The Supply Chain Exchange Thesis Partnership
Through the Thesis Partnership, sponsor companies can have top supply chain talent work on a company-specific problem… and finish before the end of a single academic year.

WHAT IS A THESIS PARTNER?

The MIT Supply Chain Management Program (SCM) is a masters degree program that prepares graduates for fast-track careers in logistics and supply chain management. A central part of each student’s degree program is a thesis project — an opportunity to conceive and execute an independent research project, under guidance of a faculty supervisor.

Companies that are members of the CTL Supply Chain Exchange are able to propose business problems as a foundation for student thesis work. Matches are made to a student or a team of students. Thesis projects that are undertaken by students are completed on the MIT campus within a four- to six-month window. Meetings between student teams and their company sponsors are encouraged and can take place on campus or at company facilities.

Students make final presentations of their work on the project and submit a written thesis. Participating Supply Chain Exchange partners are able to hear about thesis projects being done with other partner companies, giving them broad exposure to current issues in logistics and supply chain management.

And the thesis, the presentation, and other materials are available to help partners communicate the students’ findings within their organizations. On both sides, it’s a great opportunity to learn, grow… and produce results!

HOW DOES THE PARTNERSHIP WORK?

Companies that participate are asked to name a mid- to senior-level manager who will brief the students, coordinate company involvement, supply data if necessary, participate in progress checks, and champion delivery of research results to the company.

Designed for students with up to ten years of industry experience, the MIT SCM program is the only one of its kind to produce logistics professionals with a system-wide perspective who are equally at home with sophisticated data analysis and with complex management issues.
BENEFITS OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN THESIS PARTNERSHIP

Each sponsorship entitles the Thesis Partner company to the following:

- One or two graduate students working on the project for 9 months (Sept – May)
- A faculty member or research director with relevant experience as a thesis advisor
- A completed Masters Thesis presented in May at MIT CTL's annual Research Fest
- A final presentation to the sponsoring company’s management team
- A high-quality executive summary appropriate for distribution inside the company

A key benefit to partner companies is having extraordinarily bright young minds tackle their business problems — under the guidance of MIT faculty — with access to the latest developments in supply chain theory and practice. In short, it’s an opportunity to get an important project completed and documented in less than an academic year.

But beyond that, thesis partner companies enjoy additional benefits:

- Early and deep exposure to students for recruiting,
- Networking with faculty, researchers, and other companies,
- A way to energize their staff by teaming up with bright, enthusiastic MIT graduate students,
- A low risk, low-cost, quick-turnaround study focused on a company problem.

Each sponsorship entitles the Thesis Partner company to the following:
Recent SCM projects have ranged from designing a combined forecasting and inventory model for an apparel manufacturer to evaluating the benefits of employing centralized dispatch within the grocery industry.

**The Thesis Partner company is expected to commit to the following:**

- Payment of $15,000 fee for the project
- Assignment of an internal project manager to meet regularly with the students, arrange access to key individuals, help collect data, and liaison with company management during the project
- Payment of any out of town travel for team members to the company locations
- Attendance at MIT CTL’s Research Fest (in May) where the thesis results will be presented
- Host a site visit in Oct-Dec to provide context to the students

The partnership fits within a compact yet productive nine-month window. See the table below for a schedule of key milestones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partners finalize scope document</td>
<td>Early August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners present to students on campus</td>
<td>End of August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director assigns students to projects</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students visit company site(s)</td>
<td>October-December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team schedules regular status calls,</td>
<td>October-April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Session</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis Deadline/ResearchFest Event</td>
<td>May</td>
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To find past theses, please visit: http://ctl.mit.edu/pubs

For more information on becoming a Thesis Partner, contact:

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