

# The Orchestration Imperative: Human-AI Collaboration Patterns in the Agentic Economy

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## **Abstract**

### ***Research Framing***

*The agentic economy presents organizations with a fundamental choice: deploy AI to accelerate existing transactions, or orchestrate human-AI collaboration to transform stakeholder relationships. Across sectors—insurance claims, banking operations, healthcare delivery, legal services, and talent acquisition—a common pattern is emerging. Organizations that treat AI as an efficiency tool replicate transactional logic at machine speed. Those that position AI as a collaboration partner are discovering new paradigms for stakeholder engagement. This paper examines the emergence of what we term the “orchestration imperative”, the strategic necessity to design human-AI systems that enhance relationship quality rather than merely transaction velocity. We focus on recruitment as a critical demonstration domain, introducing Applicant Relationship Management (ARM) as a framework that exemplifies orchestration principles applicable across the agentic economy.*

### ***Purpose of the Paper***

*Thirty years ago, Grönroos (1994) argued that treating customers as transactions had become a “straitjacket” limiting marketing’s potential. His paradigm shift from transactional to relationship marketing transformed customer engagement. Yet one stakeholder category remains trapped in transactional logic: job applicants. Despite technological advancement, Applicant Tracking Systems process humans as pipeline inputs rather than relationship partners. This paper makes two contributions. First, we identify an orchestration paradigm emerging across sectors where AI agents are deployed with human oversight for stakeholder-facing processes. We document this pattern through cross-sector analysis of recent deployments in insurance (Allianz-Anthropic, 2026), banking (BNY Mellon, DBS), healthcare (FDA, HHS), and legal services (A&O Shearman-Harvey). Second, we extend Grönroos’s unfinished revolution to talent acquisition, proposing ARM as a framework that embodies orchestration principles: treating applicants as stakeholders, maintaining human judgment for complex decisions, and designing AI to enhance relationships rather than accelerate rejections.*

### ***Methodology***

*The paper employs mixed-method conceptual analysis. We synthesize five theoretical streams: Grönroos’s relationship marketing paradigm; Packard’s (1960) critique of efficiency without purpose; Harari’s analysis of cognitive*

opacity; Kahneman et al.'s (2021) research on judgment noise; and emerging agentic economy literature. We complement this theoretical synthesis with cross-sector empirical pattern analysis, examining recent AI deployments across insurance, banking, healthcare, legal services, and recruitment to identify common orchestration principles. We also analyse regulatory developments, particularly the EU AI Act's high-risk classification for employment AI and its human oversight requirements (effective August 2026), as external validation of the orchestration imperative.

### **Findings**

The analysis yields three levels of findings:

- **Cross-Sector Pattern:** Organizations deploying AI for stakeholder-facing processes increasingly adopt human-in-the-loop governance. Gartner reports 40% of enterprise applications will feature AI agents by end of 2026. Yet only 38% of banking executives believe current AI capable of full autonomy; nearly 50% of financial institutions are creating dedicated AI supervisor roles (Capgemini, 2026). The pattern suggests orchestration—not automation—as the emerging paradigm.
- **The ARM Framework:** Applied to recruitment, orchestration principles generate four ARM tenets: (1) Relationships precede transactions—applicants are stakeholders before candidates; (2) Opacity is universal—distrust of AI “black boxes” applies equally to human cognition, suggesting complementarity; (3) Noise reduction requires collaboration—human judgment alone is demonstrably inconsistent; (4) Orchestration supersedes automation—AI agents coordinate relationship touchpoints rather than accelerate processing.
- **Regulatory Alignment:** The EU AI Act classifies recruitment AI as “high-risk,” mandating human oversight, transparency, and documentation by August 2026. ARM's design principles anticipate these requirements, suggesting regulatory convergence toward orchestration norms.

### **Research Limitations**

The cross-sector pattern analysis relies on recent industry reports and early deployments; longitudinal validation is needed. The ARM framework, while grounded in relationship marketing theory, requires empirical testing across industries, cultures, and organizational contexts. Rapid AI capability evolution may outpace specific technical assumptions, though philosophical foundations are designed for stability. The recruitment focus, while providing concrete illustration, may limit immediate generalizability—though cross-sector evidence suggests the orchestration pattern is broadly applicable.

### **Practical Implications**

For practitioners, the orchestration imperative reframes strategic AI questions. Rather than “how can AI process faster?” organizations should ask “how can AI help build better stakeholder relationships?” In recruitment, this shifts talent acquisition professionals from transaction processors to relationship

*orchestrators. The framework suggests competitive advantage will migrate from processing efficiency to relationship quality—requiring redesign of systems, metrics, and professional competencies. For policymakers, the cross-sector convergence toward human-in-the-loop governance validates regulatory approaches like the EU AI Act. Organizations should view compliance not as constraint but as alignment with emerging best practice.*

***Originality/Value***

*This paper makes three contributions: First, it identifies and documents an orchestration paradigm emerging across multiple sectors, providing the first integrated cross-sector analysis of human-AI collaboration patterns in stakeholder-facing processes. Second, it completes Grönroos's paradigm shift by extending relationship principles to the neglected applicant stakeholder through the ARM framework. Third, it synthesizes theoretical critique (Packard, Harari, Kahneman) with empirical pattern analysis and regulatory developments to argue that orchestration—not automation—represents the appropriate response to the agentic economy. As AI agents become economic actors, organizations face a choice: play the same game faster, or play a better game altogether. The orchestration imperative suggests the latter path leads to sustainable advantage.*

***Keywords***

*Human-AI Collaboration, Orchestration Paradigm, Agentic Economy, Applicant Relationship Management, Relationship Marketing, Human-in-the-Loop, EU AI Act, Stakeholder Management, Talent Acquisition*

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