



Who is writing the music?

Part 4 in a five-part series

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Orchestration has become one of the most widely deployed terms in the current AI market. Vendors use it in product positioning. Analysts embed it in category definitions. Conference agendas are built around it. And in almost every case, the word is being used to describe something that is architecturally insufficient.

What the market identifies as orchestration is predominantly the coordination of AI agents with each other: one agent triggers another, a workflow passes through automated steps, a pipeline executes across multiple models. This is sophisticated automation. It is not orchestration. The distinction is not terminological. It is architectural. And organisations that embed the wrong definition into their AI strategy at this stage will discover, at significant cost, what the difference means in practice.

The composer is missing

A symphony orchestra does not self-organise from its individual players, however skilled those players are. A symphony requires a composer who has held the complete vision – the purpose, the structure, the relationship between every part – and designed the system within which each instrument plays its role. The intelligence that produces a symphony operates above the level of any individual instrument. Remove it and what remains is a collection of capable components producing noise at scale.

The current AI market has built a great many instruments. It has not produced the composer. Every vendor whose proposition centres entirely on the agent layer is selling one section of the orchestra and calling it a performance. The enterprise buyer operating at the strategic level is not asking which agents to deploy. They are asking what the governed architecture of a hybrid human and digital workforce looks like inside their organisation. That question the agent layer cannot answer.

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0 – Vendors currently offering a complete governing intelligence architecture above the agent layer

Agent capabilities are widespread and improving rapidly. The architectural design discipline that governs human and digital workers as a unified system – sitting above the agent layer – does not yet exist as a coherent commercial category.

Source note: Bloor Research IA Displacement Index assessment, 2026. Methodology: assessment of 50 major enterprise AI and software vendors across five intelligence architecture dimensions. The Index is updated annually. Vendor scores available on request through the Bloor Research subscription programme.

The inherited error and its consequences

The foundational error in most current AI propositions traces back to what Bloor Research identifies as the Turing Test inheritance: the assumption, originating in 1950, that intelligence is a property of machines measured by their ability to imitate human behaviour. Every product built on that inheritance positions the AI system as the intelligence and the human as the validator or exception handler. AI does not change what the organisation does. AI changes the system in which the organisation operates. That is a different order of consequence, and it requires a different order of response.

OAISM – Original Augmented Intelligence – inverts the frame. Build intelligence into the human, not the human into the AI. The human is sovereign. The system is designed to serve and extend that sovereignty.

WISH (Whole Intelligence Systems and Architecture) is the category of systems design that governs this at the organisational level, treating human intelligence, digital intelligence, and organisational intelligence as a single integrated system. HolArch (Holarchic Architecture) is the category of architectural practice that succeeds enterprise architecture and business architecture –

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- ▶ both designed for a world in which the workforce was purely human and the technology was a tool external to it. Both have reached their structural ceiling for the same reason: they cannot govern a workforce in which the technology and the worker are increasingly the same entity. Together, WISH and HolArch provide the governing architecture above the agent layer – the composer’s position that the current AI market has not filled.

The role that does not yet formally exist

The governance gap at the top of this architecture is the Chief Intelligence Architecture Officer – the CIAO. Not the Chief AI Officer as currently conceived, which in most organisations manages AI adoption and model governance. The CIAO holds

the design of the complete human and digital intelligence architecture of the organisation: how human and digital intelligence are combined, governed, and directed toward organisational purpose. This is a different scope and a different reporting relationship – above both the CTO and the CHRO, because the system it governs spans both domains and is reducible to neither.

Before the next conversation about orchestration, ask one question. Who is writing the music? If the answer is the AI, the architecture is wrong. If the answer is nobody yet, that is the most important gap your organisation needs to close.

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