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Business Transformation Management: A View on the Orchestration of Management Services (Research In Progress)

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Business Transformation Management: A View on the Orchestration of Management Services (Research In Progress)

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Abstract

Business transformations are large-scale organisational change projects that, evidence suggests, are often unsuccessful. This study aims to develop a conceptual model that explains how management services that are required for a business transformation are orchestrated during such an initiative. We classify management services such as (but not limited to) change management, risk management, IT management, financial management, program management and so forth as bearing transformational and/or transactional capabilities in a transformation initiative. We then draw upon three principles of musical composition, namely melody, harmony and rhythm, and illustrate how they apply to the orchestration of management services in the management of business transformations. In order to illustrate our emerging model, we examine the case of Malaysia Airlines, who have managed to successfully turnaround the near-bankrupt organisation beyond survival. We demonstrate how the notions of melody, harmony and rhythm can be used to describe their endeavour. We conclude by discussing next steps of our research.

Keywords
Business Transformation, Business Transformation Management, Management Services, Orchestration

INTRODUCTION

In seeking a stable or growing position in highly volatile markets and under continuing pressure from technological advances, organisations often seek business transformations as large-scale revolutionary changes (Venkatraman, 1994) that provide them with a newer way of conducting business. The nature of such transformation depends on whether businesses are in times of growth (Cherbakov, Galambos, Harishankar, Kalyana, & Rackham, 2005) or crisis (Ashurst & Hodges, 2010), and may take either or both of the following forms: 1) Perform current work differently by redesigning current work practices including, in case, deployment of new technological infrastructure; or 2) perform different work by redefining the organisation’s strategic vision, scope and business model, subsequently offering customers an all new value proposition.

Consider the case of Malaysia Airlines. The public-owned carrier were on the brink of bankruptcy in April 2006 upon realising a financial loss of RM$1.3 billion in September 2005 (Malaysia Airlines, 2008). As a result of their Business Turnaround Plan (BTP1), the carrier not only recovered from its financial crisis, but also exceeded their profit and loss (P&L) target despite the rise in oil prices. The BTP1 shows how various management disciplines were involved and required for the transformation initiative. For instance, the airline required financial management services to evaluate its P&L statements, eliciting associated costs impeding its financial performance. The company also required operational management services to identify and implement areas of improvement, including input services from human resource management to tackle its employee-related crisis coupled with information technology management services that severed organisational performance and customer satisfaction. Process and change management services were also required in conjunction with the reorganisation of work practices, embedding a distinct culture within the airline. In envisioning the avenues required to radically transform the business for survival, the company devised several strategies, subsequently requiring strategy management to drive the business transformation via program management. We refer to the services provided by these management disciplines as Management Services (MS), and define them as abstract resources (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000) that provide a set of coherent management capabilities (Teece, 2007) that contribute to the overall management of business transformations.
Despite the existence of proven practices for each management discipline, many transformation projects still fail with an alarming failure rate of up to 70% (Ashurst & Hodges, 2010). We conjecture that one of the causes of failure is due to the silo concentration of the services provided by each management discipline alone, which goes against the requirement for organisational subunits to be interdependent when dealing with radical change in an organisation as suggested by the punctuated equilibrium theory (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). While existing work on business transformations (BT) have shown the use of management practices, a gap in knowledge exists in a holistic approach for managing such initiatives. For instance, many studies have explored the organizational change as part of IS implementations, with a specific emphasis on user involvement and their relations (Orlikowski, 1993), but much less on how organisational sub-systems or units (Goodman, 2000) are required to function together towards a fundamental change.

Our research interest lies in examining whether various management services are orchestrated purposefully, effectively and efficiently in business transformations. Our specific aim in this paper, accordingly, is two-fold. First, we seek to identify what are the capabilities and attributes of MS that are critical to a successful transformation; and second, we seek to investigate how the required MS are orchestrated in a business transformation. Our research questions are:

**RQ1** What are the attributes of the management services required in business transformations?

**RQ2** How are management services orchestrated in the management of business transformations?

We proceed as follows. First, we will discuss relevant literature on the management of BT and the nature and attributes of management services. Next, we present theories of music orchestration from which we attempt to elicit the orchestration mechanism in managing BT. Then, we develop our model of MS orchestration by drawing on principles of music orchestration, viz. melody, harmony and rhythm. The section that follows further illustrates how they can be used to develop MS orchestration principles by using examples from the case of Malaysia Airlines. We then conclude by outlining the implications of our emerging theoretical model, and provide an outlook to our future work following this research-in-progress.

**BACKGROUND**

**The Notion of Management Services**

In studying the interaction between all those managerial capabilities that are active during a large-scale organizational transformation, we peruse a service-oriented view of an organisation, whereby services are actions carried out by an entity on behalf of another, and are regarded as assets that have an inherent value transferable from the provider to the recipient (O’Sullivan, Edmond, & Ter Hofstede, 2002). Importantly, the notion of service implies a black-boxed view on the internals of service provision. Correspondingly, our work views management services as input-output mechanisms that contribute to a BT but where the functioning of each service (how each service is carried out) is irrelevant to our study of the management of the overall initiative. We believe this view is appropriate as each of the main MS individually has received significant academic and practitioner attention and has reached considerable levels of maturity and standardized practices – think of PRINCE2 standards for Project Management, MSP for Program Management, or ITIL for IT service management, for instance.

Adopting a service-oriented perspective also allows us to define common properties of MS. On the forefront, we could describe each MS in terms of the acts of planning, organising, leading and controlling work activities as part of the service (Wood et al., 2010); yet, this view would not contribute strongly to a model of service orchestration due to its focus on the internal functioning of each service. Instead, we turn to the notions of transformational, transactional and ambidextrous services to describe differences between the MS required in a BT. These two attributes stem from a number of existing works, namely: service centers and centers of excellence (Ulrich, 1995), transformational and transactional leadership (Bryant, 2003), IT transformational benefits (Gregor, Martin, Fernandez, Stern, & Vitale, 2006), approaches to business process outsourcing (Mani, Barua, & Whinston, 2010), and explorative and exploitative capabilities within an organisation (O'Reilly III & Tushman, 2004). Inspired by these applications of transformational versus transactional entities, we believe it is possible and sense-making to classify management services in business transformations into three categories: 1) Transformational MS, 2) Transactional MS, and 3) Ambidextrous MS. Table 1 outlines the differences between these three types of MS, although for illustration purposes in the Malaysia Airlines example, we assume that all services are predominantly either transactional or transformational based on the role a particular MS plays in the BT initiative.

Importantly, different MS provide different transformational and/or transactional capabilities to enable a business to transform. Depending on the organizational context and the nature of a transformation initiative, therefore, different varieties of MS in different combinations are required, for instance:

- Change management, program management and project management (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010),
The term 'orchestration' is defined as the idiomatic craft in amalgamating the sounds of complex instruments (an orchestra or other ensemble) to achieve a satisfactory form of blend and balance (Oxford Music Online, 2010).

Music composition is the temporal pattern of a guitar's tones and chords, placed along the continuum of time (Russo, 1975). An example of rhythm is simultaneously, or one at a time in a manner that is pleasing to the ear. Rhythm is the temporal succession of when (Bresler, 2005), such as when multiple tones of a saxophone, drums and guitar are sounded one at a time (Russo, 1975). Harmony is concerned with the tolerance for how much dissonance, where and when (Bresler, 2005), such as when multiple tones of a saxophone, drums and guitar are sounded simultaneously, or one at a time in a manner that is pleasing to the ear. Rhythm is the temporal succession of tones and chords, or the placing of sounds in the continuum of time (Russo, 1975). An example of rhythm in music composition is the temporal pattern of a guitar’s tones and chords, placed along the continuum of time. The term ‘orchestration’ is defined as the idiomatic craft in amalgamating the sounds of complex instruments (an orchestra or other ensemble) to achieve a satisfactory form of blend and balance (Oxford Music Online, 2010).

It should be noted that this list of MS is not an exhaustive one. Nonetheless, our interpretation of the literature is that, different BT initiatives may require different combinations of capabilities provided by MS, and that, dependent on the nature and type of the transformation, even the same set of MS may need to be orchestrated in different ways. To understand such orchestration principles, therefore, the next section presents a review on orchestration literature as incepted and applied in the discipline of music.

Table 1. Attributes of Management Services in Business Transformation Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus:</th>
<th>Transactional MS</th>
<th>Transformational MS</th>
<th>Ambidextrous MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature:</td>
<td>Organisational transactions</td>
<td>Practices that transform the company</td>
<td>Undertakings that both support and change the company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capabilities:</td>
<td>Administrative, routine</td>
<td>Non-administrative, non-routine</td>
<td>Have characteristics of both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work practices:</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Dynamic</td>
<td>Adaptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example activities:</td>
<td>Flexible, established</td>
<td>Flexible, changeable</td>
<td>Dependent on purpose of MS in BTM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS examples:</td>
<td>• Reduce operational and communication costs</td>
<td>• Develop new business plans</td>
<td>• Provide current support while innovating new ways of conducting work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase returns on financial assets and savings</td>
<td>• Expand business capabilities</td>
<td>• Ensure business processes are efficient in terms of cost, while providing the design of new processes to support future practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Efficient allocation of resources</td>
<td>• Improve business models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhance employee productivity</td>
<td>• Improve organisational structure and processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project management</td>
<td>• Improve skill level for employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Asset management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Operations management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategy management</td>
<td>• Process management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Marketing management</td>
<td>• IT management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performance management</td>
<td>• HR management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revisiting the Notion of Orchestration

There are many existing studies that have utilised the concept of orchestration, including (but not limited to) those ranging from technical works such as those by (Busi, Gorrieri, Guidi, Lucchi, & Zavattaro, 2005) on web services orchestration and (Karakostas, Zorgios, & Alevizos, 2006) on business services orchestration, to non-technical research, such as (Sirmon, Hitt, Ireland, & Gilbert, 2010) on resources orchestration and (Teece, 2007) on asset orchestration. The underlying principle realised from these studies is that, despite the level of technicality, orchestration is required for services bearing both transactional and transformational nature. However, none have proposed a means of doing so.

In this study, we attempt to revisit this notion by turning to the literal origins of orchestration, i.e. to the notion of music composition and its sub-process of musical orchestration. Our rationale for doing so is because music composition considers the foreground (transformational nature), and the background (transactional nature). Subsequently, we believe that adopting musical composition principles as metaphors may allow us to explore and describe how the various MS are orchestrated harmoniously in a large-scale organisational transformation.

Composition is the art of creating a piece of music, and includes, at least, the definition of melody, harmony and rhythm in a musical piece. These elements are determined by the composer at the outset and are used to define the scale, i.e. combination of tones and semitones (e.g. black and white notes on a piano) that the piece is based on. Melody is defined as the succession of single tones (Russo, 1975), such as for instance, the predecessor and successor of individual tones of a saxophone in terms of its direction, ascending, descending or flat (Bresler, 2005). Harmony is the succession of chords where two or three different tones are sounded simultaneously, or one at a time (Russo, 1975). Harmony is concerned with the tolerance for how much dissonance, where and when (Bresler, 2005), such as when multiple tones of a saxophone, drums and guitar are sounded simultaneously, or one at a time in a manner that is pleasing to the ear. Rhythm is the temporal succession of tones and chords, or the placing of sounds in the continuum of time (Russo, 1975). An example of rhythm in music composition is the temporal pattern of a guitar’s tones and chords, placed along the continuum of time. The term ‘orchestration’ is defined as the idiomatic craft in amalgamating the sounds of complex instruments (an orchestra or other ensemble) to achieve a satisfactory form of blend and balance (Oxford Music Online, 2010).
An orchestra is composed of numerous instruments, with each of them bearing the ability to create a variety of sounds (Carpentier, Assayag, & Saint-James, 2010), by three fundamental elements in music composition, namely, melody, harmony and rhythm (Russo, 1973). Put simply, to orchestrate, is to assemble various musical instruments into a single impressive delivery with the compositional elements of melody, harmony and rhythm (Russo, 1975; Sadiq & Racca, 2003).

In attempting an appropriate application of these musical composition principles to BTM, we turn to the genre of jazz music. We do so because jazz has been argued to well-reflect the dynamic and unpredictable behaviour of businesses (Hatch, 1998), and by extension business transformations, because in both, improvisation is highly regarded over rigid planning structures (Ashurst & Hodges, 2010). Unlike classical orchestra, jazz music emphasises on the role of improvising, denoted as a fusion of the segregated roles of the composer, instrumental interpreter and conductor (Gold & Hirshfeld, 2005). The process of a horizontal network of musicians demonstrates that all members involved possess equal responsibility for the creation, production and delivery of musical experience. This reflects the capabilities of a transforming organisation (see Ashurst & Hodges, 2010) where a powerful team of coalition (Kotter, 1995) are trusted to bear their own expertise in delivering the respective MS necessary for a successful transformation, such as for instance the role of CIO, CEO, CFO and COO in transforming businesses (see Gartner, 2010). The use of these metaphors, denoted as a key aspect of symbolism, enable the suggestion and structuring of a model in attempt to articulate and understand the subject of investigation (Lewis, 1996), as well as to tentatively attribute similar relations between the inadequately comprehended entities and mechanisms (see Hirschheim & Newman, 1991 on the use of metaphor in IS). Thus, it is believed that using music composition principles as applied in jazz may guide the definition of management service orchestration principles for BTM. Based on these given concepts, we will next conceptualise the orchestration model in BT by adopting a metaphor approach and incorporate the foundations of theory-building.

TOWARDS A MODEL OF MANAGEMENT SERVICE ORCHESTRATION

Drawing on the principles of music composition introduced above, we are now developing a conceptual model of orchestration mechanisms for the management services involved in business transformations. To that end, our aim is to build explanatory theory (Gregor, 2006) that allows us to describe how BT are managed when each capability involved is conceptualized as a service. In our theory building, we attempted to follow the guidelines for good theory as introduced in (Whetten, 1989) by eliciting key constructs, their relationships, justificatory mechanisms and, where possible, boundary conditions. Table 2 outlines the key elements of our theory developed for BTM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory Component</th>
<th>Instantiation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Model representation | Management Services
| | Business Transformation Management
| | Orchestration Mechanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Services (MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration Mechanism (OM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Transformation Management (BTM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements of relationships</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BTM is composed of MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTM requires an orchestration mechanism for the involved MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OM brings together the MS required for a BTM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Different types of MS require specific OM principles for a BTM

**Scope**
- **Who:** Senior management on a corporate level
- **Where:** Within an (intra-)organisation
- **When:** Between the start and end of a punctuated equilibrium period of a business transformation initiative

**Causal explanations**
- MS serve as resources to facilitate firm performance (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000) in BTM
- OM is required during the transformation’s punctuated equilibrium period (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994) to facilitate in enhancing the firm’s performance (Teece, 2007)
- MS as resources require an OM to enable transformation across the scope and levels of a firm, as well as throughout the evolving stages of a business (Sirmon, et al., 2010)
- MS with either transformational or transactional nature require different OM principles to transform a business (Busquets, 2010)

The main conjecture of our proposed model builds on the premise that a transforming organisation resembles the composition of a jazz musical piece. This is because jazz is renowned for its improvisational nature, reflected strongly as a prerequisite in BT where organisational actors are required to improvise, innovate and amend their work practices over time (Orlikowski, 1996) driven by “organisational instability and alert reactions to daily contingencies” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 366). Subsequently, we propose to view the selection of musical instruments in jazz music as analogous to the selection of MS used in BTM in a sense that the company is composed of numerous MS, with each of them bearing the ability to create a variety of management functions. Hence, when applying the notion of jazz music composition (Russo, 1975) to BT initiatives, to orchestrate in a BT is to synchronise the melody, harmony and rhythm of the selected MS in attempt to deliver a successful transformation. Thus, in this study, we will adopt the elements of melody, harmony, rhythm with reference to Thompson’s (1993) model on the relationships between these elements as part of our conceptual model.

**PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT SERVICE ORCHESTRATION**

*Melody*, a succession of single tones (Russo, 1975), can be seen as the order of predecessors and successors of management services. Figure 1 illustrates the concept of melody by showing an example of how one MS is succeeded with another. Specifically, Figure 1 shows how TF management service MS1 is followed by MS2, which is subsequently followed by MS3 in the first wave or phase of a BT initiative. The MS in the first wave precedes the second wave, which comprises a succession of MS4, MS5 and MS6. The same process applies for the third wave of the BT initiative.

![Figure 1. Melody in Business Transformation](image-url).
Harmony describes the succession of chords where two or three different tones are sounded simultaneously, or one at a time (Russo, 1975). Harmony considers how a chord (or succession of chords) is resolved or pleasing to the ear. Dissonance has a set of rules which determine how the dissonance is heard as moving to consonance. In BTs, we can apply the concept of harmony as the meaningful combination of several different MS that provide their respective discipline functions simultaneously, or one at a time. Furthermore, specific MS activities rely on each other to be completed – some will be on the critical path and must be done before others, bearing similarities to the resolution of dissonance, i.e. if they are executed in the wrong order, the outcome is not achieved. Consider the illustration in Figure 2: The first wave shows how various MS from both TF and TA are interdependent with one another where TF management services MS1 is orchestrated with MS3 and a TA management service MS10. TA management services MS10 and MS12 also denote a common link with TF management service MS2. These aforementioned MS are required to synchronise simultaneously, or harmoniously, to provide an aggregated function that contributes to the achievement of a particular objective in the first wave of a BT initiative.

Finally, rhythm describes the temporal succession of tones and chords or the placing and emphasis of sounds in the continuum of time (Russo, 1975). We can use this notion to describe the temporal succession of single or combined MS, or the placing of management functions throughout the duration of a BT. Certain MS activities have more emphasis than others and will set the cadence (speed and timing) of both transformational and transactional activities, such as for instance, steering committee meetings where issues are mitigated, such as for instance IT management issues. The example in Figure 3 illustrates how different MS contribute at different rates of occurrence. For instance, the TF management service MS1 contributes less frequently than TA management services MS2.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE: THE CASE OF MALAYSIA AIRLINES

To demonstrate the application of music composition principles to the task of orchestrating management services in BT, viz. melody, harmony and rhythm, we utilise the case of Malaysia Airlines whose objectives were: cash crisis recovery in 2006, improving efficiency and capabilities in 2007, and new growth opportunities in 2008 (Malaysia Airlines, 2007). The transformation took place across 26 months in 3 waves. Wave 1 (months 0-12) specifically focused on cash and revenue recovery, Wave 2 (months 9-24) on cost efficiencies and building capacities, and Wave 3 (months 24-36) on developing new opportunities. All three waves are carried out in alignment with BTP1 five thrusts: 1) Commercial: Flying to win customers; 2) Operations: Mastering operational excellence; 3) Finance: Financing and aligning the business on P&L; 4) People: Unleashing talents and capabilities; and 5) Stakeholders: Winning coalitions.
The coding of data proceeded in three main steps. First, the management services were identified from the BTP1 document, ‘How We Will Do It – Our Business Turnaround Plan’ chapter (Malaysia Airlines, 2006, pp. 33 - 37), whereby the elicitation of MS generally required in BTM was based on the definitions derived from our earlier work (see Safrudin, Recker, & Rosemann, 2011). Next, the MS are attributed as either transformational (TF) or transactional (TA) based on the characteristics as outlined in the Background section of this paper. In a third step, three patterns emerged as a result from the listing and attributing of MS: 1) the sequence of MS per wave with the assumption that the activity listing is based on priority or level of importance, i.e. the melody; 2) the interdependence of MS per wave whereby two or more MS are specified in unison to produce a desired output, i.e. the harmony; and 3) the frequency of MS throughout the entire waves, whether it is high or low, i.e. the rhythm. Examples of these three patterns are illustrated in the sections that follow.

The concept of melody in orchestrating management service is reflected in Figure 4 below. In particular, Wave 1 places emphasis on generating revenue to recover from its cash crisis. As such, the airline required the following (non-exhaustive) TA management services as part of the orchestration in Wave 1: Financial MS, Operational MS, Human Resource MS, Program MS, Supply Chain MS, and Asset MS. TF management services were also required in this phase, namely, Strategy MS, Revenue MS, Sales MS, Network MS, IT MS. In Wave 2, the airline had a focus on improving efficiency and building capabilities. Thus, the TA management services required included Performance MS, Financial MS, Human Resource MS and Change MS. Its list of TF management services comprised Sales MS, Marketing MS, IT MS, Process MS and Strategy MS. In Wave 3, the carrier emphasised the establishment of new growth opportunities, and therefore required Strategy MS, Sales MS and Network MS as TF management services. Its account of TA management services entailed Financial MS, HR MS, Change MS and Performance MS in this order.

Harmony in Malaysia Airline’s orchestration of MS is demonstrated in Figure 5. Strategy MS and Revenue MS (both characterised as TF) were orchestrated together to realise their commercial objectives by deducing a plan(s) of action that will feed into the means in which the carrier can generate and achieve its targeted income within Wave 1. However, Strategy MS was also orchestrated with Program MS (typified as TA) in order to oversee the transformation initiative and intervene with corrective actions. Program MS is also coupled with Sales MS (denoted as TF) in order to track, measure and communicate the P&L progress. Sales MS is also linked with Financial MS (attributed as TA) to ensure that the carrier achieves its targeted income, sufficient for the allocation of economic resource required for the transformation. Another instance where two TA management services are coupled together is with Program MS and Financial MS as stated in the BTP1, “the PMO (Program Management Office) also works closely with Finance to produce daily cash reports, weekly financial reports and monthly progress reports to the board,” (Malaysia Airlines, 2006, p. 42).
Finally, rhythm was demonstrated throughout the airline’s transformation initiative as the emphasis of critical MS activities required, which is in this case, recovery of the carrier’s financial crisis. Financial MS as a TA management service was constantly and regularly prevalent throughout all three waves in order to ensure that the necessary actions across the BT were in alignment with its P&L statements. Conversely, Sales MS exhibited a sporadic presence in accordance with each wave’s objectives. The TF management service contributed more frequently in the first wave (where the emphasis was on cash and revenue) than it did in the second phase (which focused on minimising costs and building capabilities). Sales MS again contributed frequently in the third phase where the aim of the transformation was to establish new opportunities and growth.

To sum up, melody can be seen as delivering the required MS in order to achieve a series of desired output in alignment with the strategic vision and mission of the BT initiative. It should be noted however, that it is not required to have the exact same melody for all BT as every business is different, unless there is a common aspect of the outcome that an organisation would like to achieve or could learn from, such as what MS are required to increase financial or IT performance. But to fully replicate one transformed business’ melody may not only fail due to cultural or political reasons for instance, but it may also decrease its chances of gaining a competitive advantage (the melody is what the human ear hears most; if one were to listen to an orchestral piece, the thing that they will be able to sing or hum to after hearing is the melody – it is very rare to have two songs with the same melody for reasons of wanting to achieve a unique piece of music). Harmony on the other hand, can be seen as how specific MS are combined (e.g. IT and HR MS, or Financial and Sales MS) to produce the desired outcome across all levels of the organisation such as change in the way a business operates, benefits to shareholders, entrance to new markets and so forth (harmony relies on the combination of different elements in a clever way to produce something that is ‘harmonious’). Finally, rhythm is the cadence or how quickly a business can transform as well as the benefits and risks associated with transforming too quickly or too slowly. It is how an organisation determines how much change to push through within a given timeframe and the activities required to achieve milestones and keep the transformation on track.
CONCLUSIONS

Contributions
In our research we contribute to the literature on business transformations by proposing an explanatory model for the orchestration of management services required in a business transformation – an important aspect in the management of such complex endeavours that is not yet fully understood as existing work tends to research each management discipline in isolation. Our paper presents an attempt to provide a more holistic approach to understanding the research phenomena. Our work is also novel in that we define management services as abstract entities of a transformational, transactional or ambidextrous nature, and we develop three orchestration principles as the explanatory mechanisms that show how the services can be interlinked faithfully. We provided a case analysis based on secondary data, in which we applied our model to explaining the conduct of the business transformation initiative at Malaysia Airlines.

Building on the research presented in this research-in-progress paper, our overarching research project will produce the following outcomes: 1) a validated model specifying the impact of selected management services towards business transformations; and 2) empirical evidence for the impact of orchestration mechanisms on business transformation management. These outcomes will subsequently provide key differentiators and characteristics of management services, as well as orchestration principles that contribute to successful business transformations, regardless of business domains. In turn, the orchestration principles can also guide organisations in industry with principles of management that can be applied in current or future large-scale initiatives. In particular, we believe the practical implications are for senior level executives who simply do not have the resources to consider the functioning of each service they require and instead merely focus on input-output relations. This view is closely aligned to our service-oriented perspective and as such draws attention for how C-level directors can view their initiatives – as compositions of melody, harmony and rhythm between single services they require.

Limitations
This research does not draw upon any existing theoretical framework, but rather, generates new theory by employing a metaphoric approach to develop MS orchestration principles following notions existent in jazz music composition. As such, at this stage of the research we cannot conclusively verify internal, external or ecological validity of our model. Nonetheless, we have endeavoured to ensure construct validity by basing our conceptualisation on the composition structures used in jazz music as closely as possible and by examining a published case of business transformation as an initial exploration of the model. We further contend that, while our metaphor approach offers richness in framing our phenomenon of interest, it may be insufficient to fully describe the complexity and uncertainty of business transformation initiatives. We therefore will consider alternative approaches and theories to use in conjunction with the metaphor approach (Kendall & Kendall, 1993). We also acknowledge that as this study views each MS as a “black-box” concept, it subsequently appears to assume that all services work perfectly, which is not the case. However for pragmatic reasons, we decided not to consider the inner workings because each MS alone has sufficient research interest compared to how the required MS are to be synchronised holistically.

Outlook
The next immediate steps in this ongoing research is to conduct a set of case studies to deduce: 1) the necessary management services, 2) the orchestration mechanisms employed in past IT-enabled business transformations, and 3) relevant data pertaining to the outcome of the business transformation via archival analysis and semi-structured interviews. It is envisaged that a pilot case study will provide insights into refining the follow-up case study protocol for further exploratory cases which will add variations to the set of MS and their orchestration, subsequently leading to a model of the types of MS and orchestration patterns. Next, a series of confirmatory case studies will be examined to validate the emerging theory. This work will allow us to refine our emerging theoretical model in several ways: Firstly, contextual factors can be identified and applied. Secondly, the means of measuring the business transformation outcome can be explored and validated. In consequence, we believe our ongoing research will develop a much needed validated theoretical model of the management of business transformation through the novel lens of management service orchestration.

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