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	Sommario/riassunto	The engineering life cycle for complex systems design and development, where partners are dispersed in different locations, requires the set-up of adequate and controlled processes involving many different disciplines. The "design integration" and the final "system physical/functional integration and qualification" imply a high

degree of cross-interaction among the partners. The - place technical information systems supporting the life cycle activities are specialized with respect to the needs of each actor in the process chain and are highly heterogeneous between them. To globally innovate in-place processes, specialists must be able to work as a unique team, in a virtual enterprise model. To this aim, it is necessary to make interoperable the different technical information systems and to define co-operative engineering processes, which take into account "distributed roles", "shared activities", and "distributed process controls". In this frame an innovative study, aimed at addressing this process with the goal of identifying proper solutions – in terms of design, implementation, and deployment – has been carried out with the support of the European Community and the participation of major industrial companies and research centers.