) went out, looking for universities and colleges to work together to provide flexible, seamless, portable learning opportunities for federal employee groups and other national employees like Manulife, Hudson's Bay, and so on. The government got three responses to the RFP – one from Consortium 1, one from a fledgling group of community colleges (Canadian Virtual College, CVC), and the third one from a group of three Atlantic universities (UNB, UCCB (Cape Breton), and Mount St. Vincent). The Atlantic universities then joined Consortium 1 so that it would be easier for them to get the federal funding. Consortium 1 worked with CVC so that all three groups ended up sharing the federal funding.

Campus Canada is an active national alliance of universities, colleges and related organizations. It offers online learning, open admissions at some institutions, and a variety of courses from a variety of educational partners. Degrees, diplomas and certificates are available with 'maximum credit for prior learning'. As of May 2004, educational partners were Athabasca University, British Columbia Open University, Humber Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, Marine Institute of Memorial University, Red River College, University College of Cape Breton, and the University of New Brunswick. In April 2005, partners had changed slightly to also include Consortium 1, cegep@distance, Fanshawe College, and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. The British Columbia Open University was no longer a member.

Slightly different is Canada's Campus Connection, delivered by Industry Canada and established in collaboration with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). Canada's Campus Connection promotes the online credit courses of over 75 institutions to learners in Canada and abroad. (Campus Canada website, accessed May 6, 2004) Institutional partners include most of the colleges and universities across Canada. CCC provides student services such as a database of online courses, prior learning assessment, credit banking, credit transfer, and certification.

5.2.4 Later Partners

In June of 2001, there were eight Canadian partners, Athabasca University, Brandon, Laurentian, Manitoba, Open Learning Agency, Royal Roads, Tele-Universite du Quebec (which had now

joined the consortium), and University College of Cape Breton. The Consortium 1 Board of Directors was made up of the President or his appointee from each of the eight member institutions. There was also one Additional Provider, the University of Victoria. Victoria advertised its Distance Education offerings with Consortium 1, but did not pay Consortium 1 member dues. The Goals of Consortium 1 were identified on their web-page at that time as issues related to facilitating on-line learning and credit transfers, creating efficiencies and conducting research about learning and information communication technologies. Funding was provided by member institutions and by Industry Canada.

Memorial University of Newfoundland came into Consortium 1 in about August, 2001. They paid a shareholder's fee of $10,000 to join and now pay an annual fee of $5000. Their Director, Technologies believes that is money well spent because of Newfoundland's isolation. The Director's educational background is in strategic planning, business development, higher education and entrepreneurship in universities, and she sees their Consortium 1 connection as very strategic for MUN. Memorial is strong in distance education (350 courses, 175 online) because of the isolation of many of the island's students. A relationship with Athabasca, the biggest distance education provider in Canada, would add to Memorial's existing power and provide a key national partner. At first, MUN hesitated in joining Consortium 1 because the courses that they were allowed to bring into Consortium 1 were not the ones that they wanted to bring in. The President of the OLA at the time was a former Vice-President Academic at Memorial. He wanted MUN to bring in their education program. MUN wasn't really interested in that. By 2001, however, the criteria had changed and universities could bring in what they wanted.

UBC is not a partner of either consortium because they already have a large number of established international and provincial partnerships. In early 2000 they were looking for a Canadian partnership but at that point perceived no advantage for them. None of the University of Toronto, McGill, McMaster, or Queen's are partners of either consortium because they don't have strong distance education programs or there is no advantage to them. The University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia, however, were both members of Universitas 21.

A Vice President of Athabasca University talked to the University of Western Ontario about Consortium 1, but they decided not to join because there is no advantage to them. They offer a large distance program in professional education, which is seen to be one of the big areas of growth for Consortium 1. Consortium 1 also approached the University of Ottawa and Ryerson University, but again neither saw institutional advantages.

In early 2003, there were 13 Consortium 1 partners. Of those, 10 were full members and 3 were associates. Since then, Brandon University, Mount Saint Vincent University, the University of Moncton and the University of Victoria have left. As of March 2004, there were 250 programs and 2000 courses being offered through Consortium 1. The active institutions within Consortium 1 in 2003 were Athabasca, Laurentian, Manitoba, Memorial, UNB, and UCCB. MUN, BCOU,

Manitoba and Athabasca were working together in 2003 on a major proposal for learning objects with Manitoba as the lead.

5.2.5 Governing Structure

As the consortium grew and formalized, Consortium 1 decided that they needed an Executive Director. They hired one and paid her from the annual Consortium 1 fees and the Alberta Learning (Government of Alberta) funding of $75,000 a year. Athabasca University supplied the office. The chosen person had been hired because she had done some other work for AU. "People accepted that. And it's worked out very well." (Interview 7)

Consortium 1 is incorporated and is run as a business with a three-tier governing structure. The Board of Directors at the top is made up of one executive from each of the partner institutions. In 2004, that includes nine Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Directors and Deans. The middle tier is the Advisory Committee, which does most of the work for Consortium 1. It is made up of Distance Education directors. The Advisory Committee has monthly teleconferences with occasional face-to-face meetings. Below the Advisory Committee is the implementation level, which may include people from the Registrar's Office, Computer Services or other areas of the partner institutions. These are the people who put the Consortium 1 ideas into practice.

There are different degrees of commitment and participation from the various partner institutions, depending on the time, energy and money that they will provide for Consortium 1. The degree of participation within Consortium 1 goes to 'some institutions by virtue of the people involved who sit on the Advisory Committee'. This supports the idea of the *real* partner as the 'person', not the 'institution'. Institutions with only one course or a small number of courses to offer within Consortium 1 don't have to pay full fees. Such institutions are not shareholders in Consortium 1 and don't attend board meetings. Universities who have fewer programs to offer and those who have joined recently are less active.

Athabasca University is still more-or-less the core of Consortium 1, providing money, people and space for the Executive Director. A Vice President of Athabasca was the Chair of the Advisory Committee for 2003 since no other partner would take over after Laurentian in 2002. There is concern that Athabasca not be a continuing Chair so that it's not perceived that Athabasca is running Consortium 1. "If the partners don't take an active role, Athabasca will become the virtual university for Canada and (other institutions) won't have a role." (Interview 7)

An Associate Vice President from Laurentian is a primary member of the Consortium 1 Advisory Committee and was the Chair in 2002. Laurentian has participated in Consortium 1 at the board level and at the advisory level. They have provided input for some discussion papers.

The Laurentian bill for Consortium 1 is not paid from continuing education or distance learning; it's paid by the Director of Finance, indicating an *institutional* commitment. Memorial's Director, Technologies has also become an active Consortium 1 member recently.

Less active members in 2003 were the OLA (which was being transformed by the British Columbia government), Royal Roads, Tele-Universite, Brandon, Moncton, Mount St. Vincent, and the University of Victoria. The latter four institutions have left Consortium 1 in the past year. They are fairly small providers, however, so were not expected to impact Consortium 1 dramatically. The OLA has been transformed, so is no longer a Consortium 1 member. Royal Roads was invited as an 'alternative' university. They have their own way of doing things and don't allow many Letters of Permission. Tele-Universite (Teluq) was an independent distance education university in Quebec. It is now a School of the University of Quebec at Montreal. The Vice President Academic is the Consortium 1 contact person. Brandon was only involved because of one unique distance education program – psychology and medicine. Brandon was at the table in Vancouver and was one of the five founding members of Consortium 1 in 2000. The University of Moncton left in 2003. The Mount St. Vincent University contact identified the institution as a "provider" member of Consortium 1, and not a partner member. Their two-year term was up in 2003 and they did not renew. The University of Victoria didn't pay the full Consortium 1 fee. It was an associate member and paid $500 per program listed. The University of Victoria wanted wider publicity though, so was using Consortium 1 for publicity for their programs outside of British Columbia.

5.2.6 Benefits of Consortium 1

The motivation for Consortium 1 was to "stake a claim to the national thing" and be "part of a larger community". "It's a positioning thing." (Interview 7) The advantage of Consortium 1 is connections with the federal government, the distance education world, the continuing education world, and so on. The downside of Consortium 1 is spending time on long-term Consortium 1 goals rather than getting immediate short-term benefit working at the institutional level.

Athabasca University sees Consortium 1 as positioning and branding and networking rather than as a way to get more registrations. Memorial finds the Consortium 1 membership worthwhile just for the Canadian and world-wide contacts. Because of the isolation in Newfoundland, "you can't survive without partnerships." (Interview 9) "There's a lot of learning in a network like Consortium 1." (Interview 8) "You learn from each other at the party or reception before or after the board meeting. So, for our $5000, we get promotion, professional development, contacts, and networks Canada-wide."

The initial motivation for getting together is often to get funding, but the 'community of learning' created from that collaboration is good. When you put like minds together, the

networking that results from that coming together is 'valuable in its own self, not just the fact that we only have more money'. (Interview 7)

The major goal of interest to Memorial is the mobility of students, providing access to courses for them across the country. A second goal is to pick up market share. Memorial has been marketing to the double cohort in Ontario, for example, to attract students to regular and distance education courses.

Unfortunately, it is not easy to measure the benefits of Consortium 1. It is almost impossible for partner universities to keep track of which students or revenues or new registrations they may have obtained because of their Consortium 1 collaboration. That makes it very difficult to judge whether their Consortium 1 membership is worthwhile or not. Most of the benefits are intangible. Memorial is not able to tell whether Consortium 1 is doing them any good or not. Procedures are not formalized to track Consortium 1 students. The Registrar's Office has not been willing to waive visiting student fees, which would help Memorial to be more open and inclusive for Consortium 1. The Distance Education unit wants to be open, but the Registrar's Office structure doesn't allow it. Laurentian has done some tracking and have at least $5000 registration money coming in every year, which covers their Consortium 1 annual fee. The way they track is to phone every new admission and ask them how they heard about Laurentian! "I do it so the decision (to invest in Consortium 1) isn't questioned." (Interview 8)

The mission of Consortium 1 is to try to make education more accessible to all Canadians. Consortium 1 provides a critical mass, a collective voice to government and one-stop shopping for students. Laurentian's mission is to bring education to Northern Ontario. Students from Iroquois Falls or Cochrane or Chapleau won't go to the University of Toronto. Neither will native students or Francophone students. So Laurentian's mission fits nicely under the umbrella of the Consortium 1 mission.

Laurentian's former President is a long-time distance educator so it was easy to convince him that Consortium 1 was a good idea for Laurentian. "We wanted to be in an online network so we had to pick one. And I thought it would be better to pick a Canadian one than not. We see this as an opportunity to increase enrolments and give Laurentian more exposure." $5000 doesn't go very far in advertising, so Consortium 1 gives us that advertising. (Interview 8)

Some partners would like to see more collaborative practical research done through Consortium 1. This might study student outcomes, for example, of an online faculty presence. Another issue might be why 70% of Athabasca distance students are successful after six months, but 30% are not. (Interview 7) Are there defining characteristics? Is it lifestyle? Pedagogy? Support systems? From the answers to these questions, Athabasca and Memorial and other distance education universities may be able to help their students to be more successful.

5.2.7 Other Consortium 1 Partner Alliances

"The trouble is in Canada, there's so many of these online learning initiatives dangling around" including the Canlearn database and Schoolnet. "It's quite a headache!" (Interview 7) The e-learning e-volution paper came out (Johnston 2001) and it talked about a pan-Canadian coordination of e-learning. The CANARIE network was to be used to host the learning initiatives. The OLA was very strong in western Canada five years ago, but was very constrained by the BC government.

Laurentian and Athabasca have a joint program in Labour Studies. Laurentian is part of a lot of other collaborations outside of Consortium 1. Prior to Consortium 1, Laurentian had been working with Athabasca on a number of projects and course sharing agreements. Laurentian has a fairly big distance education program that is not only course-based, but also complete program-based.

5.2.7.1 Memorial University of Newfoundland

A new Bachelor of Education by distance program was planned to be offered jointly by Memorial and Athabasca as of 2003. Tying that to Consortium 1, there will be 15 elective courses that could perhaps be taken at other Consortium 1 partner universities. That means reduced development costs for Memorial and a new program that all Consortium 1 partners could offer to their students. As of April 2005, this joint offering had not happened yet. Memorial offered a Bachelor of Education by distance, but neither Consortium 1 nor Athabasca were involved.

The Director, Technologies has also been making international connections for Memorial through the World Education Market. Nigeria approached the Director at the 2002 conference with 48,000 teachers to be trained. Memorial does not have the resources to handle that but, with Consortium 1, the group may be able to handle it. She is looking for both a larger international student base for Memorial and increased consulting for her unit. If Consortium 1 was to work with Memorial to go after work in Uganda and Ireland and Kiev, they could probably jointly handle large international projects without severely straining their core Canadian distance education work. Memorial also bid on a development project in Vietnam and sent their staff down there to collaborate. There was a financial gain to Memorial, but the bigger gain was the experience and enrichment for staff.

The Director would very strongly like an alliance with Waterloo. That is harder to do because Waterloo is not in Consortium 1. She would also like an alliance with Simon Fraser University because she sees them as a leader in the field. She is interested less so than Waterloo, however, because of physical distance but also because "they have the NCE". Simon Fraser had a TL-NCE

which was funded for seven years, but was not renewed in 2003. Memorial believed that SFU was too busy with the NCE for Memorial or perhaps that their NCE reputation puts SFU out of Memorial's reach.

Memorial has many international alliances with Europe, Ireland, England and several Marine Institute alliances. The Director couldn't attend a Consortium 1 meeting in Vancouver in 2002 because she was in Milan, Italy establishing a collaboration with Sun Microsystems. She would also like to pursue more American and Australian alliances. American Learning Solutions at Vanderbilt University will be recruiting students for the Bachelor of Nursing program, so that Memorial will have 70 extra students in fall 2003. Tennessee will market it to the hospitals down there because Memorial believes that they have saturated the Canadian market.

5.2.8 Social Network

Many of the Consortium 1 partners knew each other and worked together before Consortium 1 was established. As well as this, many new contacts were made through the partnerships. A list of 86 people known to be involved in either the Consortium 1 or the Consortium 2 partnership or both is included in Appendix C. "The distance education community is fairly small as you see here." (Interview 8) Many of the Laurentian people already knew the Athabasca and the UBC people before Consortium 1. The Director, Education, at UBC has honourary doctorates from Laurentian and Athabasca. He's good friends with the Associate Vice President and former President and most of the appropriate people at Laurentian.

The President of the OLA was a former Vice-President, Academic at Memorial. The Director, Technologies, who made the decision for Memorial to join Consortium 1, partially based her decision on the President's recommendation. "I have a lot of trust and faith. … If {the President} thought that this was a good thing for Memorial …" (Interview 9)

The Vice President Education and Provost, BCOU is the former Dean of Education at St. Mary's University, Memorial, and York University. She is now the VPA, Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning.

The Vice President Academic at Athabasca University knew the Vice President Academic and the former President of Royal Roads. Royal Roads now has a new President and Vice Chancellor and a fairly new Vice President, Learning and are waiting to see whether Royal Roads will continue with Consortium 1. The Royal Roads Registrar has tried to work with Consortium 1 but there have been unspecified problems.

5.2.9 Evolution

Consortium 1 has a number of discussion papers developed through the Advisory Committee talking about business planning and how to create revenues to sustain Consortium 1 when the Alberta funding dies. Some ideas are international projects. Some partner institutions would like to see Consortium 1 become self-sufficient financially. Consortium 1 needs to go after more large projects to increase its funding abilities. That is, they should be able to make money by virtue of their size. International collaborations may provide better opportunities to make more money. "We can charge more … cost-recoverable fees, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, CIDA. … you get paid well with those." (Interview 9) Then, even if Consortium 1 was the project coordinator with a 20% overhead, a financial sustainability model would start to form.

One thing that could be changed is for Consortium 1 to generate self-sustaining revenue. Many partners feel that Consortium 1 is too dependent now on government grants and the small number of members. They are not sure how to generate the revenue, but think that a Consortium 1 'brand' might help. Right now, Consortium 1 is just an umbrella for the partners and doesn't give degrees or certificates. Consortium 1 is just selling programs from other institutions rather than adding value in its own right.

A second potential change is to reduce the constraint of complementary program offerings. Some partners would like to let each institution offer whatever they want and let any institution join. Consortium 1 has proposed a maximum of 15 members, but some partners think they could go to 25 members without getting too big.

New members, particularly in Ontario, may be useful for Consortium 1. A number of Atlantic partners came in at once in 2001 and Acadia has recently come in. Consortium 1 needs more Ontario-based members, however, to share the 'bigger markets' such as Ontario. Consortium 1 is "predominantly Atlantic-based and Western-based. … We have to get some more footholds in Ontario." (Interview 9)

Consortium 1 has also started adding some non-credit programming as of June 2003. "We keep modifying our scope and way of business because we want to keep our members." (Interview 7)

A final change proposed by many partners but a bit more difficult to implement is to join or work with Consortium 2. Some partners would like to work with Waterloo, SFU and other Consortium 2 partners, but are having difficulty doing so because of the Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 'divide'. One innovative suggestion was to have various 'tiers' within one partnership. That is, have a high-quality research group in the universities that are interested but also have a distance education program and course development group at the same universities. That would allow both a Consortium 1 and a Consortium 2 flavour within the one consortium.

Table 5.1 shows the changes in Consortium 1 partners from 2000 to 2005.

Institution	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Acadia						X
AU	X	X	X	X	X	X
Brandon	X	X	X	X		
BCOU				X	X	X
Laurentian	X	X	X	X	X	X
Manitoba	X	X	X	X	X	X
Memorial		X	X	X	X	X
Moncton			X	X		
Mount St. Vincent			X	X		
OLA	X	X	X			
Royal Military College						X
Royal Roads		X	X	X	X	X
Teluq	(X)	X	X	X	X	X
UCCB		X	X	X	X	X
UNB			X	X	X	X
Victoria		P		P		

Table 5.1 Consortium 1 Partners 2000 – 2005

X = Full Partner

P = Provider (of courses) only

(X) = Discussant, but not yet partner for political reasons

5.3 Consortium 2

5.3.1 Formation

Immediately after the Consortium 1 inaugural meeting in Vancouver in January 2000, two Directors and one Vice President of the University of Waterloo began discussing a different type of distance education consortium. See Appendix C for a complete list of the Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 players. Discussion in February 2000 tried to flesh out the motivation behind a new consortium. A number of questions and possible answers were proposed, asking why a new consortium was needed, what might come of it and how it might be organized and operate. A third Director also was in on this discussion, proposing a meeting with appropriate parties from like-minded schools. By February 24, less than a month after the initial Consortium 1 meeting, the Directors were ready to share the Waterloo ideas with colleagues at the University of Guelph. Guelph had not been one of the Consortium 1 invitees. The document was also shared at this time with the University of British Columbia.

The initial Consortium 2 principles were ready by late February 2000. This consortium had a significantly broader and deeper academic mandate than Consortium 1. The proposal focused on technology, quality, depth, breadth, research, and active collaboration. Major points are noted in Table 5.2 on the next page.

The Director, Learning summarized the University of Waterloo's involvement in national and regional initiatives in Learning and Teaching through Technology on March 2, 2000. As well as the Consortium 2 ideas under development, other initiatives were learnware objects, prototypes, a repository, collaborative faculty development and collaborative graduate courses. Funding for some of these projects was provided by Industry Canada.

Comments on the proposed Consortium 2 were received back in early March from the President and Director, Learning at the University of Guelph. At the same time, a University of Waterloo Vice President shared the proposed list with colleagues at York University. There was also discussion to tie the first draft criteria to other published statements, presumably to add credibility.

A planning group meeting was arranged in Guelph for March 23. Attendees included the University of Waterloo (3 people), the University of Guelph (1 person) and York University (3 people). The Interactive University working title was to be changed, but a new name had not yet emerged. Industry Canada had suggested the consortium apply for $100,000 seed money for startup costs. This matched the startup money provided earlier for Consortium 1.

Criteria for Collaboration through a Consortium

- Demonstrated experience in distance education with courses that are web based, or are significantly enhanced with web/internet technology (or credible evidence for a plan to be there within twelve months)
- Experience in developing high quality web-based teaching material
- Commitment to convergence (the same material can be used for both on campus and at a distance)
- Experience in offering full degree programs via distance education
- Faculty depth, breadth and qualifications comparable to a major research university
- Full range of on campus courses and programs (re choice, intellectual atmosphere)
- Appropriate and adequate student support services for distance education students
- Significant interactivity in all courses (students with students and/or students with faculty)
- Timed courses (known start and end dates) guaranteeing a cohort of students
- Secured final exams comparable to on campus exams
- Admission standards appropriate to a university that does selective admissions
- Programs and courses that have the workload, demands and expectations that are comparable to on campus programs and courses
- Commitment to mutually beneficial collaboration not driven by concerns about competition from others partners within the consortium
- Commitment to work within the home campus to promote meaningful collaboration in development of teaching material and development of new programs

Table 5.2 Initial Principles for Consortium 2

By early April 2000, the Consortium 2 name was being used. On April 3, an education consultant put together an internal document, which was forwarded to the three catalyst universities. A Draft (Member Version) document dated April 10, 2000 included adjustments provided by one of the Waterloo Directors. On page 3, members of Consortium 2 were recognized as research intensive universities with a strong presence in the *delivery of Internet-enhanced* learning. The Founding Members were identified as the University of Guelph, the University of Waterloo and York University. Additional universities with 'similar profiles as innovative research institutions' will be invited to join. A hand-written memo attached to this document notes that the name is too 'cute' but "we have to have 'profile' in order to get money (federal and private). Industry Canada already has made a 'soft' promise to match what they gave Athabasca!" So, with only a draft idea for a consortium and only two months after the Consortium 1 meeting in Vancouver, Consortium 2 is already thinking about and perhaps obtaining funding.

There was also a note that the three presidents needed to get together with the Minister of MTCU. (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) There had been an expression of interest from the MTCU in seeing Ontario collaborations for online learning.

External input was received in March 2000 from Bell Canada University Labs about Standards for On-line Course Development. In April, the Director of Distance Learning and Educational Alliances, Pearson Canada, wanted to talk about the proposed Canadian University Consortium.

In early 2001, the Waterloo Director, Learning prepared *Background Information for the {Consortium 2} Project*. This document explained Consortium 2, the Purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding, the Goals, and Planned Activities for 2001.

5.3.1.1 Memorandum of Understanding

A final Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Consortium 2 Project was developed between January 25 and March 13, 2001. The Memorandum established the 'intention' of member institutions to work collaboratively to enhance 'high-quality Internet-based programs and to integrate scholarly values and culture into our learning and teaching'. Collaborative initiatives were available in Online Programs, Faculty Development and Research & Evaluation. A Steering Group was established to oversee the work of Consortium 2. Membership was open to other Canadian research universities 'who can add value' and who 'share our traditions of quality, innovation, accessibility and outreach'. Funding was *explicitly* mentioned in the MOU. A lead institution will apply for funds for Consortium 2 projects. An annual membership fee of $5000 was proposed. The MOU was to be revised before August 1, 2002 but it has not been revised yet as of April 2005.

5.3.2 Initial Partners

A Vice President at the University of Saskatchewan supported both Consortium 2 and changes proposed earlier by a Director, Education at the University of Alberta. All agreed that an academic focus of research into teaching and learning through technology was important as was an interactive approach. The Saskatchewan contact was concerned about a clear definition for a 'research university'. He proposed the Maclean's magazine medical/doctoral category 'provided that doesn't rule out any universities that we would want to leave in', which in fact it did. He also expressed interest in new partner selection – "how and at what stage" would you invite others if they wished to join? The University of British Columbia contact had indicated to the Saskatchewan Vice President that he had found solid international and provincial consortia, but

the University of British Columbia was still looking for a national consortium. Also, should Consortium 2 incorporate as Consortium 1 had done? The Vice President's last point was that his experience with CampusWest.Ca had verified that the people organizing the consortium needed to consult internally with their Vice Presidents, Deans Councils and so on for institutional buy-in. There was a meeting at an education conference in 2000 where some of this was discussed by one of the Waterloo Directors and the potential western partners.

By May 25, 2000, the University of Alberta had been included in the Proposal for the development of Consortium 2. An Overview of the Consortium 2 Project dated June 16, 2000, identified a target 'to add three more universities by the end of 2000 … providing a truly national, coast-to-coast collaboration.' At this time, two operational thrusts were recognized – Consortium2.ca focused on collaborative development of high-quality Internet-enabled programs and the Consortium 2 Institute focused on integrating scholarly values and culture with longer-term impacts.

On August 27 and 28, 2000, a meeting was organized in Edmonton including representatives from the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Waterloo, York University, and the Alberta Online Consortium. On August 29, a draft Memorandum of Understanding was prepared by York University. By early September, Waterloo and Alberta partners were organizing budgets, lists of courses and their online content. At the same time, the Waterloo Director, Learning was to invite a Quebec partner and Dalhousie University to provide the broad geographical coverage necessary for a truly Canadian consortium. The University of Alberta Director, Education noted "our strength will depend to a large extent on the commitment of each institution to do its own selling of the concept internally."

Feedback from the August meeting identified a number of issues of potential concern to Consortium 2.

1. A source of funding for joint research initiatives has not been identified.
2. Copyright and return on investment need to be clarified.
3. The definition of 'online course' varies among institutions.
4. The Consortium 2 brand name may be less than that of individual institutions.
5. Consortium 2 needs buy-in at the vice presidential level.
6. The value added by Consortium 2 needs to be clear for each institution.
7. External funding will probably be needed for at least three years.

On September 18, 2000, an Interim Steering Committee Report was prepared by the Waterloo Director, Distance Education, on behalf of himself and other Directors at Waterloo and the University of Guelph. Partner issues in the Report:

1. The Waterloo Director, Learning has had two discussions with Dalhousie.

2. Industry Canada cannot suggest a suitable English-speaking university in Quebec, so Consortium 2 can proceed without a Quebec partner for the time being.
3. The University of Waterloo Director, Learning will discuss the issue of UBC with the University of Alberta Director, Education.

The Report also contained course content and administration issues, such as development and preparation of lists of courses, graduate programs, educational principles, website development and student administrative processes. A major issue was the need for a Chief Executive Officer to drive Consortium 2. Without such a person, it was felt that the initiative would falter. Finally, the Report noted the need for a Consortium 2 budget and funding, as well as the need for the Vice President Academics (VPAs) from each Consortium 2 institution to support the initiative.

The University of Waterloo Director, Learning wanted the Atlantic provinces represented because part of the criteria of Canadian government funding was that it be coast-to-coast. The Director saw Dalhousie as the most recognized and/or the most research-intensive Atlantic university. Also the Executive Director, Technology, at Dalhousie at the time was a personal contact promoting instructional development and that was wanted by Consortium 2. The Associate Dean in Health Professions and his faculty had had the most involvement in online course delivery, so it made sense for the Associate Dean to be the Consortium 2 liaison. The Dean in the Faculty of Health Professions gave them a mandate to grow and they had no physical space, so online delivery fit the bill. A number of people at Dalhousie have had the Consortium 2 liaison position, due to significant faculty turnover at the university. The current representative from Health Services is helping to collaborate on a research paper with a Director, Development from Simon Fraser University. The two professors were collaborating before Consortium 2 since they had both been faculty members at Dalhousie.

On February 7, 2001, the Vice President of York University talked to the President and the Chair of Communication, Simon Fraser University, about Consortium 2. Simon Fraser was interested in all three areas of Consortium 2. Simon Fraser would be the seventh member if they signed on. The Director, Education, University of Alberta, said that research and development were most important to him and detail was needed "to convince my VPA that we need to be active members".

The University of Waterloo Director, Learning wanted the Consortium 2 membership confirmed by February 2001 to secure government funding. Waterloo, Guelph, York and Alberta had signed the MOU by March, 2001. Dalhousie, Saskatchewan, and Simon Fraser were ready to sign. By March 19, Simon Fraser had signed. More external input was received in May 2001 from NSERC speaking to Consortium 2 about the Advisory Committee on Online Learning (ACOL). The University of Alberta Director, Education accepted a new position as Executive Director, Learning at the University of Calgary. By mid-September 2001, he had persuaded his new VPA to sign the Consortium 2 MOU, making the University of Calgary the eighth institutional member. At about the same time, the University of Alberta Director, Extension moved to the University of Saskatchewan. The University of Alberta remained in Consortium 2

with a new contact. In January 2002, the Acting Director, Technologies, confirmed continued support for Consortium 2 from her Associate Vice-President.

5.3.3 External Funding

5.3.3.1 McConnell Foundation

On April 14, 2000, a Consortium 2 proposal was jointly submitted to the McConnell Foundation by the University of Guelph, University of Waterloo and York University, signed by the presidents of the three institutions. On April 27, a letter was received back from the Foundation asking for a full proposal by May 23. The reviewers from the Foundation requested further explanation as to how Consortium 2 would be any different from any other collaboration, how it is more than just a wider network of online courses, and specifically how Consortium 2 contributes to teaching and learning at each university.

An Abstract of the proposal from the Consortium 2 Group to the Foundation mentions the Consortium 2 Institute, a scholarly centre which was meant to add a strong research component to the collaboration. There was also discussion of joint goals with the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC) and the MERLOT project in the United States.

On October 10, the Vice President of York University and the Director, Learning of the University of Waterloo visited the President of the McConnell Family Foundation. A new proposal was to be submitted although there was no guarantee that McConnell money would be available. Even if McConnell funding is made available, it would cover only some parts of Consortium 2 and only three or four years rather than the five years that are needed for startup funding. A new McConnell proposal was developed by January 2001 suggesting the need for funding of 10 faculty members ***at each university*** by Fall 2001, then 30 in 2002 and 40 in 2003 and 2004. The individual universities would have to pick up the costs of these Faculty Fellows about 2002 or 2003.

5.3.3.2 Government

On February 22, 2001, the University of Waterloo Director, Learning met with the Office of Learning Technologies (OLT) about their research agenda for potential Consortium 2 funding. On May 15, there was discussion about an OLT-NPLT fund application. The application was to evaluate the CLEO resources and, in case Inukshuk Learning Plan funding doesn't come through, evaluation of Consortium 2 learning objects, thereby extending the application from Ontario to a

national project. An OLT meeting was being arranged in May to "collaborate on their research agenda".

In late April, the University of Waterloo proposed Collaborative Research and Research Alliances and Lifelong Learning as an SSHRC strategic theme. While the Consortium 2 group was in Ottawa in May, they planned to meet with SSHRC about their Initiative for the New Economy (INE) program. The INE initiative was a 5 year, $100 million program of targeted research support. Focus areas, set by Finance and Industry Canada partners, are education, life-long learning and management. The STELAR (Stimulating Technology-Enhanced Learning with Action Research) initiative is directly related, but was not pursued after attracting minimal interest when circulated.

In May 2001, meetings were arranged in Ottawa between several funding organizations - OLT, SSHRC, and Industry Canada - and Consortium 2 people. Directors from the Universities of Guelph and Alberta were both originally interested in attending. The University of Alberta couldn't make the Ottawa meeting at the last minute, so there was some consternation on both sides as to what went wrong and why and how. An Alberta presence was seen to be necessary to support the notion that Consortium 2 was national. In fact, only the Director, Learning from Waterloo and a Distance Learning Specialist from Guelph ended up in Ottawa, which defeated the large-scale Canada-wide focus that had been expected.

The Consortium 2 group also planned to put a proposal in to SSHRC and NSERC to support discipline faculty in Learning Technologies research. As of October 2001, Industry Canada was interested in Consortium 2 and intended to provide funding. A Statement of Work was being reviewed. A press release was to come later jointly with Industry Canada after the Statement of Work was final. From April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2003, Consortium 2 had funding from Industry Canada to prepare a database of courses, get the courses ready for public access, and prepare documents such as Letters of Permission for course credit.

5.3.4 Governing Structure

In July 2000, the Academic Vice Presidents of Guelph, Waterloo and York shared e-mail about the governing structure, funding and publicity for Consortium 2. By October 2000, a web portal was being developed to showcase the Consortium 2 courses. A part-time Project Director was hired in November. In January 2001, work continued on the Consortium 2 database and portal. The University of Alberta had originally started doing this work, but Waterloo later took it on due to poor project management in Alberta. A contract company called CompCanada Atlas finally created Consortium 2's database and public website. This outside company was hired because of the project management issues and delays at the University of Alberta. The course database in spring of 2001 contained 285 courses, spread broadly by category.

On February 27, 2001, a teleconference was arranged with Senior Administrators (Vice Presidents) and Directors of all Consortium 2 universities. The teleconference discussed Learning Object definitions, portal specifications, and internal course databases, all with March 31 deadlines.

On April 30, 2001, a series of monthly teleconferences began with the six confirmed universities. Dalhousie had not yet signed the MOU by this date. Separate monthly teleconferences were held with the Project Directors, Online Programs, and Research & Evaluation groups. A Vice President at the University of Saskatchewan was leading the transfer credit process. The Director, Development was still at Dalhousie at this time, but is moving to Simon Fraser University on July 1, 2001 so is now the SFU Online Program Initiative Contact.

A meeting was arranged in Saskatoon August 28 and 29. On August 28, 2001 there was a Research meeting to discuss OLT, Industry Canada, SSHRC INE, and STELAR research projects. On August 29, there was a Project Directors meeting. Possible additional participants were suggested from the University of Calgary and the University of Quebec. Alberta's Director, Education was moving to the University of Calgary and Dalhousie's Executive Director, Technology, to the University of Quebec. Roles within Consortium 2 were discussed – the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada (CMEC), Vice Presidents, Project Directors and other staff – as well as initiatives, funding and research.

On November 10, 2001, a meeting was planned at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. A well-known administrator was proposed as the new Executive Director, one day a week. At that time, this person was the Executive Director of the TeleLearning Network of Centres of Excellence and she was recognized by many of the partners. By February 2002, the universities were trying to get a Consortium 2 organization chart together – a sign of maturity of the consortium.

The Consortium 2 Project Directors teleconference in August 2003 discussed possible relationships between Consortium 1 and Consortium 2. This was followed up with e-mails to the Executive Director of Consortium 1. The key joint project at the time seemed to be a national gateway to distance education courses. The Consortium 2 Annual Meeting in October 2003 discussed Consortium 1 relationships and again the national gateway to distance education. The agenda included a national research consortium for online learning, collaborative development of online programs, and faculty development in research-based teaching online.

5.3.5 Potential Partners

5.3.5.1 University of British Columbia

On March 1, 2000, the Director, Education of UBC provided his comments on the Interactive University document. He found the process restrictive, but thought that the proposal matched the 'culture' of UBC. Transfer arrangements were similar to those that had been in practice among UBC, SFU and the University of Victoria for nearly 20 years. The Director was concerned that an *online* restriction would need to be clearly defined and might limit course offerings. UBC at that time had been asked to participate in nine different consortia, so the Director was making no promises for Consortium 2. He ended his comments by asking whether institutions from outside Ontario would be welcome in the 'club', implying that he had sensed an 'exclusive' 'Ontario' focus in the document.

The Director's comments were appended with a University of British Columbia document to UBC's Vice-President, Academic, with copies to others at UBC, summarizing the Director's thinking about the various distance education consortia of the time. The Director's recommendations to his superiors:

1. Aggressively support Universitas 21
2. Possibly support the US-based R1 consortium
3. Continue with the British Columbia Open University consortium through OLA
4. Watch Consortium 1 and perhaps let them use UBC distance education courses, but don't pay to join
5. Low priority to Campus West
6. No priority to Industry Canada's Campus Network, but allow UBC courses

The Director concluded his UBC document with "I see UBC courses having high value for most other consortia, so we should be cautious about paying to join such a consortia." He follows up with "These are my recommendations. However, I would feel a lot more comfortable if this was a decision/policy of the senior management at UBC, rather than my own preference."

In January 2001, the University of British Columbia decided not to join Consortium 2. UBC said "we support the intent of the project" but do not see advantages to the institution or for the students. All Consortium 2 partners can already use UBC courses if they wish. Students from the Open Learning Agency and Athabasca University already register in UBC courses and Consortium 2 students could do the same. UBC is also interested in research, but with individual institutions. There may be potential accreditation problems and residency issues. They already do their own international marketing specific to UBC. There is a high cost of participating in

Consortium 2, including fees, time and travel costs. Finally, the UBC staff is already "burnt out" with existing funded projects.

5.3.5.2 Other Universities

On March 11, 2001, the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning approached McGill about Consortium 2. On March 13, the reply from McGill said that faculty development and research collaborations are already done "bottom up" by individual faculty members at McGill. McGill was also already in Universitas 21 so didn't need or want to share online courses. As well, they would require vice presidential and legal office approval, both of which are hard to get.

McMaster enquired about a potential partnership in the spring of 2002. They ended up signing on with CLOE, a learning objects consortium, but not with Consortium 2. They do not have a large distance education offering, so Consortium 2 was therefore not applicable for them.

5.3.6 Evolution

By mid-September 2001, Consortium 2 members were looking for Status Reports about Consortium 2 that they could share with their institutions for continuing administrative support. In October 2001, the Consortium 2 project was announced at the AUCC meeting by York University. Industry Canada was interested in Consortium 2 and intended to provide funding. A Statement of Work was being reviewed. A press release was to come later jointly with Industry Canada after the Statement of Work was final. It took several months of preparation before the public announcement because Consortium 2 wanted the public portal to be ready first.

In Fall 2002, Consortium 2 was officially announced as a national collaboration of eight major Canadian universities. Consortium 2 had actually been operating for some time but was just beginning its publicity with the hiring of an Executive Director, and new funding from Industry Canada. The Executive Director had been the former Executive Director of the Telelearning Network of Centres of Excellence, now disbanding as its federal funding ran out. Several staff members from the University of Waterloo were involved in start-up work for Consortium 2. The University of Waterloo's Associate Vice-President, Learning and formerly Director, Learning was Consortium 2's Project Director and a member of the Steering Committee. The other universities in Consortium 2 were Dalhousie, Simon Fraser, Alberta, Calgary, Guelph, Saskatchewan and York. The Consortium 2 website described its first research project with an on-line learning environment, as well as co-development of courses among universities. The website also promised a 'culture of research and scholarship' tied to technology-enhanced learning, development of students' capabilities and ongoing development of faculty, culminating

in a “network of expert faculty members”. Once again, a very different focus and agenda from Consortium 1.

5.4 Summary of Case Study Narratives

Documentation of the case study narratives provided preliminary data organization both by timeline and by main topics. The narrative work itself brought together information from a number of data sources. It also ordered the information and allowed key themes to surface. Important issues emerged related to formation of the partnerships, external funding, and evolution of the partnerships including expansion with new partners.

Consortium 1 membership has changed dramatically over the years, as shown in Table 5.1. The consortium began with five members, grew to a high of 13 members in 2003, and is now at 11 members. Conversely, Consortium 2 began with eight members and is still at that steady state. The interests and motivation of the partners are very different as well. Consortium 1 partners are very interested in online course development and offerings and in generating revenue from the partnership. Consortium 2 partners are more interested in research and scholarship related to online teaching and learning, co-development of courses, and faculty development.

Once the case study narrative was completed giving an overview of the data, the detailed analysis of documents was started. A qualitative research data analysis software package was used to store materials and enable electronic coding. Information on the package and results of the detailed analysis are provided in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6
Detailed Analysis with Coding

6.1 Data Analysis Software

Three software packages for data analysis were reviewed – Atlas ti, N6 (Nudist), and NVivo. Atlas ti had been suggested as a long-established data analysis tool that could handle text, graphics and audio. A search for the software, however, showed that it did not appear to be appropriate for this work and that it would be difficult to obtain a current version. N6, the latest version of the traditional Nudist data analysis software, could handle large data sets and routine queries. NVivo, another recent variation of Nudist, worked on smaller data sets but could handle multifaceted data and complex queries. NVivo was more user-friendly than N6, had simple coding and data management, worked with thematic tree structures, and could generate emerging grounded theory from the data analysis. Since this research encompassed a small amount of complex data, NVivo seemed to be the best fit overall.

NVivo 2.0 from QSR International Ltd. was the data analysis software chosen for this research. It works with rich text records edited, coded and linked with multi-media data such as voice recordings, audio tapes, and video clips. The software allows simple coding of data and ideas, as well as a wide variety of methods of data analysis, retrieval and interpretation. Emerging theories can be recorded and changed as the data are coded and analyzed. One item can be associated with several different codes as appropriate. Multiple levels of codes are available, so that items can be grouped into more general categories, such as 'partner choice criteria' and then separated into detailed specific codes, such as 'requirements', 'reputation', 'social network' and so on. Data can be linked qualitatively into views, groups or sets, and ideas can be shaped and modeled as the information is entered and analyzed. The software allows easy integration, interpretation, discovery and focused questioning on the data. As well as coding capabilities, the software also allows easy keyword searching and data pattern emergence. Reporting can be done in text, tables, charts and multi-media formats.

Data are coded as Nodes, which are containers for ideas and concepts. For this data, these were specific codes such as funding, geography, reputation and so on. Tree Nodes can also be coded to group individual nodes. In this research, all of the Process codes or Criteria codes could be grouped to represent research questions or propositions. Cases can document specific interviewees, universities, documents and so on. Each of these cases can also have Attributes assigned to it, such as Consortia and Document Type. Sets of codes allow for grouping of all interviews, e-mails, contracts or various types of data. For reporting, Show identifies which documents relate to which other documents or themes. Models can be created from these relationships. The Assay reporting function provides more detail, such as numbers of documents,

tables, percentages of data, who said what, and detailed cross-referenced tables comparing interviewees to codes. Tables can show numbers of responses, percentages, words, passages and a variety of characters compared by code or set or attribute. The Search function allows searching by text, word, phrase, passage, or paragraph. Search can also expand to include enclosing text to put specific words in context as needed. Reports can be produced on data, searches, tables, models or other information. All of the NVivo information can be linked to web pages, photographs, diagrams, graphs, charts, and other materials in a variety of online locations.

6.2 Initial Coding

Coding is very flexible and can be done in a variety of ways with the NVivo data analysis software. Initial coding was done by reading the documents in NVivo and coding as they were being read. NVivo permits multiple coding for all data, so the same words could be coded as both Funding and Research, for example. This allowed for a more realistic analysis of the large amount of text.

This type of coding in NVivo codes *passages* rather than words or lines or documents. A passage in NVivo can be text of any length – a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or any other *meaningful unit* of text. When passages are coded then, they represent one part of the interview or contract or document (of any size or length) that discusses the idea at hand. To code 'social network' for example, the researcher can code "Matt came to see us" as one passage or "We knew Justin" or a long, detailed paragraph about previously knowing and working with a variety of people. In general, a passage was ended when a new topic was introduced.

A small number of codes from the Initial Data Analysis such as Partner Selection, Reputation, Research, Social Network and Funding were set up to start the coding process. The balance of the initial codes noted below were generated by reading the interview transcripts and coding as they were read. This produced a list of 36 Free Codes. The number of passages that were coded with the code word is shown below the word. There were 278 passages coded, some with multiple codes.

The Free Codes shown in Table 6.1 represent the first attempt to code data. The names in the table are initial codes that seemed to make sense of the transcript and other information. The numbers below the names are the number of passages coded for that code word. For example, there were 16 passages that were coded as 'Institution'.

Activity 14	Canada 8	Complementary 2	Cost 5	Deal 6	Drawing 3
Exclusion 6	External 1	Funding 26	Future 1	Geography 10	Government 5
Individual 11	Institution 16	Involvement 3	Join 1	Key Partner 2	More Students 2
Motivation 23	Negotiation 1	Objectives 5	Online 6	Organization 13	Partner Selection 0
Peripheral 1	Power 5	Reputation 23	Requirements 7	Research 6	ROI 1
Role 23	Self-sufficiency 2	Similarity 9	Social Network 28	Timing 0	Trust 3

Table 6.1 Free Codes

6.3 Code Consolidation

Since many words had 0, 1 or 2 codes, these codes were either dropped entirely or rolled into another word. The passages for these codes were reread and decisions were made on what to do with the words based on this review. The words and decisions are identified below.

1. Complementary (2) was coded from Interview 9 saying "We bring in different strengths." This seemed to be the opposite of Similarity, so the two nodes were combined.
2. External (1) was coded from Interview 5 talking about getting external funding from contracts. This same section was coded as Funding, so the External code was removed to prevent duplication.
3. Future (1) was Interview 8 talking about 'self-sustaining revenue generation' in the future. Since it had already been coded as Funding, the code was deleted.
4. Join (1) was Interview 9 talking about bringing the two consortia together. This was left as is since other interviewees also noted the notion of one consortium. Recoding was expected to increase the number of instances of this code.
5. Key Partner (2) was moved to Role since it appeared to be an example of one of the important partnership roles.
6. More Students (2) was Interview 5 talking about more students growing his distance education program from Consortium 2. This code was deleted since it was already coded as Motivation.
7. Negotiation (1) was Interview 5 talking about bringing in whoever happens to be available rather than your first choice of partner. Interview 5 mentioned that there was no UBC, but Simon Fraser was in. Also, there was no U of T, but Waterloo and York were in. This was recoded to Role (Key Partners), Reputation, and a new code, Resource Availability.
8. Partner Selection (0) was omitted entirely. This code had been established to start the coding process, but the interview material referred to issues around partner selection, but not Partner Selection itself.
9. Peripheral (1) was Interview 5 talking about the Dalhousie people just 'reviewing' some work that other partners had done. This ties to Dalhousie's role in the partnership, so was changed to Role.
10. ROI (1) was moved to Funding.
11. Self-sufficiency (2) was Interview 9 talking about reasonable funding and income making the consortia self-sufficient. This was recoded to Funding.
12. Timing (0) was omitted entirely. This code was originally included because some interviewees felt that the timing of certain events was critical to the partnership. The issue did not surface during formal interviews, however, or it was perhaps subsumed in other

issues, such as Resource Availability. That is, particular partners may or may not be available to join a consortium at certain times.

Activity 14	Canada 8	Cost 5	Deal 6	Drawing 3
Exclusion 6	Funding 30	Geography 10	Government 5	Individual 11
Institution 16	Involvement 3	Join 1	Motivation 25	Objectives 5
Online 6	Organization 13	Power 5	Reputation 23	Requirements 7
Research 6	Resource Availability 1	Role 26	Similarity/ Complementary 11	Social Network 28
Trust 3				

Table 6.2 Consolidated Codes

A total of 26 codes and 277 passages were left after consolidation, as shown in Table 6.2. Some of these codes appear to be more general than others, such as Motivation and Social Network. This suggested that at least one layer of high-level codes or Sets or Tree Nodes should be added. These changes were done during the code rework described in the next section.

6.4 Rework and Final Coding

After reading and re-reading interview transcripts, it became apparent that some words, such as 'Geography', meant different things to different people. For Memorial University in Newfoundland, it related to the feeling of isolation from the rest of Canada and the rest of the world. The Director, Technologies was using Consortium 1 to help Memorial collaborate to reduce their feelings of separation. In this sense, 'Geography' was a *motivation* for Memorial to join the partnership. The Director, Learning in Waterloo and other Consortium 2 interviewees were using the term 'Geography' to mean 'Cross-Canada'. That is, they had an Industry Canada contract that encouraged Canada-wide participation in their consortium. For this group,

'Geography' was a *constraint* or one of the *specific requirements* of the partnership. The Geography code was changed to Isolation and Canada, and these two codes were identified as sub-codes of Motivation and Requirements as noted earlier.

Similarly, the word 'Funding' meant different things in different contexts. In some cases, they were referring to Funds from Income to make the consortium self-sufficient. In other cases, interviewees were talking about Government Funding or Research Funding. Consortium 1 was searching for teaching and course-related funding. Consortium 2's focus was more on research funding. A third use of the term was for Funds (or Fees) to be paid to belong to the consortia. In the third case, there was also discussion of how that funding was obtained and who approved it, which ties to Organizational Approval. The Funding code was split to three codes: External Funding, Income, and Fees.

Likewise, 'Role' was used to mean both partner selection roles and operational partnership roles. To differentiate the terms, two codes were used – 'PSRole' and 'ORole'.

The researcher also noted that 'Institution' and 'Organization' appeared to be the same thing. Each of these codes had a large number of passages, however, so further investigation was necessary to identify potential subtle differences.

All consolidated codes were reworked as follows to ensure correct coding and to add layers of high-level codes as necessary.

1. Activity (14)

This code referred to consortia operations rather than partner selection. It referred to how active people are or should be in the consortia. There were 14 instances of Activity in the MOU and Interviews 5, 7 and 10. Operations was added as a higher-level Code.

2. Canada (8)

Canada was referenced eight times by Interviews 8 (2), 5 (3) and 10 (3). Interview 8 was talking about a cross-Canada network, part of Requirements, and the need for one consortium across Canada rather than two consortia, which could be better coded as Join. Interview 5 talked about the need for an Atlantic presence twice and the need for a British Columbia presence once, both of which are Requirements. Interview 10 talked about a cross-Canada consortium and the need for McGill and a Quebec presence, again Requirements.

3. Cost (5)

Interview 9 talked about reduced course development costs, which is really a Motivation or Benefit of Consortium 1. Interview 9 also talked about the financial benefit of income from

Consortium 1 twice, which is better coded as Income. Interview 10 talked about whether it was worth the money to be involved in Consortium 2, so that could be better coded as Fees. The Cost code was removed.

4. Deal (6)

Deal was documented once by Interview 5 talking about deal-making among some Vice Presidents and Directors of the University of Waterloo, York University and the University of Alberta. Interview 10 also talked about deal-making five times among the Provost and Senior Administration of the University of Waterloo, York University and the University of Guelph. The Provost and Senior Administration comments were also coded as Organizational Approval.

5. Drawing (3)

Interviews 5, 8 and 10 talked about the network pictures that they were drawing to show their organization's structure. This dialogue was used in the drawing Discussion.

6. Exclusion (6)

Interview 9 talked about Consortium 2 being more of an exclusive group, which is better coded as Requirements. Then the interviewee said that Dalhousie won't do anything with Memorial (Reputation), then that the Consortium 2 partners are too exclusive, Dalhousie will block Memorial from getting into Consortium 2 (Key Partner Role), there has always been a "bone of contention" between Dalhousie and Memorial (Reputation) and finally that Consortium 2 is elitist. (Requirements and Reputation)

7. Funding (30)

The Funding codes were split to Income, Fees and External Funding as noted earlier. Interview 9 spoke about $15,000, money coming out of the budget, and that it was important to find money to support Consortium 1, all of which were recoded as Fees. Interview 9 also talked about reasonable funding and income making the consortia self-sufficient. This was recoded to Income. Interview 8 talked about self-sustaining revenue, a return on investment, the consortium being too dependent on the government and that Consortium 1 needed its own branding to generate revenue, all four of which were coded as Income. Interview 8 also talked about paying fees, recoded as Fees. The MOU suggests that Consortium 2 needs to 'seek external funding', which was coded as External Funding. Interview 5 talked about external money from contracts, coded as Income. Then he spoke about government funding for CA Net and funding for BELLE, both of which were coded as External Funding. Finally he spoke about the provost providing money, getting the most influential person you can (also coded as Organizational Approval), the Provost has provided continuity, $5000 per institution to join, phone costs and annual and one-time fees, all of which were recoded as Fees. Interview 10 talked about federal government funding, money allowing us to do things, waiting for grants, needing funding for an Executive Director (twice) and needing and waiting for Industry Canada funding (twice), all of which were recoded as

External Funding. She also spoke about allocating people and resources to Consortium 2, which was recoded as Fees.

8. Geography (10)

The Geography code was split to Requirements and Isolation. Interview 9 said that Consortium 1 needs more Ontario members (twice) (Cross-Canada Requirements or Constraints) and that she felt isolation in Newfoundland (Isolation). Interview 8 spoke about rural communities up north needing distance education, so his comment was recoded as Isolation. Interview 5 said that Consortium 2 wanted the Atlantic provinces represented, a coast-to-coast consortium and Atlantic provinces coverage, all of which were better coded as Cross-Canada Requirements. A last comment about Dalhousie's profile in the Atlantic was coded as Reputation and Key Partner Role.

9. Government (5)

Interview 9 mentioned a federal-provincial agreement, which was coded as Deal and External Funding. She also mentioned public-private partnerships as one of the Motivations for Memorial to join Consortium 1. Interview 10 mentioned government funding which was recoded as External Funding. She later talked about the government not understanding differences in universities, which was coded as Reputation. The code for Government was removed.

10. Individual (11)

Interview 5 mentioned individual representatives who made the consortium deals, certain Calgary individuals, and individuals coming and going as partners, all of which were recoded as Deal. Interview 10 mentioned the Director, Technology at UBC (Reputation and Social Network), need for an administrator (Operational Role), a partner as a person, unit or institution (Unit of Partner) and the Vice President, York University (Reputation and Social Network).

11. Institution (16)

Interview 9 talked about the institution versus the unit as a partner (Unit of Partner). Interview 5 talked about organizational approval eight times (Organizational Approval). Interview 10 talked about the institution versus the unit twice and organizational approval four times. Institution was removed.

12. Involvement (3)

Interview 5 said that Simon Fraser and Waterloo were heavily involved, which was the same as Activity. Later, he said that {Simon Fraser}, University of Alberta and Dalhousie people all knew each other. (Social Network) The Involvement code was removed.

13. Join (1)

Interview 10 said that Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 should be joined into one Consortium.

14. Motivation (25)

Interview 9 needed some partners to grow. (5 comments) Interview 8 needed partners to grow, didn't want to join the U.S. or some other consortium, and Consortium 1 made Laurentian's distance education offerings better. (3) Interview 5 mentioned more students, expanded programs (5 times), participation in research (twice), participation in course development and sharing, being the Atlantic partner (twice), wanting a central database of courses, strength in numbers, and mutual interests and similar programs (twice). He also noted that Calgary and Waterloo were already in. (Reputation, Key Partners)

15. Objectives (5)

These comments were changed to General Motivation.

16. Online (6)

These comments were also changed to General Motivation.

17. Organization (13)

Interview 9 discussed the institution versus unit-based collaboration, which was recoded as such. Interview 8 noted the President of Laurentian University supporting collaboration, the director of finance and president supporting it, and presidential approval, all of which were recoded as Organizational Approval. Interview 5 noted four items of organizational approval and two instances of the institution versus unit as partner. Interview 10 noted organizational approval.

18. Power (5)

Interview 9 spoke about Key Partners four times and then power or strength in numbers as a Motivation for a collaboration. Power was removed.

19. Reputation (24)

Interview 9 wanted a relationship with Athabasca, Waterloo, Simon Fraser and other universities based on their reputations. Interview 5 felt that Dalhousie is the best university in the Atlantic. He noted that Dalhousie looked in Consortium 2 and saw that "U of T isn't there, but Waterloo and York are in" (Key Partners). He also identified similarity between Dalhousie and other partners and cited the Maclean's reputation survey. Interview 10 talked about reputation with respect to UBC, Guelph, {Waterloo}, Manitoba, Calgary, Alberta, other known people, and similarity of reputation.

20. Requirements (7)

Interview 9 noted Consortium 1 requirements of specific program offerings. Interview 8 mentioned open enrolment for Distance Education offerings. The Consortium 2 MOU stated that institutions must enhance offerings and do research. Interview 5 noted the need for Cross-Canada coverage and Atlantic provinces representation. Interview 10 mentioned distance education online courses and quality requirements.

21. Research (5)

Interview 5 noted research done with Consortium 2 and UBC. Interview 10 spoke about Guelph and Consortium 2 research work.

22. Resource Availability (1)

Interview 5 mentioned that there was no UBC, but Simon Fraser was in. Also, there was no U of T, but Waterloo and York were in.

23. Role (26)

This code was split to Partner Selection Role and Operational Role. Within Partner Selection Role, Key Partner was mentioned most often. Interview 5 said that he got the "most influential person" to be a local sponsor, which was recoded to Organizational Approval. Consortium 2 was formed from individuals with personal unit interests was recoded to Deal and Key Partners. The previous Peripheral code changed to Operational Role. Interview 9 mentioned operational roles and participation or activity. Interview 8 noted operational roles and 'all equal partners'. The MOU identified operational roles. Interview 5's comments were recoded to 1 operational, 7 key partner, 3 institution versus person, and 1 Motivation. Interview 10 identified four instances of Key Partners and one Executive Director (Operational).

24. Similarity/Complementary (11)

Interview 5 identified 6 similar problems and issues among universities and 3 reputation comments. Complementary was referenced twice by Interview 9. She talked about complementary strengths within the consortia and complementary programs within Consortium 1. These items were coded as a sub-category of Motivation.

25. Social Network (28)

All interviewees noted either a person or a university which they 'knew' or 'trusted' to get them involved in these consortia. Specific quotations about their social networks, people and reputations are included in the Results section.

26. Trust (3)

Interview 9 trusts the judgement of the President of the OLA. Interview 10 trusts the instincts of the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning and the University of Manitoba. These comments had already been coded as Social Network, so the Trust code was removed.

6.5 Summary and Organization of Final Codes

6.5.1 Summary

The codes for Cost, Exclusion, Funding, Geography, Government, Individual, Institution, Involvement, Objectives, Online, Organization, Power, Role and Trust were removed since their material was recoded as noted previously. The Drawing code was removed and its material was moved to Section 4.5.5.3, Consortia Network Diagrams. Codes were added for Partner Selection Role (Key Partner), Organizational Role, Organizational Approval, Isolation, Income, External Funding, Fees, and Unit of Partner.

The final codes then are as noted in Table 6.3 below. This is a total of 17 codes and 261 passages. The number of codes is reduced from 26 codes in the last round because of consolidation and rework. The number of passages is also reduced somewhat, from 277 previously, because of reduction of multiple codes and because of passage 'spreading'. That is, two small earlier passages have now been consolidated into one larger passage.

Activity 16	Deal 14	External Funding 11	Fees 13	General Motivation 39
Income 9	Isolation 2	Join 3	Organizational Approval 21	Organizational Role 6
PS Role (Key Partner) 22	Reputation 34	Requirements 20	Resource Availability 1	Similarity 8
Social Network 32	Unit of Partner 10			

Table 6.3 Final Codes

6.5.2 High-Level Organization

The codes documented in previous sections started as 'free codes' taken directly from the raw data with no intentional regard to the Partner Negotiation Model. The next step was to organize the codes for analysis according to the Model and Propositions. Codes were identified as follows:

Proposition 1: Deal, External Funding

Proposition 2: Partner Selection Role

Proposition 3: Organizational Approval, Fees

Proposition 4: (a) Requirements/Constraints
(b) Resource Availability
(c) Social Network
(d) Reputation
(e) Organizational politics
(f) Ambiguity

For better organization, sets of higher-level codes were added for Process (Research Question 1) shown in Table 6.4 below, Criteria (Research Question 2) shown in Table 6.5 and Other Codes shown in Table 6.6. Process Codes were Deal, External Funding, Partner Selection Role (Key Partner), Organizational Approval, and Fees. Criteria Codes were Requirements, Resource Availability, Social Network, Reputation, Politics, and Ambiguity. Other Codes were Activity, General Motivation, Income, Isolation, Join, Organizational Role, Similarity, and Unit of Partner.

Deal	External Funding	PS Role (Key Partner)	Organizational Approval	Fees
14	11	22	21	13

Table 6.4 Process Codes

Requirements	Resource Availability	Social Network	Reputation	Politics	Ambiguity
20	1	32	34	0	0

Table 6.5 Criteria Codes

Activity	General Motivation	Income	Isolation	Join
16	39	9	2	3
Organizational Role	Similarity	Unit of Partner		
6	8	10		

Table 6.6 Other Codes

6.5.3 Detailed Organization

Finally, each of the three sets of codes in the preceding tables has been organized and subdivided with further detail. Process code results for Propositions 1 to 3 are noted in Table 6.7. Criteria code results for Proposition 4 are shown in Table 6.8. Table 6.9 shows Other Codes organized by issue.

A. Process Codes

Proposition	Code	Number of Passages	Percent
1	Deal-making	14	17%
	External Funding	11	14%
2	Key Partner Role	22	27%
3	Organizational Approval	21	26%
	Fees	13	16%
Total		**81**	**100%**

Table 6.7 Process Codes by Proposition

B. Criteria Codes

The 24 Requirements code results were the total of Canada 14, Research 7 and Distance Education Offerings 3. E-mail archives mention specifically trying to fit Consortium 2 to a government funding program. This is a measurement of the ambiguity of the government program.

Proposition	Code	Number of Passages	Percent
4	Requirements	20	23%
	Resource Availability	1	1%
	Social Network	32	37%
	Reputation	34	39%
	Politics	0	0%
	Ambiguity	0	0%
Total		**87**	**100%**

Table 6.8 Criteria Codes by Proposition

C. Other Codes

Other codes were grouped as appropriate and then sorted into Issues. The 49 Motivation codes were made up of General Motivation code 39, Similarity 8 and Isolation 2. Operations 22 was made up of Activity 16 and Organizational Role 6.

Issue	Code	Number of Passages	Percent
Motivation	General Motivation	39	53%
	Similarity	8	
	Isolation	2	
Operations	Activity	16	23%
	Organizational Role	6	
Unit of Partner		10	11%
Income		9	10%
Join		3	3%
Total		**93**	**100%**

Table 6.9 Other Codes by Issue

Chapter 7
Results and Evaluation

The results of this research include the following:

- the final revised Partner Negotiation Model in Chapter 3, reproduced below
- narrative documentation of the two detailed case studies in Chapter 5
- analysis and discussion of Major Findings and propositions in this chapter
- a set of Other Findings in this chapter, relevant to the research questions.

The research began with a literature review of existing theory providing an identification of gaps in the literature. The gaps plus initial interviews led to the original model and declarative propositions. Detailed case studies were written for the two distance education consortia being studied. The analysis of interviews and other archival data provided Major Findings related to the research questions and propositions. For example, the original Partner Negotiation Model was adjusted to add an Organizational Approval cycle. Other additional and unexpected results were documented as well.

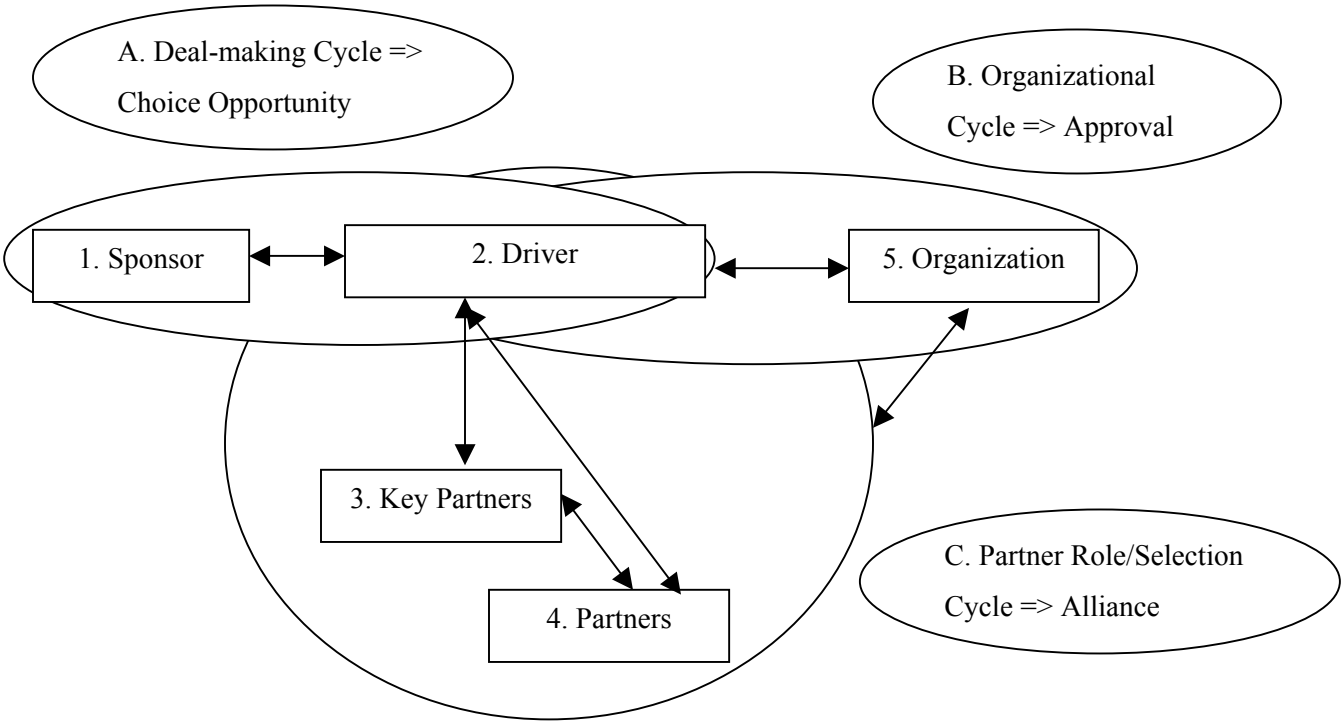

Figure 7.1 Partner Negotiation Model

Results are provided in varied formats and organized into a number of areas, following mixed research methods. A typical qualitative study might produce a tentative theory and a set of propositions for results or alternatively a detailed written case study. Conversely, a quantitative study may include a literature review leading to a set of comparative or predictive hypotheses with high-volume statistical tests. This work combines these two areas as well as providing a revised model and some unexpected results.

Findings were validated in the following ways, as suggested by (Creswell 2003, p. 196).

- *Multiple cases* presented several views on the research questions.
- A *rich description* of the cases was provided for the two major case studies.
- *Patterns* were observed by grouping the interview data in particular into propositions and other findings.
- Different sources of data – interviews, e-mail, web pages and other documents – provided *triangulation*.
- *Member-checking* was done with case members reviewing findings and identifying no major concerns with them.
- *Researcher bias* was investigated in Chapter 4 and assessed as insignificant.
- The research has taken six years to complete providing a *prolonged time* in the field.
- Results have been reviewed with other arms-length researchers at conferences, in Management Sciences and in Computer Science providing *peer debriefing.*
- *External auditors* are available in the form of thesis committee members.
- *Negative or discrepant information* was identified in Other Findings.

7.1 Major Findings

The research questions, model, propositions and data analysis codes were used to generate the themes of the Major Findings, which were in the following areas:

1. Deal-making
2. Partnership Roles
3. Organizational Approval
4. Partner Choice Criteria

These Major Findings tied to the original Research Questions and Propositions. The Research Questions concerned the how (process) and the why (criteria) of partner selection. The Major Findings have been coalesced into Propositions 1 to 3 which address Research Question 1, and the multiple parts of Proposition 4 which address Research Question 2.

Propositions were tested with a variety of data types as noted in Chapter 4. Interview materials, e-mails, contracts, and other data were reviewed for each proposition. Contrary or negative data were also noted for completeness.

Evidence for these propositions is presented in a variety of ways. First, the quantitative counts from coding analysis and text searches in the data are indicated. Coding analysis is counted in *passages* – a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or any other meaningful unit of text. To obtain a relative percentage, the number of passages for each proposition is compared to the total number of passages related to the *process* or *criteria* of partner negotiation and selection. The second point of evidence is a sample of interview quotations and specific documentation to illustrate the coded material for each case study. Third, the evidence is discussed in light of the holistic data provided in the case study narratives. Finally, the research concludes with the extent to which the available evidence confirms the proposition as stated.

7.1.1 Deal-making Cycle

The researcher argues in this section that the partner selection process begins with a Deal-making Cycle of *informal negotiation* between Sponsor(s) and Driver(s), leading to *formal documentation* of a Choice Opportunity. Evidence to support this contention follows, organized first with quantitative evidence, then Consortium 1, Consortium 2, and finally a summary and conclusion.

The quantitative evidence has two components – coding analysis from Chapter 6 and a count of appropriate words and phrases. These differ in that a section of a document (interview, contract, e-mail, and so on) can be coded with the code 'Deal-making' when the section may not actually have the word 'deal' or any similar word in it. The coder makes a subjective judgement that this dialog concerns deal-making. Conversely, the word 'deal' may be found in a section of text that is unrelated to the notion here of a deal-making cycle. The researcher performed both types of quantitative searches to produce the numbers given in the next three paragraphs. Then the data from both searches were used as a frame to examine the narrative evidence from the Consortium 1 and 2 case studies. This process included all data types.

From Table 6.7 in the Data Analysis section, coding analysis showed 14 passages that dealt with Deal-making in the context of consortium formation. Another 11 passages noted the need for External Funding as a precursor to the partnership. With a total of 81 process codes, this gave the researcher 31% of the interview comments about partner selection process that identified issues related to a deal-making process. A sample of specific comments are provided following.

The second search for quantitative evidence provided 413 instances in 9 documents. These numbers were obtained from a text search for words related to deal-making cycle and informal negotiation such as bargaining, back and forth, tried, talk, discuss, confer, negotiate, negotiation,

consult, settle, compromise, cooperate, collaborate, cycle, circle, go back, return, sequence, round, rotation, complicated, and complex. The NVivo software had originally returned a count of 704 passages in 9 documents. Since many of the passages were unrelated to deal-making, however, the researcher had to manually remove those items. Again, the specific issues are presented below.

For funding related to deal-making, the researcher searched for grant, contract, government, deal, fund, and money. Results showed 426 passages in 10 documents. Separately, a search was done for formal and document and produced 137 passages in 5 documents.

A deal-making cycle was evident in the planning and organization of Consortium 1. Three founding institutions – Athabasca University, the Open Learning Agency (OLA), and Tele-Universite (Teluq) from Quebec originally discussed the formation of this consortium. Teluq could not participate for political reasons, so AU and the OLA proceeded together to obtain government funding, establish a Consortium 1 vision, and invite other universities to join.

- Athabasca University (AU) and Open Learning Agency (OLA) are the Drivers of Consortium 1 according to their January 10, 2000 letter to other university presidents.
- The two Drivers had already arranged for government funding for Consortium 1. Both Industry Canada and the Alberta government had tentatively approved funding for this new consortium.
- The Consortium 1 name had already been trade-marked before additional partners were invited.

The January 10, 2000 letter included a six-page Consortium 1 document, outlining the vision of the Consortium 1 Drivers for this consortium. The Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles (See Chapter 5) provided ten specific points put in place by the two Drivers. As well, the "Process for creating the Consortium 1 Consortium" notes the lead of Athabasca University in trade-marking the Consortium 1 name. Since Consortium 1 would provide "added value", however, Athabasca is prepared "to license to it, free of charge, the Consortium 1 trademark." This statement, once again, puts Athabasca clearly out front as a Driver and the other institutions positioned separately.

Since many issues had already been solidified, there was little left for new partners to contribute in the formation of Consortium 1. For instance, a western focus was clearly evident with the example of an Athabasca University Executive MBA program along with other cases from British Columbia and the Western Deans of Continuing Education. Certainly the framing of the invitation to new participants suggested that there was little deal-making left to do for other partners even at this early stage of Consortium 1 formation.

Some potential partners felt that they had been left out of the deal-making and therefore did not join. The two Drivers may have gone too far along in their planning before engaging other

partners. One of the University of Waterloo's Vice Presidents, for example, felt that Waterloo would not gain by joining Consortium 1. The concept of a Canada-wide consortium was good, but the Consortium 1 model was not. Similarly, the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and York University did not join Consortium 1 but some of them later formed Consortium 2 with their own higher-level research ideas.

During the search for deal-making evidence, it became clear that there were different levels of deal-making and different power of players in the deal-making. With Consortium 1, for example, one of the reasons that the original deal was not well-received was that it had been developed and was being led by Athabasca University. Some people from other universities invited to join the consortium felt that their university was more prestigious than Athabasca. Therefore, they didn't want to commit to a consortium being driven by a 'lesser' university. If the same arrangement had been offered from the University of Toronto or the University of British Columbia, the deal might have been better received and they might well have joined Consortium 1. The status or prestige of the Driver in this case made a big difference in terms of how well the deal was perceived by other partners.

Another issue is whether this institution is included in the initial deal-making at all. Only two institutions developed the Consortium 1 proposal. This made the deal as presented appear to be a solid final consortium rather than a 'proposition'. Since the solid deal had been developed by what was perceived to be 'lesser' institutions, it was even less well-received.

A third issue is whether potential partners like the deal at all. Institutional partners must weigh costs and benefits of any potential partnership and decide for themselves whether this is a suitable Choice Opportunity for them. For a deal to be positive, partners need to respect the Drivers, feel part of the deal-making, and want to be part of the deal to make all of the pieces work together. For Consortium 1, the deal-making cycle was too far along before other partners were sought and the two Drivers were not universally respected.

Once an agreement with Consortium 1 was seen to be inappropriate, the University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph and York University began their own deal-making cycle. These three universities became the Drivers of Consortium 2, negotiated informally amongst themselves, and started their own plans for a new consortium and their own search for funding. At this point, the deal-making was very heavily Ontario-based although both Alberta and British Columbia were involved at arms-length.

> Anything worthwhile needs a Driver, somebody on top of things and knows the opportunities and facilitates our expertise to that solution.
>
> The Provost has asked me to drive this for the university and quite often asks me, "Is this worth it?"
>
> Interview 10

UBC was concerned about the deal-making seen to be happening with the formation of Consortium 2. Specifically, the Director, Technology asked whether institutions from outside Ontario would be welcome in the "club'" implying that he had sensed an "exclusive" "Ontario" focus in the Consortium 2 documents. The University of Alberta similarly felt left out although it had originally thought of itself as a Driver of this new consortium. The University of Guelph and York University were included as part of the deal-making in early March 2000, with comments received back from the Presidents and other high-level administrators at each institution.

The three Ontario founding partners of Consortium 2 and the University of Alberta applied to the McConnell Foundation for external funding in April 2000. Deal-making was evident in subsequent e-mails, letters and meetings between these Drivers and the McConnell Funders. The original application was denied with feedback that the proposed partnership was too complex to work. A second application was submitted including only the Ontario partners. Alberta felt that they had not been consulted enough on the first application and they were not happy to have been left out entirely on the second application. This particular effort failed, but it provided experience for future funding ventures.

> Well, money allows you to, it's just the tool to do the great things you want to do.
>
> Interview 10

Deal-making was evident as well when the three Ontario university presidents (Waterloo, Guelph, and York) were encouraged to meet the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. There had been an expression of interest from the MTCU in seeing Ontario collaborations for online learning. It was hoped that this could lead to external funding. Again, the funding effort failed but it continued the deal-making process as Consortium 2 was formed.

On August 27 and 28, 2000, a meeting was organized in Edmonton including representatives from the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Waterloo, York University, and the Alberta Online Consortium. On August 29, a draft Memorandum of Understanding was prepared. By early September, Waterloo and Alberta partners were organizing budgets, lists of courses and their online content. At the same time, the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning was to

invite a Quebec partner and Dalhousie University to provide the broad geographical coverage necessary for a truly Canadian consortium.

Feedback from the August 2000 meeting identified two external funding issues of potential concern to Consortium 2.

> A source of funding for joint research initiatives has not been identified.
>
> External funding will probably be needed for at least three years.

Deal-making needed to be continued until a source of funds could be found to solidify the consortium.

The Funding section of the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding, March 2001, discussed both startup and continuing funding in the context of both a Funder and a Driver.

> applications for funds from foundations or government agencies will be submitted by a lead institution

By 2001, a number of deals were being contemplated for external funding. On April 26, the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning mentioned the SSHRC selection of strategic themes, proposing Collaborative Research and Research Alliances for Lifelong Learning. In May, NSERC spoke to Consortium 2 about the Advisory Committee on Online Learning. There was also discussion of an OLT-NPLT fund application and using Ontario funds to leverage national funds as needed.

Another potential source of funding included the SSHRC INE initiative, which was a 5 year, $100 million program of targeted research support. Focus areas, set in consultation with Finance and Industry Canada partners, were education, life-long learning and management. The STELAR (Stimulating Technology-Enhanced Learning with Action Research) initiative was directly related, but did not generate external funding.

A meeting was arranged in the summer of 2001 between several funding organizations and Consortium 2. The University of Alberta didn't make the Ottawa meeting at the last minute, so there was some consternation on both sides as to what went wrong and why and how. An Alberta presence was seen to be necessary to support the notion that Consortium 2 was national. In fact, only the Director, Learning from Waterloo and a Distance Education Specialist from Guelph ended up in Ottawa, which defeated the large-scale Canada-wide focus that had been required.

> If you are expecting funding from federal government, you better be representative of your country.
>
> Interview 10

Funding for Consortium 2 was finally obtained from Industry Canada, but it took a long time to get this agreement. The initial draft was May 2001 and the contract was finally signed in March 2002. The University of Waterloo's Director, Learning was working with a contact at Industry Canada, but he had to get authorization or approval for the money to be allocated to Consortium 2. That is, the contact was not in a role authorized to make deals on his own.

Deal-making was evident in a number of contexts in the Industry Canada Contribution Agreement, May 2001. In section 6.1, Industry Canada states explicitly that they want to be identified as a contributor to the Consortium 2 partnership. Sections 12.1 and 12.2 state that public announcements must be made through or approved by the government Minister. After these two previous sections which seem to link Industry Canada and Consortium 2, section 14.7 clearly declares that there is no partnership between the Minister and Consortium 2. The government wants to be identified as a funder and contributor, but not a partner. The final evidence of deal-making is in section 2.5 of the Statement of Work, Schedule A. Under the title, Collaborating with Industry Canada, the government states:

> The {Consortium 2} Project Group/University of Waterloo will explore collaboration options with Industry Canada to identify and take advantage of opportunities for {Consortium 2} Project Group partner universities to offer Industry Canada online courses and evaluation tools

Although this does not appear to be a specific requirement of this government contract nor binding on funding for the Consortium 2 project, it does appear to be a potential 'deal' as an outcome of the funding. In essence, the government is hoping to obtain some future online courses and tools for its own use from the Consortium 2 collaboration.

Evidence of a deal-making cycle from Consortium 1 includes:

- Athabasca University and OLA as Drivers
- External funding negotiated with Alberta and federal governments as Sponsors
- Consortium 1 name trade-marked
- Consortium 1 document prepared for discussion
- Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles documented

With Consortium 2, the evidence is:

- Waterloo as primary Driver, negotiating with external Sponsors
- Alberta, Guelph and York as secondary Drivers
- University Presidents and Industry Canada as Sponsors
- Search for funding from the McConnell Foundation, MTCU, SSHRC, NSERC, OLT-NPLT, and INE
- Final funding from Industry Canada
- Documentation of the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding

Since there are 10 different pieces of evidence from two case studies across a number of sources – interviews, e-mails, contracts, written documentation – there is significant support for this proposition. Initial literature reviews had indicated that alliance formation and partner selection was a simple, rational straight-line process. In fact, these data show a very complex process of deal-making, searches for external funding, and opportunistic activity. Many interview sources also noted the need for a Catalyst or Driver to start the negotiation process or to keep it on-track once begun.

This complex proposition required evidence of a number of different aspects. First, there is the notion of a 'deal-making cycle' implying back-and-forth cooperation in an attempt to create a partnership. Second, there are two Partner Roles noted – Sponsor(s) and Driver(s). Sponsor(s) may be External Funder(s) or a person in a position of power who has sanctioned or mandated the formation of the partnership. Driver(s) will be the person or people who ensure that the work is done to form the partnership. Finally, there is 'informal negotiation' which later produces concrete 'formal documentation'. The evidence gathered in this study focuses on the deal-making cycle including external funding. The Partner Roles are explored again in Proposition 2, but are evident in these Proposition 1 results as well. The informal negotiation and formal documentation appear to be outcomes of the deal-making and external funding, so are supported with evidence as part of the package as a whole. Similarly, the deal-making cycle and external funding are often linked as a catalyst for the formation of the partnership. This evidence leads to Proposition 1 below.

P1: The partner negotiation process begins with a *Deal-Making Cycle* of *informal negotiation* between Sponsor(s) and Driver(s), leading to *formal documentation* of a Choice Opportunity.

7.1.2 Partnership Roles

The researcher argues in this section that partners can be selected to play different *partnership roles*, both partner negotiation and operational roles. Partnership roles were discussed in the

literature in terms of operational roles once the alliance was established. Significant evidence was also found of partner negotiation roles as the partnership was forming. Individual people or organizations acted as Sponsors, Drivers, or Key Partners. Depending on their success in these roles, other partners would join the consortium or not. Interviewees specifically mentioned the notion of key partners and lesser partners. Within the institutions, some people appeared to be more key than others as well. The Provost for example, or someone who controlled funding, had much more power than the people doing the research or course work within the consortia. The Provost's power in this example is internal organizational power, which ties to organizational approval noted with Proposition 3. The Provost's role can also be seen as that of a Sponsor, however, since external funding and organizational support are key for the partnership.

> "{The Director, Learning} said "Get the most influential person you can as sort of the local sponsor of the project." So the first contact was with {the Provost}."
>
> "the Provost's office is where extra money ... derives from"
>
> Interview 5

Partner roles are important when new partners are sought. It is important to have key partners in place to attract new partners. Also, it may be important to be able to offer a key partner role to a high-reputation potential partner.

Coding Analysis identified 22 passages noting a Partnership role, mentioning a key partner in particular. In most cases, the key partners were people or institutions that were used to attract future partners. From a total of 81 process codes, this made 27% of the interview comments about partner selection process related to partner negotiation roles. The text search explored role, part, job, title, position, function, responsibility, task, and rank. Results showed 938 passages in 11 documents.

According to the January 10, 2000 letter of invitation, Consortium 1 established "as its core, the combined programs of Athabasca University and Open Learning Agency." This immediately sets AU and OLA up as both the Drivers and the Key Partners of Consortium 1.

Following from the early deal-making, different partners joined the group under different deals. Some were suggested by the Drivers or Sponsors. Some checked out the existing partners and made their own decision based on who was already in the consortium. Some were checked out by the existing partners and were allowed in by the majority of existing partners. There seem to be different rules for different roles or levels of partner. Founding partners seem to have more say than newer partners. Similarly, higher reputation or status partners have more power than lesser partners.

> What is really important to me was the fact that {Waterloo's Director, Learning} is involved. He's a visionary. I've got great respect for him. We've worked together for several years.
>
> Interview 10

On February 7, 2001, the Vice President of York University talked to the President, and the Chair of Communication, Simon Fraser University, about Consortium 2. As a key partner, York's Vice President could potentially interest Simon Fraser in becoming the seventh member of the consortium.

Differences in partner roles are important in the partner selection process. Part of the partner selection process is that some roles need to be filled. Based on requirements criteria, a cross-Canada consortium was needed so one criteria for a partner role is to be the Western Partner (Simon Fraser) or the Eastern Partner (Dalhousie). These partners may also fill other roles such as Key Partners to attract further partners.

Dalhousie played two key partner roles in Consortium 2. First, Dalhousie was chosen by the existing Consortium 2 partners as the *only* suitable research university in Atlantic Canada. This provided the high-quality research university necessary from the Maritimes to solidify Industry Canada funding. Second, it was key for Dalhousie that Alberta was already a member of Consortium 2. Dalhousie's vision of reputation was based on the Maclean's survey categories and Alberta was the only category fit with Dalhousie. So, overall, Dalhousie needed to be attracted as a key partner from the Maritimes and they were attracted both by Industry Canada funding and by Alberta as an existing partner.

"That's right. I mean, I think, and I've probably said this, the partners all bring something, you know you can contribute something and you know you all have the same vision so that together you can make something better. And I think that's the success of a good partnership. And I think that's the success of {Consortium 2}." (Interview 10)

Evidence of partner negotiation roles from Consortium 1 was:

- Athabasca University and the Open Learning Agency as Drivers
- Some universities (Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent) as Key Partners in terms of the required national spread for Federal funding
- Some universities (Victoria, Moncton, Mount Saint Vincent) as Providers only

Evidence from Consortium 2 included:

- Alberta, Waterloo, Guelph and York as Drivers
- Simon Fraser University and Dalhousie as Key Partners required for national coverage
- Dalhousie attracted to Consortium 2 by the University of Alberta

The evidence is mainly from interviews, so support for the proposition is not as strong as for Proposition 1. Both partnerships showed evidence of Drivers and Key Partners, but the evidence is not strong. Lesser partners – providers and project funding partners – were also evident in Consortium 1. Because the evidence only comes from self-reported perceptions recorded in interviews, it is possible that it is only hearsay. Proposition 2 should therefore be tested on a broader spectrum of partnerships to see whether additional solid evidence will support it.

P2: Partners are chosen to play different ***Partnership Roles***, both partner negotiation and operational roles.

7.1.3 Organizational Approval

The researcher argues in this section that *organizational approval* is a key element in the partner negotiation process. The literature was silent on the need for organizational approval for partnerships. In the context of this research, organizational approval can be defined as endorsement from upper management of both the partnership under consideration and the release of funds to support the partnership. This data showed clear indications of organizational approval and cycling back to get organizational approval at several points in partnership negotiation. Some of the keys to understanding the partner negotiation process are the initial and ongoing cycles of organizational approval. The negotiation process cannot be understood without understanding the need for organizational approval.

The original Partner Negotiation Model had identified Organizational Approval as a factor, but not one of the key cycles. The model has now been extended with two approval cycles – one during the initial deal-making and the second for partners being added to the established partnership. Initial and ongoing funding were noted in many instances as specific reasons for strong upper management support. Organizational approval cycles appear to be ongoing as partners are added and decisions need to be made on partnership renewal or continuation.

The amount of Organizational Approval needed depends to a large extent on the partner doing the negotiation. Partners at a high level of the organization require less formal approval since they may already have responsibility for major decisions and for their own funding. As well, less organizational approval may generally be needed for a partnership with a well-known or highly reputable institution or consortium. Such an institution or consortium may have such brand-name recognition that approval is almost a given.

From Table 6.7, Coding Analysis identified 21 passages that mention organizational approval. A further 13 passages identified Initial and Ongoing Fees as one of the negotiation issues. These Fees often needed negotiation within the organization for approval to proceed with the proposed partnership. Of 81 process codes, this made 42% of the interview comments about partner selection process concerned with Proposition 3.

The researcher searched document text for organization, institution, university, department, president, provost, dean, manager, senior, administration, formal, official, bureaucratic, bureaucracy, approve, approval, endorse, support, agree, grant, consent, sanction, back up, allow, and authorize. Results identified 1606 passages in 11 documents.

The University of Waterloo and the University of Alberta told the Consortium 1 organizers that they could not sell Consortium 1 in their institutions because it did not have a strong distance

education *research* emphasis. Organizational approval in their universities depended on strong academics and research as well as strong teaching.

> They couldn't sell that (non-research) model in their own institutions.
>
> Interview 7

Consortium 1 is incorporated with a Board of Directors made up of one executive from each of the partner institutions. In 2004, that included nine Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Directors and Deans. Since financial, time and organizational commitments are required to work within the consortium, this high-level administrative structure facilitates organizational approvals.

Consortium 1 initially required $10,000 to join and $5000 per year to stay in the consortium. High level organizational approval, usually at the Provost's level, was needed to approve these funds.

Laurentian's organizational approval is evident in the funding of Consortium 1 by their Director of Finance, rather than from continuing education or distance learning. This indicates an *institutional* commitment to the national consortium. Laurentian's former President is a long-time distance educator so it was easy to convince him that Consortium 1 was a good idea for Laurentian.

At UBC, the Director, Education needed organizational approval to join Consortium 1 and other consortia. He recommended continuation of the Universitas 21 consortium to his Vice-President, Academic and other superiors with a lower priority to other groups.

> These are my recommendations. However, I would feel a lot more comfortable if this was a decision/policy of the senior management at UBC, rather than my own preference.
>
> Interview 2 document, March 2000

For Guelph, interview 10 provided strong evidence of organizational approval cycles with this statement. "I was able to do it myself but I ... always go to the Provost. This was too important for me to make that decision on my own. I said, "I think this is important. I know who the players are. They bring something to the table. It's value-added. Their reputations are sterling. And I think that Guelph is, we're number one in Ontario in terms of distance education registrations. We've got something to offer. And we just want to continue to raise the bar. And these are people who ... have that same commitment." And the questions I would get are, "Well, what's the University of Guelph going to get out of this?" And I said, "The University of Guelph is going to

be working with the best people, the best minds in this area. And are only going to make the distance education experience for the learners better. And if that doesn't happen, my recommendation will be, this is not of interest to us anymore." This quotation shows a clear cycling back to the Provost for funding and for approval of partnership continuation decisions.

Organizational commitment or approval was evident in the Project Steering Group Governance section of the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding, which called for a "senior management representative or his/her delegate from each institution". As well, the Funding section of the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding discusses "an annual fee for members (currently $5,000)" which presumably would require organizational approval.

> We were functioning at a high level in the institution. And if you don't have the ear of your senior administration and you're trying to affect institutional change, you'd best put your effort somewhere else.
>
> Interview 10

One of the Vice Presidents at the University of Saskatchewan noted that his experience with CampusWest.Ca had verified that the people organizing the consortium needed to consult internally with their Vice Presidents, Deans Councils and so on for institutional buy-in.

The Director, Education University of Alberta, felt that research and development were most important for Consortium 2 and detail is needed "to convince my VPA that we need to be active members". He also noted "our strength will depend to a large extent on the commitment of each institution to do its own selling of the concept internally."

Feedback from the August 2000 meeting identified a number of issues of potential concern to Consortium 2. The following two concerns clearly indicate the need for organizational approval.

- Consortium 2 needs buy-in at the vice presidential level.
- The value added by Consortium 2 needs to be clear for each institution.

McGill was approached to join Consortium 2 but declined based on existing research and online course collaborations. As well, they indicated that vice presidential and legal office approval would be required, both of which were hard to get.

In mid-September 2001, Consortium 2 members were looking for Status Reports about Consortium 2 that they could share with their institutions for continuing administrative support. In January 2002, the Acting Director of Learning, University of Alberta, confirmed continued support from her Associate Vice-President.

> It's really important when York's Vice President has these teleconferences with the Provosts. They are critical.
>
> Interview 10

> {The Executive Director, Development} considered it and made a recommendation that we join and took it back to {the Provost} ... so Sam agreed and then we signed on as a member.
>
> Interview 5

> Well, you have to spend time. There are out-of-pocket costs, i.e. your long distance teleconference calls. And we have two face-to-face meetings. We're going to Dalhousie next weekend. And allocation of people's time in terms of feeding the university online web site and preparing research projects. And there's $5,000 to fund.
>
> Interview 10

Evidence from Consortium 1 was:

- Some universities not joining C1 because of lack of organizational approval
- Consortium 1 Board of Directors made up of executives
- $10,000 initial and $5000 annual funding
- Interview quotations from Laurentian
- UBC document

Evidence from Consortium 2 included:

- Interview quotations from Guelph, Saskatchewan, Alberta
- Memorandum of Understanding noting senior management
- Annual fee of $5000
- McGill refusal based on lack of organizational approval
- Meeting notes documenting vice presidential buy-in
- Status Reports required for ongoing organizational support

Because there is a wide variety of evidence for both partnerships from a variety of data sources, the researcher can conclude that there is strong support for this proposition.

P3: Organizational Approval is a key element in the partner negotiation process.

7.1.4 Partner Choice Criteria

The researcher argues in this section that partner selection is not completely rational, nor based solely on partnership requirements. Requirements are established during the Deal-making Cycle and used to attract Key Partners. Requirements are also fluid and changing, however, and evolve over time. According to the interviewees, partners are largely chosen based on requirements, social network and reputation. These partner choices are moderated by resource availability, ambiguity and organizational politics. These data suggest that specific requirements or constraints are important early on to establish a strong partnership. Some requirements, however, could be so ambiguous as to allow open membership in the consortium. Resource availability could also temper the chosen partners since second or third choices may need to be taken if the first choice partner is not obtainable for whatever reason. A strong social network and either personal or organizational reputation are also very important in terms of finding and attracting potential partners. Finally, the researcher contends that politics, however characterized, may play a role in partner negotiation and final selection.

From Table 5.10, coded passages noted 20 coded as Requirements (23%), 1 Resource Availability (1%), 32 Social Network (37%), and 34 Reputation (39%) from a total of 87 passages about partner choice criteria. No passages were coded for either Politics or Ambiguity.

4a. Requirements

Originally, Consortium 1 only allowed complementary programs with openness and flexibility. The first point of the Consortium 1 Fundamental Principles stated that a Consortium 1 member must make its distance delivered program and its courses available to any eligible student registered in any Consortium 1 sponsored program. Potential partners needed strong Distance Education *programs*, programs that could be offered *nationally* and something *unique* that everyone else didn't have.

> We were pretty firm about don't come and join us if you're not willing to play this game.
>
> If you don't think you can abide by these principles, then don't join.
>
> Interview 7

By June 2003, however, Consortium 1 was much more flexible. "We keep modifying our scope and way of business because we want to keep our members." (Interview 7) Some partners would have liked to let each institution offer whatever they want and let any institution join. Consortium 1 proposed a maximum of 15 members, but some partners believed that they could go to 25 members without getting too big. Some partners felt that Consortium 1 was too heavy in

western universities and not heavy enough in Ontario and were pushing for an evenly-distributed Canadian requirement.

The Consortium 1 case illustrates the interactions amongst partner selection and the evolution of requirements. Originally, Consortium 1 recruited and wanted everyone who would fit into their master plan. Initial requirements mandated a very strict idea of who fit and who didn't. Over a number of years, however, the requirements eased as initial partners left and new partners demanded more autonomy. For example, Consortium 1 initially required all partners to accept all consortia students. They also directed that multiple institutions could not offer the same program. That is, only Athabasca could offer Psychology or only Brandon could offer Nursing. Both of these requirements have been altered to allow more partner freedom.

The Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding required only "Canadian research universities who can add value to our activities and who share our traditions of quality, innovation, accessibility and outreach." This requirement is broad enough that most Canadian universities would perceive that they meet this condition. In fact, however, the 'and' in the requirements statement limits acceptable universities to those who have already done a great deal of high-quality innovative work in all of these areas. Interview 10 described the idea of Consortium 2 requirements as follows.

> You look at the institution. How research intensive is it? How internationally known is it? How entrepreneurial are they and who are the people?

Later, talking about possibly offending some of the smaller universities because of the focus on research, she said "so it was really important that those people that were committed at research intensive universities come together first. To be research intensive, you need to be big."

As well, Interview 10 reported that Consortium 2 was looking for partners with a commitment "to distance online learning, ... sound pedagogy, the wise use of technology. What I was also looking for is what do I bring and what do they bring and how are those synergies going to make it better." She further noted that "Guelph is committed to online learning and distance and use of technology", so felt that her university clearly met the partnership requirements.

Requirements are evident in the Industry Canada Statement of Work for Consortium 2. Section 2.3 (a) requires

> the commitment of *not fewer than seven (7) universiti**es*** to become partners within the {Consortium 2} Project Group by March 31, 2002. This commitment will be demonstrated through the signing of a {Consortium 2} Project Memorandum of Agreement.

Further, Canadian national membership is required in Section 2.3 (b) which calls for "partner universities from *not fewer than five (5) of Canada's provinces*". By September 2000, the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning had two discussions with Dalhousie to try to get an appropriate Atlantic connection, Industry Canada agreed that Consortium 2 may proceed without a Quebec partner for the time being, and the Director continued to discuss UBC involvement with contacts in Alberta. Once the Industry Canada funding was in place, Dalhousie could commit to join Consortium 2 providing the high-quality research university necessary from the Atlantic. Consortium 2 is perceived by some partners to be too heavy in Ontario, or at least to have too much power in Ontario.

The University of Toronto, McGill, McMaster, and Queen's are not partners of either consortium because, among other things, they don't meet the requirements of strong distance education programs.

4b. Resource Availability

Resource availability was not well supported with the interview data (only one coded passage), but could perhaps be studied in future work since several partners were observed that had been chosen only because other partners were already busy or not interested in the partnership at hand. This indicates to the researcher the notion of a first choice or second choice partner. The second choice only seems to be included when the first choice is not available for whatever reason. Some universities, such as the University of British Columbia, were recruited as partners but declined to join. UBC was chosen by both consortia, but had already met its consortium needs and was already too busy with existing international and provincial partnerships. In early 2000, UBC was looking for a Canadian partnership but saw no advantage for them in joining either Consortium 1 or Consortium 2.

In January 2001, the University of British Columbia decided formally not to join Consortium 2. E-mails from the Director, Education at UBC said "we support the intent of the project" but do not see advantages to the institution or for the students. All Consortium 2 partners can already use UBC courses if they wish. Students from the Open Learning Agency and Athabasca University already register in UBC courses and Consortium 2 students could do the same. UBC is also interested in research, but with individual institutions. There may be potential accreditation problems and residency issues. They already do their own international marketing specific to UBC. There is a high cost of participating in Consortium 2, including fees, time and travel costs. Finally, the UBC staff is already "burnt out" with existing funded projects.

Simon Fraser University joined Consortium 2 after UBC declined to be the western partner. The University of Manitoba was also considered by Consortium 2 as a potential partner but had already signed with Consortium 1 and was not able to make the commitment to both consortia.

Industry Canada wanted Consortium 2 to have a Quebec partner but could not suggest a suitable English-speaking university in Quebec, so Consortium 2 was allowed to proceed without a Quebec partner. McGill was approached as a reasonable English-speaking research university, but did not have a fitting distance education focus for the consortium and expressed administrative and resource hurdles. Other appropriate research universities in Quebec were not considered since they were French-speaking, which would limit research collaboration.

Resources were also very limited in terms of a suitable research university for Consortium 2 in eastern Canada. Dalhousie was chosen as the *only* suitable research university in Atlantic Canada. Their commitment to Consortium 2 was necessary to provide Canada-wide coverage.

4c. Social Network

A social network framework is needed to fully understand how these partnerships formed. There are many issues around social network, discussed in the following paragraphs. Partners were found through social networks. Canada has a large geographic area to cover but existing social networks enabled the consortia to develop. The alliance process could be construed to be more efficient because of a social network, tying to both how and why partners are chosen. The Case Studies showed a large number of people involved – at least 86 people (See Appendix C) between the two consortia – indicating a strong social network. Since the social network in this case is work-related, it can be considered a task network. Either way, the network provides first or second-hand knowledge of other people. This can make the partner selection go faster or more efficiently because there is already some knowledge of the potential partners. There is an efficiency of finding suitable people. Past positive experiences can make this deal-making easier and faster. People feel that they can trust each other. People moving from one university to another can extend the social network further since their second-hand knowledge is moving with them.

Partner issues and categories were identified as they appeared in the interviews. Many names of people were identified as partners, triggers to partnership, organizational decision-makers, or part of a large social network. These names were coded along with their institution and the part they played in the partnership process. Eventually a network of people and organizations emerged from the data. Key people emerged as leaders and active researchers within the two consortia. This social network was the basis for the case study narratives in Chapter 5 and the people listed in Appendix C.

Many of the Consortium 1 partners knew each other and worked together before Consortium 1 was established. “The distance education community is fairly small as you see here.” (Interview 8) Some of the Laurentian people already knew the Athabasca and the UBC people before Consortium 1. The Director, Education, UBC, has honourary doctorates from Laurentian and Athabasca. He’s good friends with the Associate Vice President and former President and most of the appropriate people at Laurentian.

The President of the OLA was a former Vice-President, Academic at Memorial. The Director, Technologies, who made the decision for Memorial to join Consortium 1, partially based her decision on the recommendation of this former Vice-President. "I have a lot of trust and faith. … If {the former Vice-President} thought that this was a good thing for Memorial …"

The Vice President Education and Provost, BCOU is the former Dean of Education at St. Mary's University, Memorial, and York University. She is now the VPA, Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning.

The Vice President Academic, Athabasca University, knew the Vice President Academic and the former President of Royal Roads. Royal Roads now has a new President and Vice Chancellor and fairly new Vice President, Learning, so Consortium 1 is now waiting to see whether Royal Roads will continue with the partnership.

Similarly, many people involved with Consortium 2 had known each other at various universities. The social network expanded because of the partnership. There was already a social network in place, but it was augmented by the consortium. The Drivers (Guelph, Waterloo and York) "were all buds. They went back and talked to themselves." (Interview 7) Interview 10, discussing the partnership formation, said "We (Guelph, Waterloo, and York) had a perspective on who should be, whom we would like to see included. The Director, Education was at Alberta and he's now at Calgary. And UBC was one, but Manitoba was already in Consortium 1. And then {the University of Waterloo's Director, Learning} just got on the phone and did his thing. It was primarily {him}. I think {the Director} appreciated my input in terms of how committed the institution was to online learning and distance and hybrid and use of technology, the innovation, that sort of thing. Because *I know the players*."

Interview 10 provided multiple instances of social network in action on behalf of Consortium 2.

> "I would love to have the University of Manitoba join us because *I know the people there*. And I know what they believe in and what they do."
>
> "*I knew the people*, I knew what their philosophy was. Certainly I didn't personally select them, we did it as a group. But these were the factors that entered my mind."
>
> "I think this is important. *I know who the players are.* They bring something to the table. It's value-added."
>
> "What is really important to me was the fact that {Waterloo's Director, Learning} is involved. He's a visionary. I've got great respect for him. *We've worked together for several years*."

Several people now involved with Consortium 2 had been at Dalhousie at some previous time. This is probably not unusual, but shows the social network. The Director, Development was at Dalhousie in the Faculty of Medicine, but later moved to Simon Fraser University. Dalhousie's former Education Co-ordinator is now at the University of Alberta and continues to collaborate on research with Dalhousie. As well, the University of Alberta Director, Education moved to the University of Calgary and Dalhousie's Executive Director, Development to the University of Quebec. At about the same time, the University of Alberta's Director, Extension moved to the University of Saskatchewan. The University of Alberta remained in Consortium 2 with a new contact person. Many of these people are part of the Canadian higher education community as well, which is also a tight network with multiple interconnections.

4d. Reputation

When Waterloo and Alberta would not join Consortium 1 because there was no focus on research, Consortium 1 found their tone "insulting". "We (Consortium 1) are a consortium of research universities." (Interview 7) Many of the Consortium 1 universities felt strongly that they were 'research universities' although perhaps not of the calibre of the Consortium 2 research universities. The mental models of research reputations were often based on Maclean's rankings, which put Consortium 1 universities in general with lower reputations than Consortium 2 universities. This meant that for partner selection purposes, Consortium 1 was willing to accept a number of universities that were not welcome in Consortium 2.

One of the reasons that Consortium 1 was not universally well-received was that it had been developed and was being led by Athabasca University and the OLA. Consortium 1 was willing to accept higher-reputation universities as partners but some people didn't want to commit to a consortium being driven by what was perceived to be a 'lesser' university. Reputation of the Drivers made a big difference in terms of how well the deal was accepted by potential partners.

The University of Guelph's decision to join Consortium 2 was based largely on the reputations of the people from the University of Waterloo and York University as well as social network. "I think this is important. I know who the players are. They bring something to the table. It's value-added. *Their reputations are sterling.*" "I wanted the benefit of {Waterloo}'s vision. So anything that {Waterloo}'s involved in for me, because of {its} reputation nationally and internationally is 90 percent endorsement. So that's what I mean, it's about reputation. I knew {the person at York}. I know how the government looks to him for leadership in these areas, that was another key." (Interview 10)

From Waterloo and York's viewpoint, Guelph had an excellent reputation in distance education and technology to strengthen Consortium 2 in that dimension. From the Guelph contact's point of view, Guelph had a strong enough reputation to belong in Consortium 2. "I think Guelph's darn good. And I mean, we're the number one comprehensive in Canada. And number one in distance education registration in Ontario last year {2002}. And we're one of the few that have a

central unit where the faculty has to work with us. And they like working with us. And we are not a separate silo operating where we've got our distance students in our own faculty. We're outreach focused and … I think Guelph brings an awful lot to the table which I'm really pleased about that." (Interview 10)

One of the Vice Presidents at the University of Saskatchewan supported both Consortium 2 and changes proposed earlier by the Director, Education at the University of Alberta. All agreed that an academic focus of research into teaching and learning through technology was important as was an interactive approach. The Vice President was concerned about a clear definition for a 'research university'. He proposed the Maclean's magazine medical/doctoral category 'provided that doesn't rule out any universities that we would want to leave in', which in fact it did. The Vice President also expressed interest in new partner selection – "how and at what stage" would you invite others if they wished to join?

It was *key* for Dalhousie that Alberta was already a member of Consortium 2. Reputation was based on the Maclean's survey categories and Alberta was the only fit with Dalhousie.

> We saw the list of who he was inviting ... Dal's decision was made at every institution independently prior to the whole thing coming together. We looked at it and said "Well ... Calgary's in and Waterloo's in."
>
> Interview 5

With Consortium 2, another issue of concern was the reputation of the partnership compared to the reputation of individual partners. Feedback from the August 2000 meeting noted:

> The {Consortium 2} brand name may be less than that of individual institutions.

Reputation could have also been a factor for a number of Canadian universities that did not join either consortium. The University of British Columbia was already busy with other partnerships, but still saw no advantage in joining either Consortium 1 or Consortium 2. Similarly, the Universities of Toronto, Western Ontario, Ottawa and Ryerson University were not motivated to join. This could have been due to a lack of focus on distance education or it could have been a sense of reputation. According to one of the interviewees, the University of Toronto does not accept Athabasca graduates into its graduate programs, so Toronto and Western Ontario in particular may have felt that they didn't belong in a consortium with Athabasca University.

4e. Organizational Politics

Organizational politics was not well supported with the interview data, as no coded data was recorded for this issue. Politics was mentioned in terms of needing a Quebec partner and in terms of Quebec universities not wanting to join Canadian consortia, but the evidence was not strong enough to support this proposition. These somewhat political issues were coded as Requirements. These results are not surprising since politics often relate to underlying issues that are not openly expressed, so need to be deduced. Political issues may also be disguised to hide bias.

The only strongly political comment was that Tele-Universite became part of the University of Quebec and "that changed the dynamics", implying that Teluq was now somewhat restricted politically by UQ. In accordance with provincial policy, Tele-Universite could not be seen to be part of a Canadian collaboration. It was acceptable to partner with Athabasca University, but not Consortium 1.

> Political concerns have not made it possible for Teluq to sign on as an independent founding member
>
> Consortium 1 Letter of Invitation

Interestingly, Tele-Universite became part of Consortium 1 a year after its formation.

A second somewhat political issue was that the other Alberta universities – the Universities of Alberta and Calgary – had not been invited to the initial Consortium 1 formation meeting hosted by Athabasca University. There was initial discussion that they had just been 'missed' or that they did not have complete distance education 'programs'. Later, however, some interviewees suggested that Athabasca University considered themselves to be 'the place' in Alberta for distance education and therefore there was no need to include the Universities of Alberta and Calgary. This smacks of exactly the same charge of 'elitism' that had been leveled by Consortium 1 at the research universities after they decided to form their own consortium.

4f. Ambiguity

Ambiguity was not supported with the interview data, as no coded data was recorded for this issue. Ambiguous document wording, however, was evident in archival e-mails, the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding, and the Industry Canada Contribution Agreement. Archival e-mails noted the formation of a partnership to meet certain government criteria, implying that the criteria were broad enough (and therefore ambiguous enough) that partnerships could be twisted to fit the criteria. Ambiguity is part of the normal communication structure of formal documents, contracts, reports to government, and Requests for Proposal from government, so is perhaps not identified as an unusual issue.

Ambiguity was evident in the following Purpose of the Consortium 2 Memorandum of Understanding.

> work collaboratively to enhance offerings of high-quality Internet-based programs and to integrate scholarly values and culture into our learning and teaching

'Collaboratively' can mean any number of ways of working together from a single short telephone call to six months of full-time joint course development. Similarly, 'enhance' can mean anything from updating a web page to completely rewriting course offerings. Likewise, 'integrate scholarly values and culture' can be very broadly interpreted according to individual disposition.

Ambiguous characteristics of potential partners are also apparent in the following requirements for new members of Consortium 2.

> other Canadian research universities who can add value to our activities and who share our traditions of quality, innovation, accessibility and outreach

Since there are many ways to measure 'added value', 'quality', 'innovation' and so on, any Canadian research university may believe that they are able to meet the criteria to become a new member of Consortium 2.

The Background of the Industry Canada Contribution Agreement, May 2001 indicated sweeping ambiguity with the following phrase.

> a commitment to use the Information Highway to provide value-added learning content to Canadians

A 'commitment' doesn't have to imply actual future use, but rather just a promise. The 'Information Highway' could mean any of a large number of technical items, such as any network, e-mail system, web page or so on. Finally, 'value-added learning content' leaves the end result wide open, depending on various definitions of all three of these words. Access to a remote library or access to one specific community college course or access to an entire university program are all very different but could all meet this requirement.

The Objectives of the Statement of Work, Schedule A, also showed evidence of ambiguity with the following phrase.

> to establish a pilot consortium of Canadian research universities for collaborative design, development, and evaluation of online courses and programs and their delivery to students in rural and urban communities in a manner that will be administratively seamless and educationally coherent.

This phrase starts off well with the specific requirement for a 'consortium' and 'Canadian research universities'. The middle of the phrase, however, leaves the organization, the effort, the student audience, and the end result wide open so that any outcome will meet the criteria. Finally, the conclusion of the phrase – 'administratively seamless and educationally coherent' – is so ambiguous as to be almost meaningless. Presumably, the Objectives are trying to say that there should be one united effort from the consortium, but no explicit parameters have been specified for this unity.

P4: Partner choice cannot be understood completely as a simple rational decision based on specific partner *requirements*; there is a network of important interacting factors, including *resource availability*, *social network,* and *reputation*.

7.1.5 Summary of Data Source Support for Major Findings

Evidence to support the propositions came from a variety of sources, including interviews, e-mail correspondence and formal documents, as summarized in Table 7.1.

Proposition	Interviews	E-mail	Formal Documents
1	X	X	X
2	X	X	
3	X	X	X
4a	X		X
4b	X	X	
4c	X	X	
4d	X	X	
4e	X		X
4f		X	X

Table 7.1 Instances of Evidence

7.2 Other Findings

Some information was obtained that was not related to either of the research questions nor to the propositions. The issues are interesting, but peripheral to the current research. The data presumably were offered as of particular importance to the interviewees, so have been included for completeness. The information may be of use to future researchers in other partnership studies.

From Table 6.9 in the Data Analysis, five issues were mentioned as indicated below. Motivation was identified as a reason that an individual partner joined the partnership rather than why the partnership might select the partner. Operations were issues around partnership business rather than partner negotiation or selection. Unit of Partner refers to the ambiguity of whether the partner was an individual person, department within an institution, or the institution itself. Income is an operational issue around the consortium becoming self-sufficient by generating ongoing revenue sources. Integration was the recurring theme that perhaps Canada should only have one distance education partnership rather than the two cases noted here and the multitudes of other smaller consortia.

7.2.1 Motivation

Answers from the interviews were not always as expected. Many answers were more about why this institution joined the consortium rather than why the consortium wanted them to join. The two points of view – from the partnership and from the partner – did not always match. From the point of view of the partnership, a particular partner may have been desirable. From the point of view of the partner, however, the partnership may not have seemed attractive. The cycling and negotiation processes discussed earlier allowed the partners and the partnership to learn about each other and to decide which partners might be appropriate for which partnerships.

There was considerable discussion in the interviews of motivation to join the consortia. Motivation was referenced 49 times during the coding analysis. This was 53% of the 93 Other Codes documented in Table 6.9. Some of the motivators for joining the consortia:

- Previous personal contact (Social Network)
- Already doing research with other partners
- Ease of course transfers
- Co-development of programs
- Online portal to advertise programs
- Increase market share for courses

The general feeling was that "unless we have a consortium of Canadian universities that get together, the likelihood of several of us joining either American or European or even Asian consortiums was increasing." (Interview 8)

Athabasca University sees Consortium 1 as positioning and branding and networking rather than as a way to get more registrations. Memorial finds the Consortium 1 membership worthwhile just for the Canadian and world-wide contacts. Because of the isolation in Newfoundland, "you can't survive without partnerships." (Interview 9)

"There's a lot of learning in a network like Consortium 1." (Interview 8) "You learn from each other at the party or reception before or after the board meeting. So, for our $5000, we get promotion, professional development, contacts, and networks Canada-wide. We wanted to be in an online network so we had to pick one. And I thought it would be better to pick a Canadian one than not. We see this as an opportunity to increase enrolments and give Laurentian more exposure."

> $5000 doesn't go very far in advertising, so {Consortium 1} gives us that advertising.
>
> Interview 8

The initial motivation for getting together is often to get external funding, but the 'community of learning' created from that collaboration is good. When you put like minds together, the networking that results from that coming together is 'valuable in its own self, not just the fact that we only have more money'. (Interview 7)

The major goal of interest to Memorial is the mobility of students, providing access to courses for them across the country. A second goal is to pick up market share. Memorial has been marketing to the double cohort in Ontario, for example, to attract students to regular and distance education courses.

Dalhousie was motivated to increase their online offerings and to join a consortium of universities with similar ideas.

> Distance education is now becoming more online. Everybody's facing the same issues whether it's policy on their campus or the mechanics of doing certain things.
>
> Interview 5

Motivation was missing for a number of Canadian universities that did not join either consortium. The University of British Columbia was already busy with other partnerships, but still saw no advantage in joining either Consortium 1 or Consortium 2. Similarly, the Universities of Toronto, Western Ontario, Ottawa and Ryerson University were not motivated to join. This could have been due to a lack of focus on distance education or it could have been a sense of reputation. Toronto and Western Ontario in particular may have felt that they didn't belong in a consortium with Athabasca University.

7.2.2 Operations

Many interviewees noted that consortium activity was directly tied to the activity level of the point person or Driver. That is, a person who is more active in the partnership makes their organization more active. This person could also or instead make the partnership more active. Consortium activity was coded 16 times as an issue of importance and organizational roles were coded 6 times for a total of 23% of the 93 Other Codes documented in Table 6.9.

The degree of participation within Consortium 1 goes to "some institutions by virtue of the people involved who sit on the Advisory Committee". (Interview 7) In Consortium 2, "There are some (partners) who contribute more than others in terms of consistent participation. ... I know that they really want to be supportive but that's not always evident. 'I can't get to this meeting or I can't do that.' But I recognize that everybody's plate is very, very full. Also the players change an awful lot." (Interview 10) Since both Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 seem to be an extra on the side of most people's major jobs, it is not surprising that activity and commitment may be hard to come by.

A variety of organizational roles were also mentioned six times during interviews. These comments related to the need for an Executive Director, a Project Manager, and the different roles within the consortium at different organizational levels of the university. Consortium 1 hired an Executive Director, paid from operational funds. Athabasca University is still more-or-less the operational core of Consortium 1, providing money, people and space for the Executive Director. The Vice President, Academic of Athabasca was the Chair of the Advisory Committee for 2003 since no other partner would take over after Laurentian in 2002. There is concern that Athabasca not be a continuing Chair so that it's not perceived that Athabasca is running Consortium 1. "If the partners don't take an active role, Athabasca will become the virtual university for Canada and (other institutions) won't have a role." (Interview 8) Athabasca has also taken the lead in terms of coordinating ongoing funding. Large-scale government contracts are assigned by project and money assigned accordingly. The OLA developed course credit banks and a website for Campus Canada while UNB compiled a set of student services.

The need for ongoing funding to pay for administrative staff was also a concern for Consortium 2. The Guelph contact noted that she would like to see "the infrastructure to carry on. And by

that I mean the funding for an Executive Director who can commit the time and the energy to constantly be aware of what's going on federally, provincially. ... We need to be able to have the resources to attract the right person who sees a value in the job and commitment to work with all of us and make it happen. That would be the one thing. Anything worthwhile needs a driver, somebody's on top of things and knows where the opportunities are and facilitates our expertise to that solution." "And it's really important. We need somebody keeping us on track because after these face-to-face meetings we're all very enthused and eager and everything else. Two days you're back working, you're swamped with what you have to do. And so we need an administrator, gate keeper person."

7.2.3 Unit of Partner

Ten people (11% of the 93 Other Codes identified in Table 6.9) noted some confusion between the people as the partners or the institutions as the partners. Even when the institution was seen to be the partner, there was concern that only one unit of the institution was involved. Interviewees also noted that institutions stayed as Consortium 1 or Consortium 2 partners even when the people moved on to other universities. The people who moved often added their new institution to the consortium as well so that they could maintain their personal partnership.

The degree of participation within Consortium 1 goes to "some institutions by virtue of the people involved who sit on the Advisory Committee". This supports the idea of the real partner as the 'person', not the 'institution'.

In August 2001, possible additional Consortium 2 participants were suggested as the University of Calgary and the University of Quebec. The University of Alberta's Director, Education was moving to the University of Calgary and Dalhousie's Executive Director, Development to the University of Quebec. By mid-September, the University of Calgary had become the eighth institutional member. The University of Alberta remained in Consortium 1 with a new contact. At about the same time, the University of Alberta's Director, Extension moved to the University of Saskatchewan.

Dalhousie was concerned that the individual Consortium 2 partners were a problem.

> {Consortium 2 is a} collaboration out of the interest of the individual representatives.
>
> The influence those people need didn't run deep enough.
>
> They were speaking just as a professor ... not deep enough down to an academic faculty.

Guelph, on the other hand, thought that individual commitment was good. "(The people are) the ones that make it happen." She did have some misgivings as well however. "Also, I'm not sure with some of the partners whether I'm talking to the institution or their unit. ... And here's an example. It's no reflection at all, but it's just one that comes to mind. The university online where we all put our courses up. I looked at York University and thought "I know they offer a lot more". Well, these were just the courses that that unit is responsible for. We aren't seeing (the university as a whole). And I begin to wonder then ... how is this? How are the benefits of what we've learned getting disseminated within the institution and why aren't these other people on board in terms of their courses being listed or whatever? Now our (Guelph) model is very different. Every distance course comes through here. And we co-develop it and we deliver it. And we link with all the academic departments. But they have different faculties who are different silos. No one's ever going to solve that problem. But if university online is there and the whole array of an institution's courses aren't there, what is that saying?"

7.2.4 Income

As already noted, funding was referenced in three contexts. First, funding was mentioned in the context of dollars already obtained or to be obtained from the government or other funding sources to support the work of Consortia 1 and 2. Consortium 1 was searching for teaching and course-related funding. The focus of Consortium 2 shifted to more emphasis on research funding. This external funding was identified as part of the Deal-making Cycle.

Second, funding was needed to join the consortia and for annual fees so there was discussion of how that funding was obtained and who approved it. That funding was noted earlier with Organizational Approval.

Third, in an operational context, there was concern about generating income from the consortium for ongoing expenses and to make the consortium self-sufficient. This Income issue was noted nine times in this research, making up 10% of the 93 Other Codes.

There was no mention of generating income initially with Consortium 1. Each university just wanted to promote their distance education courses and consolidate into a Canadian consortium. Consortium 1 now has a number of discussion papers developed through the Advisory Committee, however, talking about business planning and how to create revenues to sustain Consortium 1 when the Alberta funding concludes. Some ideas are international projects with international revenue streams.

Some partner institutions would like to see Consortium 1 become self-sufficient financially. To do this, Consortium 1 needs to go after more large projects to increase its funding abilities. That is, they should be able to make money by virtue of their size. International collaborations

may provide better opportunities to make more money. "We can charge more … cost-recoverable fees, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, CIDA. … you get paid well with those." (Interview 9) Then, even if Consortium 1 was the project coordinator with a 20% overhead, a financial sustainability model would start to form.

Many partners feel that Consortium 1 is too dependent on government grants and its small number of members. They believe that a Consortium 1 'brand' might help. Right now, Consortium 1 is just an umbrella for the partners and doesn't give degrees or certificates. Consortium 1 is just selling programs from other institutions rather than adding value in its own right. With some added value, the Consortium 1 name might be able to generate self-sustaining revenue.

Guelph noted for Consortium 2 "Well, the disadvantage is the constant chasing of dollars for us to exist. I understand the reality of it, but how we live and die on whether we're going to get some more Industry Canada funding. How pressure is brought to bear to *change what our original philosophy and mission is*. And {the Waterloo Director} has heard me say this several times, *at what price here*." "{Consortium 2} creates the research proposal. The call goes out to all of {Consortium 2} institutions. And we say, "Well, we would like to be involved for these reasons." ... But it's the developing the proposal, wait, wait, wait." "And so my big worry is, and I've discussed this with {the Waterloo Director}, is that we have a wonderfully cohesive group. *If we do not get funding, what's going to happen.* And it's like so many great ideas and people with vision who create something who really want to do it. But you're doing this voluntarily in essence. And so if there is no funding support because we do need an executive director to drive us, keep us on track."

Feedback from the August 2000 meeting identified a number of issues of potential concern to Consortium 2. "Copyright and return on investment need to be clarified." suggests that the group was already thinking about potential future income during early formation.

7.2.5 Integration

Three interviewees specifically wanted Consortia 1 and 2 to join so that there would be only one education consortium. Consortia 1 and 2 were both known to and discussed by all interviewees. All participants had their own idea of why there were two consortia, the differences between them, and the need for two seemingly similar consortia. Those who wanted a united front felt that it would be easier to get funding for a single group and that it made sense to have one consolidated consortium in Canada. In an informal discussion with a funder from Industry Canada, he clearly indicated that he would prefer one consortium. This would clarify funding issues for the government and ease the flow of dollars from Ottawa.

Industry Canada and many {Consortium 1} partners have suggested that {Consortia 1 and 2} need to get together.

University of Manitoba Contact

We should have tried to make it one consortium.

Interview 7

Some Consortium 1 partners perceive Consortium 2 as 'elitist'. "They see themselves as tier one universities and Laurentians, Athabascas, because of the size, because of our openness are tier two universities with maybe weaker standings which is a false perception." "This elitism thing" with Consortium 2 is just not helpful. (Interview 8)

Memorial would like to work with some of the Consortium 2 members, such as Waterloo and Simon Fraser. They don't see many Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 institutions mixing generally though. "Dalhousie won't do anything with Memorial. I'd be shocked. There's institutional things." (Interview 9) "I don't view Guelph as a leader in this area." "Waterloo and Simon Fraser are what I would view to be counterparts to Memorial." (Interview 9) "historical rivalry between Dalhousie and Memorial" "Dalhousie will likely block us in to Consortium 2."

Some Consortium 1 partners would like to work with Waterloo, Simon Fraser and other Consortium 2 partners, but are having difficulty doing so because of the Consortium 1 and Consortium 2 'divide'. One innovative suggestion was to have various 'tiers' within one partnership. That is, have a high-quality research group in the universities that are interested but also have a distance education program and course development group at the same universities. That would allow both a Consortium 1 and a Consortium 2 flavour within the one consortium.

In August 2003, the Consortium 2 Project Directors teleconference discussed possible relationships between Consortium 1 and Consortium 2. This was followed up with e-mails to the Executive Director of Consortium 1. The key joint project at the time seemed to be a national gateway to Education courses. Previous gateways had developed with very different views:

- Campus Canada brought together institutions committed to high levels of prior learning assessment.
- Consortium 1 was committed to credit transfer.
- Consortium 2 offered online learning and was committed to a coherent educational philosophy and values.
- Several provincial gateways (at least British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario) brought together provincial offerings.

"Oh yes. And I think that in all fairness ... Industry Canada ... (is) interested in having a nice neat product that you can export. And that's not our business. We are not in the widget business. We both have separate uniquenesses." "And I'm not against {Consortia 1 and 2} being together. My recommendation is that we each dissolve and create something new. It saves face. But we do this for the right reasons, not because we want some dollars from Industry Canada. That I have a problem with." "I would love to have the University of Manitoba join us because I know the people there. And I know what they believe in and what they do." "We (Guelph, Waterloo, and York) had a perspective on who should be, whom we would like to see included. ... Alberta ... Calgary ... and UBC, but Manitoba was already in Consortium 1." (Interview 10)

7.3 Interpretation and Discussion

7.3.1 Interpretation of the Data

The data showed clear cycles of negotiation for founding and subsequent partners. Documents were prepared with clear partner requirements, but the requirements evolved as the partner negotiation proceeded. Formation of the partnership in these cases depended on external funding from a sponsor. There was a long process of deal-making between partnership drivers and sponsors until funding was obtained. Once obtained, drivers could move to attract new partners and to sign on those who had been identified early as potential partners. Throughout the deal-making and the partner sign-on cycles, there were also organizational approval cycles. The approval cycles were on both sides. The existing partnership and its partners needed to approve the new partners and the new partners and their organizations needed to approve the partnership.

This information verifies the researcher's assertion that the process is partner *negotiation* rather than *selection*. Drivers approached a number of sponsors trying to obtain funding for the partnership formation. Once the partnership was underway, they selected first-choice partners but accepted second-choice partners when necessary. Key partners helped to sanction the partnership as a reputable entity worthy of consideration. They also helped with subsequent partner selection, either in suggesting their own potential partners or being chosen by outside potential partners.

A number of the elements of the final Partner Negotiation Model and Partner Choice Criteria appear to be related. The researcher deliberately kept these components separate in this work, but they could perhaps be considered jointly in future work. For example in Deal-making, Drivers and Key Partners were often tied to the notion of Reputation. New partners signed on to the partnerships because of the reputation of the person or institution promoting the partnership. Similarly, Social Network tied to Reputation as people told other people good things about the partnership or the partners.

The Final Codes in Table 6.3 of Chapter 6 identified a number of issues that were subsumed into the pre-defined Model and Propositions. Some of these issues could be considered as subjects or relationships in their own right in future work. For example, the Sponsor from the Partner Negotiation Model and the External Funding code appear to be closely related. The Sponsor often is an External Funder and appears to be a necessary person or organization in partnership formation. The entire process of a search for funding, negotiation of a funding deal and ongoing funding is a serious problem for partnerships.

A secondary observation of the two case studies suggested that Founding Partners may have more say in who the subsequent partners are or in the future requirements of the partnership. Higher reputation partners also appear to have more say in the partnership and its future partners.

The high reputation partners also, by nature of their standing, are more likely to be Key Partners. These two issues were not explored in this work, but could be considered in a study of power and control in partnerships or in partner selection.

7.3.2 Discussion

The second research question, "Why do organizations choose a particular partner?", views the partner choice from the *partnership*'s point of view. Several of the interviewees were eager to offer their motivation for joining the partnership from their own *partner* point of view instead. This would answer the question "Why does a partner want to join?" rather than why they or others were chosen to join. These are two viewpoints on the same issue and needed to be separated in this study. The researcher tried to keep the focus on the choice of partner rather than the partner choosing the partnership. Again, the two issues are related and could perhaps be explored together in future work.

Tied to the above observations, the researcher noted that partnership offers don't necessarily lead to new partners. Some offers are accepted and some are declined. There are various criteria around the decision to make an offer and an entirely different set of criteria around the decision to accept or not. In some circumstances, organizations may not want an offer at all. This issue relates the Partner Choice Criteria to Partner Motivation. There must be a reciprocal gain for the partner and the partnership.

PROPOSITION	ISSUE	SUPPORT
1	Deal-making Cycle	Strong
2	Partner Negotiation Roles	Some
3	Organizational Approval	Strong
4	Partner Choice Criteria	
	Requirements	Strong
	Resource Availability	Some
	Social Network	Strong
	Reputation	Strong
	Ambiguity	Weak
	Organizational Politics	Weak

Table 7.2 Support for Propositions

The data analysis shows support for propositions as shown in Table 7.2.

The items below were noted earlier in this chapter with the evidence for individual propositions. It is nonetheless interesting to observe that the package as a whole identifies many of the issues documented in the overall results. These issues were identified as feedback from the August 2000 meeting as issues of potential concern to Consortium 2 during its formation.

1. A source of funding for joint research initiatives has not been identified.

   External funding

2. Copyright and return on investment need to be clarified.

   Income

3. The definition of 'online course' varies among institutions.

   Deal-making

4. The Consortium 2 brand name may be less than that of individual institutions.

   Reputation

5. Consortium 2 needs buy-in at the vice presidential level.

   Organizational Approval

6. The value added by Consortium 2 needs to be clear for each institution.

   Organizational Approval

7. External funding will probably be needed for at least three years.

   External funding

Although the initial Consortium 1 document was meant to be a 'proposal', it read more like a final version of the Athabasca and OLA vision of Consortium 1. This pre-planning and decision-making turned off a number of participants at the Vancouver meeting. Ideas had already been solidified and Athabasca and the OLA were perceived as leading all Consortium 1 developments. This limited the partners who were interested in the Consortium 1 partnership. Too much deal-making and organization had been done before other potential partners were approached. The timing of the invitation to join Consortium 1, therefore, impacted who was interested. Also the idea that higher-reputation partners would be add-on partners was not appealing to many universities. If the invitees had been included from the beginning and felt that they truly were Founding Partners, then Consortium 1 may have been able to handle all partners in one consortium. This more open and early approach could well have saved the hassle of two partnerships forming and competing for limited funding opportunities.

The cycles of negotiation and approval in the final Partner Negotiation Model are not evident in previous literature. In fact, much of the current literature on partner selection documents

rational straight-line decision-making leading to partner selection. (Das and Teng 2000; Reid, Bussiere et al. 2001) Similarly, practitioner literature is rife with checklists of appropriate characteristics for partners in particular situations, as if partner selection was simple and straightforward. (Hitt, Dacin et al. 2000; Saffu and Mamman 2000) Business negotiation literature documents generic deal-making, but there is no specific literature on partner negotiation.

The idea of cycles of negotiation is important to an understanding of partnerships. Many practitioners want to form a partnership quickly or join an existing one because it is the thing to do these days or because they think that it makes sense for them in today's market. (Dussauge, Garrette et al. 2000; Economist 2000; Kanter 2001) With an understanding of this cyclic process, they can better plan the formation of their partnership and the time that will be needed for negotiations. They can also prepare business cases for approval.

The results show that existing partner selection theory may be too simplistic in many cases. Existing approaches assume that partners can easily be found from a checklist of possible criteria and that partners that are selected will choose to join the partnership. A better approach might be to begin with general business negotiation theory and add the instance of partner selection as a specific example of a business negotiation.

Extensive evidence was not available to support the resource availability proposition. In spite of the shortage of interview and documentation data, however, anecdotal evidence of this resource availability issue is presented. In particular, UBC was a desirable partner for Computer Education (CE) in one of the preliminary studies. It was also approached to be a partner for both Consortium 1 and Consortium 2. Once UBC declined, all three of these partnerships signed on with other British Columbia universities. That is, the other universities were second choices, which were only made after UBC, the primary target partner, indicated that it was not available.

The Partner Negotiation Model was presented to a Supply Chain Management Symposium and was validated with respect to other domains by a range of people there. One person said it was exactly how his Sales and Marketing work was done. Two others said that, if anything, their partnerships were *more complex* than this Model. This verified that, for at least some partnerships, the straight-line rational model was nowhere near true.

A final observation is that over the five years of this study the two consortia appear to be declining (Consortium 1) or stabilizing (Consortium 2) in terms of numbers of members. This may be due to reduced government funding or reduced partner interest and may be advancing the idea of one joint consortium.

7.4 Summary

The Partner Negotiation Model developed in Chapter 3 suggested a number of propositions which were explored with the data. Strong support was found for both a deal-making cycle and organizational approval cycles. Some support was noted for the idea of partner negotiation roles – in particular the roles of Driver, Sponsor and Key Partner. The Partner Choice Criteria had suggested that requirements were important, but that they were moderated by five other factors. Results showed strong support for social network and reputation as key criteria in specific partner selection. There was some evidence of resource availability as an issue in that second-choice partners were sometimes chosen when first-choice institutions were not obtainable. Weak support suggested that ambiguity and organizational politics may have played minor roles in partner selection. Other findings from interviews were also noted in this chapter. Interviewees identified motivation, operations, unit of partner, income, and one joint consortium as issues of additional interest for them. The chapter concluded with an interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Chapter 8
Summary and Conclusions

8.1 Summary of the Results

In contrast to previous work, these results show the complex and multifaceted nature of partner selection with multiple negotiation cycles and irrational selection criteria. These findings showed two patterns – one related to process and the second related to selection criteria. The process showed multiple cycles of deal-making, partner negotiation, and organizational approval rather than the simple straight-line decision-making process shown in much partner selection literature. The selection criteria findings showed a number of decisive factors that influenced the final choice of partner. As well as the need to meet the condition of documented requirements, partner selection was also influenced by resource availability, social network and reputation. Additional issues of interest to the interviewees in this study were motivation, operations, unit of partner, self-sustaining income, and joining to one consortium. These issues were documented for completion but an extensive investigation is beyond the scope of this research.

The deal-making cycles in these results showed multiple Sponsors and Drivers. External funding was needed for both consortia as well as high-level organizational approval for the partnership itself. Cycles of organizational approval appeared both in this early partnership formation and later as new partners were added and the partnership changed. Key Partners were needed to fulfill specific partnership roles or to attract new partners. Partners were identified first based on their match to explicit requirements. As part of the selection process, however, additional criteria influenced the specific partners that were chosen. Some partners were selected only after the potential first-choice partners had declined their offers. Many partners were chosen because they were already known by others in the partnership. Partners were distinguished and proposed because of their reputation. And finally, there was some evidence that ambiguity in requirements and politics beyond the control of the partnership could both influence final partner selection.

Overall, results have identified the following issues.

1. Partner selection is more complex than past research has described.
2. There are gaps in the research on partner selection.
3. Existing partner selection models do not adequately describe what was happening here.
4. Partner selection criteria are not based solely on rational analysis of goals and requirements.

5. One challenge of partner selection is the large number of people involved in partner selection and partnerships in general. This social network and communication are important in identifying and selecting partners.
6. Reputation can be very important in partner selection.

8.2 Limitations

Case study research by its nature is limited with small sample sizes. The case study approach used in this study was appropriate to provide preliminary data, but additional research will be needed to provide a broader base for an expanded theory. This research included two consortia as partnership case studies, 22 university partners and 20 interviewees. The two consortia were also in a limited type of partnership – university distance education in Canada from 1999 to 2005 – which may further limit the applicability and generalizability of the results, although some attendees at a Supply Chain Management Symposium validated the Partner Negotiation Model for their business domains as well. The small number of interviewees was countered by a rich set of interview data. This did allow deep, narrow research but limited the applicability of these research results to a larger set without more empirical study.

The interviewees who agreed to provide information were active in their consortia and were generally positive about their partnership experience. Limited data were therefore available about the less active partners and about occurrences of negative partnerships. Some partners dropped out of Consortium 1 during the time period of this study. Data from these ex-partners may have provided deeper insight into their partner selection process leading to further understanding of instances where partner selection was not successful.

Response bias may have been affected by some interviewees because of their personal knowledge of one of the researchers. The researcher in the field did not know interviewees, but the interviewees may have agreed to participate in this work based on prior relationships. The data should not have been impacted by this personal relationship, but the final selection of people who agreed to be interviewed may well have been. That is, some people may have agreed to be interviewed because they knew one of the researchers. Conversely, some people may have declined to be interviewed for the same reason. Again, because a wide variety of data were obtained from a multitude of sources, this bias should not have severe impacts on the final results.

Although the researcher used a standard Interview Question Guide, open-ended answers to interview questions were deliberately allowed. This may have provided extraneous data, which are not relevant to this study. More structure and standardization could have been imposed for more precise results, but the researcher felt that the tradeoff was worthwhile to allow the Other Findings to emerge.

The researcher has chosen to not focus on the notions of power, politics, time and trust in decision-making and in partner selection, other than as they were raised by interviewees and affected the specific decision instances of the research. A detailed discussion of these issues is outside the scope of this work. Power is difficult to identify, measure and put into practice. (Pfeffer 1992) Time to make a decision and length of time that the alliance will last are both beyond the scope of this work. Trust is a large enough issue that it has been explored in many other articles, and again is outside the scope of this work.

8.3 Future Research

An interesting and large-scale issue for future research could be a study of the relationships amongst the elements of the Partner Negotiation Model and the Partner Choice Criteria. That is, review the two research questions pulling the 'how' and 'why' of partner selection together to see which criteria may fit into which process cycle. As an example, requirements may belong to the deal-making cycle.

Future research could also extend the Partner Negotiation Model. This model implies sequential cycles of deal-making, partner negotiation and organizational approval. In fact, these cycles may be happening concurrently.

Each of the issues in this work could be studied separately or various relationships amongst them could be explored. That is, deal-making, partnership roles and organizational approval may be appropriate to investigate on their own. Similarly, requirements, resource availability, social network, reputation, ambiguity and politics could produce interesting topics on their own. An advance on the six individual choice criteria could be that these partner characteristics are *in order* of the above items. That is, future research could investigate factors influencing the ordering of these issues in terms of importance in the decision cycles.

Resource availability could be studied on its own since several partners were observed that had been chosen only because other partners were already busy or not interested in the partnership at hand. This indicates the potential of a first choice or second choice partner. The second choice only seems to be included when the first choice is not available for whatever reason. Similarly, ambiguity and politics could be studied in their own right as potential selection criteria. Evidence for their inclusion was weak in this research, but additional data may show more influence.

A number of *levels* of partner and partnership emerged from this work, but were too complex to include at this time. For example, partnerships can be based on verbal agreements among high-level executives. The actual partnership formation and operation are then delegated to lesser executives, middle managers, and finally line personnel. Each of these levels of responsibility has a different focus on the partnership. Each level has work to do to make sure that the

partnership develops appropriately and evolves to the advantage of each organization and to the advantage of the partnership itself.

Network structures are a very interesting field of study in computer science, management, psychology and a number of other academic areas. Some work has been done on network structures in alliances, but more could be done. In particular, by tying such work to partner selection and levels of partners, interesting networks may appear.

All work to be done, with or without partnerships, is constrained at different institutions, depending on resources of time, money and expertise. Government constraints are tied to funding priorities such as distance education, mobile technologies, Canada-wide networks and coast-to-coast coverage. There was some evidence in this research of institutions trying to fit their needs to government constraints and vice versa. A study of a number of funding opportunities, including constraints and funding fit on both sides, might provide some interesting results which could help both sides better negotiate their future requirements.

Many of the issues which surfaced from the interviews related to partnership *operation* rather than the focus of this work, *formation*. In fact, each of the items noted as Other Findings in Chapter 7 could provide the basis for future research as follows.

1. Motivation

Partner selection could be explored from various points of view. This research investigated partner choice from the point of view of the partnership. There was confusion among some interviewees who wanted to express their motivation for joining the partnership, which would provide data from the partner point of view.

2. Operations

The research suggests that the more *Active* a person is, the more active their institution. As well, the researcher speculates that more partners make the partnership more rigid. That is, the alliance and its people are more set in their ways and stronger network structures are in place.

3. Unit of Partner

It is difficult to separate the partner as a *person*, an *organization* and an *organizational unit*. The *partner* can be seen to be a person (executive or worker) or an organization or an organizational unit, depending on the point of view.

4. Income

Many partners believe that their partnerships need self-sustaining income to survive. A study of income sources could provide ideas for future partnerships. A study of partnerships with and without external income could explore specific characteristics that will allow partnerships to survive without income.

5. Integration

The two consortia used for case studies were disparate in a number of ways. Future research could uncover similarities which could enable a move to a single consortium. The new partnership structure would need to reflect differing ideas and viewpoints, but may be possible.

Potential future research topics are summarized in Table 8.1.

1. Relationships amongst all elements
2. Extend Partner Negotiation Model
3. Separate individual issues
4. Relationships amongst individual issues
5. Order Partner Choice Criteria
6. Levels of partner
7. Levels of partnership
8. Network structures
9. Match funding opportunities
10. Partner motivation
11. Partnership operations
12. Unit of partner
13. Self-sustaining income
14. Integration

Table 8.1 Potential Future Research Topics

8.4 Contributions

The research questions that were answered in this work focused on how and why partners are chosen. These questions turned out to be non-trivial as the researcher found that the formation of partnerships and the process of partner selection are both very complex. New insights have been provided linking business negotiation concepts with partner selection. Two initial interviews and two detailed case study narratives were described, all of which offered insight into specific partnerships. A framework for viewing partner selection as negotiation has been provided. Three negotiation cycles of deal-making, partner negotiation roles and organizational approval have been proposed. Four criteria have been identified that influence why specific partners are chosen – requirements, resource availability, social network, and reputation. The five other findings of motivation, operations, unit of partner, income and integration have been noted, which were considered to be significant by the interviewees. Finally, based on the complexities and issues from this work, a number of ideas have been summarized for future research.

The literature review provides a synopsis of previous work on interorganizational relationships, alliance motivation, decision-making, partner selection, and organizational and partner characteristics. Researchers interested in these areas may find this work to be a good starting point. The work provides an overview of a variety of written materials about alliances and a number of associated issues. The focus on partner selection and characteristics also provide deeper, narrower research in these areas.

The initial interviews described during the model development phase provide additional insight into real-world partnerships and their concerns. As well, the models contribute a variety of approaches and a number of viewpoints from which to consider partner selection. Propositions developed from the initial interviews and model offer a different and interesting framework for partner negotiation and selection.

The Canadian distance education partnerships described in the case study narratives provide both positive and negative lessons learned. Partnership formation and initial partner selection information can help other institutions with similar issues. Information on later partners who were added or who dropped out can provide insight as to what worked and did not work in these cases. External funding, governing structure and social network emerged as extremely important issues for these partnerships, so could again provide a solid background for new partnerships just starting out.

Propositions were tested with case study data to provide a sense of whether the issues might be worth pursuing in larger-scale quantitative research studies. The cycles of deal-making, partner negotiation roles and organizational approval were very evident in this research, which contributes at least three ideas for future work. The six proposed partner choice criteria of

requirements, resource availability, reputation, social network, ambiguity and politics were not all well-supported by the data but again may be good resource materials for future work in these areas. Similarly, the five other findings related to motivation, operations, unit of partner, income and integration contribute ideas identified as important to interviewees.

8.4.1 Implications for Theory

Partner selection is much more complex than academic and practitioner literature suggest. The most important contribution of this research to theory is an increased understanding of partner negotiation and selection from a firm perspective. An understanding of this area is, as yet, extremely limited (van der Heijden, 2000). This study provides a model and highlights issues that can lead to more successful partner selection. The conceptual Partner Negotiation Model is distinctive in the literature. The research is unique with the focus on partner selection, processes, and multiple alliance types. Key people and institutions are major factors in partnership formation. Social networks and reputation are key elements in partner choice.

The Canadian distance education field cases used as the domain also provide a distinctive perspective for this research. These cases provide deep, narrow research that may later be extended and generalized into a partner selection theory in combination with the existing literature and many models noted previously.

This research will also be of interest to universities that want to know how certain partnerships formed by providing examples of educational consortia in Appendix A. The study will be of interest to governments and other organizations involved in establishing standards and limitations for collaborations, so that they can better delineate partner selection processes and choice criteria.

8.4.2 Implications for Management

One contribution of this study to the practice of management will be to provide managers with an aid in partner selection decisions. The list of partnership issues and organizational and alliance characteristics resulting from this study can assist managers in implementing, or considering, interorganizational relationships. The study can provide both a rich description of partner selection issues and an analysis of the relationship between these issues and real-world consortia.

At an individual organization level, the results of this work can save time and aid the decision-making process in terms of partner selection. This work may allow organizations to choose among potential collaborators more easily, more fairly and in a more structured manner than an ad hoc approach by providing information about the process and factors to consider as important

for partnerships. Organizations may even decide not to join a particular consortium if the available partners are not suitable.

This study provides a base for further investigations that will be of interest to organizations that need to establish partnerships in order to thrive in today's markets. It will be of interest to specific industry groups that need to collaborate for reuse and people shortage issues, such as the software development and component industries.

From the Case Study Narratives, managers can learn about deal-making and searching for funds. These cases show that it took a great deal of time and deal-making to form partnerships in the first place. Part of that early process was the achievement of external funding, which added value to the partnership. The partnership then appears more legitimate in its own right with solid funding and it appears more desirable to potential new partners.

8.4.3 Summary of Contributions

This work makes a number of contributions to an understanding of partnerships and partner selection. The Literature Review provides a summary and overview of current alliance and partner selection literature and shows deficiencies and gaps in that literature. The Partner Negotiation Model provides an improved understanding of the partner selection process. Case Study Narratives offer deep, interesting insight into two specific cases of Canadian consortia. The results of the case study data applied to propositions from the final model give further understanding of partnerships. Finally, the large number of issues identified for future work verify the complexity of this research and give other researchers a better understanding of what still needs to be done and how it might be undertaken.

Appendix A

Examples of Educational Consortia

The educational consortia listed here provide a sample of partnerships that have been around for the past several years. Some consortia have since disbanded and others have changed significantly over the years.

BC^4, British Columbia Computer Curriculum Consortium, 1985 or 86, 60 school districts (K-12) in B.C., 150 educators, originally developed courseware together, now just have a collaborative database of what courses are available where, www.bc4.bc.ca

British Columbia Open University (BCOU), is a wholly distance learning institution offering courses from a variety of British Columbia sources including the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Victoria. In early 2005, UBC courses were not available through BCOU but were still available directly from UBC. As of April 2005, BCOU will become part of Thompson Rivers University through the University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops, B.C.

Campus Manitoba, www.campusmanitoba.com, is an organization to manage a collection of courses available to students studying at the university level anywhere in Manitoba. One of the main ideas of Campus Manitoba is that it can provide a central repository for courses from small disciplines. That is to say, one university may only have one or two courses in a particular subject area but the collection of courses from a number of universities will be enough to give a broad cross-section of courses in that field. The big concern for participating departments is that they will become redundant and the department will be closed, so the consortium is being treated with suspicion.

Consortium 1 is a partnership of universities across Canada, committed to distance delivery anytime anywhere. Partner universities are Athabasca, Brandon, Royal Roads, Tele-Universite du Quebec, The University of Manitoba, the University College of Cape Breton, Open Learning Agency, and Laurentian University. The University of Victoria is not a partner, but provides complementary distance education programs. Consortium 1 is funded by its partners and by Industry Canada. Consortium 1 identifies accredited courses, provides access to courses developed by partner universities, provides a clearing house for students wanting to mix and match courses from various universities, facilitates transfer credit and generally creates sharing efficiencies.

Consortium 2 includes Simon Fraser University, and the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Waterloo, Guelph, York, and Dalhousie. Two issues in the development of Consortium 2 are that Industry Canada required an east coast partner and the west coast partners were worried that Ontario was controlling things. This alliance has 'project staff' to keep it running smoothly.

Congese, Consortium for Graduate Education in Software Engineering, URL off the U of T website, www.utoronto.ca, includes the University of Waterloo, University of Toronto, Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, York University in Toronto, and Carleton University in Ottawa

The e-University is a British government project supported by $100 million US in government financing as an effort to offer distance education around the world.

GUA, Global University Alliance, www.gua.com, is an alliance of ten international universities. It offers graduate and postgraduate education to adult learners via the Internet. Universities come from Australia, Canada, Europe, and the USA. Athabasca University in Canada is one of the partners.

Griffith Flexible Learning Services at Griffith University, Australia is negotiating learning alliances with non-traditional industries to expand its flexible education programs to meet global education markets.

IMS Global Learning Consortium, Inc., www.imsproject.org, is a closed consortium that produces open standards in education. This organization is developing and promoting open *specifications* for facilitating online distributed learning activities. IMS is a global consortium with members from education, business and government.

MERLOT, www.merlot.org, offers online learning and sharing of resources, but is not focused on Distance Education. The Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Teaching Online (MERLOT) is an organization that collects and disseminates online learning materials, assignments and reviews. It is also a community of people who strive to enrich teaching and learning experiences. This organization started as a best practice study at California State University and then moved into an alliance organization.

Michigan Virtual University, with U of Michigan from the Universitas 21 consortium

NextEd Ltd., www.nexted.com, is an education and training infrastructure company with headquarters in Hong Kong. NextEd offers corporate and higher education as an accredited online learning provider. The company partners with universities and private education providers to deliver their courses over the Internet to students in Asia. IMS and GUA are technology partners. Athabasca University is an educational partner and part of GUA.

Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI), http://web.mit.edu/oki, is a joint initiative between MIT and Stanford University that identifies, designs, and packages a set of web-enabled learning

components. Its focus is on sustainable, open source, web-based tools to support teaching and learning.

Open Learning Agency (OLA) is a "leader in the delivery of lifelong learning opportunities" through the "provision of high-quality, flexible learning products, services and systems." The OLA includes distance learning and recognition for non-traditional learning. It was a partner in the Western (Canadian) Universities Telecourse Consortium in British Columbia. The British Columbia Open University was part of the OLA, but is now moving to Thompson Rivers University. The mandate and structure of the OLA has changed significantly from 2001 to 2005.

The University of the Arctic, www.uarctic.org, is 'a network of academic institutions and programs in the circumpolar North'. The network includes universities from Canada (the Yukon and UNBC), Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Russia, and the USA (Alaska and Vermont).

Universitas 21, www.universitas.edu.au, (old www.universitas21.org), is a network for international higher education. It is a company incorporated in the United Kingdom with 18 universities in 10 countries. The core business is 'provision of a pre-eminent brand for educational services'. The two Canadian universities are McGill University in Montreal, www.mcgill.ca, represented by Dawn Conway, Director of the Office of International Research, dconway@FGSR.Lan.McGill.ca, and the University of British Columbia, www.ubc.ca, chase@oldadm.ubc.ca. The University of Toronto pulled out of the consortium in April 2001 over concerns about how the online university would run. U21 Equity is the company set up to manage the consortium's financial arrangements for the online university and many of the partner universities are expressing concern over the commitment of large sums of money and the licensing of names and logos to an outside organization. (Maslen 2001)

UNIGIS International is a worldwide network of educational institutions that offer distance learning courses in Geographical Information Systems. Three British universities started UNIGIS in 1990. Now there are 13 universities in 12 countries, including Simon Fraser University in Canada, with about 900 students total.

Western (Canadian) Universities Telecourse Consortium in British Columbia includes nine universities and broadcasting organizations sharing the responsibilities of first and second year telecourses.

Westmost – Masters of Software Technology – www.cs.ualberta.ca/~westmost Kal Toth, toth@techbc.ca, www.westmost.ca

Worldwide Universities Network is an alliance among autonomous universities in the United States and Great Britain, formed in early 2001. Initially, the universities will be collaborating on

graduate research but they soon hope to add online courses. Financing so far has come from the universities, but the group is bidding for e-University money from the British government. The collaboration includes Penn State, UC at San Diego, U Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, U Washington, U Wisconsin at Madison; U Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Southampton and York.

Appendix B
Interview Materials

Interview Protocol Form

Data Collection Matrix

Interview Question Guide

Probe Questions

Consortium 1 Partners

Consortium 2 Partners

Interview Protocol Form

Instructions

The purpose of the interview is to gather data on partner selection in interorganizational relationships. How and why are specific partners chosen? We would also like to gather further information about the organization, its partner(s), and their alliances. Some factors that we believe may be of interest are alliance motivation, organizational and partner characteristics, reputation, decision maker turnover and resource availability.

NOTE: When we interview the partners we may get different answers to our questions.

Key Research Questions

This study seeks to answer two main research questions. They are:

1. How do organizations choose collaborative partners?
2. Why do organizations choose a particular partner?

Descriptive Notes and Demographic Information

Document the following descriptive information:

Date, time and place of the interview

Interviewee name and job title

Dialogue

Physical Setting

Data Collection Matrix

Complete the key data identified in the Data Collection Matrix on the next page.

Probes

If necessary, ask additional questions found following in Interview Questions.

Interviewer's Reflective Notes

Document your (the researcher's) personal thoughts such as "speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions, and prejudices" about the data.

Documents Obtained

Identify and catalog all documents obtained during the interview. At a minimum, note a name, type of document, key categories of interest to this study, and primary or secondary source material.

Data Collection Matrix

Organization Name: _____

Partner Name: _____

How was this partner found? (personal contact, advertisement, previous experience, etc.)

Why was this particular partner chosen? (size, sector, finances, location, etc.)

How does this partner compare to an 'ideal' partner for this alliance?

Is there evidence of Deal-making, Key Partners, Negotiation?

What was the rationale for selection of this partner? (hard constraints, resource availability, ambiguity, social network, politics, reputation, other)

Other Issues:

Interview Question Guide

Introduction

I appreciate your time and will try to limit the interview to one hour. All information is confidential. The purpose of the interview is to gather data on partner selection in distance education collaborations, specifically Consortia 1 and 2. We are exploring how these collaborations are formed and will attempt to interview all partners.

{Your University} is part of {Consortium 1, Consortium 2}. I will be asking about your current role in the alliance and how and why your organization got involved.

Current Situation

1. What is your official title within {C}?

2. What is {U}'s role in {C}? Major responsibilities? Major activities?

3. To the best of your knowledge, what is the degree of participation among all partners? *{Do all partners have equal funding, for example?}*

4. Draw a diagram, showing the major communication or reporting structures.

5. What is your idea of the objectives, goals, and motivation of {C} as a whole?

{U}'s Motivation

1. How did {U} get involved in {C}? What were the major events?

Informal Discussion | *Beginning* | *Middle* | *End* | *Decision to Join*

2. Why did {U} get involved in {C}? What was your rationale?

3. What were the advantages & disadvantages to {U} of joining {C}? *Concrete examples*

{C}'s Partner Selection

1. To the best of your knowledge, *how* was {U} selected for {C}?

    Major events? Decision-making processes?

2. To the best of your knowledge, *why* was {U} selected for {C}?

3. To the best of your knowledge, was any one partner directly involved in selecting or eliminating another partner?

4. How do the other partners compare to {U}? Measured by what criteria?

Retrospective Reflection

1. If you could make one change to make this process better, what would it be?

I will follow up by e-mail within the next month if necessary to clarify information.

Would you like a copy of the final results of our research at a later date? (YES) (NO)

Probe Questions

Partner Negotiation Model

We understand that partner choice is a very complex process and not at all the rational decision-making that some would have us believe. Evidence of the following issues?

Choice Opportunity (Driving Force) some *big* reason to join – deal-making cycle

Alliance Catalyst, Principal Investigator – one or more people who made it all happen

Key Partners who may have helped choose other partners or do other alliance work

Negotiation – back and forth with the funder, the catalyst, other partners, internally with your organization?

Proposed Partners versus the **Actual Partners** who signed on

Partner Selection Rationale

Why was your organization selected for this alliance?

Hard Constraints: Were you needed for a specific talent, expertise, geographical reason, etc.? What hard constraints were there on alliance partners? What constraints did the funder put on alliance partners? Did you meet some *required* constraints? What constraints?

Resource Availability: Was Resource Availability an issue? In what way? Were a number of partners available? How many other appropriate organizations?

Ambiguity: From Information Theory, the number of possible ways that issues can be interpreted is large. The more ambiguous the project, the more likely any partner will do. More ambiguous goals and looser constraints = Garbage Can (any problem will map to any solution and vice versa)

Social Network: The more positive social capital between partners, the more likely an organization will be selected. What was the role of social network or social capital in partner selection? Were partners chosen or did partners join based on *who* rather than *what* they knew? Did you know any of these partners before? Who? How? Did you have previous experience with any of these partners? What experience?

Politics: What is your definition of politics? (Public Relations, Marketing, Expectations, Biased Views, Organizational Expectations, Packaging of the Alliance, Favours Owed Internally or Externally) Did you owe someone a favour or vice versa? Did you feel pressured to join the alliance?

Reputation: What are some of the factors that you use to judge an institution's reputation? How much of that does {U} have compared to the other universities in {C}? How is your reputation in relation to the other partners? Are there disparate reputations among the partners? If so, are there power and control issues? Other imbalance issues? The higher your reputation, the more likely you are to be invited to join. Organizations with similar reputations are more likely to choose each other Organizations with disparate reputations will have power and control issues

Overall: Is our list of Constraints and Issues an ordered list? An embedded list? A complete list? What other issues or constraints were in play?

Would any partner have done? Why or why not?

Consortium 1 Contacts as of 2003

1. Athabasca University:
   - President
   - Vice President, Academic
   - Executive Director
2. Brandon University
3. Royal Roads University
4. Tele-Universite du Quebec
5. University of Manitoba
6. University College of Cape Breton
7. Open Learning Agency (British Columbia Open University): Director, Education
8. Laurentian University: Associate Vice President
9. University of Victoria
10. Memorial University of Newfoundland: Director, Technologies
11. Mount Saint Vincent U: Director, Education
12. University of Moncton
13. University of New Brunswick

Approached, but Did Not Join

University of Waterloo
University of Guelph
University of British Columbia
York University
University of Alberta

Consortium 2 Contacts as of 2003

1. Simon Fraser University
   - Director, Development
2. University of Alberta
   - Director, Technologies
3. University of Calgary
   - Director, Education
4. University of Saskatchewan
   - Dean, Extension
   - Vice President
5. University of Waterloo
   - Associate Vice President
6. University of Guelph
   - Director, Learning
7. York University
   - Vice President
8. Dalhousie University
   - Executive Director, Technology
   - Director, Computing

Program Director is at Saskatchewan; Others are Consortium 2 Project Directors

Approached or Inquired, but Did Not Join

University of British Columbia
McGill University
University of New Brunswick
McMaster University

Appendix C

Consortia 1 and 2 Social Network

The social network listed here provides a cross-section of the people and organizations that were involved in the formation of the two consortia under study.

1. President, Athabasca University
2. Program Director, Distance Education and Off-Campus Services, College of Extended Learning, University of New Brunswick
3. Director, Academic Technologies for Learning, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
4. Director, Extension Department, University of Alberta, (February 2001) then later Professor and Dean, Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan (December 2001)
5. Vice President, Academic, University of Saskatchewan
6. Distance Education Co-ordinator, University of Alberta (September 2000)
7. Director, Academic Computing Services, Dalhousie (October 2001)
8. Director, Distance Education and Technology, Continuing Studies, UBC (March 1, 2000)
9. Directrice, Télé-Université du Québec
10. Vice President Academic, University of Calgary
11. Director, NSERC, Advisory Committee on Online Learning (ACOL)
12. President, McConnell Family Foundation
13. Associate Vice President, Information and Communications Technology, Professor of Computer Science, University of Saskatchewan
14. Executive Director, Consortium 1
15. Acting Director, Academic Technologies for Learning, University of Alberta (September 2000, January 2002) also Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Extension
16. Director, Technology (April 2000 title) University of Waterloo, Consortium 2 catalyst/driver
17. Distance Learning Specialist and Special Graduate Faculty, Guelph
18. Associate Vice-President, Academic, Memorial University of Newfoundland
19. Vice President, University of Saskatchewan
20. Executive Director, Consortium 2
21. Director, NSERC, Consortium 2 proposal
22. Vice President Academic, Athabasca University
23. Associate Vice President, University of Alberta

24. Vice President Research, Dalhousie, Professor, Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology
25. Professor, University of Alberta
26. Director, Education, University of Alberta (moved to University of Calgary)
27. Consortium 2 Project Director, then Consortium 2 Online Program Project Manager (December 2001), University of Guelph
28. Interim Dean, University of Alberta
29. Director, Learning, University of Guelph
30. Policy Analyst, Industry Canada, Multimedia Group
31. Director, Teaching, University of Waterloo
32. Director, International Distance Education, UBC
33. Vice President Research, University of Waterloo
34. Director, SSHRC
35. Interim President & CEO, British Columbia Open University
36. Manager, Contracts Research & Industrial Grants, University of Waterloo
37. Associate Director, Academic Technologies for Learning, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
38. Educational and Management Consultant, Victoria, BC
39. Director, Industry Canada, part of the Connecting Canada mandate, SchoolNet
40. President, University of Waterloo
41. Director, Education, University of Waterloo
42. Director, Faculty Development and Research Coordinator, Communication Skills Program, Dalhousie until July 1, 2001, then Director, Instructional Development Centre, Simon Fraser
43. Director of Distance Learning and Educational Alliances, Pearson Canada
44. Chair of Communication, Simon Fraser University
45. Dean, Extension and Community Affairs, University College of Cape Breton
46. Associate Dean, Atkinson College, York University
47. President, York University
48. Director, Education moved to Saskatchewan from Brandon University, thus providing a link between Consortium 1 and 2
49. Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs, Laurentian University
50. Director, Dalhousie University
51. Director, SSHRC

52. Professor, York University
53. Executive Director, Alberta Online Consortium
54. Director, Funding, Industry Canada
55. Online Program Initiative Contact, University of Guelph
56. Director, Education, NSERC
57. Professor, Dalhousie University
58. Professor, Simon Fraser University
59. Founding Director, Centre for the Study of Computers in Education, York University
60. Dean, Continuing Education, University of Manitoba
61. Director, College of Extended Learning, University of New Brunswick
62. Professor, York University
63. Professor, McGill University
64. President, University of Guelph
65. Director, HRDC, Skill and Learning Taskforce
66. Executive Director, Campus Canada
67. Vice President Academic and Provost, Dalhousie University
68. President, Royal Roads University
69. Manager, Application Services, CompCanada Atlas
70. Associate Vice President, Vice President, Research & Innovation, York University
71. President, Simon Fraser University
72. Consultant, York University
73. Provost and VPA, University of Guelph
74. Professor, University of Saskatchewan
75. President and CEO, OLA (March 2000)
76. Health Sciences Professor, Dalhousie University
77. Director of Distance Education Learning Technologies, Memorial
78. Director, Bell Canada University Labs, Guelph
79. Professor, University of Manitoba
80. Vice President, University of Waterloo, Consortium 2 catalyst
81. Professor, Simon Fraser University
82. President, Laurentian University

83. Director, Mount Saint Vincent University
84. Director, International Distance Education, UBC
85. Professor, York University
86. Executive Director, Technology, Dalhousie University moved to Universite du Quebec

Glossary

Alliance: Exchange relationship, but no joint ownership (Das, Sen & Sengupta 1998)

Ambiguity: Fuzzy wording that could lead to multiple meanings or misunderstandings of intent; doubtful or uncertain especially from obscurity or indistinctness; capable of being understood in two or more possible senses or ways (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Choice Opportunity: Positive outcome which could result from a partnership; point in time when a decision is required; diverse problems and solutions (Cohen et al 1972)

Consortium: Specialized joint venture, often technology development (Kanter 1989)

Constraints: restrictions or checks; compelled to avoid or perform some action (M-W 2004)

Deal: Value proposition; an offer or agreement involving a number of related items or one making acceptance of one item dependent on the acceptance of another (M-W 2004)

Deal-making: Negotiation in preparation to form a partnership

Driver: A catalyst for the partnership, usually a (key) partner

Goal: the end toward which effort is directed (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Hypothesis: Predictions about the relationship among variables; used in quantitative research; numeric estimates of population values based on data collected from samples; testing employs statistical procedures (Creswell 2003)

Instance: Number of words in a word search (NVivo 2.0)

Joint Venture: A separate jointly-owned firm created by two or more firms (Garcie-Canal, 1996)

Key Partner: A partner useful to the partnership in terms of attracting future partners or providing other resources

Model: A description or analogy used to help visualize something that cannot be directly observed (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Negotiation: to arrange for or bring about through conference, discussion, and compromise (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Organizational Approval: to accept as satisfactory by administration or upper management in an organization; to give formal or official sanction to (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Organizational Politics: Competition between competing interest groups or individuals for power and leadership (within or between or within organizations)

Partner: A person, institution or organizational unit involved in a partnership; one associated with another especially in an action (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Partnership: Any interorganizational relationship, such as an alliance, consortium, joint venture and so on; a relationship resembling a legal partnership and usually involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Partnership Roles: Either a Partner Negotiation or Operational Role (Sponsor, Driver, Key Partner or Director, Project Manager)

Partner Selection: Finding and choosing good matches for interorganizational relationships

Passage: Coded term, which could be a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or text of any length representing a specific thought or *meaningful unit* of text (NVivo 2.0)

Politics: Competition between competing interest groups or individuals for power and leadership (as in a government) (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Prestige: Standing or estimation in the eyes of people: weight or credit in general opinion; commanding position in people's minds (Merriam-Webster 2004); excellence, often in terms of overall quality of people or programs; relative to other institutions; quality of incoming students, amount of federal research funding, and athletic programs; generated by excellent faculty and students, world class research, successful sports teams; generates revenue; these schools try to increase the selectivity of their admissions process, which improves the peer group and the worth of the degree (Brewer, Gates et al. 2002)

Proposition: Less stringent descriptive or illustrative statements used in qualitative research; may be followed by stronger directional hypotheses in quantitative research; something offered for consideration or acceptance (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Provider: An institution which offers programs through a partnership, but doesn't broadly participate (Consortium 1)

Reliability: Stability or consistency of responses (Creswell 2003)

Reputation: Perceived prestige, or prestige in one area of endeavor; overall quality or character as seen or judged by people in general; a place in public esteem or regard: good name (Merriam-Webster 2004); specific, measurable, related to services offered to students, can be continuously improved in quality and variety of services, based on student demand for programs and leads to tuition revenue and enrolment-based government funding; these schools try to meet student needs (Brewer, Gates et al. 2002); survey of graduates and the community at large for highest quality, most innovative, leaders of tomorrow (Maclean's 2004)

Requirements: Specific work to be done by a partner or specific needs for the partnership; something essential to the existence or occurrence of something else (M-W 2004)

Resource Availability: Time or people available to work on a partnership

Selection: to choose (as by fitness or excellence) from a number or group; pick out; to make a choice (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Social Network: People known to others in the partnership; a relationship of people who know each other or know of each other (Scott 1988); linkages among employees (Cross 2003); tending to form cooperative and interdependent relationships with others of one's kind (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Sponsor: A person or institution which provides funding or other resources or support

Theory: A plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain phenomena (Merriam-Webster 2004); an explanation of why things work the way they do

Trust: assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something (Merriam-Webster 2004)

Validity: Accuracy, trustworthiness, authentic, credible results (Creswell 2003)

Verification: to establish the truth, accuracy, or reality of (Merriam-Webster 2004)

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