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Sommario/riassunto	The managed flow of goods and information from raw material to final sale also known as a "supply chain" affects everything--from the U.S. gross domestic product to where you can buy your jeans. The nature of

a company's supply chain has a significant effect on its success or failure--as in the success of Dell Computer's make-to-order system and the failure of General Motor's vertical integration during the 1998 United Auto Workers strike. Supply Chain Integration looks at this crucial component of business at a time when product design, manufacture, and delivery are changing radically and globally. This book explores the benefits of continuously improving the relationship between the firm, its suppliers, and its customers to ensure the highest added value. This book identifies the state-of-the-art developments that contribute to the success of vertical tiers of suppliers and relates these developments to the capabilities that small and medium-sized manufacturers must have to be viable participants in this system. Strategies for attaining these capabilities through manufacturing extension centers and other technical assistance providers at the national, state, and local level are suggested. This book identifies action steps for small and medium-sized manufacturers--the "seed corn" of business start-up and development--to improve supply chain management. The book examines supply chain models from consultant firms, universities, manufacturers, and associations. Topics include the roles of suppliers and other supply chain participants, the rise of outsourcing, the importance of information management, the natural tension between buyer and seller, sources of assistance to small and medium-sized firms, and a host of other issues. Supply Chain Integration will be of interest to industry policymakers, economists, researchers, business leaders, and forward-thinking executives.
