# MANAGING THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE SCREEN INDUSTRIES: A PROCESS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

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# Abstract

The Screen Industries are characterised by dynamic, multifaceted projects that present distinctive challenges in process management, diverging significantly from structured sectors such as manufacturing or software development. Unlike industries that follow linear progressions with strict timelines and predefined outputs, creative content production is inherently fluid, iterative, and unpredictable. Conventional process management frameworks often fail to accommodate these complexities, leading to inefficiencies that hinder operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA). This research examines the challenges of process management within the Screen Industries, refining theoretical understanding and proposing a structured framework aligned with their distinct operational landscape.

By defining the Screen Industries and their five core sectors—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—this study provides a clear classification, addressing longstanding ambiguities in academic and industry discourse. It critically examines how value is created and sustained across production phases, revealing that workflow stability, leadership alignment, and creative autonomy are as integral to success as financial returns. The study highlights the multidimensional nature of value and demonstrates that structured processes play a crucial role in balancing innovation and commercial viability. Sector-specific dynamics influence how value is perceived and managed, with different sectors prioritising distinct measures of success, such as audience engagement, interactivity, and brand impact. These variations underscore the need for process management systems that balance creative autonomy with structured workflows to mitigate risks.

Employing a mixed-methods research design, the study integrates quantitative and qualitative analyses to develop a comprehensive understanding of process management within the Screen Industries. The SERPENT Process Management Framework, structured around Leadership, Process, and Value, fosters creative flow, autonomy, and structured oversight. By enhancing process structures, milestone checkpoints, and operational transparency, it provides a tailored framework that strengthens OE and CA in an industry where adaptability, efficiency, and innovation are crucial to sustained success.

# Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work, and I am the sole author. I certify that this work contains no material that has been presented or accepted for the award of any other degree or qualification at this University or any other institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. All external references and sources are acknowledged and identified as references and, where applicable, included within the Bibliography.

I have read and understood the regulations of the University of York concerning plagiarism and intellectual property.

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Signed:

Stewart Jones, MBA, PGCert

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

Like many involved with media and entertainment, interests often start from viewing the finished products—the output from teams and individuals working collaboratively to create whatever human imaginations can envision for screen-related projects. For this author, who has had a career in film, television, commercials, and video games that has lasted for over twenty years, childhood video games from the 8-bit and 16-bit console generations sparked an interest in the creative elements brought to our screens. This interest continued throughout newer console generations and was reinforced with films that focused on a pirate's map that starts a perilous journey filled with tricks, traps, and treasure (The Goonies, 1985), a tyrannosaurus rex that crashes through its electrified enclosure at a theme park (Jurassic Park, 1993), a skeleton king who kidnaps Santa Claus and tries to recreate Christmas (The Nightmare Before Christmas, 1993), a sheriff and a space ranger who battle for first place in a world where children's toys come to life (Toy Story, 1995), and an attorney who is sent to coach the worst peewee ice hockey team in the league (The Mighty Ducks, 1992). The majority of the films listed here have been selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant," and The Mighty Ducks (1992), the only film not to be selected, sparked the creation of an NHL hockey team, named the "Mighty Ducks of Anaheim." Disney initially founded this team in 1993, and it has become the "Anaheim Ducks" since 2006, highlighting the significance and reach of the Screen Industries into popular culture. These influences inspired this author to pursue an international career that has branched through various sectors within the Screen Industries, revealing creative, artistic, technical, and business-related roles that allowed for a broad overview of projects and pipelines, leading to expert knowledge in specialised disciplines and varying production scales. This experience has facilitated the transfer of skills between different sectors while providing insight into the processes, values, challenges, core competencies, leadership, and managerial requirements needed to develop successful projects centred on creative content and intellectual property (IP) development.

Over the years, the techniques and proficiencies used and learnt in one successful production translated directly into other productions, yet, as there are no standardised or structured leadership and operational systems in place, workflows drastically changed. This led to disruptions and sometimes stagnancy, with substantial adverse effects on projects, leading to unsuccessful reception and compromised outputs from the teams involved. These experiences translated to many questions for this author, leading to an active interest in research within process management—compounded when the success or failure of a project, studio, or business rested entirely upon the author while in ownership, executive, or leadership roles. In particular, these positions emphasised the importance of leadership, process, and value within the Screen Industries and propelled the ambition to engage in academic research during an MBA that focused on project and people management techniques within the creative industries (Jones, 2015). The conclusion of this research, which involved the creation of a theoretical management approach named TEMPLAR (Task Environment Management Process for Linear Agile Results), enabled work-related management techniques that helped forge the development of more successful projects that this author had the pleasure of being part of. However, as more experience was gained, it was evident that the use of borrowed project management theories in screen productions required further research and documentation, leading to the research that has formed within this PhD. These studies, along with previous understanding and knowledge, have created a deep interest in discovering what processes and the management of processes can help develop efficient and effective productions from a leadership and operational point-of-view (POV), with key pillars that rely on leadership, process, and value.

The Screen Industries—a term that means different things to different people (see DCMS, 2001: p.4; British Council, 2010: p.11; Brewka, 2008; Florida, 2002, 2003; Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020), usually encapsulates the broad spectrum of film, television, and emerging digital media platforms. The combination of these sectors stands at the forefront of global entertainment and communication. Beginning with the inception of motion pictures in the late 19$^{th}$ century (Musser, 1994), when black-and-white silent films evolved to incorporate sound and colour (Cook, 2004), to the mid-20$^{th}$ century, which saw television become a dominant form of mass communication (Spigel, 1992), through to the emergence of digital media platforms in the late 20$^{th}$ and early 21$^{st}$ centuries (Dwyer, 2010), these developments brought the magic of visual storytelling into homes

worldwide and transformed how content was produced, distributed, and consumed. These technological advances kept the Screen Industries in constant flux, with new technologies continually emerging, forcing skills and techniques to adapt to these changes (Autodesk, 2022; Cohendent and Simon, 2007: p.587; Gartenberg, 2020). These continuous changes propelled the scope and reach of screen-related media, revolutionising associated screen mediums and, in more recent years, became more inclusive and diverse, reflecting the voices and stories of various cultures and communities (Smith, 2020). Products developed from the Screen Industries are now more than sources of entertainment and have become mediums for cultural expression and information dissemination, with the ability to influence public opinion and shape societal norms (Johnson and King, 2018). These rapid technological developments expanded the industry's creative horizons and introduced new challenges and complexities. With developments like CGI (Computer-Generated Imagery), VFX (Visual Effects), VR (Virtual Reality), and AR (Augmented Reality) that can create visually stunning content, additional expertise and expanded skills are now a requirement for many individuals working in these sectors (Brown, 2021). This has led to an increasingly competitive landscape where staying abreast of technological trends is crucial for survival for both organisations and individuals (Carey, 1996; Jensen, 2008; Mocaplab, 2024).

Sectors within the Screen Industries have been characterised by complex creative processes that are inherently intricate and multi-layered, which require multi-disciplinary skills and specific expertise (Adobe, 2021; Unreal Engine, 2023; Vicon, 2021). Effective management and leadership frameworks in the Screen Industries must address these complexities. Traditionally, these industries have relied on conventional project management techniques, but there is a growing application of Agile and hybrid approaches to improve flexibility and responsiveness (Brown and Taylor, 2021). Understanding and improving these processes is crucial for efficiency, innovation, and the overall success of media projects. These procedures are often unique in their situations, require balancing creative visions with logistical constraints, and can frequently span one or many production phases. The value chain within the Screen Industries involves several of these production phases: development, pre-production, production, post-production, and distribution (Irving and Rea, 2015). These production phases, including the processes and tasks associated with every stage, requires meticulous planning, coordination, and

execution to manage the interplay between creative goals and logistical constraints (Mamer, 2005; Honthaner, 2010; Irving and Rea, 2015). For example, the development phase involves scripting and financing, while production encompasses filming and resource management. Post-production focuses on editing and visual effects, and distribution involves marketing and release strategies (Jones and Smith, 2020). The development of projects within the Screen Industries requires a combination of creativity, artistry, technology, and business ventures that involve navigating budget constraints, scheduling conflicts, and resource limitations while striving to realise the artistic vision of the project and protecting what is often substantial financial investment from key stakeholders. Due to the inherent complexities, a highly skilled workforce is needed at every stage of a project's development (Jones and Smith, 2020). Each professional is constantly challenged by the productions they are involved with and the need to continually update their skills and knowledge as technology and the dynamic environment force continuous change and new technologies upon each staff member (Doe, 2019). These crew members must ensure that each task is satisfactorily completed and that quality standards are maintained while ensuring harmonious collaboration and effective communication between diverse teams and departments under immense pressure to perform optimally (Brown and Taylor, 2021). Effective management of these stages enhances the efficiency and success of projects, reflecting the integrated nature of the value chain.

Added to this is the global nature of the Screen Industries, meaning that they are subject to diverse market demands and international audience preferences (Lee, 2022). The rise of global streaming services has led to an increased demand for content that resonates with a worldwide audience, and this shift requires content creators to be culturally sensitive and aware of global trends and preferences (Kim, 2023). With continuous technological advancements, global audience reach, and ever-building complexities, process management within the Screen Industries has been predominantly neglected (Pick *et al.*, 2015: p.757; Townley, Beech, and McKinlay, 2009: p.941). Yet, the need for robust process management cannot be overstated. Effective process management can significantly enhance efficiency, foster innovation, and contribute to the success of all projects. Understanding and improving these processes is crucial for the sustained growth and success of productions, and it requires a nuanced approach that balances the art and science of screen-related content production. This involves not only the

management of resources and schedules but also the nurturing of creativity and adaptation to changing market dynamics. By addressing these unique challenges and harnessing their opportunities, the Screen Industries can continue to thrive and evolve, captivating audiences worldwide with compelling stories and innovative content.

This personal trajectory underscores a broader knowledge gap in the academic study of process management for creative, screen-based ventures. While extensive research exists on project management in manufacturing or software contexts, relatively few investigations delve into the distinctive operational, leadership, and value-driven challenges that arise in the Screen Industries. It is precisely this gap—between day-to-day practical insights from varied productions and the more general frameworks available in scholarly literature—that this thesis aims to address.

## 1.2. Research Overview

With dynamic and multifaceted projects, the Screen Industries presents a unique set of challenges in process management. Traditional process management approaches, often derived from manufacturing or software development (Agyei, 2015), emphasise more predictable linear progression, strict timelines, and predefined outputs, yet they can struggle to fully accommodate the creative nature, peculiarities, and demands of creative content production. Projects with creative outputs operate on a different paradigm (Bealing and Krieble, 2017; Kehoe and Mateer, 2014); they have a fluid and dynamic nature, characterised by unpredictability, high levels of creativity, and non-linearity—elements frequently at odds with conventional process management models.

### 1.2.1. Tensions Between Traditional Models and Creative Outputs

Creative endeavours are inherently iterative, and creative inspiration and artistic expression do not always adhere to predetermined timelines (Smith and Johnson, 2018). This can cause discord between the creative process and rigid management structures, leading to tension or conflict in the management of diverse production team dynamics, where each department and individual has distinct working styles, communication preferences, and creative perspectives (Brown *et al.*, 2020). Flexibility and adaptability are paramount when managing diverse teams (White, 2019). Yet standard process management often assumes homogeneity in team composition and

presupposes a clear hierarchy, making it difficult to foster effective collaboration among multifaceted and sometimes egalitarian structures (Jones and Davis, 2021). Such misalignments risk miscommunications, inefficiencies, and a stifling of creative potential (Williams, 2017).

Moreover, the non-linear nature of creative projects further complicates the applicability of traditional linear approaches. For example, tasks such as editing and visual effects (VFX) might commence before all the scenes are filmed, or the marketing strategy might be developed concurrently with concept art or pre-production (Taylor, 2016). This overlapping of phases demands a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness from any process management framework (Miller, 2022). Traditional, phase-based, sequential models (PMI, 2017, 2018, 2021) often need help to accommodate these concurrent or iterative processes (Green and Clark, 2019). For instance, Waterfall methodologies, commonly associated with manufacturing or large-scale software projects, can be too rigid for sectors where change is frequent and iteration is crucial.

### 1.2.2. Balancing Creative Autonomy with Operational Structure

Recognising these challenges underscores why developing a theoretical process management framework designed specifically for the Screen Industries is so vital. Such a framework should accommodate iterative and creative tasks, emphasising leadership (those directly involved in planning and project processes), process (the tasks or requirements at every production stage), and value (the outputs or impacts of each process on the final product). The goal is to facilitate seamless transitions across phases (Honthaner, 2010: p.84), promoting effective decision-making amidst evolving project details, all while balancing creative goals with the logistical constraints of budgets, timetables, and distribution channels.

Collaboration is indispensable in these environments, bringing together writers, directors, actors, designers, technicians, and many others (Audet and Roy, 2016). Although each team member is essential, they have different approaches, experiences, and expectations, which can lead to complex dynamics. Managing such diversity remains challenging, particularly in areas of communication and coordination. Misunderstandings and misalignments in creative vision are frequent, potentially leading to project conflicts or costly delays (Davenport *et al.*, 2004; Meadows and Merali, 2003).

Therefore, this study aims to propose strategies that can enhance existing theories by fostering a culture of openness and respect, so teams can make collective decisions reflecting the input of all team members (Audet and Roy, 2016; Davenport *et al.*, 2004). Yet the Screen Industries also require solutions that maintain deadlines and budgets, ensuring that unrestrained creativity does not derail project feasibility (Conor *et al.*, 2015). Implementing conflict resolution or consensus-building approaches, responsive to the industry's creative character, is essential (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1998). A framework must also anticipate unforeseen shifts in storyline, design, or technology without sacrificing artistic integrity or commercial viability (Caldwell, 2008). Further, scheduling, resource allocation, and risk management demand a dynamic posture that purely linear tools cannot address (Cattani *et al.*, 2011). In short, a flexible-yet-structured process management framework can potentially enhance creativity—by protecting the space to innovate—while keeping projects on track for release and profitability (Bennett, 2012; Lampel *et al.*, 2000). Ultimately, a specialised framework for the Screen Industries can produce higher-quality, more cohesive content that resonates with both audiences and stakeholders (Sorensen and Jenson, 2017). "Quality" here encompasses not only artistic and technical excellence but also an ability to deliver within specific budgetary and scheduling constraints (Davis and Scase, 2000). By aligning creative and logistical imperatives, the envisioned framework helps ensure that final outputs reach their creative potential without breaching viability thresholds (Lampel *et al.*, 2000; Wasko and Erickson, 2009).

## 1.3. Research Significance

From a background of years of practical experience and prior research undertaken (Jones, 2015), this study aspired to substantially impact both academic theory and practical applications, spotlighting knowledge gaps regarding process management applied directly to the Screen Industries. By integrating creativity, process management, and organisational behaviour, it contends with conventional assumptions and strives to set a new standard for managing creative projects in real-world contexts.

### 1.3.1. Contribution to Process Management and Creative Studies

Focusing on the complexities of these sectors, the research highlights how unique conditions—interdisciplinary collaboration, compressed timelines, intangible creative decisions—necessitate advanced management approaches. While profit margins often judge success in the Screen Industries, attention to the operational dimension has largely been overshadowed by creative or box-office analyses. By introducing an explicit framework for managing project complexity, this research clarifies how operational effectiveness (OE) can yield competitive advantage (CA) by merging artistry with well-grounded scheduling and resource management. As a result, theoretical and methodological contributions abound, challenging or extending existing frameworks from general project management. In a sense, it exemplifies how practitioners might incorporate the pillars of leadership, process, and value to keep multifaceted productions aligned with strategic and creative goals (Porter, 1985). This approach underscores the synergy between academic investigations of organisational structures and the real-world demands of collaborative production environments.

Beyond creativity and responsiveness, this research targets operational effectiveness (OE) as a guiding factor of value—consistent with Porter's (1985) notion that sustainable competitive advantage (CA) arises from differentiated capabilities to manage production processes effectively. In the Screen Industries, meeting or exceeding time–cost–quality parameters can strengthen a studio or production team's reputation, enabling them to attract top-tier talent, secure better funding, and retain creative autonomy in future projects. Thus, operational efficiency is not a stifling force but an enabler of sustained innovation and market distinction.

### 1.3.2. Delving Into Operational Aspects of Screen Productions

Often, discussions around film or television revolve around artistic choices, audience reception, or commercial success at the box office. However, behind each screen-based work lies a labyrinth of operational processes seldom appreciated amidst the glamour of the finished product. These processes inherently require cross-functional efforts: from directors and writers to technicians and designers, each providing essential creative or technical expertise. Despite the complexity, synergy can be elusive—particularly where standard project management techniques fail to address the spontaneity and iteration needed for creative productions (Ng *et al.*, 2020;

Perumal and Woods, 2007). Through a lens of operational systems, this study underscores key challenges, such as how to coordinate discrete specialists, manage processes within uncertain creative contexts, handle intangible deliverables, and navigate rapidly changing technologies. In doing so, it offers robust insights into multi-team interactions, the tension between autonomy and oversight, and maintaining production flow in environments with shifting priorities.

### 1.3.3. Linking Organisational Behaviour and Leadership

The work intersects organisational behaviour, investigating how teams coalesce on creative projects and how leadership styles significantly affect these processes. Leadership here does not merely mean hierarchical authority but also encompasses facilitating autonomy, fostering an environment conducive to creativity, and establishing open channels of communication. Considering the constraints of time and money, leaders must ensure equilibrium between free exploration and structured tasks (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997). This demands robust tracking systems to gauge progress and offer timely feedback—tools that, if not wielded carefully, can smother innovation by imposing excessive discipline. The dissertation contends that well-crafted oversight can, in fact, liberate rather than constrain teams: by clarifying roles, setting achievable milestones, and mitigating misunderstandings, managers give creative workers the psychological safety and direction they need to take calculated risks (Davenport *et al.*, 2004; Meadows and Merali, 2003).

### 1.3.4. Addressing Rapid Technological Evolution

New technologies continually reshape media production, introducing fresh tools to streamline or augment project quality. However, this rapid evolution also presents a significant challenge (Brewka, 2008; Cohendet and Simon, 2007). Integrating emerging techniques—be it real-time rendering for virtual production or advanced AI-driven tools for post-production—can disrupt tried-and-true workflows, demand retraining of staff, and challenge established roles. By adopting a process management approach that is adaptive and future-focused, organisations can harness new technologies' benefits without losing creative momentum or overspending. Balancing the "wow" factor of technology with coherent creative vision remains critical (Borderlands, 2024; Rotten Tomatoes, 2024).

### 1.3.5. Bridging Theory and Practice in a Proposed Framework

Based on these insights, the research posits a new process management framework capable of transforming practices in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and game production. This framework—centred on leadership, process, and value—endeavours to close the gap between academic insight and practical production realities, providing a comprehensive reference for future studies and day-to-day operations in these highly creative industries. By dividing more complex tasks into smaller, trackable units and ensuring an approach that welcomes emergent ideas without compromising project structure, the model fosters synergy among different departments. It also emphasises continuous learning, adaptation, and an ongoing alignment of artistic goals with resource considerations (Honthaner, 2010: p.84).

Critically, the framework also addresses an environment that must embrace technology yet keep artistic control. Enhanced tracking, scheduling, and leadership training are envisioned as cornerstones, ensuring teams remain at the cutting edge of innovation without letting new tools overshadow artistic integrity. As projects grow more complex and technologically sophisticated, a well-grounded process model ensures consistency, helps avoid production chaos, and preserves a distinctive creative spark that resonates with audiences in a saturated global market.

By exploring governance strategies suitable for these iterative, collaborative projects, this work points to practical gains in how to systematically track progress and handle inevitable changes, thereby balancing freedom with accountability. It challenges conventional process-control paradigms, offering novel frameworks that consider autonomy, leadership nuance, and intangible creative outputs. The result is a renewed perspective on project management that can help unify different skill sets under a single creative impetus while strictly managing budgets and schedules for timely and coherent delivery (Lampel *et al.*, 2000; Wasko and Erickson, 2009).

From an academic standpoint, the dissertation underscores the value of an interdisciplinary lens, merging business management, creativity studies, and non-linear process management. This integrated perspective reaches beyond typical siloed analyses, demonstrating how multiple fields' theories can interconnect to address pressing, real-world challenges in the Screen Industries. Consequently, it enriches the literature on operational phases and process

methodologies tailored to creative tasks—particularly intangible, IP-driven outputs that have limited predictability.

### 1.3.6. Relevance to Managers and Practitioners

In practice, managers and practitioners in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and gaming stand to benefit from "actionable strategies" informed by rigorous, evidence-based research. By championing an interdisciplinary mode that weaves together business, creativity, and agile project management, the study lays out a realistic depiction of the sector's challenges and opportunities, serving as a blueprint for adapting management theory to real-world demands. Positioned on the pillars of leadership, process, and value, its proposed framework is both nuanced and implementable—crafted to stimulate innovation, efficiency, resource optimisation, and a more satisfied workforce, all of which yield tangible benefits for production companies and creative teams alike.

Ultimately, the significance of this research lies in its potential to reconcile process management principles with the free-flowing energy of creative endeavours across these five screen-based sectors. It addresses vital gaps in existing literature while offering practical solutions for practitioners who must navigate chaotic or fast-changing project landscapes. Its promise is to shift perceptions of process management from a creative constraint to a helpful backbone supporting artistry, operational agility, and, as Porter (1985) reiterates, sustainable competitive advantage in a complex and highly competitive global domain.

## 1.4. Research Questions

The core values of this research revolve around its primary objective—creating a process management framework designed specifically for organisations and individuals working within the Screen Industries. Questions and methods applied to this research study have been designed to guide the investigation into developing this framework and are not just mere statements of intent but are intricately woven into the fabric of this research, each serving a specific purpose and addressing a particular aspect of the complex tapestry that is process management in the Screen Industries. Focus is given to processes exploring how operational effectiveness (OE) within multifaceted processes can be managed more efficiently, leading to a competitive

advantage (CA) highlighting the significance of leadership, process, and value throughout creative content productions.

The following research questions frame the study:

1. **How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?**

   Rationale: A key dimension of this question is the variation in how different countries and institutions officially define or classify the Screen Industries. For example, the UK's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) enumerates a specific set of screen-based fields, whereas global bodies like UNESCO or WIPO can adopt broader or narrower criteria for creative content. These disparities reflect diverse cultural and policy environments, and they complicate efforts to formulate a unified taxonomy of screen media. By exploring international frameworks side by side, the study seeks to identify where shared core elements emerge and where local nuances necessitate more context-specific process management solutions. Although the term "Screen Industries" frequently encompasses film, television, and digital media (DCMS, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2013), it is often used interchangeably with broader categories like the "creative industries" and "cultural industries" (Flew and Cunningham, 2010; UNESCO, 2016). While there is no inherent issue in doing so, it can dilute the specific focus on screen-based outputs and broaden the scope in ways that may not serve the objectives of this study. Clarifying which sectors are surveyed, explored, and considered under the Screen Industries—distinct from other creative or cultural fields—therefore becomes essential to maintain precision and consistency. At the same time, creativity is integral to these sectors, as it involves iterative, collaborative processes that demand specialised managerial approaches to balance innovation and operational needs (Sawyer, 2012; Bilton, 2010). Defining and emphasising creativity in this context ensures the study adequately addresses the unique challenges and value of screen-based work.

Approach: To achieve this clarity, the study undertakes a systematic review of existing literature, drawing on both academic sources and broader public documentation, including governmental reports related to the creative, cultural, and media industries (Florida, 2002, 2003; Mamer, 2005; Honthaner, 2010). By evaluating these classifications, a consolidated perspective emerges on which specific sectors constitute the Screen Industries. This process enables a unified distinction between the Screen Industries and broader creative or cultural labels, ensuring the scope remains focused on film, television, and digital media. In parallel, the study adopts key definitions of creativity (Sawyer, 2012; Bilton, 2010) to highlight how leadership, process, and resource management must be adapted to the inherently non-linear and collaborative nature of these sectors. Creativity, a core component of this study, is examined in detail in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, where its role in leadership, process management, and innovation within the Screen Industries is critically analysed.

2. **How is *value* conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?**

Rationale: Crucially, interpreting value in the Screen Industries also requires careful attention to intangible factors such as brand equity, long-term franchise potential, cultural resonance, and audience loyalty. Unlike purely transactional markets, where profitability is measured principally in near-term returns, creative works may accrue cultural or brand significance over extended periods. Examining how such intangible benefits influence scheduling, budgeting, and production choices provides an expanded view of "value," going beyond immediate revenues to consider broader strategic aims across film, television, and interactive platforms. Understanding how "value" is conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries is essential for examining the current landscape of process management frameworks. To develop something new and relevant, one must first identify how value—whether creative, financial, or cultural—shapes the phases of production and influences project outcomes. By revealing how existing theories and practices address (or fail to address) these facets of value, this research clarifies the specific limitations of current frameworks in screen-based contexts. Michael Porter's

(1985) Value Chain provides a foundational framework for analysing value creation through sequential business processes, its application to the Screen Industries requires adaptation to reflect the iterative, intangible, and audience-driven nature of value. In particular, the traditional emphasis on internal efficiencies and near-term profitability must be expanded to accommodate long-term franchise potential, cultural significance, and external ecosystem influences, which shape production phases and strategic decision-making in creative industries. Recognising these shortcomings forms the foundation for constructing a more robust, tailored approach aligned with the unique demands of the industry.

Approach: To address this question the study adopts a mixed methods approach. It begins with a thorough review of literature defining value in the Screen Industries, offering a theoretical baseline. Empirical inquiry then proceeds through interviews and surveys, capturing both qualitative and quantitative perspectives on how practitioners perceive and manage value across different production phases. By integrating these theoretical and practical insights, the research identifies where existing frameworks succeed or fall short, paving the way for a more effective and context-specific process management model tailored to the Screen Industries.

3. **What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?**

Rationale: There remains limited empirical consensus on how leaders in these sectors adapt or hybridise multiple leadership styles to meet the unpredictable demands of creative production. While some teams thrive under vision-centric approaches that unleash maximal artistic autonomy, others require more structured, transaction-based oversight—particularly where budgets or technological complexities constrain progress. Most existing frameworks do not thoroughly examine the fluid shifts in leadership strategies needed across varying phases of screen-based projects. By gathering insights from multiple roles and industry sub-sectors, this research examines the balance between inspirational leadership and operational discipline, clarifying how each may support or

hinder creative outcomes. This question delves into the unique challenges the Screen Industries face in managing and leading creative people and creative processes. By identifying these challenges, the research tailors the new framework to be more relevant and effective, making it theoretically sound and practically applicable.

Approach: First, a systematic review of literature encompassing classical and contemporary literature is conducted. Surveys offer quantitative input, but qualitative methods are predominantly used to explore this question. Interviews with various industry professionals from many roles and sectors within the Screen Industries provide a spectrum of perspectives. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the challenges from multiple perspectives within the industry and provides a deeper appreciation of their adaptability and limitations.

4. **Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?**

Rationale: This question is the cornerstone of the research, focusing on developing a new process management framework specifically designed for process management in the Screen Industries that drives operational effectiveness (OE) and leads to competitive advantage (CA). It is based on the premise that the Screen Industries require a specialised approach to process management due to their complexities and creative and collaborative nature. This framework addresses the identified challenges and incorporates insights from existing theories, making it a robust tool for industry practitioners.

Approach: This framework is developed through an iterative process, synthesising information from the literature review, qualitative insights, and quantitative data. This multifaceted approach ensures that the framework is grounded in theory, informed by industry practice, and validated through empirical data, with a focus on three-stage process building, and leadership, process, and value, that form the three core pillars of the framework.

The detailed objectives and questions outlined in this research address the complex and multifaceted nature of process management in the Screen Industries. They represent a thoughtful and systematic approach to unravelling the intricacies of this field and aim to contribute significant theoretical and practical advancement to the disciplines of creative leadership and process management while adding valuable knowledge to the creative sectors that predominantly focus on creative outputs rather than processes and management. Through a methodical exploration of these objectives and questions, this research seeks to offer a framework that is academically rigorous, highly relevant, and applicable to professionals within the Screen Industries sectors. Each of these objectives and questions is intrinsically linked to the broader goals of this research, which are to enhance the understanding of process management in the Screen Industries and provide a practical tool for industry practitioners. They have been designed to build upon each other, with each objective and question leading seamlessly into the next, ensuring a comprehensive and structured approach to the research.

## 1.5. Methodology Overview

This investigation aims to explore how operational effectiveness (OE) within the processes of the international Screen Industries can be managed more efficiently, leading to a competitive advantage (CA) for organisations working with intellectual property (IP) and creative content creation. Leadership, process, and value will give direction in the form of core pillars, and complex iterative processes (tasks) can be broken into elements that include further details to ensure an understanding of complex challenges while providing opportunities for reporting and progression updates. A mixed-methods approach to research design, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques, is pivotal in ensuring a comprehensive understanding of complex research problems (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). This approach leverages the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, where qualitative methods provide depth and context to the study, and quantitative methods contribute breadth and generalizability. Such a strategy is particularly beneficial when exploring issues at the intersections of business, management, and creativity—fields that demand a nuanced understanding of broad trends and individual experiences. Qualitative research is indispensable for delving deeply into intricate phenomena. It facilitates an extensive examination of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges practitioners encounter within the Screen Industries.

This method will involve conducting detailed interviews with industry professionals across various sectors, roles, and departments, focusing on their experiences with process management, their challenges, and their perspectives on what constitutes effective practices. The selection criteria should prioritise diversity in perspectives by considering various dimensions such as role in the industry, experience level, and demographic characteristics. This approach will ensure that the participants can provide in-depth insights relevant to the research questions being explored. The process of thematic analysis (TA) will be employed to analyse the data from these interviews. The depth provided by this qualitative inquiry is crucial for understanding the subtleties and complexities that quantitative data alone might not reveal. Complementing the qualitative approach, quantitative research methods will be employed to test hypotheses and examine the relationships between various variables. To achieve this, surveys will be administered to a larger group of industry professionals. Using a mixed-methods approach in this research underscores the commitment to a thorough and nuanced exploration of the research problem. By meticulously integrating qualitative and quantitative data, the study can address the immediate research questions and contribute to a broader understanding of how business, management, and creativity intersect and interact within the global landscape of the Screen Industries. Conversely, the quantitative data will support and extend the findings from the qualitative research, providing a more robust basis for conclusions and recommendations. The choice of this research design reflects a deliberate effort to capture the full spectrum of experiences and opinions from industry professionals worldwide, thereby enhancing the validity and applicability of the research outcomes. Furthermore, the global scope of the data collection, encompassing various geographic and distribution territories, adds another layer of complexity and relevance to the study. It ensures that the findings reflect a wide range of cultural, economic, and operational contexts, making the conclusions more comprehensive and universally applicable. This worldwide perspective is critical within the Screen Industries, where global trends and local specifics often intersect and influence each other profoundly.

Moreover, each of the four research questions is systematically addressed through distinct strands of this mixed-methods approach. Research Question 1 is examined through a comprehensive review of the literature, establishing how the Screen Industries are categorised internationally and identifying the core operational factors that define them. Qualitative

interviews will provide nuanced insights into the interplay between intangible and tangible value metrics (Research Question 2) and, alongside quantitative surveys, will explore the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries (Research Question 3). Quantitative surveys will also assess whether a process management framework can be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and provide a competitive advantage (Research Question 4). This structured approach ensures that the final analysis effectively links empirical findings to the study's core inquiries.

## 1.6. Process Management Framework

The exploration of process management frameworks tailored for the Screen Industries demands a careful synthesis of diverse academic disciplines due to the lack of explicitly created frameworks for these sectors and their reliance on borrowing existing methodologies (Agyei, 2015; Cottmeyer, 2010; Richet, 2013; Wysocki, 2009). This pursuit bridges the conventional process management principles and their application within the dynamic, non-linear, and highly innovative realm of screen production. This thesis undertakes the ambitious task of charting the evolution of process management methodologies, transitioning from traditional models (Agyei, 2015; PMI, 2017, 2021) that emphasise proficiency and normalisation of processes to contemporary models (Kahneman *et al.*, 2021; Moul, 2005; Wysocki, 2009) that prioritise responsiveness, invention, and flexibility. It must then delve deeper into alternative approaches (Ressler and Thompson, 2013; GoRowe.com, 2014) on the periphery of classical and modern systems, exploring unorthodox tactics recognised as catalysts for success in current business landscapes.

This research is set against a backdrop where the Screen Industries stand out for their creative complexities and incessant demand for innovation. The Screen Industries are marked by projects that are unique, transient, and influenced by a myriad of unpredictable factors, including creative vision, talent availability, and market demands (Brewka, 2008; Moul, 2005). Hence, there is a pressing need for a process management framework that not only understands but also enhances the operational effectiveness of these industries. To address this gap, the proposed structure, entitled the SERPENT Framework, integrates established theories from business management, organisational behaviour, and operations management, adapting them to fit the peculiarities of

screen production. This adaptation involves shifting from focusing on competence and standardisation to valuing agility and creative problem-solving using leadership, process, and value as defining pillars to motivate the creation of a framework that pushes competitive advantage (CA) through operational effectiveness (OE). The framework must advocate for a process management approach that accommodates the non-linear nature of creative work, allowing for flexibility in planning and execution (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997), which is essential in a sector where project outcomes are highly uncertain (see "Nobody knows anything" from Goldman, 1983) and innovation is paramount to success.

Research into this new framework will highlight how traditional process management models, which typically aim for cost reduction and efficiency, can be re-envisioned to support the creative processes inherent in the Screen Industries. For instance, while lean manufacturing techniques (Datta and Roy, 2010) might optimise resource use in an industrial setting, a modified version of these techniques could help manage creative projects where resources—be they human creativity or physical production assets—are not so easily quantifiable or replaceable. The framework will also explore the role of technology in reshaping production processes within the Screen Industries. In recent years, digital transformation has altered the landscape of many creative sectors, enabling new forms of content creation, distribution, and monetisation (see Axon, 2020; Farris, 2020, for details on the latest video game technology combined with virtual production for film and television). Digital tools and platforms need further consideration in this framework due to their ability to integrate into process management practices, enhancing flexibility and responsiveness and enabling organisations to better respond to changing market conditions and consumer preferences. In a sector driven by innovation and rapid change, managing and capitalising on creativity is a significant asset. The process management framework developed through this research must provide Screen Industry practitioners with a strategic tool that enhances their ability to launch and manage creative projects that resonate with audiences and succeed in the global media and entertainment market.

Central to the framework is the concept of a hybrid methodology/approach, which blends various management practices to cater to the specific needs of the Screen Industries, recognised by Ng *et al.* (2020) and Wysocki (2009) as a technique that could lead to improved management practices.

This hybrid approach should not be just a mere combination of methods but a thoughtful integration that considers the strengths and limitations of each technique. For instance, the framework might integrate the rigorous scope management of Waterfall methodologies (PMI, 2017, 2018, 2021) with the iterative processes of agile frameworks (Bergmann and Karwowski, 2019; Levitt, 2011; Wysocki, 2009) to create a planned and responsive structure.

An iterative nature applied to the framework would ensure that it evolves based on continuous feedback and learning, incorporating mechanisms for regular review and adjustment, not just at the end of each project but at various stages throughout the project lifecycle. This would allow for real-time adjustments, which are crucial in sectors where project scopes can evolve rapidly and unpredictably due to creative developments or external factors like technological advancements or market trends. Governance and monitoring are integral components of management techniques and must be applied to all aspects of the framework. Effective governance will ensure that each project aligns with broader organisational goals and complies with industry regulations. At the same time, rigorous monitoring will allow for tracking project progress against set benchmarks and objectives. These processes will be vital in controlling projects and ensuring they are completed on time, within budget, and to the desired quality standards. While these methods should effectively track, monitor, and control processes in ways that enhance autonomy and flexibility for creative endeavours, leadership within this framework should not solely focus on overseeing project execution but also foster a culture of innovation and creativity

Leaders in the Screen Industries need to balance operational efficiency with creative freedom, making decisions that enhance creative outcomes while ensuring project viability and sustainability. This requires a deep understanding of the industries' creative and business aspects and the ability to mediate between various stakeholders with often diverging interests. Flexibility and adaptability are core features of the framework, acknowledging the highly dynamic and competitive environment that requires adaptability to various project sizes and types, capable of scaling up for large, complex productions or scaling down for smaller, independent projects. Additionally, customisation according to specific project demands or unique creative visions must be facilitated, ensuring that the management structure supports rather than constrains the

creative process. Finally, the framework emphasises the importance of post-project reviews and learning. Each project is an opportunity to gather insights and improve future practices. Post-project evaluations focus on assessing both successes and failures to continuously refine the framework based on practical outcomes (Ilyas, Hassan, and Ilyas, 2014). This improves management practices over time and contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of project and process management for the Screen Industries. In summary, the proposed framework needs to be a meticulously crafted tool designed to guide the management of film and media projects. Its essence must draw from a rich tapestry of theories and practices, ensuring it is grounded in academic research and attuned to the realities of practical, real-world productions. By integrating diverse methodologies and emphasising continuous improvement, the framework should provide a comprehensive, adaptable, and effective management solution tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities of managing creativity within a structured environment.

The SERPENT Framework is designed to address creative iteration, intangible value, and cross-department collaboration in ways that differ substantially from standard methodologies like Waterfall or purely agile processes. By embedding milestones for creative ideation and iterative re-shoots or design loops, the framework aims to track both tangible progress (budgets, timelines) and intangible creative arcs (concept exploration, audience feedback). This integrated model could simultaneously improve short-term project performance and foster a durable competitive advantage by guiding how screen-based organisations harness creative momentum for market impact.

## 1.7. Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis is designed to provide a coherent and comprehensive exploration of the development of a theoretical process management framework tailored for the Screen Industries. Each chapter builds upon the previous one, creating a logical progression that guides the reader from the initial conceptualisation of the research problem to the final presentation of the research findings and the developed framework. The thesis is divided into six chapters, each serving a distinct purpose in the research narrative.

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

This first chapter, the one you are currently reading, opens the stage for the entire research. It introduces the topic and background from the author's perspective, aiming to engage readers and clarify what the research entails and why it is crucial. The chapter outlines the research problem, highlights the significance of the study, announces the research questions and objectives, offers an overview of the methodology, and provides a roadmap for the thesis.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Crucial for situating the research within the existing body of knowledge, the second Chapter involves a critical analysis of relevant literature, identifying gaps the study aims to fill. Covering a range of topics, including definitions, value chain, leadership, management, traditional and contemporary process management theories, creativity in organisations, team dynamics theories, and previous studies on the Screen Industries and other creative industries, the literature review provides the theoretical and empirical background for the study, justifying the research objectives and questions. It demonstrates the research's alignment with, and divergence from, existing studies, establishing its uniqueness and necessity.

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

Vital for validating the research design, an explanation, justification, and guide to conducting the chosen methodological approach for this study is discussed in Chapter 3. An in-depth discussion of the mixed-methods research design, sampling strategies, data collection methods—including semi-structured interviews and surveys—and data analysis techniques, with ethical considerations and limitations of the chosen methodologies, are addressed, providing transparency and allowing readers to assess the rigour and reliability of the research process.

**Chapter 4: Data Findings**

The presentation of the data collection and analysed results provides an in-depth breakdown of examined recorded facts and forms the origin for developing the theoretical

process management framework explicitly created for the Screen Industries. Quantitative and qualitative data are presented here, along with detailed integrated data, including statistical analysis and themes from surveys and interviews, all referencing existing literature. By presenting and interpreting the research data, this chapter forms the empirical core of the thesis, bridging the gap between theory and practice and offering insights into the real-world application of process management in the Screen Industries.

**Chapter 5: Process Management Framework**

Synthesises the findings from the previous chapters, integrating theoretical and empirical insights, the penultimate chapter is where the research culminates in the development of the new theoretical process management framework. It presents the proposed framework in detail, explaining its components, how it draws from the research and existing frameworks, addressing the identified challenges, and its applicability to the sectors of the Screen Industries. This chapter represents the pinnacle of the thesis, showcasing the original contribution of the research to the academic and practical fields whilst providing a tangible outcome that fulfils the study's primary objective.

**Chapter 6: Conclusion**

The final chapter concludes the thesis by summarising the key findings, discussing the research implications, and areas for future study. It also offers recommendations for industry practitioners and future research and critically reflects on the research process and outcomes, providing a launching point for further inquiry and application.

Each chapter in this thesis is interconnected, forming a coherent and logical narrative. The structure is designed to gradually build upon each research component, ensuring that each chapter contributes to the overarching research goals. The progression from a broad exploration of existing literature to the specific development of a new process management framework illustrates a deep and thorough investigation of the research problem. Additional elements of this thesis include a full appendix, which contains details pertaining to this thesis, areas with lists of tables and figures, a declaration and acknowledgements section, a table of contents, an abstract, a title page, and an index of commonly used terminology. The entire structure of this thesis and

additional pages is thoughtfully designed to guide the reader through a comprehensive journey from identifying a research gap to presenting a novel solution.

## 1.8. Summary

In the contemporary business landscape, industries characterised by high levels of creativity and innovation, such as the Screen Industries, face unique challenges in process management. These challenges arise from the dynamic, creative, and iterative nature of projects within these sectors, which differ markedly from the predictable and linear environments of more traditional industries. There is a significant need for a process management framework that integrates creative workflows with operational efficiency, accommodating the fluidity and complexity of production phases.

Traditional management approaches often fall short in supporting the dynamic and collaborative nature of creative projects in the Screen Industries. Conventional leadership practices may not fully address the unique needs of diverse production teams, which require flexible and adaptive leadership to manage creativity and innovation effectively (Irving and Rea, 2015). This gap highlights the need for research into leadership methodologies that can enhance collaboration, communication, and responsiveness within creative environments.

Moreover, prevailing process methodologies do not always account for how the value chain in the Screen Industries influences both production efficiency and creative differentiation, impacting final project outcomes. According to Porter (1985), a well-structured value chain enhances competitive advantage by optimising both primary production activities and supporting functions. Effective value management within the Screen Industries entails balancing creative objectives with logistical constraints to ensure that outputs resonate with audiences while remaining on schedule and within budget (Jones and Smith, 2020). However, current frameworks often fall short in clarifying how to optimise value creation across multiple production stages—both to elevate creative quality and to reinforce operational effectiveness (OE). In response, this study integrates leadership, process, and value as core pillars to strengthen OE as a foundation for sustainable competitive advantage (CA). By deconstructing complex production workflows into optimised value-generating activities, this approach aligns

with the strategic imperatives of value chain management, shedding light on and reducing the intricacies of creative processes.

Addressing these shortcomings requires constructing a tailored process management framework that harmonises leadership, process, and value. Designed specifically for the Screen Industries, such a framework must provide the structure and efficiency needed for successful project completion while preserving the creative freedom essential for genuine innovation. Drawing on the synthesis of prior research and direct industry experience, this thesis proposes a bespoke process management model—referred to as the SERPENT Framework—that is structured around leadership, process, and value. Its central challenge involves facilitating creative processes without allowing rigid oversight to stifle originality, thus ensuring that teams can achieve both high quality and efficiency.

To tackle these challenges, the research adopts a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, merging qualitative perspectives from sector professionals with quantitative data analysis to inform the SERPENT Framework's design and refinement. By anchoring itself in both traditional process management theories and recent insights from creative industries, this thesis endeavours to construct a model that is practically applicable yet theoretically informed. Throughout the study, empirical examination—both before and after implementing preliminary aspects of the framework—will gauge its effects on operational effectiveness and project success. This iterative cycle of gathering data, refining the model, and integrating feedback from practitioners ensures that the final framework remains grounded in the real-world demands of the Screen Industries.

Ultimately, the research also contributes to broader theoretical discussions about the feasibility of aligning creativity with operational structure. Conventional notions often treat process management as purely a vehicle for control and standardisation; here, an alternative vision emerges—one that promotes flexible, adaptive frameworks acknowledging the vital role of creativity and innovation. Positioned at the intersection of process management, creative industries scholarship, and organisational behaviour, the study not only strives to close existing

gaps but also re-examines conventional management theories under the rigorous lens of the Screen Industries' practical realities.

By forging a new process management framework, this research makes innovation, creativity, and efficiency indispensable drivers of success for individual projects, as well as for the sustainability and expansion of the industries at large. Its potential impact extends globally, given the increasingly international scope of screen production. Consequently, the findings and subsequent theoretical model may influence production practices and strategic thinking worldwide—encouraging more agile, comprehensive management methods better suited to the evolving complexities of film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video game development.

# 2. Literature Review

## 2.1. Aim, Scope, Context, and Relevance

This research explicitly explores how creating a theoretical process management framework based upon the three pillars of leadership, process, and value, tailored to the requirements and challenges within the Screen Industries, can help obtain operational effectiveness (OE), leading to competitive advantage (CA). Many facets are needed to cover all aspects of such a complex industry, and this analysis revolves around four research questions that frame the study:

1. How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?
2. How is value conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?
3. What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?
4. Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?

Exploration in this chapter is derived from secondary research in the form of the appraisal of existing literature. This literature has been absorbed and scrutinised to gain a comprehensive overview and an integrated knowledge base in which precise, essential, and critical data is gathered. Due to the complexity of this research, areas of interest relevant to this study are broad and diverse. These secondary sources offer a comprehensive perspective on topics, are relatively accessible, and form the basis for resolving inaccuracies by comparative studies of other literature and any collected primary research data. However, it must be noted that these secondary sources may contain inaccuracies, can be affected by author bias, and require effort in order to research. Content analysis (see Krippendorff, 1980) has been used to make replicable and valid inferences from data with critical meanings, and quotes from literature have been selected and stored for reference. Additional records address literature developments relevant to historical and current industry progressions linking to the research hypothesis. Data collected during this phase includes both quantitative and qualitative information that has been compared

to create detailed results that are both factual and relevant, giving the research a solid starting point for further development.

Motivated by more than twenty years of experience across various sectors of the Screen Industries internationally, this author developed the ability to apply skills learned in one sector directly to another. This experience also highlighted the challenges, core competencies, and managerial requirements involved in developing successful projects, which are often overlooked in external evaluations. It emphasised the importance of leadership, process, and value, particularly in times of uncertainty, where decision-making was shaped by significant unpredictability. In such contexts, set rules and operational structures were often borrowed from existing management theories originally developed for other industries, such as manufacturing or software development, despite their limitations in addressing the complexities of creative production (Agyei, 2015; Cottmeyer, 2010; Richet, 2013; Wysocki, 2009). These insights led to research grounded in practical experience, reinforced by a journal-published MBA thesis written by this author, which examined project and people management techniques for the creative industries (Jones, 2015) and identified key gaps in the existing knowledge base. Building on this foundation, the systems explored were subsequently applied to real-world productions and adapted throughout a continuing career, ultimately bringing this research to realisation.

With this background in mind, it is essential that the understanding of the intricacies of the Screen Industries are addressed before reviewing literature that is valuable to the specificities of this research, and due to the endeavours of organisations within this industry—which primarily include the use of Intellectual Property (IP) that is harnessed through the output of creative practices for the screen in the national and international market—the unique characteristics associated with work in these sectors must not be overlooked.

The first film, or moving pictures, to ever be shown to paying customers took place in Paris, France, where the Lumière brother's fifty-second film, *Arrival of the Train in La Ciotat Station*, caused viewers to flee from their seats from an oncoming steam engine shown on-screen. This showing took place in 1895, and since then, the progression of screen media has been rapid and fuelled by many technological advancements. It has been argued that the Screen Industries have

evolved in “somewhat peculiar ways” through “innovation, competition, and collusion” (Moul, 2005: p.2), including transformations to the internal relations of production as well as patterns of consumption, distribution, and supply globally (Pareja-Eastaway, 2016: p.38).

Each sector embraces a flexible, modular structure, ranging from independent freelancers and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at one extreme to some of the world’s largest corporations at the other. This creates a “missing middle” in organisational structures—a phenomenon possibly reflecting the pursuit of massive economies of scale (Brewka, 2008: p.62). In fact, “one of the most transformative global economic trends” for the Screen Industries has been the “prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs”, with 63% of surveyed organisations using outsourced or contracted staff (PMI, 2018: p.18).

However, the structural flexibility also introduces significant challenges and poses unique challenges tied to the inherent unpredictability of creative production (Caves, 2002; Tschang, 2007). These unique challenges have forced “parallels in industrial structure between videogame development and the development of feature films”, with similar structures taking place in scripted television development, where modular team arrangements and shifting project demands mirror those in film and gaming (Miles and Green, 2008: p.20).

Bealing and Krieble (2017) recognise the high degree to which film and television, specifically post-production and digital gaming, are similar (p.2) and even report a high movement of skilled professionals within and between those sectors. They elaborate on this identification by clarifying that there are overlapping activities between sectors, primarily within film and television production, where professionals tend to engage in project-specific contractual obligations rather than permanent employment (p.35). Bealing and Krieble (2017: p.35) also comment that there are clear overlaps of knowledge within all sectors of the Screen Industries, which is confirmed by Warhurst (2010: p.226) and expanded by Cohendet and Simon (2007), who state that it involves “a complex mix of technology, art and interactive storytelling” (p.587), combining specialists from all areas of creativity. All of these statements have been proven more recently with motion capture technology that has been used in visual effects (VFX) to create lifelike motion for video games, film, and television (Mocaplab, 2024; Target3D, 2023; Vicon,

2021), with the reliance on the exact same software, something which is common knowledge within all Screen Industries' sectors (Adobe, 2021; Autodesk, 2022; Unreal Engine, 2023). Even more recently, high-end television (HETV) uses technology appropriated directly from the videogame sector to construct spectacularly believable worlds while filming on live-action sound stages. This has been evident within Disney's incredibly popular *The Mandalorian*, where the team at Industrial Light and Magic (ILM) used "ground-breaking virtual production methodology: shooting the series on a stage surrounded by massive LED walls displaying dynamic digital sets, with the ability to react to and manipulate this digital content in real-time during live production" by using the Unreal videogame engine (Axon, 2020; Farris, 2020; Gartenberg, 2020).

This blending of technologies differs from interactive television, which bases itself on physical interactions with the media through choices, decisions, and general input. We could be fooled by looking over contemporary press, electronic media, and journals that even interactive television is a new phenomenon, yet adding interaction to television dates as far back as the television itself (Carey, 1996; Jensen, 2008), showing that this cross-contamination of knowledge and skills between sectors is not new. Knowledge is considered an essential resource in any organisation (Grant, 1996), and it can be believed to be at the centre of successful business (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Drucker, 1998). Resource-based view (RBV) is a theory that explains knowledge as a resource and how knowledge can be produced within a company (Wernerfelt, 1984). It is concluded that even with multi-disciplinary departments, the ability to analyse and share knowledge is vital, primarily when separate multi-disciplined departments rely upon each other to drive innovation and deliver results as they do in the Screen Industries.

### 2.1.1. Innovation, Creativity, and Evolving Management Gaps

There are many nuances and complexities that govern the Screen Industries, with creativity and innovation taking a central focus within the production of commercial outputs. Innovation is seen as fundamental to the Screen Industries, where it is connected with strategy-driven shifts in business operations, revenue models, and in a firm's outputs (product innovation), and business practices, including new management methodologies (process innovation), which increases efficiency or quality of projects/productions (Bealing and Krieble, 2017: p.16; Brewka, 2008:

p.09; Cunningham, 2013, 2018; Majdúchová and Kmety Barteková, 2020: p.02; Pareja-Eastway, 2016; amongst others). Yet, even with innovation taking such an essential position within these sectors, "there is a lack of scholarship around their management, and specifically around the innovation process" itself (Pick *et al.*, 2015: p.757; Townley, Beech, and McKinlay, 2009: p.941). Part of what this research covers is to address this gap in scholarship and explore the needs towards identifying a critical balance between creativity and efficiency and a need for flexible yet structured workflows, with the importance of stakeholder management in an industry characterised by high uncertainty and risk.

Alongside the concept of innovation is creativity, which has been suggested to be the ultimate economic resource (Landry and Bianchini, 1995), and important studies into human creativity realised the commercial significance of firms which push the development of creativity (Florida, 2002). However, creativity itself only transforms into an economic activity when an output, either a service and/or product, can be traded and value and wealth can be returned from it (Howkins, 2001). Of course, it has been argued that all work, not just those in the creative and Screen Industries, contains creative elements, and even work that can be perceived as artistic and/or creative in entirety has aspects of routine and structure (Smith and McKinlay, 2009: p.32). Other research also positions creativity as being present at all levels of business and in disciplines that aren't necessarily deemed as a creative role or endeavour (Petrović *et al.*, 2017: p.60), and as such, we can assume that any person working within a sector of the Screen Industries, regardless of their role or discipline, can be labelled as a "creative" and will subsequently face the unique challenges in the areas of project management, creativity, and technology, that are synonymous with the Screen Industries.

There is a prevalence of cross-sector skills and the fluid exchange of technologies like motion capture and real-time engines, highlighting that the Screen Industries hinge on continuous innovation and multifaceted collaboration. To understand how these industries foster such inventive outputs under uncertainty, we must first clarify the concept of "creativity" within the broader academic discourse. The "nobody knows" principle (Goldman, 1983) further amplifies this unpredictability, prompting leaders to balance creative freedom with operational oversight.

The next section examines core scholarly definitions and theories, highlighting how creativity emerges from both individual expertise and collective processes.

### 2.1.2. Defining Creativity for the Screen Industries

The question of what constitutes "creativity" has been a longstanding subject of debate in organisational studies, cultural policy, and psychology (Amabile, 1996; Sawyer, 2012). While early theories sometimes framed creativity as the exceptional domain of lone geniuses, modern scholarship stresses the collaborative, contextual, and iterative nature of innovative work. In the Screen Industries—sectors encompassing film, television, video games, commercials, and documentaries (as defined in this study)—creative outputs often arise from large, interdisciplinary teams operating under uncertain market conditions and tight deadlines (Caves, 2002; Miles and Green, 2008). Understanding how creativity is defined and nurtured in these complex environments becomes essential to managing screen-based projects effectively.

A commonly accepted baseline in creativity research posits that creative work must be both novel and valuable (Amabile, 1996; Bilton, 2007; Sawyer, 2012). In the context of screen production, "value" may manifest as commercial success, critical acclaim, cultural resonance, or long-term audience engagement (Bilton and Cummings, 2014). Films like Blade Runner (1982), which initially underperformed at the box office but later achieved cult status, demonstrate that novelty may not always yield immediate economic returns. Conversely, a commercially prosperous but formulaic movie might be dismissed as lacking innovative flair (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). This duality underscores that creativity in screen work straddles a tension between market imperatives (short-term ROI, distribution deals) and more intangible, long-term cultural impacts (artistic influence, viewer nostalgia).

Crucially, Amabile (1996) identifies creativity as emerging from three core components: domain-relevant skills (e.g., knowledge of cinematography), creative-thinking abilities (e.g., lateral problem-solving), and intrinsic task motivation (i.e., genuine interest in the work). In a screen-production scenario, an editor's proficiency in post-production software (domain skill) intersects with the ability to conceive unconventional editing techniques (creative thinking), powered by a deep passion for storytelling (intrinsic motivation). Yet these factors alone do not

guarantee innovation if the organisational environment fails to support risk-taking or collaboration (Amabile, 1996). This leads to Sawyer's (2012) notion of creativity as a socially and iteratively produced phenomenon. Rather than a solitary epiphany, creativity is often catalysed by "group flow" (Sawyer, 2012), a collective state of immersion where team members exchange, refine, and adapt ideas in real time. In a television writers' room, for instance, narrative twists may emerge spontaneously from back-and-forth interactions as participants riff on each other's suggestions, shaped by audience feedback, time constraints, and the showrunner's overarching vision.

Such dynamics become especially important in the Screen Industries, where cross-departmental collaboration—encompassing everything from set design to final marketing—constitutes the lifeblood of production (Warhurst, 2010). Acknowledging the fundamental unpredictability managers must navigate uncertain market responses while fostering conditions conducive to innovation (Caves, 2002). In many respects, the need to balance creative exploration with operational reliability places unique pressure on leadership and managerial structures. Too much rigidity can stifle creative impulses; too little can spiral into unstructured chaos that drains budgets without yielding coherent final outputs (Bilton, 2010). Hence, creativity in the Screen Industries arises at the nexus of individual expertise, team dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and an organisational system that supports iterative risk-taking without undermining production timelines and budgets.

### 2.1.3. Bilton's "Manageable Creativity"

Chris Bilton (2010) addresses a persistent paradox in the creative industries: while many practitioners view creativity as an inherently unstructured process that thrives on spontaneity, some level of managerial oversight is necessary to bring projects to fruition. He introduces the concept of "manageable creativity," suggesting that moderate constraints and clear objectives can actually enhance creative output by providing a stable platform from which artists, writers, and technical staff can experiment (Bilton, 2007). In this view, managers in the Screen Industries must walk a fine line: impose enough structure to guide teams toward shared milestones—such as script deadlines, casting decisions, or editorial lock-offs—without regimenting every detail,

which risks suppressing the open-ended exploration that fuels true innovation (Bilton and Cummings, 2014).

Bilton's perspective aligns with the realities of film and television showrunning, wherein producers or showrunners orchestrate diverse teams (actors, cinematographers, composers) around a singular narrative vision. Here, management activities revolve around resource allocation (budgets, equipment), timetable planning (shooting schedules, editing suites), and conflict resolution. Critically, Bilton insists that the intangible "creative synergy" among collaborators can be as decisive for project success as more tangible components like camera gear or set design (Bilton, 2010). This emphasis resonates with Porter's (1985) approach to diagnosing specific value-adding activities, but Bilton extends it by showing how intangible creative processes—brainstorming sessions, iterative story revisions, collaborative mood boards—also add or subtract value along the production chain. Thus, Bilton underscores that, while tools and funding are vital, it is the structured yet flexible environment that optimizes these resources and enables screen-based projects to flourish.

### 2.1.4. Sawyer's Emphasis on "Group Flow" and Iteration

Keith Sawyer (2012) offers a complementary yet more granular look at the social, improvisational aspects of creativity, reframing it as an ongoing feedback loop among collaborators. Rather than focusing on management's balancing act, Sawyer delves into the micro-dynamics of creative groups. In a video game studio, for example, a programmer might introduce a novel physics mechanic, prompting animators to experiment with character movements, which in turn inspires narrative designers to reshape story pacing around that mechanic—a cyclical exchange that Sawyer likens to "structured improvisation" (2012, p.213). Here, an overarching framework (deadlines, design documents, or a product roadmap) provides direction, but participants also react spontaneously to the emergent ideas of their peers.

In the Screen Industries, Sawyer's model of "group flow" can illuminate how entire departments (costume design, special effects, marketing) co-create a cohesive final product. However, sustaining this flow demands trust, open communication, and iterative dialogue (Sawyer, 2012). If overly hierarchical leadership imposes abrupt decisions without consulting key creatives, the

synergy can quickly collapse into rushed deliverables or underdeveloped concepts (Townley, Beech, and McKinlay, 2009; Lemke, 2015a). Similarly, stringent scheduling or cost control measures—though essential—risk constraining experimentation and "happy accidents" (often the source of breakthrough ideas) if not handled tactfully (Amabile, 1996).

### 2.1.5. A Comparative Lens on Bilton and Sawyer

Bilton and Sawyer converge on the principle that management should act as an "enabler" rather than a rigid controller. Both authors highlight how well-coordinated autonomy can be a powerful catalyst for originality, but each emphasises different managerial dimensions. Bilton (2010) focuses on strategic structure—resource planning, milestone setting, and oversight—that gently corrals creative energies without extinguishing them. Sawyer (2012), conversely, delves into the group-level mechanisms of collaboration, underscoring how reciprocal idea-sharing fuels breakthroughs.

In practical terms, the Screen Industries frequently blend these dimensions. A showrunner or lead producer (applying Bilton's framework) establishes major deadlines, budgets, and thematic cohesion. Meanwhile, departmental teams—like visual effects or scriptwriting—embody Sawyer's model of group flow by iterating creatively within the constraints set by top-level management. The synergy emerges when moderate structure fosters a playground for iterative experimentation, aligning with Sawyer's claim that creativity thrives on interplay between planning and spontaneity (Sawyer, 2012). Yet as Townley *et al.* (2009) caution, external pressures—such as tight budgets, time limits, or a domineering executive—can threaten to erode these ideals, triggering friction or superficial outputs.

Consequently, practitioners in the Screen Industries must continually negotiate how much "slack" or autonomy to grant teams, ensuring that risk-taking does not devolve into chaos. Budget constraints, for instance, might motivate more efficient or creative solutions, echoing Bilton's notion that mild pressures can enhance focus (Bilton and Cummings, 2014). However, if managers fail to invite collaborative input or trust team judgments, Sawyer's concept of group flow dissipates. Ultimately, Bilton's manageable creativity and Sawyer's group flow form complementary pillars for understanding how screen-based projects can simultaneously harness

creativity and maintain operational coherence. This dual perspective sets the stage for a leadership approach that accommodates iterative discovery while meeting the organisational imperatives of budget control, schedule management, and audience satisfaction.

### 2.1.6. Connecting Theory to Practice

While Bilton's and Sawyer's frameworks offer insight into how creative synergy unfolds, it is equally important to consider who participates in these processes. The Screen Industries employ a unique and varied workforce that can be defined as "diverse skilled and specialised workers, each bringing personal tastes with regard to the quality or configuration of the product" and their individual contributions (Caves, 2002: p.5). This vast array of personnel includes, but is not limited to, artists, actors, animators, designers, technical craft workers, riggers, sound engineers, composers, lighting specialists, quality assurance, producers, directors, accountants, distributors, media outlets, executives, owners, and even agents, managers, and attorneys acting on behalf of their clients. The situations in which these workforces operate vary considerably according to the sector; moreover, the processes in which they engage may be visible or invisible to the end consumers and/or audience (Masterclass, 2021; Miles and Green, 2008; Pratt, 2004; Townley and Beech, 2010).

This diversity heightens the need for robust process management that accounts for the wide range of roles and competencies in production. Managers must develop frameworks that support creativity across multiple departments while ensuring organisational goals—such as profitability, timeliness, and brand consistency—are met (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). The rapid proliferation of technologies and the fluid movement of talent between sectors (Bealing and Krieble, 2017) only compound these challenges, reinforcing calls for a structured yet adaptive approach to project oversight.

Addressing these complexities is part of the rationale behind the present research, which seeks to identify ways to enable operational effectiveness (OE) leading to competitive advantage (CA). Traditional process management frameworks, while successful in linear or more predictable contexts, often falter amidst the dynamic and multifaceted nature of screen-based productions. A model that integrates Bilton's "manageable creativity," Sawyer's group flow, and thorough

process oversight must cater to a large, project-specific workforce whose contributions can vary at each production phase. This emphasis on bridging creative freedom with structured resource management underpins the study's focus on developing a tailored process management framework for the Screen Industries.

### 2.1.7. Intellectual Property (IP) as a Core Business Driver

Although the final product delivered by those in the Screen Industries may diversify, the core business value is driven by intellectual property (IP). An early study by John Howkins (2001) highlighted the economic importance of intellectual property (IP) and intellectual property rights (IPR), underscoring how they play a prominent role in the monetary value of screen productions. This perspective aligns with the rationale od the present research, which focuses on processes that yield successful outputs while adopting a flexible approach to the type of deliverable produced, given the diversification of IP-related outputs. IPs and IPRs are widely recognised as key drivers for innovation and a tool for capitalising on the outputs of the film, television, and videogame sectors (Brewka, 2008: p.7, p.62; Miles and Green, 2008).

Most operating in these arenas "consider themselves to be service businesses" (Majdúchová and Kmety Barteková, 2020: p.2) integrating art, culture, business, and technology, using "cycles of creation, production, and distribution of goods and services" worldwide that use IP and IPRs (the licensing of creative assets) as both primary input and output (Brewka, 2008: p.28). Various academic findings reinforce the argument that IPs serve as a significant backbone for content creation in film and television, while Gillian Doyle (2017: p.285) indicates that effective management and exploitation of IPRs can strongly influence commercial success and sustainability within these sectors. This level of complexity often necessitates contractual agreements at all stages of the value chain, encompassing not only staff and collaborators but, at times, even the audience's engagement with the content.

According to Caves (2002), the peculiarities of creative work—from multi-layered IP claims and copyrights to variable work deliveries—render contracts and processes in these industries markedly different from those found in more predictable economic sectors. Such industry-specific nuances further justify the call for tailored process management frameworks. It is

therefore crucial to balance creative freedom and innovation with the protection and monetisation of intellectual assets. This balance ensures that while new ideas and novel approaches flourish, they remain secure and, ideally, profitable. Within this environment, IP underpins not merely legal and financial structures but forms part of the essential creative fabric of the Screen Industries, guiding how ideas are conceived, developed, licensed, and ultimately consumed.

### 2.1.8. Technological Drivers and Digital Transformation

Beyond IP, technology in its various forms—including the internet, cloud-based computing, and mobile applications—plays a critical role in facilitating content production, global collaboration, and business model innovation (Brewka, 2008; Spieth *et al.*, 2014; Visnjic *et al.*, 2016). Despite the apparent synergies, the digital transformation of business models in these sectors remains poorly understood, often due to the multifaceted nature of integrating new technologies with existing production pipelines (Ng *et al.*, 2020; Perumal and Woods, 2007). These technological evolutions have nonetheless yielded positive effects on Screen Industries' business operations, presenting fresh revenue streams and enhanced mechanisms for knowledge-sharing, essential for orchestrating large-scale productions.

All businesses operating within film, television, and interactive media can be regarded as technology-intensive and project-based, operating with a service-oriented ethos (Gareis, 2003; Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020: p.1; Vallance, 2013: p.16). Despite the significance of cutting-edge tools, Kavadia *et al.* (2016) underscore that technology alone rarely accounts for wholesale industry transformations; rather, it serves as one pivotal factor among many. This sentiment resonates with Westerman's (2017) contention that "technology doesn't provide value to a business, but […] technology's value comes from doing business differently because technology makes it possible," suggesting that strategic adaptation and managerial innovation are at least as important as any single technological leap.

Nevertheless, digital literacy in animation software, data workflows, and distributed production pipelines can reduce operational costs and expedite production timelines, thereby boosting the prospect of competitive advantage (CA) (Porter, 1985; Potts, 2011). Technology has also

accelerated globalisation in all sectors of the Screen Industries, enabling collaboration and outsourcing at unprecedented scales. This can "deliver considerable cost savings through economies of scale, especially when shared across companies and industries" (Industry Reports, 2019: p.178). Moreover, the capacity to harness real-time integration of business processes—through enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions—provides "the real-time integration of core business processes which can be analysed and adjusted throughout the lifecycle of a product or project" (Välimäki, 2020).

Within these digitally connected ecosystems, creative autonomy has long been prized (Caves, 2002: p.74), but modern pressures push for more systematic, process-driven approaches to stay current with emerging technologies. As Seidel *et al.* (2006: p.01) remark, even historically successful creative methods must evolve to adopt "contemporary business approaches such as process management," ensuring that evolving production frameworks integrate seamlessly with creative goals. Fostering synergy between high-level artistry and robust digital workflows can thus be viewed as fundamental to sustaining not just an organisation's profitability but also its cultural impact and creative distinctiveness.

### 2.1.9. Subjective Metrics of Success and the "Nobody Knows" Paradigm

In evaluating and concluding this research, one must grapple with the subjective nature of success and failure in Screen Industry projects. Various degrees of success can emerge, complicating attempts to define or measure them (Wirth and Bloch, 1995). Caves (2002: p.74) famously points out that neither the size of the audience nor a project's financial returns can be reliably predicted in advance—a phenomenon encapsulated by the "nobody knows" characteristic. This concept finds echoes in veterans of the Screen Industries, including William Goldman, who wrote the screenplays for Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969), The Stepford Wives (1975), All the President's Men (1976), Marathon Man (1976), The Princess Bride (1987) and other significant films, whereby he acknowledges that "nobody knows anything," as was written on page 39 of his 1983 book, *Adventures in the Screen Trade: A Personal View of Hollywood and Screenwriting* (Goldman, 1983), a principle that arguably extends to other sectors, from streaming platforms to high-end television (HETV) and videogames.

Larger firms sometimes mitigate these uncertainties via expansive portfolios, where losses in one area may be offset by the runaway success of another. However, smaller companies or individual creators, bound by limited resources and minimal funding, cannot as easily absorb major commercial failures (Brewka, 2008: p.63). Doyle (2017: p.285) elaborates on how effective management and exploitation of IPRs can factor into success, along with the scale and configuration of a firm's activities—two variables that heavily impact an organisation's long-term sustainability.

Defining success can thus vary: a developer may regard a videogame "shipped" to the publisher as a triumph, whereas the publisher itself might only label it successful if sales surpass initial investment (Greffe, 2006; Jöckel *et al.*, 2008; Vallance, 2013). In the film sector, metrics like return on assets (ROA), net profit, box office gross, box office rentals, and even the length of theatrical run all serve as indicators (BFI, 2020; Rossiter, 2003). For television, success may hinge on initial ratings, subsequent renewals, ancillary sales, or the aggregate revenue generated by broadcasts or subscription fees. Streaming services such as Netflix, Disney+, or Amazon Prime leverage internal viewing statistics to gauge whether their original productions meet performance benchmarks (Statista – Disney+, 2021; Statista – Netflix, 2021; Statista – Prime Video, 2021).

Although economic measures (Moul, 2005: p.1) dominate discourse on viability, focusing too exclusively on financial performance can overshadow value-adding processes that contribute intangible but vital benefits—such as brand development, audience loyalty, or staff expertise. For example, a season of a niche television show might not break even immediately but could draw in new subscribers, or a game that fails to meet sales forecasts might serve as a breakthrough in technology or IP creation for subsequent titles. Hence, success in the Screen Industries is highly contextual, emphasising a fluid interplay between quantifiable outcomes and more diffuse creative, technological, and brand-oriented gains.

### 2.1.10. Emphasis on Value Chain Processes over Purely Economic Returns

Although commercial metrics remain central to most business ventures, achieving insight into the Screen Industries' value chain is vital for understanding how process management can propel project success. Indeed, many organisations do track box office outcomes, unit sales, or ROI (Motion Picture Association, 2018), yet this research advocates maintaining focus on the activities and individuals who add value, rather than narrowly targeting economic drivers. Traditional scholarship in the realm of creativity and cultural production often centres on aesthetic or audience-related outcomes—sometimes neglecting the operational intricacies of how these outcomes are produced (Petrović *et al.*, 2017). By contrast, a more holistic lens uncovers the processes that merge artistic autonomy, technological sophistication, and strategic resource management, recognising each as essential components of success in creative industries (Bilton, 2010; Sawyer, 2012).

Accordingly, this literature review expands upon definitions and theoretical underpinnings concerning creative development, process management frameworks, value chains, and leadership. Special attention is given to how these concepts are reinterpreted or repurposed in film, television, and gaming—all of which maintain iterative production processes that demand careful coordination of resources and workflows (Finney, 2008; Honthaner, 2010). By dissecting the interplay between intangible creative impulses and tangible production constraints, this work moves toward identifying a structured yet adaptive model of process management. Ultimately, bridging operational needs (budget, timelines, risk management) with creative imperatives (originality, quality, market relevance) can yield an approach that fosters both artistic excellence and economic stability.

### 2.1.11. Bridging Creative, Technical, and Managerial Dimensions

The key operational factors of the Screen Industries—such as technological dependencies, dynamic labour structures, and IP-centric value chains—necessitate specialised expertise and a thorough comprehension of sector-specific challenges (Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020). When effectively managed, organisations can streamline production processes, enhance collaboration, and nourish innovation while safeguarding artistic integrity and financial viability. Nevertheless, traditional process management theories often find themselves challenged, adapted, or even

discarded when confronted with the fluid, iterative realities of creative workflows (Caves, 2002; Pratt, 2004).

This section of the literature review therefore evaluates how the Screen Industries have evolved in terms of organisational scope and reliance on technology, highlighting innovation and creativity as pillars of success for IP-based productions (Howkins, 2001). Topics addressed here include foundational process management theories, contextualised solutions for sector-specific issues, the integration of creative and systematic approaches, and the identification of best practices or gaps in current scholarship. Many studies, while acknowledging the global cultural and economic impact of these creative outputs, stop short of detailing the behind-the-scenes processes that directly shape projects' operational effectiveness (Ng *et al.*, 2020). By situating itself at the intersection of creativity and management, this research offers a path toward bridging that gap.

Its interdisciplinary vantage point supports the notion that creative management can benefit from both structured project methodologies and the fluid, collaborative approaches championed by authors like Bilton and Sawyer. Methodologies that fail to accommodate the non-linear spark of artistic insight can suppress innovation, while purely ad hoc workflows can lead to cost overruns, missed deadlines, or subpar products. Thus, the overarching objective is not to impose rigid frameworks on inherently exploratory processes but rather to engineer supportive structures that let creativity thrive within feasible budgets and schedules.

### 2.1.12. A Tapestry of Interwoven Perspectives

The myriad theories, methods, and models examined throughout this analysis inevitably interlock in a vast, intricate tapestry. Whether exploring value chain theory, advanced collaboration technologies, or intangible factors like "nobody knows" risk, overlapping concepts frequently resurface from different angles. As a result, this literature review does not merely isolate discrete areas of inquiry but actively cross-references them, reflecting the complex interplay between project management, creative expression, and global market forces that shape modern film, television, and interactive media.

Revisiting these subjects from multiple vantage points fosters a deep and comprehensive exploration of diverse perspectives, offering complementary as well as contrasting views on process management's role in creative production. Such an approach underscores the broader argument that these disciplines—while individually significant—gain greater explanatory power when viewed in concert. Central to the project-based nature of the Screen Industries, knowledge of how technology, IP law, economic metrics, and creative practice converge can illuminate best practices for leadership and team coordination, potentially leading to more effective management, heightened productivity, and sustained artistic excellence.

In proceeding with an integrative, critical stance, the goal is to identify robust frameworks that nurture creativity while safeguarding operational imperatives—an equilibrium that can prove elusive but may ultimately define the capacity of the Screen Industries to innovate. Recognising the synergy of these interwoven channels—IP, technology, measures of success, and cohesive production processes—serves as a precursor to the study's main investigation: a tailored process management model capable of addressing the unique constraints and opportunities in film, television, and gaming. Ultimately, this vantage point not only complements existing discourse on cultural and creative sectors but endeavours to influence managerial practices, bridging scholarly gaps and reinforcing the global economic and cultural significance of the Screen Industries.

## 2.2. Defining the Screen Industries

Understanding exactly what sectors are incorporated into the Screen Industries is an important topic as it not only forms the establishment that enables this research to start but is also central to this thesis by outlining the vision, scope, and critical focus points for all further findings. Exploring and identifying the key sectors in this industry will allow for a more focused exploration whereby literature conclusions and theoretical studies can be applied to a more specific field of creative output, becoming a more practical and specialised research thesis. Although the Screen Industries are a disputed expression in general academia and the industry itself, it is commonly acknowledged that the Screen Industries sit within the broader term of the creative industries.

The term "creative industries" (DCMS, 1998; DCMS, 2001: p.04) originated in the late 1990s and was first taken up at a national level by the UK's government (British Council, 2010: p.11) as it recognised the economic importance of these sectors, paving the way for other countries to follow and further investigate. While an accepted term in various literature (Pareja-Eastway, 2016; Paterson, 2020; Vallance, 2013; amongst others), the name itself has become a contested issue since its first inception, with expressions such as the "creative class", "creative economy", and "cultural industries", substituted or used interchangeably (Brewka, 2008; Florida, 2002, 2003; Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020; amongst others). Florida (2002, 2003), in particular, proposed that there are three factors which can help define the creative class, those who are inherently part of the creative industries, and these factors include; 1) Talent, 2) Tolerance, and 3) Technology. Yet, these could easily apply to any workforce, not explicitly delineating the creative industry or the more focused view of the Screen Industries.

### 2.2.1. The Emergence of "Creative Industries"

The United Kingdom, specifically its Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have been at the forefront of recognising and classifying the creative industries over several years via several studies, statistical identifications, and territorial mapping (DCMS, 1998, 2001, 2008, 2016). Although classifications have changed over time, it is largely agreed that the creative industries are those whose jobs are based on "individual creativity, skills, and talent, and the potential for wealth and job creation through the development of intellectual property" (DCMS, 2001: p.04). This definition persists as the commonly accepted baselines, as seen in both 2nd and 3rd editions of Towse' book, *Creative Industries – Handbook of Cultural Economics*, refer to this (Towse, 2011; Towse, 2020).

However, how exactly the creative industries are defined in different countries or by various institutions remains variable. Organisations such as the United Nations (2008), the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (Nesta) (Higgs *et al.*, 2009), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (UNESCO, 2009) have put forward additional categorisations that group multiple sectors. One well-known example is the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) copyright model, which aims to encompass

all industries involved in the creation, manufacture, production, broadcast, distribution, and consumption of copyrighted works (Greffe, 2006: p.139).

### 2.2.2. Divergent Classification Approaches

Academics often adopt slightly different approaches to classification, focusing on narrower contexts such as economics, creative governance, or general creativity and creative outputs. Researchers like Hesmondhalgh (2002, 2008) distinguishes between the "cultural industries", primarily concerned with producing, reproducing, storing, and distributing cultural goods and services on industrial and commercial terms (economics), and the "creative industry", which relies on generating or exploiting knowledge and information as an economic activity. Despite drawing these lines, Hesmondhalgh notes that the two remain deeply intertwined, causing frequent overlap in terminology (Hesmondhalgh, 2002: p.14).

In contrast, Howkins (2001) speaks in terms of the "creative economy," while Caves (2002) focuses on a contractual view that unpacks the creative industries by examining relationships between artists (sellers) and firms (buyers). Another key figure, Richard Florida (Florida, 2002, 2003), introduced the concept of the "creative class," which ties creativity to individual autonomy and decision-making, potentially extending to many fields well beyond conventional cultural domains.

As stated by Cunningham (2018: p.07), "debates about cultural and creative industries have been constantly and probably constitutively confusing," and this can be applied to the economics of the industry as well as categorisations of what sectors and areas compile the industry itself. Moreover, Paterson (2020: p.181), focusing on music videos and commercials, laments how lumping all creative output under a single umbrella obscures the unique traits and demands of specific segments—a concern especially relevant to the Screen Industries, which rely heavily on visual storytelling, advanced technology, and intricate production logistics. As a result, while broad classifications offer an overview of creative work's economic scope, they risk glossing over the distinct operational realities of film, television, commercials, documentaries, and potentially video games.

### 2.2.3. UK and International Perspectives

In the UK context, DCMS enumerates thirteen sectors under the creative industries (DCMS, 2001: p.03; DCMS, 2016), These sectors include:

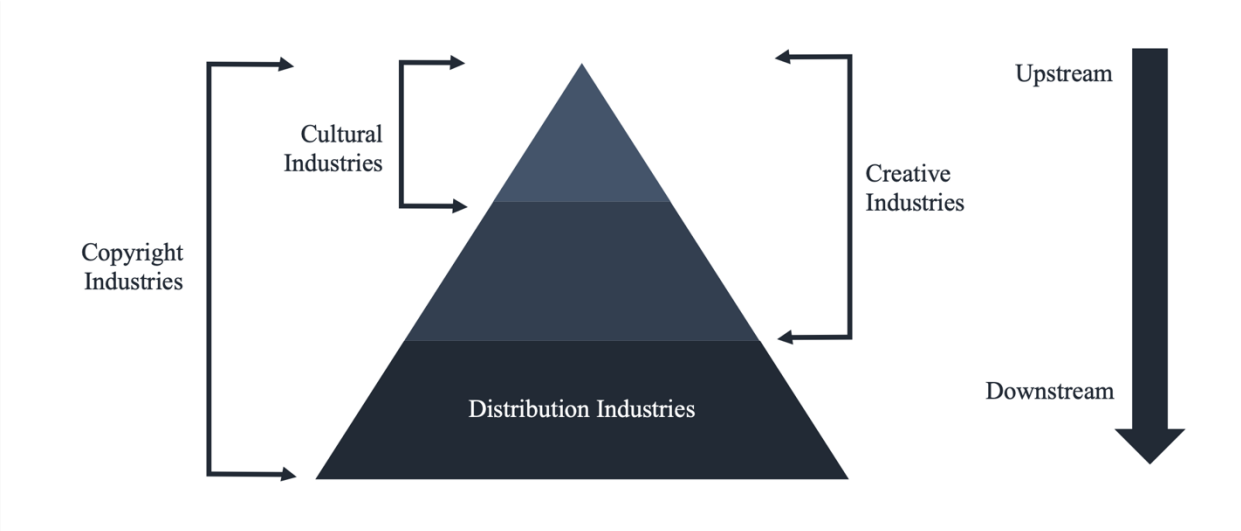
1. Advertising.
2. Architecture.
3. Arts and Antique Markets.
4. Crafts.
5. Design.
6. Designer Fashion.
7. Film and video.
8. Interactive leisure software.
9. Music.
10. Performing arts.
11. Publishing.
12. Software and computer services.
13. Television and radio.

While these categories are comprehensive, they arguably overshoot the more targeted exploration of production processes and management practices that this thesis pursues. Outside the UK, definitions vary even more drastically. Brewka (2008), Fesel and Sondermann (2007), and Hölzl (2006) note that in Europe alone, naming conventions and sectoral boundaries can shift from one country to another.

New Zealand, for instance, broadly defines the "screen industry" as encompassing "the production, distribution and exhibition of film, television, online and digital content" (Bealing and Krieble, 2017: p.2). This model excludes gaming, owing to statistical data lags, thereby sparking further debate on how universal any given classification can be. Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry situates cultural and creative industries within a hierarchy of copyright-based businesses, known as the "creative cluster" (Figure 2.1), spanning from "upstream" arts like performance and visual arts to "downstream" activities such as advertising and media (Heng *et*

*al.*, 2003: p.52; Yue, 2006). Such wide-ranging nomenclatures underscore the difficulty of arriving at a single, universally accepted definition.

**Figure 2.1: Singapore Creative Cluster**




*Source: Adapted from Heng et al. (2003); Yue (2006).*

### 2.2.4. Integrating Animation, Visual Effects (VFX), and Convergent Technologies

Adhering strictly to segments such as film, television, animation, or visual effects (VFX) can be misleading, given that these functions often intersect. Animation and VFX, for instance, have become integral to nearly every major screen production, whether it is a cinematic feature, a high-end television series, or a video game. Likewise, commercials and documentaries may recruit from the same talent pools and share similar pipelines. These interdependent sectors reflect an increasingly technologically convergent marketplace in which boundaries blur. At times, analysts attempt to categorise them separately for clarity, but real-world practice shows they are fluidly merged into most significant screen-based productions (Miles and Green, 2008).

### 2.2.5. The Role of Video Games in the Screen Industries

One persistent point of contention is whether the video game sector belongs within the Screen Industries. Early DCMS publications (DCMS, 2001) included "interactive leisure software" under creative industries, but regions like New Zealand have historically excluded video games from their official "screen industry" definitions (Bealing and Krieble, 2017). Meanwhile, the European Audiovisual Observatory has spotlighted the videogame industry's surging growth and

production sophistication, sometimes surpassing film and television in global revenue (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2023). This trend is bolstered by the increasingly cinematic nature of modern games—complete with advanced storylines, high production values, and reliance on motion capture and real-time rendering (Miles and Green, 2008; Mocaplab, 2024; Vicon, 2021).

Critics argue that interactivity and user-driven experiences differentiate games from traditional linear media, posing unique management and leadership challenges such as extended testing phases or flexible story arcs. However, the convergence of technologies (e.g., game engines used for virtual production) is actively bridging these divides, with big-budget TV shows now employing real-time rendering and game studios leveraging cinematic techniques and professional VFX specialists (Axon, 2020; Farris, 2020; Gartenberg, 2020; Warhurst, 2010: p.226). Excluding video games from Screen Industries overlooks a vital arena where new technologies and creative ideas flourish, further fuelling the cross-pollination of pipelines, staff skill sets, and narrative strategies.

### 2.2.6. Proposed Delineation for This Research

Given these ongoing debates, this research consciously selects a categorisation of the Screen Industries that includes five principal areas:

1. Film
2. Television
3. Commercials
4. Documentaries
5. Video Games

Such an approach draws on prior industry knowledge while relying on both literature and governance guidelines (DCMS, 1998, 2001, 2008, 2016; ScreenSkills UK, 2021; Screen Skills Ireland, 2021). It posits that the creative processes, technological underpinnings, and project-based labour structures in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and games share enough common ground to be investigated under one overarching framework. Moreover, including video games is not merely additive but reflective of industry-wide shifts—where real-time game

engines, iterative design, and performance capture have migrated into film and television, just as cinematic narrative practices have influenced game design.

Establishing these five categories not only sharpens the scope of this research but also reveals how management practices, leadership styles, and process workflows operate in tandem with continuous technological innovation and creative complexity. By limiting the exploration to these distinct yet interconnected sectors, the study takes a more specialised lens on production challenges—an essential move given the repeated confusion in categorising cultural and creative industries (Cunningham, 2018). Delineating the Screen Industries in this manner thus underlines the relevance of a process management framework that aligns with the creative, technical, and economic realities inherent in contemporary visual media.

Ultimately, although these five sectors remain deeply interwoven with the broader creative economy, this narrower categorisation provides the necessary focus for deriving practical insights, achieving consistent terminology, and fostering a deeper grasp of leadership, process design, and value creation in today's fast-evolving screen ecosystem. Acknowledging that games introduce interactive dimensions and complex user-driven experiences, this perspective accounts for the distinctive challenges—and opportunities—these developments bring to operational management in the Screen Industries. With this categorisation in place, the research can now advance to investigate how each of these five segments addresses issues of creative leadership, operational effectiveness, technological disruption, and scalable production frameworks, all within the context of a global, digital marketplace.

## 2.3. Value Chain and Processes

The commodity chain, more commonly known as a value chain (VC), orbits around the set of activities that an organisation performs to deliver a valuable product or service to the market where a "network of labor and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity" (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1986: p.159). In essence, a value chain is a "sequence of value-adding economic activities" that results in a completed project or product (Gereffi, 1994: p.97). Contemporary discussions of value chains in management studies typically reference Michael E. Porter's foundational work, where a value chain is a firm's "collection of activities that are

performed to design, produce, market, deliver, and support its product" (Porter, 1985: p.36). According to Porter, each activity in the chain contributes to the firm's ability to generate value exceeding its cost, thus forming the basis of competitive advantage (CA). From a managerial viewpoint, examining how these activities are structured and coordinated can reveal strengths or inefficiencies in firm processes (Porter, 1991).

Processes are central to how value chains operate. In the Screen Industries, each step of the chain—whether concept development, physical production, or post-production—can dramatically influence a project's financial and creative outcomes. By adding value at different stages through well-managed processes, organisations can either improve their return on investment (ROI) via cost savings, faster turnarounds, or better creative quality. In this thesis, ROI is examined largely in terms of operational effectiveness (OE), reflecting reductions in wasteful practices or inefficiencies, and the subsequent potential for competitive advantage (CA) when these superior practices become difficult for competitors to replicate (Porter, 1991).

### 2.3.1. Managing Resources and Processes

Porter (1985, 1991) divides the value chain into primary activities—Inbound Logistics, Operations, Outbound Logistics, Marketing and Sales, and Services—and support activities—Procurement, Human Resource Management, Technological Development, and Infrastructure (Porter, 1985: pp.11–15). While originally conceptualised for manufacturing and traditional service organisations, these categories can be reframed for creative, project-based environments like the Screen Industries. In the case of film, television, commercials, documentaries, or video games, "Operations" might refer to principal photography or game engine programming, while "Marketing and Sales" could encompass trailer releases, film festival promotions, or game demos. "Technology Development" is often essential to creative output, bridging areas like VFX, motion capture, rendering engines, and editing suites.

Closely aligned with Porter's ideas, various scholars and practitioners emphasise that organisations gain competitive advantage not merely through final outputs, but by managing resources and processes effectively (Barney, 1991; Sussland, 2007; Wernerfelt, 1984). Sussland's (2007) concept of the Process of Management (PoM) highlights two primary drivers

of business value: Resources and Processes. Building on a resource-based view (RBV) (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991), PoM underscores the significance of intangible assets—such as the creative skills of directors, animators, or programmers—in driving innovation and performance. This is particularly relevant to the Screen Industries, where a single creative insight can meaningfully differentiate a product in a crowded market. By integrating PoM with Porter's framework, managers can identify precisely how each activity in the chain uses resources (both tangible and intangible), and where process improvements could yield substantial efficiency or creative gains.

### 2.3.2. Technological Advances and Evolving Demand-Driven Chains

With the advancement of newer technologies, traditional supplier-driven value chains in the Screen Industries are being replaced by demand-driven value chains that require greater flexibility at all stages (Bealing and Krieble, 2017; Kehoe and Mateer, 2014). With the advancement of new technologies, traditional supplier-driven value chains in the Screen Industries are being replaced by demand-driven models that require greater flexibility and responsiveness (Bealing and Krieble, 2017; Kehoe and Mateer, 2014). Digital platforms, high-speed internet, and real-time collaboration tools have reshaped how teams approach everything from conceptualisation to marketing and delivery. While many of these trends mirror developments in other sectors, the Screen Industries face unique uncertainties tied to creative outputs (Caves, 2002). Each film, show, or game can differ dramatically in tone, budget, target audience, and production complexity, creating myriad challenges for project managers and financiers alike.

Here, Richard Caves' (2002) notion of unpredictability underscores that producers and consumers alike cannot be certain which projects will succeed or fail, reinforcing the "nobody knows" principle. This unpredictability complicates each value-chain stage, whether one is seeking distribution partners, setting up financing deals, or managing talent contracts. While Porter's value chain concept focuses on activities under a firm's control, Caves' perspective highlights the importance of external uncertainties, from fickle audience tastes to last-minute changes in creative direction.

### 2.3.3. Value Chain Complexities, Unpredictability, and Production Phases

The need for a complete understanding of the Screen Industries' value chain and these sectors' processes are paramount in reacting to the industries' demands (Seidel *et al.*, 2006: p.1). Yet even psychologists have commented on the general lack of knowledge in these regards by noting that "film executives estimate the market for a movie" and that we can "study the variability of their answers without knowing how much the film eventually made or even if it was produced at all" (Kahneman *et al.*, 2021: p.15), concluding the apparent unknowability and unpredictability of the value that equates from the industry.

The intricacies of value-chain activities in film, television, and game production are heightened by the innate unpredictability of creative endeavours. Multiple scholars note that each production is effectively a unique prototype, drawing on specialised skills that may never be replicated in exactly the same way (Caves, 2002; Towse, 2011, 2020). Contracts can be short-term and highly project-specific, leaving companies to coordinate an ever-changing roster of talent (Caves, 2002). This setup can offer flexibility and help secure top expertise for niche tasks, but it also increases managerial complexity. Indeed, producers risk cost overruns or schedule delays unless they master how to integrate each contributor's unique efforts.

Further complicating matters is the unpredictability of the Screen Industries and the "nobody knows" principle (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002), whereby even leadership cannot reliably predict which projects will become hits or cult classics, reinforcing the inherent uncertainty of the industry. As Kahneman *et al*. (2021: p.15) observe, film executives themselves concede they must "estimate the market for a movie" without even knowing if it will reach completion. This underscores that a seemingly strong idea in the development phase could evolve (or devolve) through the subsequent steps, reflecting real-time creative choices, logistical hurdles, and market shifts.

Adapting a value-chain framework to the Screen Industries has often led researchers to propose simplified models. For instance, while Barbara Brewka (2008: p.64) reports that the Screen Industries has one of the most complex value chains as it "embraces a multitude of interdependent stages and skills drawn from various subsectors of the creative industries, with

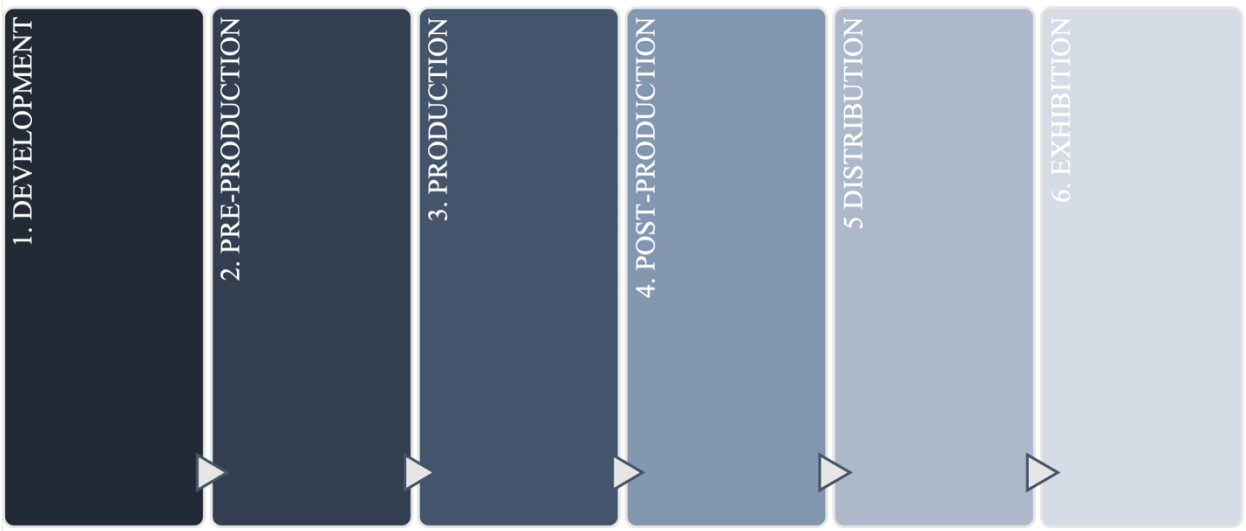
each skill group required to execute key functions in an organised, networked fashion", they introduce only a four stage approach: 1) Creation, 2) Production, 3) Distribution, and 4) Retail and Consumption, focusing exclusively on primary activities (pp.64–65). Although accessible, this model can obscure the complexity of each stage by leaving out many "support" or secondary activities, as well as the iterative, back-and-forth revisions that typify creative work (Moul, 2005).

In contrast, Mamer (2005), Honthaner (2010), and Irving and Rea (2015) identify a more granular set of steps, with some accounts enumerating as many as six phases: 1) Development, 2) Pre-Production, 3) Production, 4) Post-Production, 5) Distribution, and 6) Exhibition—shown sequentially in Figure 2.2. Here, "value" is potentially added in multiple ways—through script editing, casting decisions, costuming, sound design, marketing, and more. Each of these stages can be mapped onto Porter's (1985, 1991) primary and support activities, acknowledging that creative outputs flow through a chain of distinct tasks and decisions. From a managerial standpoint, "Operations" may manifest differently in each phase, but the goal remains to create a cohesive, market-ready product. "Human Resource Management" might involve short-term contracts for actors or programmers, while "Technological Development" could relate to adopting new editing suites or game engines. Identifying friction points—such as poor communication between production and post-production—can guide where improvements or new processes might add the most value. Porter's value chain encourages researchers to trace how each specific task contributes to final customer value, thereby clarifying sources of potential bottlenecks or cost overruns. By focusing on the interplay of distinct production phases, scholars can better pinpoint whether inefficiencies stem from managerial processes, technological limitations, or creative divergences.

Unlike in some manufacturing contexts, where products move sequentially along a clear line of assembly, creative work often cycles backward. A scene might be re-shot after principal photography, or a game mechanic entirely redesigned late in development. These iterative loops challenge the neat linearity implied by Porter's original diagram (Porter, 1985). Nonetheless, Porter's framework remains valuable in diagnosing how intangible resources (e.g., creativity, expertise, brand identity) and tangible resources (e.g., software suites, sets, editing bays) are

allocated. The "nobody knows anything" principle (Goldman, 1983) intensifies the risk that last-minute changes will derail schedules or budgets, underscoring the need for robust but flexible management systems.

**Figure 2.2: Screen Industries Production Phases**




*Source: Adapted from Honthaner (2010: p.84).*

### 2.3.4. Autonomy and its Effect on Value Creation

Balancing the structured coordination of a value chain with autonomy for individual creators is a continual challenge (Amabile, 1996; McKee, 1997). Autonomy is frequently lauded for fostering originality, but unbounded freedom may lead to unfocused projects, budget overruns, or missed deadlines (McKee, 1997). Notably, the concept of "flow" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997)—a deep, immersive focus vital to creative breakthroughs. Yet even without entering into the full specifics of flow here, it is clear that decisions about "Operations," "Procurement," or "Infrastructure" (Porter, 1985) can either enhance or hinder a creative individual's capacity to excel. For instance, overly rigid deadlines in "Operations" (principal photography for film or level-building in video games) may generate beneficial pressure but also prevent deeper creative exploration. Similarly, adopting new editing software or a more powerful rendering engine may strengthen creative output, provided these choices align with actual project needs and skill sets.

Creative freedom holds powerful appeal for those who work in the Screen Industries, yet commercial imperatives still loom. The tension surfaces repeatedly in industry practices. Hollywood, for example, invests heavily in sequels or franchises that promise brand recognition, presumably mitigating some risk. This risk-averse stance can dampen the autonomy of creators in the name of reliable returns (Hesmondhalgh, 2008). Alternatively, smaller or European production houses might prioritise artistic innovation and accept greater risk of financial disappointment, resulting in more avant-garde or culturally specific works. While this dynamic is not unique to the Screen Industries—other creative fields also grapple with balancing commercial success and artistic authenticity—it remains especially pronounced due to high production costs and consumer expectations for polished, engaging experiences.

In short, autonomy shapes the creative quality of the final product, but also influences overall operational efficiency. To optimize outcomes, structured processes must coexist with creator freedom, reinforcing both originality and a stable production pipeline. As later sections will reveal, managing this tension effectively has a substantial impact on value creation in the Screen Industries.

While the value chain concept encourages firms to optimize each activity, creative industries must safeguard artistry and innovation. Overemphasis on process efficiency could impede the spontaneity that sparks breakthroughs (Amabile, 1996). Yet an excessively laissez-faire attitude may yield wasted resources or meandering production timetables (Finney, 2008). Striking the right balance between systematic oversight and creative freedom is a recurring challenge, particularly in large-scale productions with significant financial stakes (De Vany, 2011; Perforce, 2021). As Seidel *et al.* (2006) note, certain “pockets of creativity” call for a high degree of autonomy, while other tasks benefit from standardised workflows. Managers must identify which segments of the chain demand structure to control costs and deadlines, and which could benefit from looser parameters to nurture originality. The impact of these concepts underscores the tension between creative freedom and commercial pressures, with autonomy often disrupted by the need to adhere to tight schedules and budget constraints, thereby affecting the overall efficiency and operational effectiveness (OE) of production processes (Hesmondhalgh, 2013).

### 2.3.5. The Video Games Sector Applicability in the Screen Industries

Video games present an especially rich case for understanding value chains in creative fields. Although some perspectives once positioned games separately—due to their interactive nature or classification as "software"—there is growing recognition that high-budget games can mirror film in cost, complexity, and reliance on teams of writers, artists, and programmers (Hesmondhalgh, 2010, 2020; Kerr, 2006). For instance, large game studios invest in cinematic cutscenes, professional voice actors, and custom soundtracks, aligning with many components seen in film or television production (Miles and Green, 2008: p.20). Real-time rendering tools, initially developed for gaming, now underpin advanced virtual production techniques in film and TV (e.g., *The Mandalorian*), exemplifying how knowledge and innovation circulate across these sectors.

At a process level, game studios often maintain core programming and design teams internally, while outsourcing art, animation, or specialised tasks in ways reminiscent of a film's external VFX contractors (Vallance, 2013: p.21). This partial reliance on freelancers or outside vendors can keep overheads manageable, though it imposes coordination challenges. Tellingly, many of the intangible resources prized in gaming—technical artistry, creative design, or project management skills—are equally valued in film and television (Benson and Brown, 2007; Warhurst, 2010). By applying Porter's framework across these related but distinct forms of screen-based media, researchers and practitioners can begin to see how autonomy, project phases, and resource deployment consistently influence a firm's ability to deliver value to audiences.

### 2.3.6. Significance of the Value Chain for the Screen Industries

For the purposes of this research, it is crucial to investigate how the value chain operates within the five key sectors of the Screen Industries identified as: Film, Television, Commercials, Documentaries, and Video Games. While these sectors vary in distribution models and audience engagement, they share enough process-based similarity—particularly in resource allocation, creative development, and reliance on project-based teams—to allow comparative analysis. The inherent unpredictability (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002), rapid technological changes (Adobe, 2021; Autodesk, 2022; Unreal Engine, 2023), contracts that are often ephemeral, valid only for a

single project or a specific production phase, making knowledge transfer sporadic at best (Caves, 2002; Towse, 2011), and evolving collaborative structures (Bealing and Krieble, 2017) all underscore the pressing need for a theoretical and practical framework that reflects both the creative and operational aspects of screen production.

Adopting Porter's (1985, 1991) value chain at the firm or project level provides a scalable lens for understanding how leadership, process, and value intersect. This approach avoids conflating macro-level industry trends with the micro-level management strategies that make or break individual productions. By focusing on operational effectiveness (OE) in tandem with creative autonomy, the sector's practitioners can refine workflows, harness intangible creative assets, and ultimately deliver content that resonates with audiences while preserving profitability and gaining competitive advantage (CA). It is within this intersection—Porter's value creation logic adapted to the specific conditions of screen-based media—that the next stages of this research aim to develop a tailored process management framework, capable of reconciling artistry with structured project control.

## 2.4. Leadership and Management

The Screen Industries—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—are frequently described as high-innovation environments where creative experimentation, advanced technologies, and project-based labour converge (Caves, 2002; Hesmondhalgh, 2013). At the same time, they also demand considerable organisational efficiency and strategic foresight to manage budgets, schedules, and market risks (Finney, 2008; Honthaner, 2010). Balancing creativity with robust operational processes can become a principal managerial challenge (Bilton, 2010; Townley, Beech, and McKinlay, 2009).

Building on earlier discussions of the Screen Industries and Porter's value chain (Porter, 1985, 1991), this section delves more deeply into creativity management, the distinction between leadership and management, and how creativity can be integrated with structured workflows. It defines creativity more comprehensively (Amabile, 1996; Sawyer, 2012), compares major creativity-management scholars (Bilton, 2010; Sawyer, 2012), and examines Keith Grint's articulation of leadership as an "art" distinct from management (Grint, 2005, 2010). By

synthesising these elements, the discussion refines the conceptual basis for a tailored process management framework in which creativity, leadership, and operational processes support—rather than erode—one another in screen-based projects.

### 2.4.1. Management Versus Leadership – Key Distinctions in Creative Contexts

Effective project leadership is essential in motivating teams to achieve the project goals and objectives (Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020: p.2). Leaders devise strategies and methods for individuals and teams to accomplish organisational aims, forming frameworks for collaboration. Although leadership is often equated with management, they do not necessarily serve the same function—particularly in dynamic, creative domains such as the Screen Industries. Keith Grint (2010) proposes that "management" handles complicated or routine tasks requiring clear processes and quantifiable targets, whereas "leadership" addresses "complex" or "wicked" problems demanding vision, sense-making, and deep follower engagement.

In the Screen Industries, this distinction is pivotal. Management focuses on commercial values—profit, efficiency, responding to client needs—and is sometimes seen as stifling creativity when it imposes rigid strictures (Bérubé and Demers, 2019: p.325). Yet managers also supply the budgets and timelines that keep productions viable. Leaders, conversely, orchestrate a unifying vision that galvanises creative staff, even in uncertain circumstances (Amabile, 1996; Sawyer, 2012). Film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video game productions rely on intangible creative assets nurtured by structured leadership to generate distinctive ideas, promoting competitive advantage (CA). Leaders who balance autonomy with robust processes can meet deadlines, stay within budget, and still engage audiences, increasing operational effectiveness (OE) in creative teams.

Crucial to leadership in the Screen Industries is Keith Grint's notion of leadership as an "art" rather than a purely technical skill (Grint, 2005, 2010). Grint contends that leadership diverges from management because it deals with issues marked by ambiguity, multiple stakeholders, and the absence of guaranteed solutions, which he coins "wicked" problems. High production costs, unpredictable audience tastes, and rapidly evolving technologies characterise the Screen

Industries' wickedness: no formula can reliably predict which script will become a cultural touchstone or which distribution path will yield global hits (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002).

Leaders in screen-based productions must "frame" these problems, clarifying goals, constructing a narrative of possibility, and rallying interdisciplinary teams around intangible creative aspirations. Showrunners, game directors, or executive producers become interpreters of uncertainty, persuading professionals to invest effort in projects whose success remains unknown. Beyond managerial tasks such as budgeting or scheduling, this artistic dimension entails sense-making, rhetorical skill, and mutual trust (Grint, 2010). In short, Grint's "art of leadership" suits the Screen Industries exceptionally well: these projects demand inspiration to push creative boundaries yet also require oversight to maintain coherence and feasibility.

### 2.4.2. Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Transformational leadership, as defined by Bass and Riggio (2006), accentuates charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration—traits with significant impact on creative teams, and is often associated with higher levels of innovation and job satisfaction (Bass, 1990a, 1990b). By boosting innovative thought and showing confidence in individuals' potential, transformational leaders spark higher levels of imaginative input. However, others suggest creative fields also need transactional components (Transactional Leadership)—concrete metrics, clear feedback, contractual stipulations—to avert "production drift" (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1998). Purely visionary leadership may overlook structured processes vital for finishing large productions on budget and schedule.

Thus, the Screen Industries commonly employ a hybrid approach that unites visionary leadership with well-managed daily tasks. This perspective echoes Grint's proposal that leadership tackles "wicked" complexities while management addresses "complicated" aspects—scheduling, logistics, resource allocation (Grint, 2005, 2010). In short, large-scale productions require leaders who inspire boundary-pushing ideas and managers who ensure day-to-day continuity.

In Bass's (1985) conceptualisation, transformational leaders inspire followers to transcend self-interest in pursuit of a larger vision (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Its four pillars—Idealised

Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualised Consideration—hinge on the notion that team members respond favourably to compelling missions and personal development. In creative environments, such leaders often champion the autonomy needed for flow, reinforcing the importance of leadership in fostering optimal creative conditions.

Nonetheless, big-budget productions, AAA or independent game development frequently mix transformational ideals with transactional oversight. Projects must adhere to strict budgets and scheduled releases; not every individual responds positively to lofty visionary appeals (Bérubé and Demers, 2019). Even so, Bass's framework resonates strongly in intangible or exploratory tasks, such as script refinement, concept art, or capturing emergent game mechanics. Leaders who marry charismatic vision with practical guardrails can stand out in a saturated marketplace.

Bass's (1985) distinction between transformational and transactional leadership eventually expanded into eight leadership styles (Indeed, 2021a, 2021b), including: 1) Democratic Leadership, 2) Autocratic Leadership, 3) Laissez-Faire Leadership, 4) Transactional Leadership, 5) Charismatic Leadership, 6) Transformational Leadership, 7) Servant Leadership, and 8) Bureaucratic Leadership. In the Screen Industries, transformational leadership around a shared project vision often prevails, but situational factors can force more transactional tactics. Fiedler's (1971) contingency theory suggests no single style is universally superior, especially under high financial or time pressure (Bérubé and Demers, 2019). Adaptability is crucial, given the "increasingly dynamic and demanding environments" of modern productions (Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018: p.89).

### 2.4.3. Autonomy, Flow, Value Creation, and Balancing Structures

Porter's (1985) value chain stresses interconnected tasks—scripting, filming, editing, marketing—that may enhance or reduce a product's worth. In the Screen Industries, autonomy and flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997) have a profound effect on how these activities unfold, shaping both operational effectiveness (OE) and creative output that can lead to an organisation's competitive advantage (CA) in the market. Flow is a state of deep immersion where challenges match skill levels, yielding intense focus and potential creative breakthroughs (Csíkszentmihályi,

1990; Amabile, 1996). Yet the complexity of screen production makes sustaining flow no small feat (Lemke, 2015a).

During early development, autonomy allows screenwriters, directors, or designers to experiment with fresh concepts (McKee, 1997). Nevertheless, the "nobody knows" axiom (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002) indicates that even groundbreaking ideas may fail to connect commercially. Consequently, producers limit risk by adopting templates or formulas, but these can undercut flow and originality.

Pre-production and production require a delicate interplay between creative freedom and managerial mandates. Cinematographers, VFX teams, or animators often excel under autonomy, but strict budget and scheduling concerns loom large. Heavy-handed oversight can shatter the creative synergy; too little oversight spawns chaos (Caves, 2002). Leaders must maximise flow while preserving essential guardrails.

Editing, colour grading, and sound mixing also thrive on immersion. Abrupt changes in post-production—new shots to edit, an altered colour palette—disrupt flow if deadlines remain inflexible (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997). The leader's role entails negotiating these changes, ensuring the overall vision remains feasible without extinguishing creativity.

Distribution, marketing, and deliverable concerns require much stricter timelines that can potentially hinder creativity due to timescales and restrictive demands on innovation where transactional leadership is more prevalent. In turn, this has negative effects on the exhibition of the final products, whereby theatres may have to wait on materials or delay showings, and video games may (and often do) require day one patching in order for them to operate correctly for audiences.

Autonomy and flow epitomise the clash between creative liberty and commercial imperatives (Sawyer, 2006). Over-standardisation may bolster efficiency but compromise uniqueness (a key source of CA). Conversely, unbridled freedom can lead to missed deadlines and frustrated stakeholders. Leaders who harness flow judiciously—allowing novel experimentation within

practical limits—can enhance OE by delivering inventive, timely, and financially coherent productions (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). Grint's (2010) "wicked" lens portrays such leadership as a balancing act that addresses deep uncertainty with an artful mix of structure and freedom.

Beyond influencing discrete tasks, autonomy and flow factor into broader leadership strategies in the Screen Industries. As mentioned, autonomy fuels the intrinsic motivation essential for flow (Amabile, 1996; Csíkszentmihályi, 1990). Leaders who adopt transformational styles often nurture this motivation (Bass, 1990a, 1990b). Still, large-scale projects with hefty budgets demand frequent milestones and budget checks (Bérubé and Demers, 2019). Hence, a purely visionary approach may need to integrate transactional mechanisms—clear deliverables, scope reviews, or performance metrics—to maintain alignment with stakeholders. If an organisation values output above personal well-being, flow can devolve into burnout (Lemke, 2015b). Leaders must therefore balance creative demands with realistic timelines and resource limits.

Although autonomy can unlock deep focus and creativity (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990), high-level productions inevitably require overarching visions spanning multiple teams. Absent clear guidelines, confusion sets in, risking disjointed end products (Sawyer, 2006). Meanwhile, market forces may demand formulaic approaches for financial security (Hesmondhalgh, 2013), curtailing the creative freedom that fosters truly novel outcomes.

Leaders must continually weigh these competing demands, guiding teams amid unpredictability while ensuring experimentation is not stifled. Extreme autonomy risks fragmentation, whereas draconian control suppresses innovation (Pick *et al.*, 2015). Lasting success hinges on this delicate interplay of structure and freedom, reinforcing Grint's (2010) concept of navigating "wicked" complexities in real time.

### 2.4.4. Integrating Creativity Management and Leadership

This thesis anchors Porter's (1985, 1991) value chain as the framework for dissecting how scriptwriting, principal photography, editing, and marketing combine to create screen-based value. By segmenting the pipeline into distinct phases, Porter's approach clarifies how casting choices, set-building, or game-engine selections influence costs or brand differentiation.

Likewise, support activities (HR management, R&D, or procurement) can stimulate innovation by offering cutting-edge software or training, or they can hinder it by imposing cumbersome bureaucracy (Bilton, 2010).

As previously explored, critics note that Porter's model may appear overly linear for iterative creative processes (Amabile, 1996; Townley *et al.*, 2009). Films or games often loop back into development to address narrative or mechanical shortcomings, requiring agile resource shuffling (Sawyer, 2012). From a leadership stance, such iterative revisions call for flexible scheduling—facilitating re-shoots or redesigns—or acceptance of minor imperfections to meet deadlines. As previously explored, Grint's "wicked" framing helps recast these cyclical detours not as failures but as essential to creativity's uncertain path.

A key contention is that leadership and creativity management must infiltrate each link of the chain. For instance, inbound logistics (Porter, 1985) might include casting specialised talent or obtaining advanced software, requiring alignment with broader creative goals (Sawyer, 2012). Operations—like filming, animation, and post-production—depend on group flow (Sawyer, 2012), steered by a unifying vision (Grint, 2005). Marketing and sales can stand out in a crowded marketplace when guided by imaginative leadership. Meanwhile, support functions (procurement, HR) can implement Bilton's "manageable creativity" (Bilton and Cummings, 2014)—investing in technology or skill-building without constraining originality.

At every stage, autonomy versus structure surfaces as a critical tension. Infinite freedom may result in brilliance or chaos, while excessive control produces safe but uninspired results (Sawyer, 2012; Bass and Riggio, 2006). In Grint's perspective, leadership involves constructing a compelling narrative and clarifying stakes so that budgets and schedules do not suffocate creativity.

In sum, the Screen Industries necessitate a threefold comprehension of creativity, leadership, and Porter's value chain. Chris Bilton focuses on balancing structured oversight with bottom-up imagination, while Keith Sawyer illustrates the social, improvisational underpinnings of creative achievements. Concurrently, Keith Grint's view of leadership as confronting wicked problems

clarifies how roles like showrunner or creative director unify disparate departments in unpredictable contexts. Though often critiqued for linearity, Porter's framework (1985) still exposes the areas where creative efforts either magnify or diminish value.

Rigid top-down control endangers the spontaneity required for breakthroughs, whereas a hands-off free-for-all can derail budgets and production timelines. Reconciling these theoretical strands—Bilton, Sawyer, Grint, Bass and Riggio, and Porter—establishes the basis for a customized process management model that merges creative autonomy with operational rigour. Later chapters demonstrate how these concepts apply across film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games, ultimately proposing strategies that balance the intangible drivers of creativity with the tangible requirements of delivering a polished, market-ready output.

Operational effectiveness (OE) revolves around surpassing rivals in organisational tasks like budgeting or scheduling (Porter, 1985). By contrast, competitive advantage (CA) involves offering unique value that others cannot match easily. In the Screen Industries, that uniqueness often springs from innovative concepts—whether visual effects, narrative arcs, or interactive design elements. Traditional frameworks emphasise efficiency, yet an overemphasis on efficiency can erode the autonomy required for real breakthroughs (Conor *et al.*, 2015). Leaders must then cultivate a malleable process management framework that accounts for iterative changes, unanticipated technical shifts, and sudden fluctuations in audience tastes (Sawyer, 2006; Pick *et al.*, 2015).

Granting autonomy and enabling flow can accelerate fresh ideas, boosting OE if orchestrated properly. However, a rigid waterfall approach can quash spontaneity, while a laissez-faire ethos may blow budgets or miss deadlines entirely. Leaders must navigate between consistency and flexibility—upholding brand identity and cost realism while nurturing the dynamic spark of innovation.

### 2.4.5. Critical Tensions and Potential Resolutions

Scholars frequently underscore the challenge of giving teams enough latitude to craft exceptional creative output (Amabile, 1996; Bilton, 2010; Sawyer, 2012). Directors, actors, and coders often

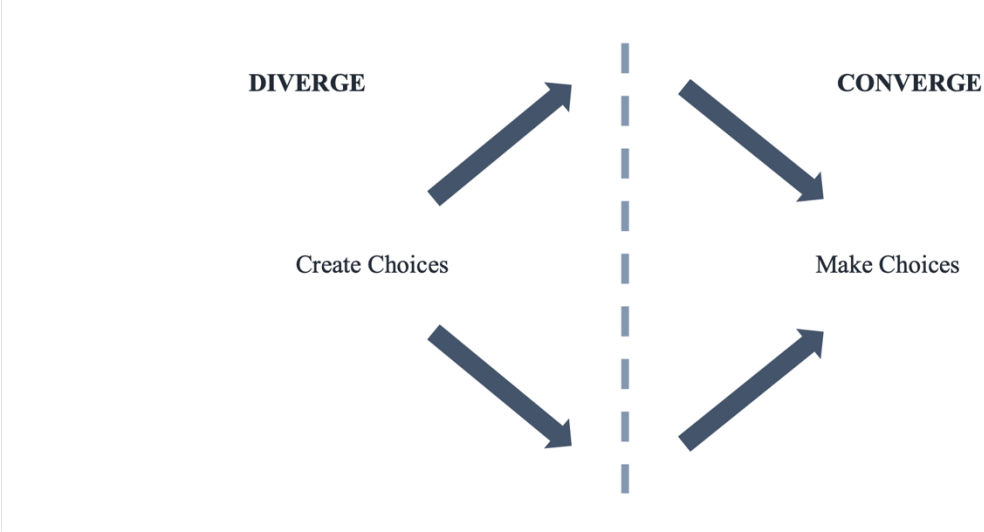
want unlimited rehearsal, multiple takes, or infinite prototyping, which can collide with strict budgetary constraints (Honthaner, 2010). Bilton's (2010) "manageable creativity" underscores transparent discussions of trade-offs, ensuring team members understand how schedule expansions or cost overruns affect subsequent phases. Leaders must present a clear vision validating creativity while acknowledging limited resources (Grint, 2005, 2010). Adaptability plays a significant role in the Screen Industries' leadership (Bérubé and Demers, 2019). This is due to both the project-based nature of productions as well as the "increasingly dynamic and demanding environments" within these sectors, "yet in the leadership field, we know surprisingly little about this topic" (Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018: p.89). Studies by Knight and Harvey (2015) addressed tension from an organisational perspective, whereby the freedom to stay creative under time constraints and inter-disciplinary teams can be challenging and ambiguous (also see Bérubé and Demers, 2019; Townley and Beech, 2010).

Another tension pits bold, untested concepts against formulaic but reliable returns (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). Sequels or reboots leverage existing audiences but risk generating creative fatigue (De Vany, 2011). Although transformational leadership can advocate for originality, stable processes must evaluate market prospects and determine acceptable risk levels (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Hybrid approaches—like agile sprints—might incorporate rapid prototyping, risk-mitigation feedback loops, and enough freedom to sustain innovative ideas (Sawyer, 2012).

### 2.4.6. Divergent and Convergent Thinking with RAPID Decision Makers

Divergent and convergent thinking models (Figure 2.3), which give a "multipolar experience in which everyone has the opportunity to participate in the conversation" (Brown, 2009) and then converge on the best possible answer, form a potential solution to the complexities of leadership and management within the Screen Industries. Divergent thinking gives the ability to experiment, offers autonomy, and grants a different, unique, or variant of ideas and solutions. Convergent thinking is the ability to find the correct solution from the choices given by divergent thinking. It is either the best or most suitable solution discovered (Yudiarti and Lantu, 2015).

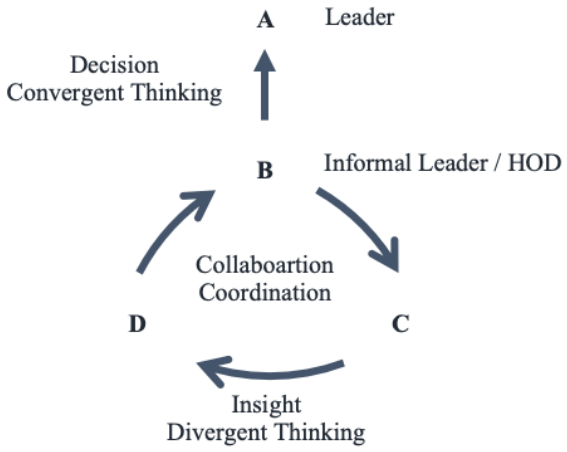
**Figure 2.3: Divergent and Convergent Thinking**




*Source: Adapted from Brown (2009) and Yudiarti and Lantu (2015).*

Autonomy fosters divergent thinking (Guildford, 1950), generating multiple creative avenues. Ultimately, leaders must enforce convergent thinking to filter and shape these ideas into viable deliverables (Cortes *et al.*, 2019; Weinberger *et al.*, 2017), as illustrated in Figure 2.4. In large film or game projects, the "Decide" role—sometimes a producer or head of department—makes final calls (Jones and Davis, 2018), unifying brand identity and strategic aims.

**Figure 2.4: Team-Based Divergent Thinking and Convergent Thinking by Leadership**




*Source: Adapted from Cortes et al. (2019); Guilford (1950); Jones and Davis (2018); Weinberger et al. (2017).*

With knowledge and skills within management, budgets, schedules, associated tools, and producers, that are known for their decision-making capacity at a studio level (looking up), and Heads of Department (HoD) known for their expertise and decision-making with specialised teams (looking down), it makes sense that one of these roles are assigned as a key decision maker when we think about organisational breakdown structures (OBS) or the hierarchies that govern in professional practice (Lin and Lin, 2016; Vallance, 2013). However, this would require each sector of the Screen Industries to agree on similar duties for each role, something which is already questionable as to why this is not the industry norm.

With divergent and convergent thinking having a significant impact on choices, it's essential to have clear decision-makers for any project to be successful. This is challenging in environments where the scope can change drastically, and decisions are not always final. Tools like the RAPID Decision Model (Rogers and Blenko, 2006) delineate who decides, recommends, performs, and inputs (illustrated in Table 2.1). This structured freedom exemplifies leadership in screen-based work: encouraging open-ended brainstorming but converging on decisions to meet production constraints (Lin and Lin, 2016).

**Table 2.1: RAPID Decision Model**

| PEOPLE WHO… | | ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR… |
|---|---|---|
| **R** | Recommend | • Making a proposal on a key decision, gathering input, and providing data and analysis to make a sensible choice in a timely fashion.<br>• Consulting with input providers – hearing and incorporating their views, and winning their buy-in. |
| **A** | Agree | • Negotiating a modified proposal with the recommender if they have concerns about the original proposal.<br>• Escalating unresolved issues to the decider if the "A" and "R" can't resolve differences.<br>• If necessary, exercising veto power over the recommendation. |
| **P** | Perform | • Executing a decision once it's made.<br>• Seeing that decision is implemented promptly and effectively. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **I** | Input | • Providing relevant facts to the recommender that shed light on the proposal's feasibility and practical implications. |
| **D** | Decide | • Serving as the single point of accountability.<br>• Bringing the decision to closure by resolving any impasse in the decision-making process.<br>• Committing the organisation to implementing the decision. |

*Source: Rogers and Blenko (2006).*

### 2.4.7. Merging Leadership Models for Sustainable Creativity

Ultimately, leadership and management in the Screen Industries form a delicate interplay. Autonomy ignites creativity but can degenerate into chaos if unbounded. Flow can spark high-level innovation but risks burnout should production only reward relentless output (Lemke, 2015b). Transformational leadership, emphasising vision, intellectual stimulation, and individual support, aligns well with intangible creative endeavours (Bass, 1985; Bass and Riggio, 2006). Yet Bass's framework assumes teams welcome idealised influence, which may clash with large budgets or studio imperatives necessitating transactional or contingency-driven oversight (Fiedler, 1971).

Throughout these leadership models, Porter's emphasis on value creation underscores why leadership is integral, not peripheral. The Screen Industries succeed when creative professionals' unique talents converge with structured project management, delivering distinct, high-quality content on time and within budget. Understanding how autonomy and flow intersect—while respecting the complexities of projects within the Screen Industries—supplies the backbone for a nuanced project management methodology. Such an approach enables creative teams to flourish in the face of volatile markets and rapid technological evolution.

Addressing a recurring gap cited by scholars (Pick *et al.*, 2015; Hodgson and Briand, 2013)—the need for a system capturing both technical and aesthetic work—this thesis proposes a process management framework merging leadership, autonomy, flow, and structured processes. By fusing these concepts, the Screen Industries can establish an adaptive culture where creative breakthroughs happen organically, without sacrificing project stability or artistic excellence in an intensely competitive global arena.

## 2.5. Empirical and Practical Insights

The Screen Industries—spanning film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video game development—depend on novel concepts, artistic vision, and shifting consumer tastes (Caves, 2002) based on new or existing intellectual property (IP). Teams are interdisciplinary, blending artists, animators, coders, writers, and producers (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). While this diversity enriches creativity, it also increases coordination challenges. Existing managerial frameworks commonly assume stable deliverables, yet research on creativity (Amabile, 1998; Townley and Beech, 2010) emphasises the exploratory dimension of ideation and the inherent subjectivity in evaluating outputs (e.g., whether a new game mechanic "feels right").

Projects, also known as "productions" in the Screen Industries, are defined by a large number of activities (jobs/tasks/events) that are performed in a logically determined sequence that has to be completed within a specific time, under a particular cost, whilst meeting performance standards (Agyei, 2015). Reliance upon time-intensive tasks as a form of control is a long-established practice, and due to the project-based structures of the Screen Industries, project management is a central pillar in which phased activities and the coordination of multi-disciplinary teams revolve (Finney, 2008). There is a "need for a control system to capture both technical and aesthetic work in this sector" (Hodgson and Briand, 2013:p. 15), but there are sceptics who remain frustrated by the elusiveness of creative staff and question if any project management techniques can successfully target in its entirety the technical, artistic, and economic aspects of the Screen Industries (Smith and McKinley, 2009: p.25).

Key decision-makers, various project management tools, software, milestone agreements, and team schedules, can help define processes, which gives the chance to take both a "prospective", in planning what can realistically be achieved in a given time period, and "retrospective", in tracking progress made against the scheduled timetable (Yakura, 2002). Producers and department leads, also known as Heads of Department (HOD), are closely associated with these project management tools and schedules, roles of which a more significant number are needed on larger project teams (Vallance, 2013: p.23). The overall responsibility of these roles is to complete the project on a date agreed with the studio or publisher, also known as the stakeholder,

with milestone agreements and team schedules being of utmost importance here to track and monitor continuing performance and outputs.

Managing projects in the Screen Industries requires a range of general managerial skills and specific skills in both the entrepreneurial and artistic or cultural aspects of the business operations (Brewka, 2008) to maximise the economic benefits and production success of their efforts (Pick *et al.*, 2015). However, there seems to be a neglect of management-specific discussions within the Screen Industries (Thompson *et al.*, 2007), and "while there is a wide body of research with regard to creativity, there is much less dedicated to the development of theory in creative industry management" (Pick *et al.*, 2015: p.756).

Management frameworks combine interlinked items that support a particular approach to a specific objective, communicate shared beliefs, and allow for a better understanding of the project within teams (Budler and Trkman, 2019). They allow principles and techniques to support a theory and practice that is adopted to complete projects successfully (Rezaei *et al.*, 2014; Swanson, 2007), and aim to improve collaboration and information sharing; essentially becoming the foundation of how a project runs and how everything pertaining to that project is communicated.

It is argued that frameworks like SWOT analysis are entirely worthless due to the "meaningless descriptions" that result from using this method (Hill and Westbrook, 1997; Postma and Liebl, 2005) and that oversimplification present too many uncertainties when applied to real-world environments (Bell and Rochford, 2016). However, it is still popular among major organisations, especially when formulating and designing new strategies and scenarios (Namugenyi *et al.*, 2019). With all of this in mind, it is important to study existing working methods and techniques for managing projects.

### 2.5.1. Traditional, Contemporary, and Hybrid Project Management Models

There is a distinct link to project management and the reliance on methods from external industries that have been adopted and adapted for all sectors of the Screen Industries. "Completing a project on time and within budget is not an easy task" (Agyei, 2015: p.222) and

accurate planning and scheduling is vital to overcome this problem especially as “all projects are unique endeavours, and one size does not fit all” (Mohindra and Srivastava, 2019: p.1).

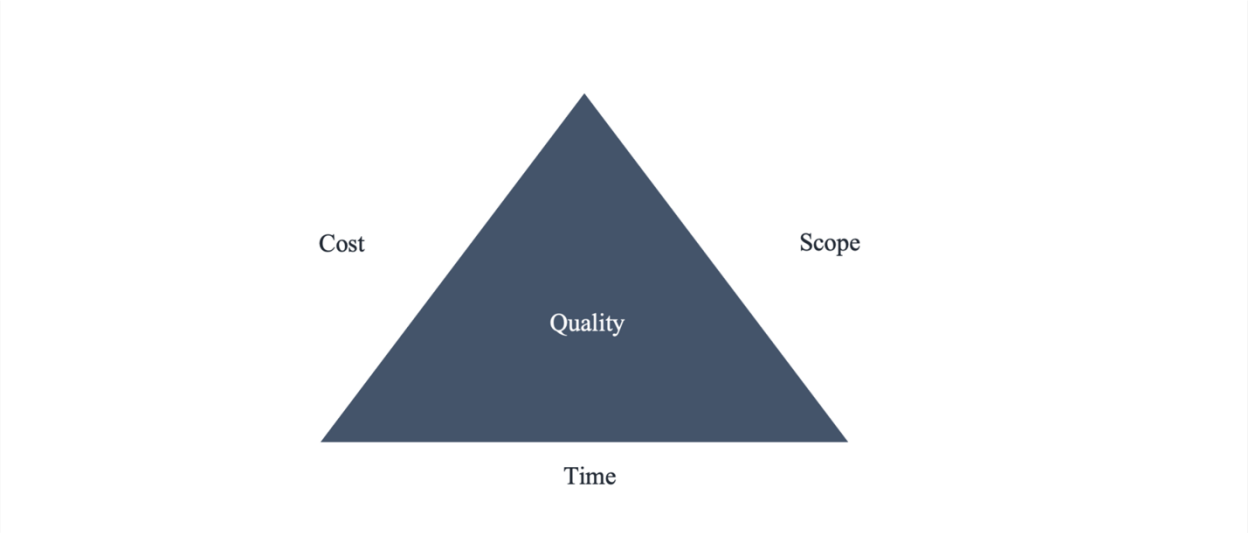
Traditional project management methodologies were built upon the PMI’s Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK) (PMI, 2017, 2021; and earlier versions). Initial developments like Project Planning and Scheduling (PPS) were later adapted and advanced into the now infamous Critical Path Method (CPM) and Project Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT). Established simultaneously, these systems enable managers to evaluate early and late times for tasks starting and finishing while helping to monitor the progress of stages, identify critical activities, and help shoe logical relations and cost on an overall project duration (Agyei, 2015).

Models such as PRINCE2, CCPM, Waterfall, and other designs formed in the 1990s have solid foundations built on the same PMBOK techniques but have become less popular with the invention of newer methods that allow for rapid development and multiple iterative cycles of projects and products. However, even older models, like Gantt charts developed by Henry Gantt (1861-1919), form a significant part of modern project management as they recognise the benefits of breaking projects into smaller tasks while accounting for task dependencies (Seymour and Hussein, 2014). For instance, this method perfectly accounts for the idiosyncrasies and peculiarities of the Screen Industries whilst breaking larger tasks into more minor duties while accounting for dependent tasks and multiple diversities in disciplines and outputs.

Additionally, the Project Management Triangle (Figure 2.5)—or “triple constraint”—positions time, cost, and scope as the principal determinants of project quality (Oisen, 1971; Van Wyngaard *et al.*, 2012). When one constraint shifts, the others must adapt, leading to the adage “good, fast, cheap—choose two.” The Project Management Institute (PMI) maintains that balancing these three dimensions is vital for on-time, on-budget deliveries with acceptable features (PMI, 2017, 2021). Josler and Burger (2005) argue that defining and controlling scope, promoting efficient communication, mitigating risk, and aligning goals can boost completion chances and stakeholder satisfaction (Milosevic and Patanakul, 2005). Despite its ubiquity, critics have long challenged the adequacy of this linear model (Cicmil *et al.*, 2009; Gallie *et al.*, 2012). Even in comparatively stable sectors like construction, plan-monitor-deliver approaches

can falter. Shenhar and Dvir (1997), Delone and McLean (2003), and Ralph and Kelly (2014) highlight additional success criteria—such as stakeholder impact, team learning, and user satisfaction—that can be especially pivotal in creative work, where intangible elements like artistic quality or narrative immersion may overshadow "on budget, on time." The origins of this model are unclear, it has been used since the 1950s as a form of project measurement (Atkinson, 1999), and productivity (cost), output (scope), and speed (time) are three core areas of project management that have spawned a remarkable number of management methods, tools, and techniques (Porter, 1985).

**Figure 2.5: The Project Management Triangle**




*Source: Van Wyngaard et al. (2012: p.1991).*

While more traditional methods excel in stable contexts, they often falter in the Screen Industries, where mid-project script changes or unanticipated technological advancements can invalidate upfront planning (Levitt, 2011). This shortcoming has sparked interest in iterative or more responsive frameworks such as Agile, Scrum, Lean, etc. Recognising the tension between iterative oversight and creative autonomy, several scholars recommend hybrid methods (Ng *et al.*, 2020), combining agile components (sprints, regular feedback) with more traditional milestones, critical-path analyses, and risk management techniques. Hodgson and Briand (2013) also spotlight self-managing teams (SMTs), drawing on Dean Elmuti's (1996, 2003) studies, which grant creative professionals the latitude to determine how and when tasks are

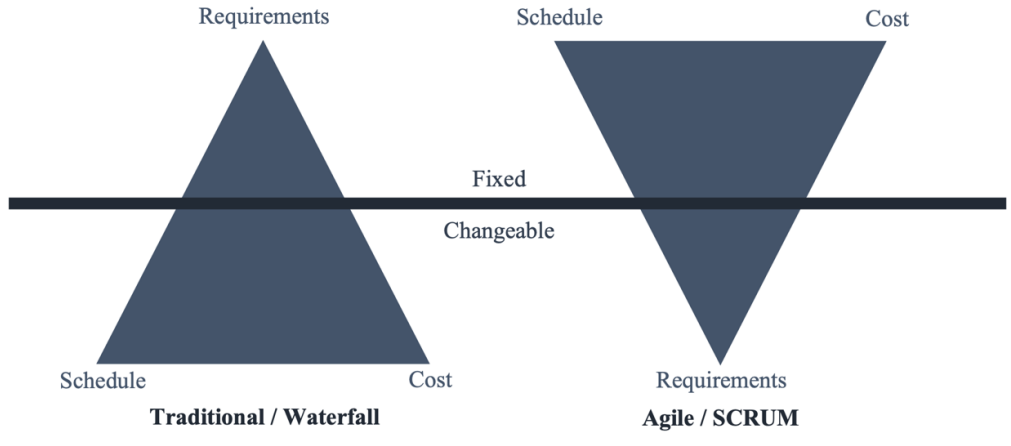
accomplished (Douglas and Gardner, 2004). Interdisciplinary groups, including writers, animators, and software developers, may benefit from such structures, which permit organic coordination around shared but adaptable goals (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2007; Haunschild and Eikhof, 2009). Abulnaga (2019) and Ng *et al.* (2020) provide us with a comprehensive breakdown of traditional versus agile methodologies (Table 2.2 and Figure 2.6).

**Table 2.2: Traditional vs Agile Project Categories**

| CATEGORIES | TRADITIONAL | AGILE |
|---|---|---|
| Development Model | Traditional | Iterative |
| Focus | Process | People |
| Management | Controlling | Facilitating |
| Customer Involvement | Requirements gathering and delivery phase | On-site and constantly involved |
| Developers | Work individually within teams | Collaborative or in pairs |
| Technology | Any | Mostly Object-Oriented |
| Product Features | All included | Most important first |
| Testing | End of development cycle | Iterative and/or Drives code |
| Documentation | Thorough | Only when needed |

*Source: Adapted from Abulnaga (2019); Ng et al. (2020).*

**Figure 2.6: Traditional vs Agile Project Management Methodologies**




*Source: Adapted from Abulnaga (2019); Ng et al. (2020).*

Typically used in software development to help businesses respond to unpredictability, Agile methods are a universally accepted method for videogame development, and "introduces an

entirely new framework for managing time, cost and scope" (Cottmeyer, 2010: p.1). Teams using Agile have more autonomy to decide how work will get done and what tasks are completed first, but the trade-off for this is frequent delivery. In contrast, the teams themselves are accountable for the success or failure to deliver, and similar techniques are applied to certain areas of film and television production.

Commonly, project management methods deployed within the Screen Industries are already described as "agile and iterative" as "the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the industry imposes the need for such an approach" (Petrović *et al.*, 2017). Petrović *et al.* (2017) continue to state that the management of creative projects must be flexible and open to change while increasing organisational adaptability, defined as "the ability to move quickly toward new opportunities, to adjust to volatile markets and to avoid complacency" (Birkinshaw and Gibson, 2004). Lin and Lin (2016) adapt, possibly enhance, and divide traditional project management into five separate stages: 1) Starting, 2) Planning, 3) Implementing, 4) Controlling, and 5) Ending. These stages are further developed into a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM), which includes a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and an Organisational Breakdown Structure (OBS). The WBS explains precisely what work is required at each stage, and the correlating OBS highlights the individual(s) responsible for completing the work at each stage. This forms a rigid structure for responsibility and accountability which is logical for businesses operating within the Screen Industries as they focus predominantly on group/team performance rather than individual achievement. An example of RAM, adapted for the Screen Industries, is shown in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM)**

| PM STAGES | OBS | WBS |
|---|---|---|
| Starting | Leader(s). | Project-based analysis. Structural inheritance. |
| Planning | Leader(s). HOD(s). | Objective and Strategic planning. Rough structure. |
| Implementing | HOD(s). Individual(s). | Structure and crew assignment development. |
| Controlling | Leader(s). HOD(s). | Service control. |
| End | Leader(s). HOD(s). Individual(s). | Service improving. |

*Source: Adapted from Lin and Lin (2016).*

The Screen Industries employ teams of creatives that are often temporary in nature. These groups of individuals bring diversities driven by personal interactions to push creative ambitions, goals, and output, with an individual's mood and disposition existing as a significant factor that can affect the performance of creative staff (Yudiarti and Lantu, 2015). They are brought together to perform complex or specialised tasks of multidisciplinary skills (Cohen and Bailey, 1997), even though they may have conflicting perspectives and loyalties (Ammeter *et al.*, 2002).

Hybrid management theories include more extreme approaches to organisational control. For instance, a concept created by Cali Ressler and Jody Thompson while working at Best Buy in the USA, Results Only Work Environment (ROWE) works on the principle that the only thing that matters is the results, not how you get there per se (Ressler and Thompson, 2013; GoRowe.com, 2014). It is a strategy where an organisation only compensates their staff for their outputs (results), irrespective of the time spent executing their duties and responsibilities. In their findings, there is a belief that "if you're at work, you're doing work", but they contest this by stating that "eighty-percent of companies lost productivity is from 'Presenteeism'–when someone is physically in the office but mentally somewhere else."

Ressler and Thompson (2013) continue their findings by stating that firms are governed by a "Four R's" framework: 1) Rules, 2) Roles, 3) Responsibilities, and 4) Relationships. However, a highly successful organisation is propelled by a fifth "R": 5) Results. This fosters a high trajectory of growth and recognition, which is the primary focus of teams operating under ROWE. The ROWE initiative involves an explicit critique and reconstruction of corporate culture. Companies adopting ROWE have been found to experience lower staff turnover, regardless of gender, age, or family life stage (Moen *et al.*, 2011). One factor not extensively analysed within ROWE is Csíkszentmihályi's concept of flow, or the flow state, which plays a crucial role in optimising creative performance (reinforcing Csíkszentmihályi, Abuhamdeh, and Nakamura, 2014; Csíkszentmihályi and Getzels, 1988; Massimini, Csíkszentmihályi, and Fave, 1988; Nakamura and Csíkszentmihályi, 2014; Townley and Beech, 2010; Tschang, 2007).

Using any new "liberated" regime of project management presents challenges corresponding to the failure of members of the team to comply. While associated iterative methodologies are

embraced by team members with a more technical role, other members resisted these approaches. Two specialist groups in particular, artists and animators, have been known to "detest" agile methodology because they believe their processes do not work effectively within the framework, meaning a "dual system" of management is then required (Hodgson and Briand, 2013). A quote from a Team Leader in Hodgson and Briand's 2013 study (p.13) stated that "the challenge for artists is that things can be very hard to identify. In programming, everything is very Cartesian. Their tasks are very mathematical and can be quantified. But in art, for one, it's hard to quantify the work; and for two, there are days when you're inspired and days when you're not and it's hard to manage that." A Producer in this study remarked that they turned to "personal monitoring to capture in an informal manner information on the artists' and animators' progress" (p.13) and that asking artists/animators to have their work completed by a specific date was not feasible.

Both of these statements could lead us to believe that there is a lack of knowledge from those in decision-making capacities within the Screen Industries. This assumption would feed into the assertion that "nobody knows anything" (Goldman, 1984; Caves, 2002) and is further supported by findings from Ng *et al.* (2020).

### 2.5.2. Creativity, Control, and the Tension of Managerial Interference

There is a belief that creative work is fulfilling, liberating, and drives individual initiative, moving away from hierarchical control (Peters, 1992; Audet and Roy, 2016), which would indicate that methods like Max Weber's (1864-1920) "Bureaucratic Management Theory" which divided organisations into hierarchical structures with rigid authority lines, and strict controlling functions for governance (McNamara, 2008), would not be a good match to these sectors. According to Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011), creatives show a strong desire to break free from traditional production processes and managerial control, and they are driven by empowering, flexible, and knowledge-based economics to drive production. They may then fit better with researcher Fred Fiedler's (1922-2017) idea of "Contingency Management Theory", which outlined that no one management approach works for every organisation and that adopting several methods may work best.

Frederick Taylor (2003) introduced "Scientific Management Theory", which is an approach that aims to simplify tasks to increase productivity, and this opinion resonates with Ng *et al.* (2020), who suggest that a combination of project management methods could lead to a foundation for better management of the Screen Industries (p.3). Some scholars stand conflicted on project management for any creative endeavours and state that creativity may be destroyed by close monitoring and require a degree of autonomy and experimentation, or there may be too much creativity and insufficient discipline (Unsworth, 2001), thus highlighting some of the fundamental challenges that managers face within the Screen Industries and the broader creative industries.

Contemporary agile frameworks feature short sprints, iterative reviews, and frequent stakeholder inputs, and are celebrated in chaotic or unpredictable domains (Cottmeyer, 2010; Richet, 2013). Agile's popularity in the Screen Industries—particularly for video games—derives from its capacity to pivot rapidly in response to design or market shifts (Bergmann and Karwowski, 2019). Yet, agile metrics such as velocity or burndown charts may undervalue qualitative, subjective features of artistic work (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009).

Consequently, applying agile in the Screen Industries often requires hybridisation or context-specific adjustments to preserve creative immersion while maintaining iterative oversight. Csíkszentmihályi's concept of flow (1978, 1990, 1997) posits that peak creativity emerges when individuals immerse themselves without disruption, balancing challenge and skill in a supportive environment (Csíkszentmihályi, Abuhamdeh, and Nakamura, 2014). Yet daily stand-ups, rigid sprint deadlines, or heavy scrutiny can fracture this state (Tschang, 2007). A "surveillance culture," bolstered by digital project management tools, may erode morale and stifle open dialogue (Hodgson, 2004). The paradox is that heightened managerial control can curtail a project's creative output in an industry where originality is pivotal for capturing audiences.

Purportedly, there is "inherent tension between the freedom to be creative and keeping this creativity within manageable and productive bounds" (Townley and Beech, 2010: p.7). This is confirmed by Bérubé and Demers (2019), who find that "creative organizations are characterized by a tension between creative work and business" (p.314) and creative workers fall into "four

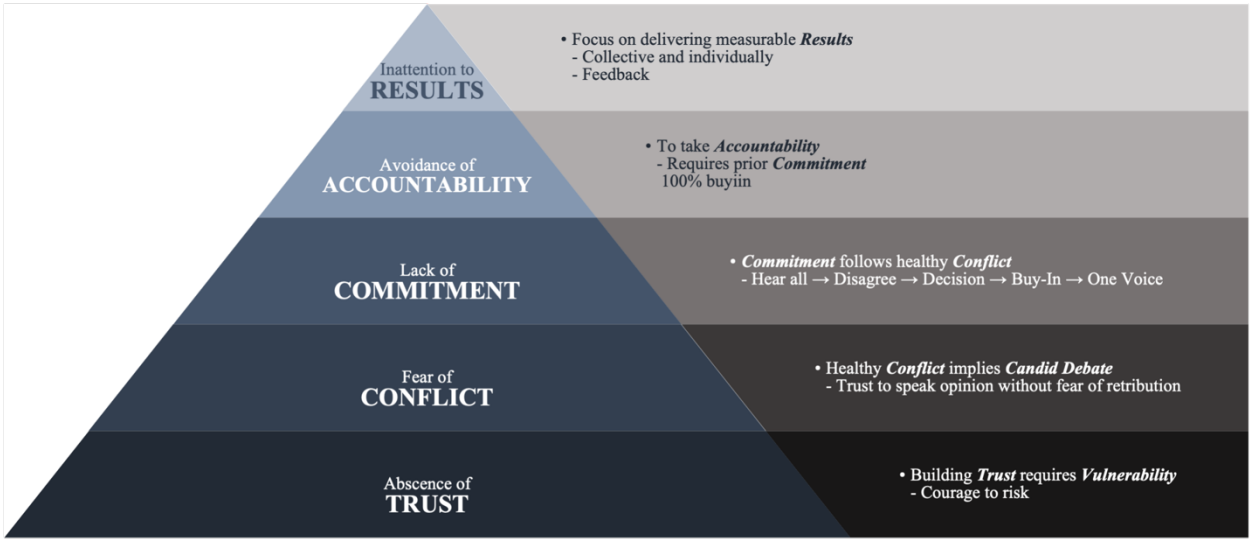
profiles for the management of creative work"; 1) Versatile, 2) Creator, 3) Manager, and 4) Technician (p.315, p.325). A significant degree of coordination is needed between these different disciplinary groups due to dependencies between their inputs to the value chain and the woven challenges that face production processes. This brings logic to the scheduling of operations for each phase of production and daily activities but removes focus on the features of the final creative output (Vallance, 2013: pp.21–23). Further complications arise with the concept that creative logic does not match the logic of commercialisation or management (Thompson *et al.*, 2009: pp.51–53). Consequently, it can be thought of that autonomy is critical, but only in areas of specialised tasks and not project-wide.

Contracts have traditionally served as formal control mechanisms in creative contexts, specifying deliverables, timelines, and potential penalties (Caves, 2002; Thompson *et al.*, 2009). Yet strictly contractual oversight often overlooks crucial relational dynamics such as trust or mutual reciprocity (Smith and McKinley, 2009). Overly rigid contractual stipulations may deter the spontaneity and open communication necessary for creative innovation (Townley and Beech, 2010), while low-trust environments promote knowledge silos and undermine collaborative synergy. Hodgson and Briand's (2013) examination of "crazy things" blocks—periods of unstructured free time—highlights this trust-versus-oversight tension. Staff viewed these blocks as ineffective or even condescending, indicating that merely granting "creative time" does not guarantee genuine innovation. Clarity, respect, and genuine recognition are essential for such initiatives; otherwise, they can appear tokenistic or suggest management does not genuinely value creative work. Scholars like Townley and Beech (2010) and Lawson and Price (2009) advocate incentivised milestones instead, rewarding timely or early completion with truly free downtime. This approach resonates with creative staff who value autonomy, especially when it is earned and acknowledged, and—when combined with self-managed teams (Elmuti, 1996) and strong leadership—can sustain morale and productivity without jeopardising the budget or schedule.

With many unknown factors within the Screen Industries and their projects, Lawson and Price (2009) argue that four elements drive successful organisational change: a unifying vision, a reward structure that supports desired behaviours, appropriate skill sets, and key role models

who exemplify the new norms. Misalignment at the leadership level becomes apparent if managers cling to hierarchical oversight or neglect trust-building behaviours (Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008). Florida's (2003) model of the creative class highlights Talent, Tolerance, and Technology as cornerstones, but Radomska *et al.* (2019) add Trust as a fourth, essential "T." Lencioni (2002) and Townley and Beech (2010) similarly underscore the need for trust in fostering creative synergy. Even when Tolerance and advanced Technology are present, fear of conflict (Hodgson, 2004) can prevent teams from candidly sharing ideas and constructive criticism. Trust effectively serves as the "infrastructure" that fosters open dialogue, a dimension often overlooked by purely technical planning or traditional Waterfall approaches. Lencioni's (2002) model underscores that top-down visibility of trust, accountability, and open conflict resolution fosters team unity (Figure 2.7). However, these ideals must be applied throughout the organisation; isolated creative departments can otherwise clash with more traditional, top-down units (Smith and McKinley, 2009).

**Figure 2.7: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team**




*Source: Lencioni (2002, 2006).*

A pervasive culture of trust is particularly vital for creative industries, where ongoing idea generation depends on open communication and minimal fear of judgment (Lencioni, 2002, 2006). Yet implementing trust principles in only one department is insufficient if upper management remains hierarchical or measures success purely by individual metrics. On the more

structured side, Lin and Lin (2016) propose dividing projects into five stages—Starting, Planning, Implementing, Controlling, and Ending—paired with a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM), Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), and Organisational Breakdown Structure (OBS). These tools clarify responsibilities, helping organisations track budgets more effectively and accommodate creative digressions without overwhelming the production pipeline (Brown, 2009; Yudiarti and Lantu, 2015). Nevertheless, such frameworks must be flexible enough to absorb last-minute inspirations or substantial revisions frequently seen in screen-based projects.

### 2.5.3. Financial Oversight in Creative Processes

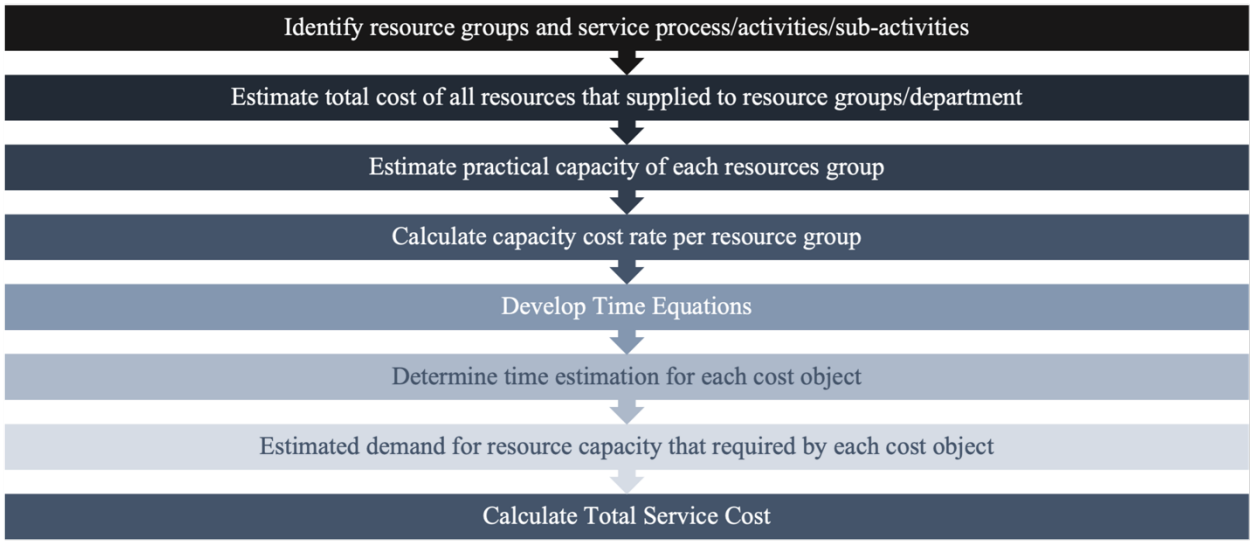
Although creative work is intangible, financial and accounting demands cannot be bypassed. There is no diversion or escape from the economics of the Screen Industries, and budgets and schedules are inextricably linked, both affecting the success or failure of a project. Dyson (2010) characterises accounting as an information system that reveals how resources are allocated. In the Screen Industries, budgets can inflate when additional visual effects, re-shoots, or expansions become essential mid-project (Pick *et al.*, 2015).

In creative contexts, budget overruns can degrade quality, and scope creep can derail resource allocations (Agyei, 2015). Here, Porter's (1985) concept of value creation remains highly relevant: every part of production should enhance or preserve value, whether tangible or intangible. In film, television, or gaming, intangible aspects—brand resonance, intellectual property (IP), franchising potential—may outweigh immediate financial returns. Porter's approach, at the project or firm level, underscores how scripting, shooting, editing, or marketing cumulatively shape the final outcome. Petrović *et al.* (2017) note that creative projects often face high volatility, incomplete information, and evolving client feedback, complicating efforts to pin down cost, timeline, and scope. Scope creep becomes practically inevitable when new ideas emerge mid-development, underscoring the shortcomings of traditional triple-constraint logic in capturing the subjective, exploratory nature of creative production. These flaws are compounded by a widespread lack of project management competency—particularly in leadership positions—across many Screen Industry organisations (Ng *et al.*, 2020; Pick *et al.*, 2015; Thompson *et al.*, 2007). Such deficits can precipitate project failures, reinforcing the notion that "nobody knows

anything" (Goldman, 1984; Caves, 2002; Hodgson and Briand, 2013) when accurately predicting or guiding creative outputs.

Activity-Based Costing (ABC) and Time-Driven ABC (TDABC) help managers connect specific costs to particular tasks or processes (Cooper and Kaplan, 1991; Kaplan and Anderson, 2007), a vital strategy in multi-phase productions with high variability in overhead. However, ABC/TDABC systems require constant data gathering and frequent cost-driver adjustments—an effort-intensive requirement in environments prone to iterative pivots (Rasiah, 2011; Santhi *et al.*, 2012). Many creative organisations thus avoid or partially adopt these methods, risking gaps in accounting for ephemeral concept development or intangible "spark" phases. Still, when applied effectively, ABC/TDABC can reveal potential budget overruns early and indicate which departments or project stages yield the strongest return (see Figure 2.8 for a breakdown of TDABC Procedures).

**Figure 2.8: Time-Driven Activity-Based Costing (TDABC) Procedures**




*Source: Everaert et al., 2008; Kaplan and Anderson, 2007.*

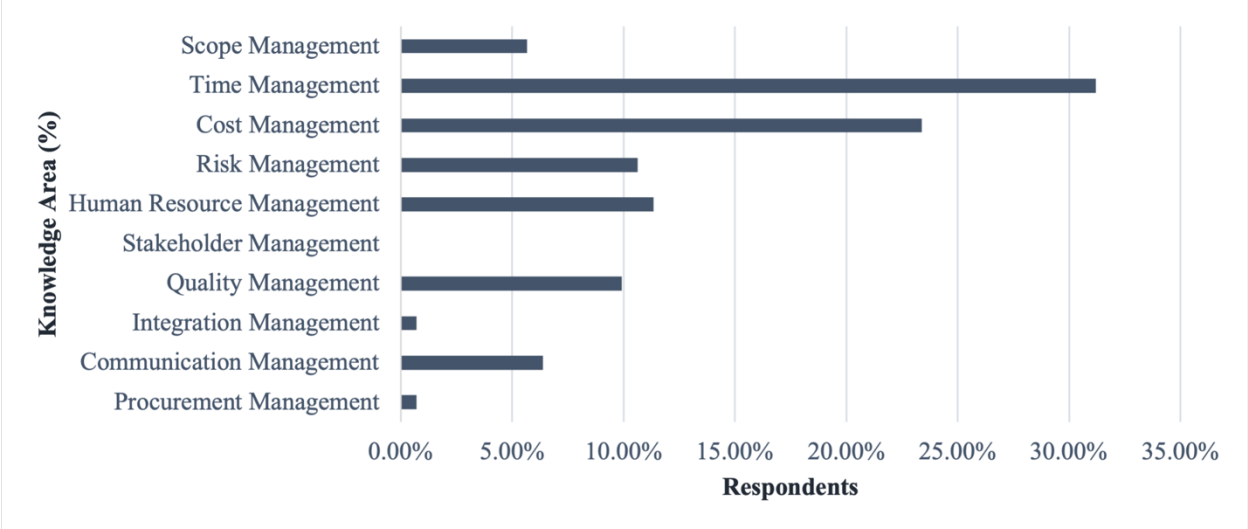
### 2.5.4. A Consequential Lack of Understanding

Many have tried to tame and govern both creativity and control within the Screen Industries sectors (Smith and McKinlay, 2009; Townley and Beech, 2010), yet empirical studies indicate that the control and management have been reinvented (Clegg and Courpasson, 2004; Hodgson,

2004), strengthened (Briand and Bellemare, 2006), and have shifted into project management systems and the technologies governing them (Clegg and Courpasson, 2004; Hodgson, 2004). Petrović *et al.* (2017) comment that one of the main problems that face creative projects is uncertainty regarding the finished product. Although there is a provisional plan, it rarely comes to fruition due to changes during project realisation. They also mention that decisions are made on incomplete information through dynamic and changing environments where there may be issues in team engagement, difficulties in operational planning, project scope changes (even during later stages), and the participation of experts from different disciplines. These are not unique issues found only within the Screen Industries, yet it seems that there is an evident lack of knowledge within creative production regarding the fundamentals of processes, operations, management, and leadership.

These knowledge gaps make a significant contribution to project failure rates, emphasising incompetency, rather than complexity (Pick *et al.*, 2015; Thompson *et al.*, 2007). This corroborates the findings of Ng *et al.* (2020: p.6), which show that comprehension of basic project management techniques is missing from the sectors of the Screen Industries (Figure 2.9).

**Figure 2.9: Familiarity of Project Management Knowledge Areas**




*Source: Ng et al. (2020).*

This is a significant discovery but becomes even more critical when also factoring surveys conducted by the PMI (2018), which asked a total of 5,402 professionals for their feedback which highlighted that 58% of organisations understand the value of project management, 93% of which used standardised project management practices (p.04). Findings from that same survey concluded that the top drivers of project success include three key areas: 1) Project support, 2) Project scope, and 3) Project delivery (pp.6–8). "Support of a project is priceless" (p.6). The communication between "influencers" and "implementers" (leadership and staff) is vital to getting this support, and it has also been declared that "effective communication" is also "paramount for success" generally (Davenport *et al.*, 2004; Meadows and Merali, 2003). "Scope creep - the uncontrolled expansion of product or project scope without adjustments to time, cost, and resources" (PMI, 2018: p.07) is a huge problem. Although it can happen on any project this is acutely evident in the Screen Industries, particularly in the video games sector. Competency to deliver a project is the third driver, and a team or an organisation's capabilities to produce under the three constraints (time, scope, cost) are vital (p.8). The PMI (2018) also outlines that the future of successful project delivery will require a spectrum of approaches – predictive, iterative, incremental, agile, hybrid, and future ways of working (p.11). It is a considerable challenge if traditional and basic concepts are not already clearly understood.

### 2.5.5. Concluding Observations and Synthesis on Literature and Practice

Literature suggests neither traditional nor agile methods alone suffice for the Screen Industries. Traditional scheduling tools like CPM or PERT may be adept at controlling timelines but struggle with sudden changes in scope or intangible creative goals, while agile nurtures iterative experimentation yet can disrupt deeper creative engagement (Hodgson and Briand, 2013). Consequently, multiple scholars recommend hybrid or context-tailored frameworks that blend established milestones, short sprints, trust-building measures, and carefully designed incentives (Ng *et al.*, 2020; Townley and Beech, 2010). Lencioni's (2002) emphasis on trust, constructive conflict, commitment, and accountability necessitates company-wide alignment: top leadership must abandon rigid or punitive approaches (Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008) to avoid undermining newly implemented systems. Unfortunately, frameworks are often adopted under ignorance, a novelty value, or a best-guess scenario, potentially causing damage to an organisation and

removing the possibility of adopting a more suitable framework (Benders and Van Veen, 2001; Mamman, 2002).

Persistent leadership gaps in the Screen Industries—where inexperienced producers or HoDs can inadvertently derail projects (Pick *et al.*, 2015; Thompson *et al.*, 2007)—further demonstrate why consistent knowledge and vision at the highest levels are critical. Misguided "creative blocks" (Hodgson and Briand, 2013) can trivialise innovation time; shifting to earned downtime or incentivised milestones aligns better with creative workers' need for recognition (Townley and Beech, 2010; Lawson and Price, 2009). Coupled with self-managed teams (SMT) (Elmuti, 1996) and supportive leadership, such systems strengthen morale and maintain coherence with budgetary constraints. Finally, ABC/TDABC can integrate art with commerce by pinpointing cost overruns early, provided leaders preserve creative freedom and avoid oppressive micromanagement (Townley and Beech, 2010).

Taken together, the Screen Industries present a complex, paradoxical environment for project management. Leaders juggle budget discipline and deadlines with free-flowing creativity that defies linear planning. Ultimately, trust stands out as a crucial enabler: it encourages open communication, collaborative innovation, and reliance on relational norms over rigid control (Smith and McKinley, 2009; Townley and Beech, 2010). Still, trust must be reinforced by organisational infrastructure: appropriate metrics, fair reward systems, and aligned leadership. Whether free creative blocks or structured "earned" downtime, incentives must avoid tokenism or cynicism. Above all, organisational adaptability (Birkinshaw and Gibson, 2004) remains key, allowing frameworks to flex with each project's shifting demands while preserving continuity in the face of unpredictable creative breakthroughs.

Skilled teams want autonomy and flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997; Csíkszentmihályi, Abuhamdeh, and Nakamura, 2014) for new ideas; organisations require consistent routines to handle multimillion-dollar budgets. Operational effectiveness (OE) entails surpassing competitors in scheduling or resource management (Porter, 1985). Competitive advantage (CA) demands singular, audience-catching content. Leaders must integrate autonomy and flow with structural discipline, mindful of real-world constraints. A robust management approach in the

Screen Industries must weave together project management theory, creativity research, organisational behaviour, and financial oversight into one coherent tapestry—respecting both the artistry and the commercial imperatives that define these fast-paced, high-stakes sectors.

## 2.6. Literature Conclusion

The literature examined here shows that the Screen Industries—defined as encompassing film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—share a distinctive set of production, labour, and technological conditions. Across various regional classifications, these sectors share overlapping pipelines, iterative workflows, and a profound reliance on intellectual property. This environment underscores a tension between creative spontaneity and operational rigour, particularly because frequent rework, budgetary pressures, and rapid technology shifts make purely linear frameworks insufficient. Scholars have identified the importance of conceptualising value in more than financial terms, acknowledging that intangible outputs such as brand equity, audience trust, and the potential for IP licensing can carry as much weight as initial box-office or unit-sales figures. At the same time, the recurring "nobody knows" principle highlights the market's inherent unpredictability, demanding management and leadership practices that accommodate last-minute changes, artistic risk-taking, and potential returns that can extend far beyond immediate release windows.

Taken collectively, these insights highlight why many standard management methods prove incomplete when applied to the Screen Industries. Although established project management approaches and leadership theories offer valuable anchors, the literature calls for hybrid or adaptive frameworks that marry rigorous oversight with creative autonomy. Trust, incentive alignment, and non-linear value-chain mapping all feature as pivotal considerations when bridging imaginative aspiration with day-to-day organisational demands. By situating each sub-sector's requirements within a broader creative ecosystem and acknowledging that iterative processes often cross disciplinary boundaries, this review underlines how operational effectiveness and competitive advantage will hinge on adaptable leadership, dynamic resource allocation, and a nuanced understanding of what "value" entails in cultural production.

## 2.7. Research Gap

A first gap, directly linked to how the Screen Industries are categorised and defined (Research Question 1), centres on the varied and sometimes conflicting taxonomies used by different countries and institutions. Although there is scholarly consensus that digital technologies, short-term contracts, and project-based approaches shape these sectors, there remains insufficient clarity on how emerging platforms—such as gaming engines and streaming services—should be integrated into overarching industry definitions. A second gap concerns the management of intangible, unpredictable value (Research Question 2): although Porter's value chain and agile-inspired planning capture practical dimensions, a more robust understanding of how creative revisions, iterative decision-making, and audience-driven pivots alter economic and cultural outcomes is lacking. These dynamics complicate traditional cost-benefit calculations and highlight the need for project management tools sensitive to iterative rework and creative "spark."

With regard to leadership and management frameworks (Research Question 3), a third gap persists in detailing how leaders can navigate extremes of creative autonomy and contractual constraint. While transformational leadership has been shown to amplify innovation, sustainable project outcomes also require transaction-focused checks and balances—yet scholarship offers few clear guidelines on blending these styles across unpredictable production cycles. Lastly, and most urgently, there is a need to create and refine a dedicated process management model that can systematically boost operational effectiveness (OE) and cultivate competitive advantage (CA) (Research Question 4). Fragmented evidence suggests that neither purely traditional nor fully agile methodologies suffice when creativity is a primary driver. Future inquiry must thus map how trust, flexible scheduling, and iterative workflows can coexist with standardised oversight mechanisms, a form of integrative process management that could be generalised across multiple sub-sectors of the Screen Industries.

# 3. Methodology

## 3.1. Research Design

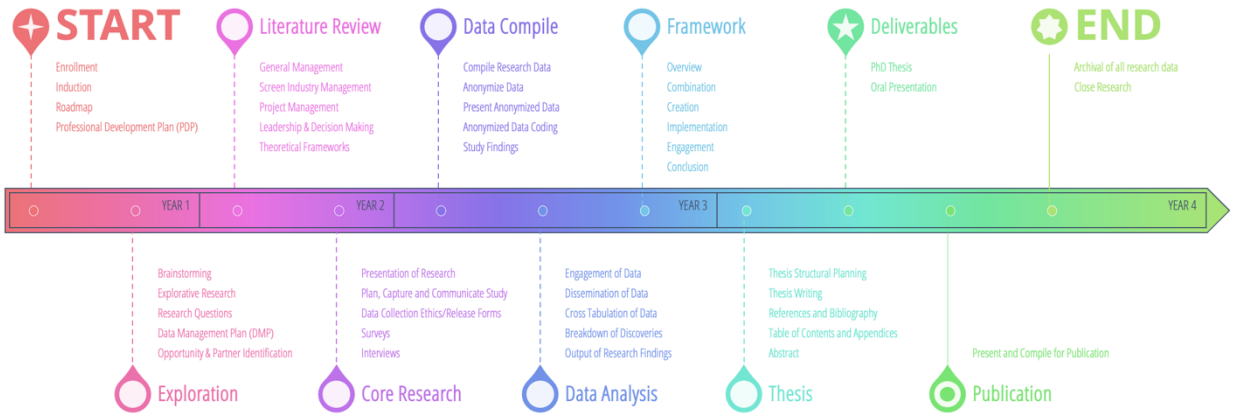
This chapter outlines the comprehensive methodological framework developed to explore the operational structures, leadership dynamics, and value systems that underpin production within the international Screen Industries. The study investigates how these industries function across creative and commercial contexts and whether tailored process management strategies can enhance operational effectiveness and competitive advantage. To capture the multifaceted nature of this inquiry, a convergent mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques. This design combined 503 survey responses with 24 semi-structured interviews, enabling the research to draw on both the breadth of numerical data and the depth of practitioner insight. This blended strategy supports a holistic understanding of the complex, interdependent systems that characterise the Screen Industries (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

The Screen Industries present a complex amalgamation of creative, technical, administrative, and logistical processes, which poses a challenging environment for operations and additional challenges for research into these nuanced activities. Characterised by a technology-driven, dynamic, fast-paced, and project-based nature, operations within the Screen Industries are highly skilled, and the problem-solving required is often unique (see Elkjaer and Felding, 2020b). With this study aiming to understand the multifaceted components of these sectors better and to target the creation of a universal framework, a theoretical understanding and practical insight into the industry are required. This necessitates a robust, flexible research methodology that can capture the nuanced realities of the Screen Industries that can contribute to the academic discourse and offer practical insights and solutions. This dual aim requires a methodological approach that can integrate theoretical concepts with real-world practices and experiences, meaning choices made in this study are deliberate and strategic, designed to address the specific research questions and objectives while acknowledging the unique context of the Screen Industries.

This chapter offers a comprehensive roadmap of the methodological journey taken in this study, detailing each step in the research process from initial conceptualisation to data collection, analysis, and reporting. Transparency at each stage is given, allowing readers to understand the

methodological rigour and systematic approach that underpins the research. To ensure that this research was undertaken in a committed timeframe with emphasis on the highest level of academic rigour, a visual roadmap created at the start of this process kept focus and direction for the author while giving concise and clear milestones which needed to be hit for this study to be a success. Throughout this research, updates were made every six months to allow autonomy for any changes from collected research data. The final roadmap is displayed in Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1: Phased Sequential Research Design – The Flow of Research Data**




*Source: N/A*

At its core, this research explores how operational effectiveness (OE) within the processes of international media and entertainment can be managed more efficiently, leading to a competitive advantage (CA) in organisations working within film, television, documentary, commercials, and video games—referred to as the Screen Industries for the purposes of this investigation. This investigation positions its discoveries between the interdisciplinary areas of business, processes, management, and creativity, filling gaps in current information relating to the management of productions in the Screen Industries and their operations within national and global geographic and distribution territories. The study is framed by the following four research questions:

1. How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?
2. How is “value” conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?

3. What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?
4. Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?

These questions represent a thoughtful and systematic approach to unravelling the intricacies of this field and aim to contribute significant theoretical and practical advancement to the disciplines of creative leadership and process management while adding valuable knowledge to the creative sectors that predominantly focus on creative outputs rather than processes and management. Through a methodical exploration of each research question, the study systematically gathers and compares both theoretical insights from academic literature (for example, on value chains, leadership, and creative project management) and practical data (from surveys and interviews with active industry professionals).

This iterative collection and analysis process lets the researcher pinpoint real-world challenges—like budget constraints, flexible work arrangements, or creative bottlenecks—and match these issues to proven theoretical principles on leadership, flow, and organisational design. In doing so, the study synthesises academic models with direct industry feedback, culminating in a bespoke process management framework that is grounded in established scholarship, borne from direct experience and further informed by the insights and experiences of film, television, commercial, documentary, and video game practitioners. Having a dual grounding in theory and practice ensures that the resulting framework is both academically rigorous (meeting scholarly standards for concept clarity and evidence) and immediately actionable for professionals (offering concrete steps, practices, and metrics aligned with the Screen Industries' collaborative, fast-paced workflows).

With the central research questions guiding this study and grounded in the author's firsthand industry experience, it could initially appear that this work adopts a deductive epistemology—one that begins with established theories or hypotheses and then tests these within the Screen Industries (see Elkjaer and Felding, 2020a; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). However, upon deeper consideration, the study's true epistemological stance is more nuanced. While the

background of this research indeed draws on prior theoretical developments (including the TEMPLAR methodology proposed by Jones, 2015) and the author's lived professional practice, the emphasis on gathering new data—via both qualitative and quantitative means—means that findings emerge inductively from the data analysis (see Bryman, 2008; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010).

In essence, the study weaves together two epistemological traditions. On one hand, it acknowledges the positivist inclination toward systematic, often numerical, methods of inquiry (see Comte, 1855; Creswell, 2014), which allow for objective measurement and the testing of pre-existing assumptions about leadership or process efficiency. On the other hand, it recognises an interpretivist perspective (see Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2015), wherein subjective, qualitative insights from industry practitioners illuminate how creative work is experienced, navigated, and understood in their unique contexts. The ontological stance of this study aligns most closely with pragmatism, which bridges the gap between positivist and interpretivist paradigms by focusing on practical applications of knowledge (Morgan, 2007). Pragmatism acknowledges that reality is shaped by both objective and subjective experiences, making it well-suited for a mixed-methods approach where both quantitative measurement and qualitative interpretation are necessary (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). This research, therefore, operates under the assumption that process management in the Screen Industries involves both measurable operational factors and the subjective experiences of industry professionals. By adopting a pragmatic ontological position, the study ensures that findings are both empirically valid and contextually meaningful, allowing for the integration of diverse perspectives from industry practitioners.

### 3.1.1. Mixed-Methods Research Design

By uniting these positions—deductive testing alongside inductive exploration—the project aims to capture both the measurable facets of operational effectiveness (resource utilisation, production timelines) and the subjective, experiential dimensions of the creative process (collaboration, leadership dynamics). Consequently, the resulting epistemological approach is pluralistic: it refuses to be confined solely to a hypothesis-testing model or an exclusively interpretivist viewpoint (see Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Morgan, 2007). Instead, it leverages the

strengths of both traditions to build a more holistic, multi-layered understanding of Screen Industry realities—one that is empirically robust yet mindful of the interpretive richness that arises from creative work (see Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Therefore, a mixed-methods research design has been adopted for this study, rooted in a pragmatic worldview that values both qualitative and quantitative data for their complementary insights (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). In practical terms, this approach integrates time-tested methods such as Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2021; Bryman, 2008; Gibbs, 2007, 2010) and Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2003) to provide a multifaceted exploration of the research problem. By synthesising different data types, the study addresses both the breadth and depth of the Screen Industries—encompassing definitions, value chains, process management, and leadership—while allowing for nuanced insights that purely single-method studies might overlook.

The benefits of such a design go beyond one-dimensional explanations, enabling the construction of a conceptual and methodological framework suited to the dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of these sectors. In effect, it serves as a structured yet flexible blueprint that guides data collection, analysis, and integration, examining everything from individual attitudes and behaviours to broader organisational systems. This pragmatic commitment to mixed methods acknowledges the inherent complexity of screen-based enterprises and underpins the rationale for weaving together qualitative and quantitative lines of inquiry. Throughout the research, extensive note-taking in the Cornell Notes Format (Pauk and Owens, 2010) supported both linear and non-linear thinking, ensuring a robust, iterative engagement with the data.

### 3.1.2. Qualitative Component: Understanding Professional Experience

The qualitative component of this research is explicitly designed to venture deeply into the subjective experiences, perceptions, and nuanced challenges faced by professionals in the Screen Industries. Although qualitative approaches are exceedingly diverse, complex, and subtle (Holloway and Todres, 2003), a phenomenological and narrative approach to the data assists in realising and articulating how individuals experience a particular phenomenon from their perspective. Phenomenological research, as underscored by Husserl (1970) and further refined

by Moustakas (1994), attempts to describe and interpret the essence or core meaning of lived experiences as perceived by individuals. It underscores the importance of subjective perception, personal interpretation, and the relational contexts of those experiences. In this sense, phenomenological research seeks to understand how individuals construct the meaning of their situations, focusing on first-hand experiences (Holloway and Todres, 2003; McLeod, 2001; Smith and Osborn, 2003). Narratives, likewise, capture the rich contextual layers that define how experiences unfold over time. By applying both phenomenological and narrative techniques, this research is oriented towards gathering data that highlight the depth and texture of experiences within the Screen Industries, making it possible to unearth how participants perceive, interpret, and make sense of their professional worlds.

Elements of this qualitative study are anchored in the principles of Critical System Heuristics (CSH), created by Werner Ulrich (Ulrich, 2000) and subsequently expanded upon by Martin Reynolds (Ulrich and Reynolds, 2010). CSH offers a framework for understanding how people and groups ascertain what is pertinent to a given scenario, exploring the notion of 'selectivity' and the 'assumptions of facts' among individuals while simultaneously considering sources of motivation, power, knowledge, and legitimation. Each of these factors constitutes direct attributes that substantiate certain debates and considerations in this research.

Inevitably, bias and subjectivity permeate studies of this nature, making bracketing an indispensable practice for mitigating the influence of preconceived notions. Bracketing entails the researcher's ongoing recognition and temporary setting aside of personal biases, assumptions, and prior knowledge so that the interpretation of data primarily reflects the participants' perspectives (Husserl, 1970; Moustakas, 1994). Within this study, the combined proficiency of the researcher and the industry experts interviewed further aids in identifying similarities and differences across the data, thereby helping to minimise undue partiality and permitting a more balanced body of information to be reported. For instance, as the author has two decades of industry experience, there was an awareness of potential biases in perceiving leadership effectiveness. To mitigate this, preconceptions were actively documented in a reflexivity journal before engaging with the interview data, ensuring that emerging themes were data-driven rather than influenced by prior industry experience.

### 3.1.3. Quantitative Component: Measuring Broader Industry Trends

The quantitative component of this study aimed to measure and analyse key aspects of leadership, process, and value across a broad sample, establishing a generalisable understanding of operational effectiveness in the Screen Industries. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency, variability, and frequency, were used to summarise the data and highlight initial trends (Flick, 2021). Spearman's Rank Correlation was applied to examine relationships between leadership effectiveness, workflow structures, and project outcomes. Multiple regression modelling was employed to identify the most influential predictors of operational effectiveness and competitive advantage (Francis, 2021). Chi-Square tests were also conducted to explore associations between categorical variables. The statistical findings were then integrated with qualitative themes to support a comprehensive, mixed-methods interpretation of the data.

### 3.1.4. Triangulation and Data Validation

Triangulation was employed throughout the study to enhance the validity and reliability of findings by cross-verifying data from multiple sources and perspectives (Denzin, 2012; Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Flick, 2018). This included methodological triangulation (combining surveys and interviews), data triangulation (drawing from different participant groups), and investigator triangulation (analysing results through multiple analytical lenses). Together, these strategies helped prevent narrow interpretations and encouraged a more comprehensive understanding of the data. An iterative research design further supported this approach, with each phase of data collection informing subsequent analysis. This allowed for flexible refinement of inquiry while maintaining a coherent methodological structure (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

To strengthen the credibility of findings, multiple validation techniques were applied. These included cross-checking participant responses to identify both consistencies and divergences, comparing qualitative insights with quantitative trends to assess alignment between narrative themes and statistical patterns, and refining focus areas as new findings emerged (Flick, 2018; Denzin, 2012). By integrating these elements, the study presents a robust and responsive mixed-methods framework for addressing leadership, process, and value challenges within the Screen

Industries. The combination of structured survey data, in-depth interview narratives, and statistical modelling ensures that the conclusions are both theoretically grounded and practically relevant.

### 3.1.5. A Structured but Adaptive Research Model

The mixed-methods design allows for a comprehensive understanding of creative workflows, which are often complex, evolving, and shaped by various internal and external factors. By integrating qualitative insights with quantitative validation, the study provides a detailed view of how creative and operational dimensions intersect in the Screen Industries.

This methodology ensures that findings remain adaptable, allowing for ongoing refinement of research instruments and analytical techniques. Qualitative approaches offer insight into the complexity of creative work, while quantitative methods provide clear measurements of production processes, resource management, and efficiency. The combination of both methods ensures that the study offers valuable insights for both academic research and industry practice.

By incorporating sector-specific comparisons, statistical validation, and iterative refinement, this study presents a structured yet flexible research model capable of addressing the dynamic nature of the Screen Industries. The integration of thematic and statistical insights strengthens the reliability of findings, offering a research framework that balances theoretical exploration with industry application.

### 3.1.6. Potential Challenges of Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies

While the integrated use of both qualitative and quantitative methods (a hallmark of mixed-methods research) brings a robust, comprehensive perspective, it is not without its challenges. A primary difficulty concerns the philosophical paradigms associated with each tradition: qualitative research frequently aligns with interpretivist stances that emphasise subjective realities, whereas quantitative research typically reflects positivist or post-positivist views that highlight objectivity and generalisability (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). Reconciling these different worldviews demands careful methodological and conceptual framing to avoid internal conflicts in the research design. Furthermore, mixing methods can lead to complexities in data

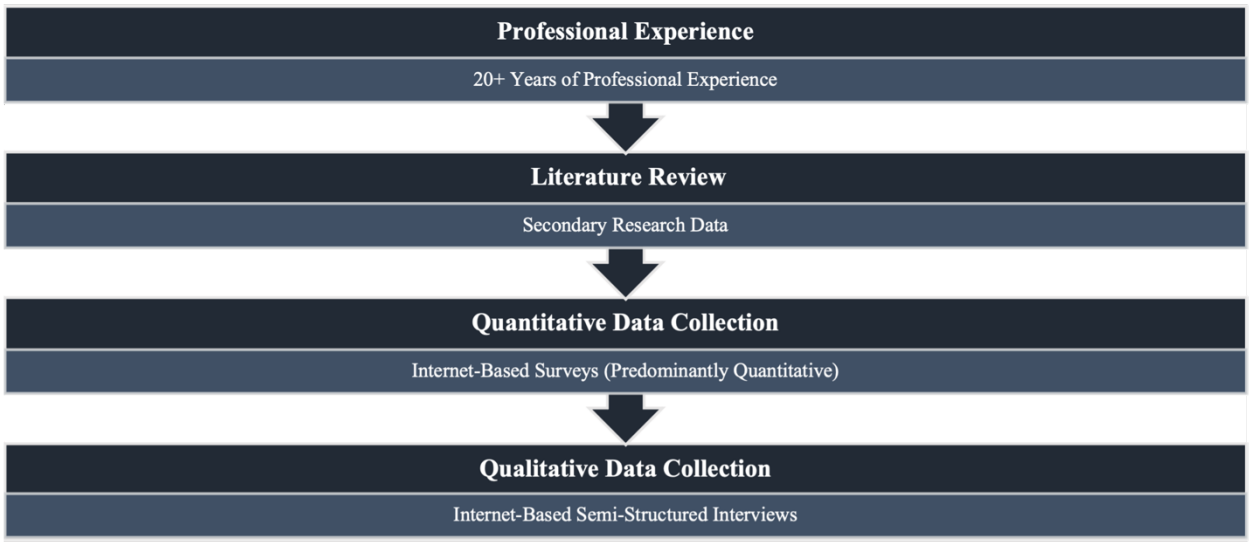
analysis, as integrating themes, narratives, and statistical findings entails more advanced and time-consuming interpretive processes. Researchers must also remain vigilant about managing potential biases when they shift between inductive qualitative analysis and deductive quantitative validation. Resource constraints—time, funding, and expertise—can similarly become a limiting factor, given the additional effort, skill sets, and infrastructure required to collect and analyse two types of data effectively. Additionally, in studies with multi-disciplinary participants like those in the Screen Industries, ensuring consistent engagement from both creative and operational professionals can present logistical and ethical challenges, necessitating a well-thought-out sampling strategy and data management plan to maintain the integrity of the research findings.

## 3.2. Sequential Phases

The research questions posed in this study require a process-based exploration, where findings from one method can improve the current phase or inform and refine the subsequent phases of research. This iterative process is inherent in a mixed-methods design, allowing for a dynamic and responsive approach to the study, enhancing the data gathered, and fitting perfectly with the requirements of this complex research.

Due to this research branching from this author's own lived experiences and involvement within the Screen Industries, an explanatory strategy— where qualitative data is collected and analysed first, followed by quantitative data—could have been used as it is an approach is beneficial when exploring a new or complex phenomenon that is not well understood. However, a sequential exploratory strategy, the opposite of the explanatory strategy, has been employed as the sequential explanatory strategy involves collecting and analysing quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data. In this case, the qualitative phase explains and builds upon the initial quantitative results, providing depth and context to the statistical findings, which is beneficial for the complexity and cross-discipline nature of the study. Figure 3.2 highlights the phased sequential process in which the findings from one phase positively affect the flow of information and data into the next.

**Figure 3.2: Phased Sequential Research Design – The Flow of Research Data**




*Source: N/A*

A sequential research approach was chosen because Phase 1 (Professional Experience) offers a robust, practice-derived understanding of the sector's realities, which then informs and refines the academic lens applied in the subsequent phases. By beginning with experiential insights, the study ensures that the theoretical exploration directly engages real-world issues and insights, fostering an iterative progression. This structure allows the findings from each phase to guide the development of the next, creating a cohesive and contextually grounded research process.

### 3.2.1. Phase 1: Professional Experience

Phase 1 of the sequential research design originates from the author's extensive career in the international Screen Industries, spanning more than twenty years in various interdisciplinary roles for small and large-scale entertainment productions (film, television, commercials, video games, AR/VR, app creation). During this time, the author observed numerous overlaps and distinctions across these sectors.

Despite clear similarities, success—defined in this study through operational effectiveness (OE) leading to competitive advantage (CA) (Kehoe and Mateer, 2014; Porter, 1985)—often correlated with how effectively and efficiently processes were managed, directly influencing the value chain (Porter, 1985; Jöckel *et al.*, 2008) of a project or production. Conversely, poor

process management typically resulted in bottlenecks, delays, and compromised OE and CA for organisations operating in these fields.

Over time, structured techniques and approaches to process management were consistently linked to increased success. Furthermore, because the sectors share core similarities, certain processes are 'transferable' across domains, thereby enhancing performance in multiple disciplines; this not only added value to the overall production pipeline but also helped mitigate risks and reduce the likelihood of project or production failure. Drawing on this professional background, the author conducted MBA graduate research on Project and People Management Techniques for the Creative Industries (Jones, 2015), which confirmed that although project management frameworks had been introduced in these creative domains, there remained a need for methods specifically adapted to accommodate creativity as a primary driver of successful outputs.

From that research, a combined methodology was proposed, culminating in the development of TEMPLAR—Task Environment Management Process for Linear Agile Results. This PhD study builds upon these foundations. Given the author's continued involvement in the Screen Industries, issues of access, bracketing, and potential biases have been carefully addressed at every stage, in keeping with phenomenological and narrative research traditions.

### 3.2.2. Phase 2: Literature Review

Phase 2 involved conducting a comprehensive Literature Review, as detailed in Chapter 2, to gather and critically examine existing research on process management, leadership models, creativity, value chains, and operational effectiveness. This step follows Phase 1 so that the theoretical perspectives are firmly anchored in the practical observations gathered from professional experience, thereby ensuring relevance and depth.

Key literature was selected, evaluated, and cross-referenced for empirical validity and applicability to the four overarching research questions. The critical findings—which inform subsequent stages—are summarised as follows:

⇒ **Defining the Screen Industries**

Debates persist regarding the precise sectors included under the Screen Industries umbrella, reflecting the "nobody knows" principle (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002). For this research, five major sectors are delineated: 1) Film, 2) Television, 3) Commercials, 4) Documentaries, and 5) Video Games.

⇒ **Value Chains and Production Phases**

At the core of the Screen Industries lies a value chain (Porter, 1985; Jöckel *et al.*, 2008) structured around six production phases. Within each phase, leadership, process, and value emerge as three operational pillars, all of which rely on autonomy and the concept of "flow" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1996, 1997, 2000; Csíkszentmihályi, Abuhamdeh, and Nakamura, 2014) to foster creativity and engagement.

⇒ **Leadership Styles**

Scholars frequently emphasise transformational leadership as predominant in these industries, given their creative demands and motivational contexts, yet the contractual, gig-based nature of this workforce (Caves, 2002) also highlights a role for transactional leadership. In practice, leadership (control), process (tasks), and value (output) all necessitate autonomy to achieve success at each stage of production (Honthaner, 2010).

⇒ **Existing and Prospective Frameworks**

A range of frameworks is already in use or has been adapted by different Screen Industry segments; however, empirical and theoretical discussions suggest that methods specifically tailored to the unpredictable and creative nature of these industries would prove beneficial, again invoking the "nobody knows" principle (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002). This opens the door for new or modified frameworks to be explored within this thesis.

By synthesising these strands of research, Phase 2 establishes the scholarly foundation needed to sharpen and validate the direction of future phases. Crucially, this phase builds on the practical insights acquired during Phase 1, so that the study can move forward with a combination of experiential grounding and academic rigour.

### 3.2.3. Phase 3: Quantitative Data Collection

Phase three initiates primary research, collecting industry-specific data that is otherwise unavailable in secondary sources. A structured survey was designed, informed by key themes from the literature review, ensuring that the instrument remains aligned with historical and contemporary academic perspectives. The survey primarily consists of quantitative items, with two open-ended qualitative questions allowing for deeper insights.

Descriptive and inferential statistics provide an empirical foundation, summarising industry categorisation, operational practices, leadership approaches, and value management. Key statistical measures such as means, medians, and frequency distributions offer insight into trends, particularly in defining core operational factors and the international distribution of the Screen Industries. The survey results inform the subsequent qualitative phase, identifying emerging trends that warrant deeper exploration.

### 3.2.4. Phase 4: Qualitative Data Collection

The final research phase employed semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insight into the themes identified in both the literature and survey findings. Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2020) was applied, following a structured six-step process to identify patterns in leadership effectiveness, workflow challenges, and value perceptions. Additionally, elements of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) were incorporated to allow for emergent coding, ensuring that themes develop organically from participant responses rather than being constrained by pre-existing categories.

This phase was exploratory, aiming to uncover complexities that may not be immediately apparent in quantitative data. Initial interview questions were refined through four pilot interviews, ensuring alignment with industry realities. This dual-phase approach—survey-driven insights followed by in-depth qualitative exploration—provided a rigorous, multi-layered understanding of process management within the Screen Industries.

### 3.2.5. Narrative Synthesis

The final phase involved collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data and integrating the findings. This integration consists of a comparison, corroboration, and synthesis

of qualitative and quantitative results, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem and allowing the findings to be woven together to form a coherent story. This narrative synthesis presents and interprets the findings within the study's process management framework and practical context. The sequential design allows each phase of the research to build upon the insights gained from the previous phase, with initial literature providing a rich foundation in which quantitative and qualitative data provide a contextual foundation for developing the process management framework, ensuring that the survey and interview instruments are both relevant and comprehensive.

## 3.3. Distribution and Sampling

The design and methodology of this research had to account for the risk that an unlimited number of respondents could dilute and distort the results, rendering the data insufficient or obsolete. To mitigate this risk and ensure the integrity and relevance of the data, it was crucial to gather responses from industry professionals who are actively engaged in the Screen Industries. This targeted approach helps maintain the focus and applicability of the research findings to those who are directly involved in and knowledgeable about the industry.

To achieve a representative sample that accurately reflects the diversity of roles and sectors within the Screen Industries, a purposive stratified random sampling method was employed. This method ensures that all subgroups within the population are represented proportionally in the sample, thereby providing a microcosm of the industry as a whole. The sampling strategy was critical in avoiding bias and in capturing a comprehensive snapshot of the industry’s dynamics.

Purposive stratified random sampling is particularly useful for research involving heterogeneous populations, as it ensures proportional representation across subgroups (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). By applying this approach, the study achieved a balanced sample across different industry sectors, experience levels, and geographic locations, mitigating potential self-selection bias (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). This method was critical for ensuring that insights into leadership, management practices, and process effectiveness were drawn from a cross-section of industry professionals rather than over-representing a single demographic. Although the survey

recruitment process was industry-targeted, purposive stratified sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation across different Screen Industry sectors.

The surveys were distributed using Qualtrics software, a robust platform known for its ability to manage large-scale data collection through internet-based self-completion surveys. The use of Qualtrics enabled the efficient handling of the logistical aspects of survey distribution and data collection. Participation in the survey was made entirely optional, respecting the autonomy and consent of potential respondents, which is crucial in ethical research practices. The distribution channels for the surveys were carefully chosen to maximise reach and participation among targeted industry professionals.

By ensuring that the sample was representative and that the data collection tools were appropriately targeted and deployed, the research stands on a solid empirical base. This base supports the study's contributions to understanding the intricacies of process management in the Screen Industries and offers valuable perspectives that can influence both theory and practice within this creative field.

To maximise participation and ensure a high response rate, careful consideration was given to the survey design for this research. Recognising the busy schedules of professionals in the Screen Industries and the potential for survey fatigue, the survey was constructed to be concise and straightforward. The questions were composed using simplified English to make them accessible to a broad audience, regardless of their native language or academic background. Moreover, it was estimated that completing the survey would take no more than ten minutes, a duration that was intentionally overestimated to manage expectations and encourage participation by making the task seem less burdensome.

Additionally, to further incentivise participation and engage with respondents, the survey provided an option for responders to leave their contact information—specifically, their name and email address. This allowed interested participants to receive updates on the progress of the research and the final outcomes. This approach not only facilitated ongoing engagement with respondents but also built a conduit for disseminating the results of the study, potentially

enriching the professional knowledge of those involved and maintaining a dialogue within the industry about the findings and their implications.

To ensure the collection of relevant and high-quality data, interview participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling. While purposive sampling is inherently selective, it was essential to ensure that participants possessed industry-specific expertise relevant to the research questions (Patton, 2015).

To mitigate potential selection bias, interviewees were selected across different production phases, hierarchical levels, and geographical regions, ensuring a diversity of perspectives (Kuzel, 1999). By drawing from professionals across multiple industry roles, the research captures a well-rounded representation of process management challenges in the Screen Industries, aligning with best practices in qualitative research that advocate for maximum variation sampling to enhance validity and richness of data (Miles *et al.*, 2014).

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique often used in qualitative research where participants are selected based on their knowledge and experience, making them well-suited to provide insights into the research question. This method is particularly detailed in Patton's work, "Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods" (Patton, 2015), which describes how purposive sampling can effectively target a specific group of people who are best equipped to answer the research questions.

While purposive sampling is widely used, it has been criticised for potential unreliability, inaccuracy, and bias, as it does not provide a random sample of the population. These concerns are discussed in depth in Kuzel's chapter on sampling in qualitative research, found in "Sampling in Qualitative Inquiry" (Kuzel, 1999), which argues that while purposive sampling is useful for in-depth qualitative studies, researchers must be cautious of its limitations.

Accessing suitable participants in the Screen Industries is often complicated by factors such as gatekeeping, secrecy, non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), and other legal and contractual matters that can make the industry appear shrouded in mystery. The challenge of accessing

diverse industry professionals is articulated in Jones' study on research barriers in creative industries outlined in "Barriers to Academic Research in the Creative Arts and Industries" (Jones, 2012). Here, Jones explores how these barriers can impact the breadth and depth of research conducted within these fields.

Despite these challenges, this author's background within the Screen Industries provided better access to potential participants. However, access was not without its hurdles and approvals from representatives were often necessary, reflecting the guarded nature of the industry.

Participants were strategically chosen to represent a broad range of skills and experience across the six phases of Screen Industry project development: 1) Development, 2) Pre-Production, 3) Production, 4) Post-Production, 5) Distribution, and 6) Exhibition. The distinction between above-the-line (ATL) and below-the-line (BTL) roles and their impact on project outcomes and perceptions within the industry is further examined in the book "The Budget Book for Film and Television" (Koster, 2004), which provides a detailed look at how these roles function and are valued differently within the industry.

A strategic, multi-channel approach was adopted to disseminate the survey and recruit interview participants, leveraging key organisations within the Screen Industries. These organisations include unions, guilds, professional associations, research societies, training bodies, and online platforms—each defined as groups with identifiable memberships that engage in collective actions to achieve shared purposes. Examples include well-established entities such as the Director's Guild, PACT, IATSE 800, ScreenSkills, VFXAI, SIGN, and online industry forums like www.impact.net. These organisations play a central role in professional networking, career development, and sectoral representation, making them ideal gateways for participant engagement.

The selection of these organisations was based on their credibility, established legacy, and proven access to key sectors across the Screen Industries. Each group focused on one or more specific areas—ranging from film and television to visual effects and game production—which enabled the research to access highly specialised networks and sub-sectors. This targeted

approach enhanced the richness and diversity of the data, ensuring the inclusion of participants who were both knowledgeable and currently active in their respective fields.

The author's prior experience and established connections within the Screen Industries were instrumental in identifying and accessing these channels. This insider knowledge facilitated meaningful collaboration with trusted organisations, improving both the reach and relevance of the survey and interview phases. As a result, the data collected was not only high in volume but also deeply reflective of current industry practices, leadership challenges, and operational structures.

The details of the organisations involved, along with participant roles and hierarchical levels, are outlined in *Appendix A: Distribution and Organisation Selection*. This provides full transparency, allows for future replication, and reinforces the integrity of the recruitment and sampling strategy employed in the study.

Additionally, Table 3.1, which is featured below in this research document, offers an overview of the distribution information for both surveys and interviews, illustrating the scope and scale of the recruitment effort. This comprehensive approach to participant recruitment not only enriches the data collected but also strengthens the validity and credibility of the research findings.

By engaging a wide range of participants, from front-line workers to high-level executives, the study captured a holistic view of the industry. This diversity is crucial in understanding the nuanced ways in which different roles and experiences contribute to the broader industry dynamics. Moreover, the recruitment strategy employed in this study reflects a deep understanding of the Screen Industries' global nature.

**Table 3.1: Survey and Interview Distribution Overview**

| **SURVEY DISTRIBUTION DATA** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | Distribution Channels | Percentage |
| Australia | 6 | 9.38% |
| Asia | 1 | 1.56% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Canada | 1 | 1.56% |
| Cyprus | 1 | 1.56% |
| France | 2 | 3.13% |
| India | 1 | 1.56% |
| International (not location specific) | 3 | 4.69% |
| Ireland | 18 | 28.13% |
| New Zealand | 7 | 10.94% |
| UK | 15 | 23.44% |
| USA | 9 | 14.06% |
| Total | 64 | 100% |
| **INTERVIEW DISTRIBUTION DATA** | | |
| Total Contacted | 78 | 100% |
| No Response | 45 | 57.69% |
| Response but No Interview | 6 | 7.69% |
| Rejection | 3 | 3.85% |
| Interview | 24 | 30.77% |

*Source: N/A*

Geographical diversity was a key consideration in participant selection, with individuals recruited from major international regions including the United States and Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland, mainland Europe, Asia, and Australia/New Zealand. These regions were purposefully selected due to their prominence in the global Screen Industries landscape and their relevance to the research aims. This strategic sampling approach aligns with Balio's (2013) analysis in *Hollywood in the New Millennium*, which highlights the global dynamics of screen production and the significance of these regional markets in shaping contemporary industry practices.

Incorporating participants from a range of geographical and cultural contexts allowed the study to explore cross-regional differences and shared challenges, while ensuring that the resulting data transcended local or national constraints. This global orientation enhanced the study's comprehensiveness and strengthened the applicability of findings to international industry settings. By engaging with professionals operating across a variety of production hubs, the

research was better positioned to capture sectoral nuances, regional innovations, and organisational dynamics on a broad scale.

Recruitment strategies were carefully designed to maximise engagement and participation rates across these regions. This was achieved by making the process as accessible and relevant as possible for potential contributors, using trusted networks, tailored outreach through industry organisations, and communication that respected local professional norms. This inclusive, global approach not only enriched the dataset but also reinforced the study's aim to develop a process management framework that reflects the real-world complexity and international scope of the Screen Industries.

Surveys and interviews are carefully designed to respect the time and contributions of the participants, often employing streamlined processes that minimise the effort required to participate while maximising the depth and quality of the information collected. The recruitment strategies employed in this study are both robust and strategic, designed to engage a diverse cross-section of the Screen Industries. These strategies ensure that the study draws on a rich tapestry of experiences and insights, making the research not only comprehensive but also deeply insightful and reflective of the industry's current state and emerging trends. Through this meticulous approach to participant recruitment, the research is poised to offer valuable contributions to the understanding of process management, organisational behaviour, and innovation within the Screen Industries, providing actionable insights and recommendations for industry practitioners and policymakers alike.

## 3.4. Methods of Inquiry

To gather the required research data and due to the current gaps in knowledge and investigations within process management frameworks for the Screen Industries, including the complexity and interdisciplinary requirements of this research, various methods of inquiry have been asserted to fulfil the obligations of this study appropriately. These approaches have been filtered into separate stages, allowing the findings from one phase to be appropriately critiqued and studied before moving into the next stage.

This has positively affected the flow of data gathering and evidenced information garnered from each stage in the investigation so that information, details, and statistics can be as accurate as possible while also allowing for changes and variations in the lines of inquiry that have become more relevant to answering the research questions that this paper reports upon. Figure 3.2 illustrates the flow of research data in phases, and this directly reflects the stages in which inquiries were made, as shown in Figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3: Methods of Inquiry – Workflow Stages**


*Source: N/A*

### 3.4.1. Methods of Inquiry: Literature Review

With this study initially starting from an international career that has lasted for over twenty years, it was essential to balance this practical knowledge with a solid academic structure and readings from experts and other industry professionals. Preliminary findings from existing literature brought a direction to the practice-based knowledge and added contextual study from academia, branching from business to creativity.

Data was gathered from relevant literature from a vast range of sources, including, but not limited to, journals, books, magazines, reports, and articles found in either print or online format. Due to the location of this information, some documents may be limited, partial, or biased, which has been noted during the analysis of these materials. Content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980), a powerful tool for determining data and helping examine arrays and repetitions within documents, has been used to make replicable and valid inferences from data.

These methods have been executed as a basis for analysing content found within this literature, which has allowed for the examination of trends and patterns within these documents and represents a formal approach to qualitative data analysis and allows the conversion to quantitative data analysis in units of enumeration such as words, sentences, paragraphs,

documents and videos. The literature reviewed within this research is far-reaching in its vision, covering varying disciplines, and in order to keep these extensive findings as pertinent as possible, literature has been ordered and classified into the following sections (listed alphabetically, not by importance):

**Accounting and Economics**

Due to the Screen Industries being a business first and foremost, and most studies and definitions of success are dictated by a return on investment (ROI) or financial success of screen productions, the economics of the Screen Industries and their sectors are of utmost importance. In relation to this research study, accounting and cost allocation to each process are essential in creating a framework accountable for a process's financial inputs and outputs.

**Communication and Psychology**

The collaboration of cross-discipline teams not only characterises the Screen Industries but also defines the types of work that takes place within sectors operating to produce creative content. Due to the team-based nature of screen productions, the communication and psychology of teams and their collaborative outputs have become essential topics for gaining operational effectiveness (OE) within the Screen Industries.

**Management and Organisation**

The management of people and organisations is an essential topic for business, and it can help define and refine working practices, from strategy to processes, and give competitive advantage (CA) to teams and companies. We often value the outputs of talented, creative individuals and teams, but the focus on the management of these groups is the attention of this research.

**Project Management and Philosophy**

Project management and the philosophies that govern or direct the management of processes and the individuals and teams involved are important topics for this research. These topics not only give an overview of how operational effectiveness (OE) can be

gained within process management, but they also allow the research to concentrate on individual focus and positive or negative intent for task completion.

**Screen Industries**

While experience within a sector can give knowledge and understanding, others can provide differing experiences and approaches to tackling the same, similar, or different requirements. Therefore, expanding into existing Screen Industries literature offers unique views and opinions that can help give a broader and more accurate overview of the existing landscape and future developments.

Literature was reviewed and added throughout the collection of primary data and the writing of this paper to ensure that this research was as relevant as possible upon completion. *Chapter 2: Literature Review* and the *Bibliography* contain detailed information on all references and resources used throughout this research.

### 3.4.2. Data Collection: Surveys

Predominantly used to collect quantitative data from a more extensive and more diverse sample than is feasible with qualitative methods alone, a survey was created to target a larger audience. The surveys are particularly useful for identifying prevalent trends, practices, and attitudes regarding identification, value chains, process management, and leadership within the sectors of the Screen Industries.

An initial sixty-eight survey questions were prepared from the data gained from the reviewed literature and driven by the research questions. While these questions were extensive and comprehensive, the number of questions and the time it would take to complete the survey would heavily impact the number of finished and completed surveys, which form a large part of the primary data collection.

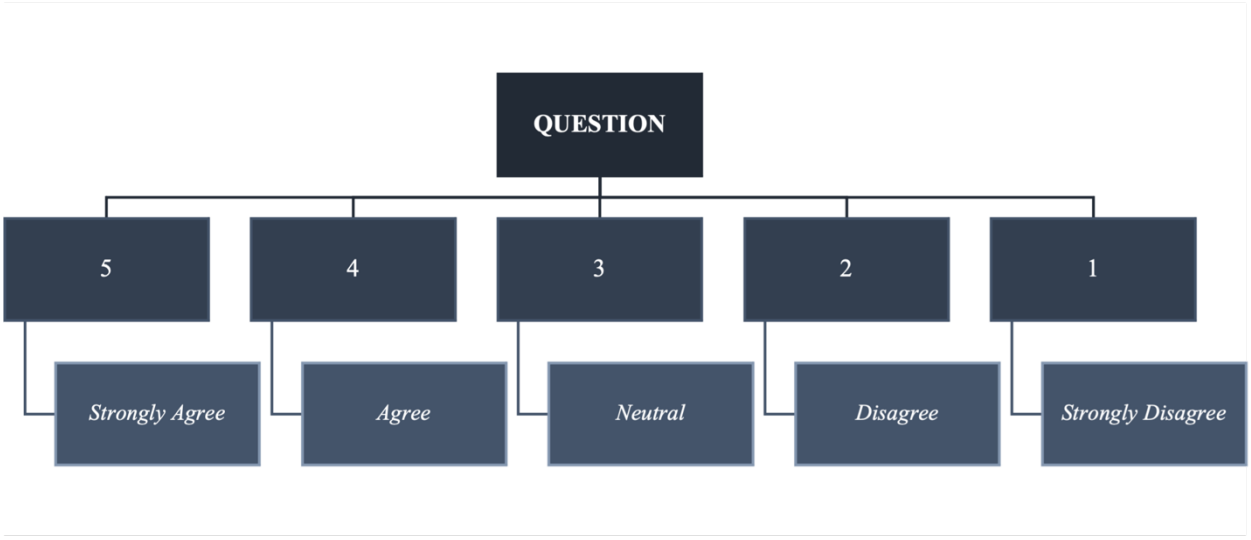
A lack of completed surveys would be detrimental to this study; therefore, a second draft of the survey condensed the initial questions into forty-seven. Within this rendition, questions were

mixed, containing quantitative and qualitative answers, but once again, this was an unacceptable number of questions as completion rates would still be problematic.

Further effort created more drafts, reducing the questions to twenty-three, a far more reasonable number, which would promote a higher response and completion rate from participants. However, supplementary development added an additional two questions, bringing the final survey to a combined total of twenty-five specific questions that are structured in their design.

The final survey (see *Appendix D*) used simplified English to enhance the accuracy of responses from participants, with the majority of the questions (twenty-three to be exact) are further simplified and designed so that they can be answered using a five-point unipolar Likert Scale (Likert, 1932), as shown in Figure 3.4.

**Figure 3.4: Example Unipolar Likert Scale**




*Source: Adapted from Likert (1932).*

Out of the twenty-three Likert Scale questions, twenty-one questions allow for one answer, and two questions allow for multiple choice answers in order to ascertain information regarding Screen Industries sectors and phases of production within those sectors. This allows for a more detailed response from participants and highlights their knowledge and exposure to the sectors in the Screen Industries, including their understanding and definition of the production processes

and phases (value chain). The final two questions of the survey do not follow the Likert Scale in any way and are designed for qualitative analysis.

The questions give participants the opportunity to type their answers and offer opinions based on their own experiences. Once again, these questions use simplified English to allow for straightforward interpretation but are open questions designed to purposefully extract detailed data that covers all aspects of the research questions. An introduction section, which contains information on the survey and research, with no questions for participants, was included to enhance clarity and understanding and give context to all participants.

Additionally, the introduction section noted that participants answering the survey would take approximately ten minutes. This was an over-assumption, and in reality, the survey should have taken far less time to complete if the participant was entirely able and focused on the task. However, it gave another chance for participants to stop the survey if they needed more time or wanted to provide the specified effort required to get solid data from the survey.

The survey design ensures that the questionnaire is comprehensive, covering all aspects of Screen Industries relevant to this research while also being concise to encourage completion. It is carefully designed and structured with a mix of closed-ended questions (such as Likert-scale questions) to quantify attitudes and practices and open-ended questions to capture more detailed responses where necessary. The relevance of the research questions and the application of findings to the creation of a process management framework were continually evaluated throughout their development.

Table 3.2 offers a snapshot of data obtained from the 503 collected survey responses, including data on respondents' age, years of experience, sectors they operate in, associated production phases, and how many people they work with on projects and in their immediate teams. This diversity ensures that findings reflect both broad industry trends and specific insights from different career stages.

**Table 3.2: Survey Participant Responses (Condensed)**

| CONDENSED SURVEY DATA RESPONSES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age Range** | | | | |
| Less than 30 years | 30 - 40 | 41 - 50 | 51 - 60 | Over 60 years |
| 91 | 181 | 96 | 80 | 55 |
| **Experience** | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 1 to 3 years | 3 to 5 years | 5 to 10 years | Over 10 years |
| 40 | 75 | 86 | 121 | 181 |
| **Sector Distribution** | | | | |
| Film | Television | Commercials | Documentaries | Video Games |
| 106 | 97 | 83 | 63 | 84 |
| | | | | ** Other – separately specified: 70* |
| **Production Phase Distribution** | | | | |
| Development | Pre-Production | Production | Post-Production | Distribution/Exhibition |
| 70 | 96 | 171 | 101 | 65 |
| **Number of Cast & Crew Members on Projects** | | | | |
| 0 to 10 people | 11 to 50 people | 51 to 100 people | 101 to 250 people | Over 250 people |
| 106 | 78 | 148 | 94 | 73 |
| **Number of People in Specific Teams** | | | | |
| Just You | 1 to 5 people | 6 to 10 people | 11 to 25 people | Over 25 people |
| 50 | 136 | 140 | 95 | 77 |
| | | | | **Total Number of Survey Responses Collected: 503** |

*Source: N/A.*

### 3.4.3. Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are chosen for their flexibility and depth. They allow for a deep dive into industry professionals' personal experiences and insights and offer an understanding of the intricacies of processes that quantitative methods may not capture.

Upon completion of the final survey, the finalised survey questions were taken and expanded upon to create a condensed list of ten interview questions that would be used as the base questions for four pilot interviews. Two pilot interviews took place when the surveys were released, with the following two taking place after over one hundred survey responses had been captured, allowing for any further changes to the lines of inquiry to be updated to reflect collected data.

Although additional primary research data was to be collected from multiple semi-structured interviews, the four pilot interviews took place as a progressive step between surveys and interviews so that the ten interview questions could further be refined and/or changed if the line of inquiry was not returning suitable data for this study. The original pilot interviews included the following questions:

1. How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries, and what do you do?
2. Which phase(s) of production do you work in?
3. How many projects have you participated in?
4. How long does a project usually last?
5. Can you describe the working environments of these projects?
6. How many hours per day do you work, and do you ever have to work overtime?
7. How are projects managed, and how are tasks and activities distributed and monitored?
8. Is there any specific software that you use for project management or activity/task tracking?
9. What would you say is the most problematic aspect of your job or the Screen Industries from your experience?
10. Have you had any other jobs outside of the Screen Industries?

Each pilot interview created the opportunity to expand upon the base set of ten questions. Still, with each interview, additional branching narratives would appear from each question. These were noted and added to the questions as the interviews progressed, leading to the final set of questions that formed the basis of all further interviews. All participants for the pilot phase of interviews were pre-selected from the author's contacts within the Screen Industries. Although each one of the participants in the pilot phase interviews has no association or connection to the research, findings, or author other than being a previous colleague, it was considered that this could skew or bias data results. However, upon completion of these pilot interviews, and due to the lack of affiliation to the author of these participants, their responses have been included in the final data analysis as the findings are as significant as other interview participants outside of these four pilot interviews.

The initial ten questions were developed further, and while the original questions did not change, different narrative directions were included to capture all possible answers that could impact this research study (see *Appendix G* for the final interview questions). Although it is imperative to keep participants anonymous throughout this study, Table 3.3 offers a breakdown of the twenty-four interview participants including information on their roles, sectors, locations, experience, and the duration of the interview. The interview participants were selected to capture a broad

spectrum of industry expertise, sectors, and international perspectives. The sample includes professionals from film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games, covering key roles such as directors, producers, screenwriters, visual effects supervisors, animators, and art directors. Experience levels ranged from 3–5 years to over 20 years, ensuring that perspectives from both emerging professionals and senior executives were captured. Additionally, participants were drawn from multiple geographic regions, reflecting the global nature of the Screen Industries and the varying operational challenges across markets.

**Table 3.3: Interview Participant Profiles**

| PARTICIPANT PROFILING | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Specialist** | **Position(s)** | **Sector(s)** | **Location** | **Experience** | **International Experience** | **Interview Length** |
| #1 | Writer. Director. | Film. Video Games. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:02:47 |
| #2 | Screenwriter. | Film. Television. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | No | 1:02:38 |
| #3 | Technical Director (TD). | Film. Television. Commercials. Video Games. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | Yes | 0:46:05 |
| #4 | Company Owner. Artist. | Video Games. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | No | 0:39:55 |
| #5 | 2nd Assistant Director (AD). Crowds Coordinator. | Television. | UK / Ireland | 5 to 10 Years | No | 0:40:01 |
| #6 | Art Director. Props Master. | Film. Television. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:38:13 |
| #7 | Set Decorator. Buyer. | Television. | UK / Ireland | 5 to 10 Years | No | 1:12:42 |
| #8 | Company Owner. | Documentary. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | Yes | 0:46:33 |
| #9 | Director. Producer. Executive Producer. | Film. Television. Commercials. Documentary. | Europe | Over 10 Years | No | 1:18:27 |
| #10 | Special Effects Director. | Film. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | No | 0:57:38 |
| #11 | Writer. Director. | Film. | UK / Ireland | 5 to 10 Years | No | 0:52:25 |
| #12 | Director. Visual Effects Supervisor. | Film. Television. Commercials. | Singapore | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:04:11 |
| #13 | Actor. | Film. Video Games. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | Yes | 0:36:27 |
| #14 | Company Owner. Director. Producer. Visual Effects Supervisor. | Film. Television. Commercials. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | No | 0:54:56 |
| #15 | Producer. Line Producer. Unit Production Manager. | Film. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | No | 1:17:07 |
| #16 | Actor. | Film. | UK / Ireland | 3 to 5 Years | Yes | 1:00:27 |
| #17 | Animation Supervisor. | Film. Television. Commercials. Video Games. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:16:14 |
| #18 | Visual Effects Supervisor. | Film. Commercials. | Australia | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:18:05 |
| #19 | Producer. | Film. Television. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | No | 0:26:42 |
| #20 | Animation Director. | Film. Television. Commercials. Video Games. | USA / Canada | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:18:19 |
| #21 | Art Manager | Television. Commercials. Videogames. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | Yes | 1:23:20 |
| #22 | Composer. | Film. Television. Commercials. | UK / Ireland | 5 to 10 Years | No | 0:22:56 |
| #23 | Animator. Modelmaker. | Film. Television. Commercials. | UK / Ireland | 5 to 10 Years | Yes | 0:58:45 |
| #24 | Extras Coordinator. Trainee Assistant Director. | Film. Television. | UK / Ireland | Over 10 Years | No | 0:37:52 |
| | | | | | Shortest | 0:22:56 |
| | | | | | Longest | 1:38:13 |
| | | | | | Average | 0:58:52 |
| | | | | | Total | 23:32:45 |

*Source: N/A.*

The interview protocol includes open-ended questions designed to explore the participants' experiences within the industry, including their strategies for handling creative and logistical challenges and their perceptions of effective and ineffective practices. The flexible protocol allows for follow-up questions based on the participant's responses, ensuring that each interview can explore the nuances of individual experiences. These follow-up inquiries directly result from working in sequential phases where the first phase enhances the next, and so on.

An advanced notice of at least one month ensured that interview arrangements were successful. Participants were made aware of the study participation requirements at each contact point, and no covert methods were employed during the interviews. With the consent of the participants, interviews were recorded (both video and audio recordings) to ensure accuracy in capturing responses, and these recordings allowed future reviews and the ability to transcribe accurately.

Transcriptions are seen as a “key-phase” of data analysis (Bird, 2005: p.227), where meanings are created (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999), and are made verbatim as a way of getting more familiar with the interviews that have been recorded and the notes that have been taken (see Reissman, 1993, for additional information on data familiarisation). Transcripts were completed within a two-month window after the final interview took place in order to keep the interviews new and relevant in the author's mind. Both pilot and primary interviews were designed to last for less than sixty minutes, which gave enough time to answer all ten questions and explore any branching narratives that evolved from those questions.

### 3.4.4. Software and Tools

A number of software and tools have been evaluated as part of this research in order to use the best solutions possible when it comes to the analysis of the collected data. Qualitative tools like Nvivo (website: lumivero.com/products/nvivo/) and quantitative tools like SPSS (website: ibm.com/products/spss-statistics) that aid in organising, coding, retrieving, visualising, and comprehensive statistical analysis were assessed. However, due to the use of a mixed-methods approach to the study and the amalgamation of data from literature, surveys, and interviews,

combined with existing knowledge of the author, all data found within this research study has been carefully and critically managed and analysed exclusively in Microsoft Excel.

Not only is this software part of the Microsoft Office suite of tools, a commonly used software suite for businesses internationally, but it is also used extensively within the global Screen Industries. This software provides the opportunity to use a universal tool which can operate using multiple data source types (.XML, .CSV, etc.), and it also gives a chance to use its advanced features, including Sort, Filter, Conditional, Formatting, Tables, Charts, Quick Analysis, What-If Analysis, Pivot Tables, and Lookup Tables, amongst many others including the new addition of Copilot which uses artificial intelligence (AI) to analyse, comprehend and visualise data. As this author has a high level of expertise with Microsoft Excel, spreadsheets, and statistical data, it proved to be the best decision to gain insightful conclusions from the collected data. Additionally, this gave the freedom to unlock the "Developer" menu within Excel and use the "Analysis ToolPak" giving moer advanced options for data analysis, often unavailable to those less familiar with the softwares more sophisticated features.

Surveys were distributed using Qualtrics (website: qualtrics.com). This complex online software includes the ability to create easy-to-use surveys/questionnaires and has the added advantage of having built-in analysis tools for the data collected. However, although the surveys were presented via Qualtrics to responders, as previously mentioned, the completed data was exported as XML files, readable by any spreadsheet software.

In order to facilitate the international reach of this study through interviews, Zoom (website: zoom.us) software was used to host interview meetings, allowing for high-quality recording of both video and audio from interview participants. This software offered the complete answer for enabling safe and secure meetings while facilitating the features required for such a study.

Notes were made with pen and paper during each interview using the Cornell method (Pauk and Owens, 2010), which provides a systematic format for condensing and organising notes and allows for the creation of keywords prior to further investigation with thematic analysis, discussed below.

Transcripts were then completed within two months of the final interview taking place in order to keep the interviews as fresh as possible in the mind of the author. All interviews were manually transcribed into text creation software (TextEdit), which saves as a .txt file that many programs can universally read and is not platform-dependent.

All data related to this study are stored safely and securely with the guidelines required for such data storage, and all information that will be shared to show the research and that could identify participants has been completely anonymised.

## 3.5. Data Analysis

Analysis of the raw data collected is a critical phase in which this research translates the raw data into meaningful insights. At all points throughout the data analysis process, a systematic and rigorous approach was taken to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings, emphasising both qualitative and quantitative data and the combination of discoveries. Evidence that correctly managing processes could positively or negatively affect the journey and outcome of a screen media production became apparent during a career that has spanned over two decades within the Screen Industries. Research into existing literature and an MBA thesis focused on project and people management techniques (Jones, 2015) further proved that this was not a singular case or personal bias from this author's opinion.

### 3.5.1. Data Analysis: Literature Review

For this PhD research study, a comprehensive literature review (see *Chapter 2: Literature Review*) provided findings and analysis from interdisciplinary areas that concluded with options and adaptions already present in the Screen Industries taken from business and management studies that fuelled the process management and leadership within the sectors of the Screen Industries. A deep dive into definitions, value chains, leadership, project management, and process management related to the Screen Industries offered insight into the complexities and nuances of the sectors operating within these diverse screen media fields.

A flood of relevant information from accounting, economics, psychology, management, and business plays a prominent role in answering the research questions whilst laying foundations that can be further analysed to define operations and direction for primary research data collection and can be used as a starting point for the process management framework that this research is creating. Krippendorff's (1980) methods for content analysis combined with intensive note-taking using the Cornell Note Taking Method (Pauk and Owens, 2010) and techniques that allowed this author to organise data and important facts allowed for a solid foundation of existing works that ended up directing and driving the flow of all research, in effect providing the building blocks for all research that follows the literature review.

### 3.5.2. Data Analysis: Surveys

Surveys provided the benchmark for all other primary research, with the questions driving interviews and determining the direction of the study. The quantitative survey results are first analysed to identify prevalent trends and patterns in process management practices within the Screen Industries.

Using statistical techniques to analyse and interpret numerical data from survey responders formed the starting point for all survey data investigations. Descriptive statistics are used to summarise the basic features of the data, providing simple summaries about the sample and the measures forming the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis and providing an insight into the essential characteristics of the data.

Techniques used include basic measurements (min, max) to discuss extreme points of statistics. Measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) are used to describe the central position of the data, and measures of variability (range, variance, standard deviation) to describe the spread or dispersion of the data are also noted. Inferential statistics are used to make inferences about the population based on the sample data. They allow for the testing of hypotheses and the examination of relationships between variables. Techniques such as frequencies and cross-tabulation are used to test hypotheses about the relationship between variables or group differences (Bryman, 2008; Charmaz, 2003). Regression analysis is used to understand the

relationship between dependent and independent variables, helping to understand how the typical value of the dependent variable changes when any one of the independent variables is varied.

Paired sample t-tests were utilised to compare key performance indicators across different production phases, assessing the impact of workflow interventions (Francis, 2021). Correlation analysis was applied to examine relationships between leadership effectiveness, operational performance, and financial outcomes, using Spearman's Rank Correlation. Multiple regression modelling was employed to identify key predictors of operational effectiveness and competitive advantage, quantifying the relative impact of leadership structures, process frameworks, and value management strategies (Francis, 2021). Additionally, Chi-Square tests were conducted to assess relationships between categorical variables such as industry sector, leadership perceptions, and workflow structuring (Francis, 2021). These comparisons helped differentiate universal industry trends from sector-specific management challenges.

The quantitative component targets the measurement and analysis of phenomena across a more substantial cohort, establishing a broader, more generalisable framework of comprehension. This data yields statistical outputs that can be further examined, quantified, and integrated with thematic analysis, leading to practical and pertinent conclusions that facilitate the discernment of patterns and trends in both quantitative and qualitative evidence (Francis, 2021).

While this outlines the data analysis principles used in most survey responses, two questions do not fit into quantitative methods and instead require qualitative methods to analyse (see questions 24 and 25 of the final survey, found in *Appendix D*). For these two questions, thematic analysis is primarily used to comprehend relevant data. This methodology fits the principles employed for all qualitative analysis within this study, particularly the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, discussed next.

### 3.5.3. Data Analysis: Interviews

Thematic analysis is used to systematically examine the data obtained from two open-ended questions in the surveys and all completed interviews, identifying patterns, themes, and meanings. Chosen for its flexibility and ability to capture the richness and complexity of pooled

qualitative data, thematic analysis allows for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data, providing a detailed and nuanced understanding of the research problem (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2020; Bryman, 2008; Gibbs, 2007, 2010). As shown in Figure 3.5, thematic analysis operates on a structured and methodical approach that systematically examines the acquired data, making this the perfect device for analysis of the two remaining survey questions and, in particular, all twenty-four interviews and their transcripts.

**Figure 3.5: Phases of Coding in Thematic Analysis**


*Source: Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006, 2020), Bryman (2008), and Gibbs (2007, 2010).*

Both video and audio were recorded for all interviews, covering a total of twenty-three hours and thirty-two minutes. Table 3.4 outlines the core details of the recorded interviews, including the total runtime, the average runtime, and the shortest and longest interviews that took place.

**Table 3.4: Interview Responses – Data Collection Overview**

| INTERVIEW DETAILS | |
|---|---|
| Total Time | 23:32:45 |
| Average | 0:58:52 |
| Shortest | 0:22:56 |
| Longest | 1:38:13 |

*Source: N/A*

Transcriptions were made verbatim to create critical meanings behind the interviews (Bird, 2005; Lapadat *et al.*, 1999; Reissman, 1993). These transcripts were completed within two months after the final interview to ensure that the relevance and information recorded in the interviews were remembered. As each interview took, on average, fifty-eight minutes and fifty-two seconds, the transcription process took between three and six hours per interview in order to obtain a high level of accuracy.

To progress these interview recordings, notes, and transcripts into a more profound study, thematic analysis (TA) was used as the primary data analysis method to systematically examine the data obtained from the interviews. This method for qualitative inspection is flexible and adaptable, allowing for the complexities of this research to be analysed and accurately reported using a series of six phases, illustrated in Figure 3.5, based on research by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2020), as well as Gibbs' work—*Phases for Coding Thematic Analysis* (Gibbs, 2007, 2010)—and Alan Bryman (2008).

**Phase 1: Familiarisation with Data**

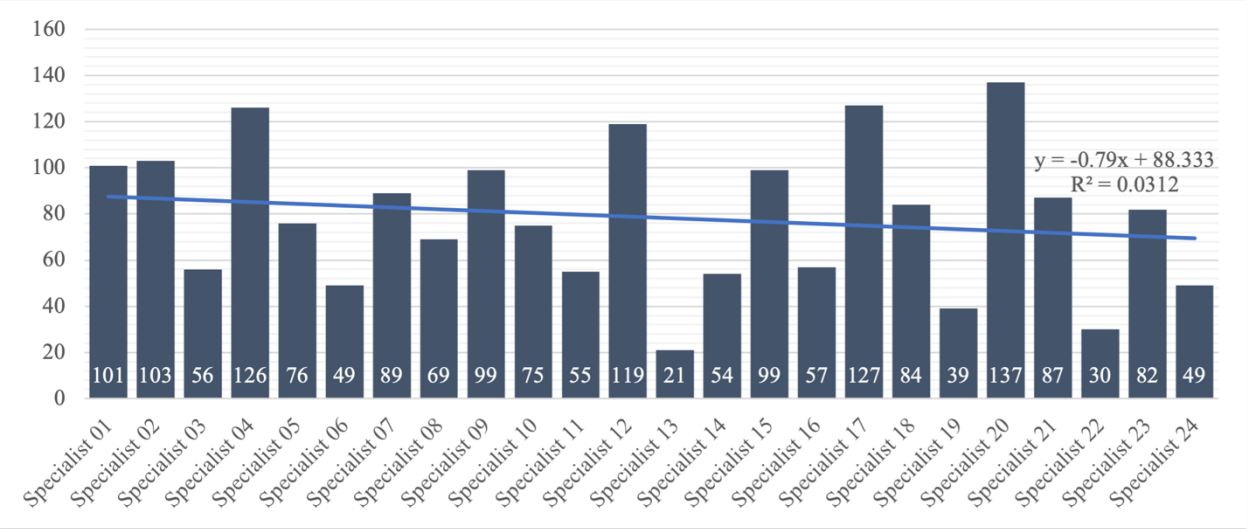
The initial study of interview data started with re-reading all Cornell-style (Pauk and Owens, 2010) notes taken during all twenty-four interviews. To continue the process of thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2020; Bryman, 2008; Gibbs, 2007, 2010), anonymised transcriptions for all interviews were completed within two months of the concluded interviews, and each participant was labelled as "Specialist [#]" instead of using their real name, with each "#" indicating a numerical value so that differentiation between anonymised participants is still possible. The transcriptions were made by listening and watching each interview, and carefully writing each conversation while using automatic subtitle generation technology to help identify and expose words that may have been misheard.

Following this, transcripts were analysed by highlighting specific passages throughout the text that directly relate to and acknowledge the research questions being asked during this study. A total of 624 quotes were highlighted, all contributing to this thesis's research findings.

### Phase 2: Generating codes

The preliminary study of the transcripts found that 1,883 interactions took place, with an average of seventy-eight interactions for each interview (Figure 3.6). This study calculates interactions for each spoken output from the Author and the Specialist during their recorded interview period. During these interactions, the following significant findings were realised.

**Figure 3.6: Interview Responses – Number of Interactions between Author and Specialists**




*Source: N/A*

Firstly, the linear trend line in Figure 3.6 demonstrates that the average number of interactions gradually depleted from the beginning to the end of the interview process. This reflects that the Specialists provided more detailed responses towards the end of the interview process.

As the questions did not technically change, the way in which questions were asked was more successful at that point, and rapport and comfort within the process was greater. Adversely, this could show a lack of engagement from each Specialist earlier in the interview process, but the transcripts and data recovered alleviate this possibility.

Secondly, this author could highlight specific keywords mentioned in sentences throughout conversations with each Specialist by watching and listening back through the interviews and

using the created transcripts. Listed in Table 3.5 in no particular order, these were announced more than once or discussed by more than one participant.

It must be noted that these keywords formed only the starting point for investigations into the thematic analysis (TA) of the interview data. These keywords are an essential first stage in creating the final data sets. They are each labelled as an "open code" for further development, establishing the building blocks to structure the focus for this qualitative data.

**Table 3.5: Interview Responses – Initial Keywords / Open Codes**

| KEYWORDS / OPEN CODES (LISTED IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Culpability | Liability | Freedom |
| Responsibility | Flexibility | Opportunity |
| Participation | Partnership | Teamwork |
| Articulation | Status | Waypoint |
| Conversation | Productivity | Industry |
| Freelance | Work Hours | Correspondence |
| Milestones | Output | Result |
| Knowledge | Information | Understanding |
| Competence | Access | Budget |
| Expertise | Strategy | Administration |
| Meetings | Performance | Stage |
| Staff | Development | Network |
| Systems | Authority | Solutions |
| Team | Schedule | Step |
| Function | Software | Tasks |

*Source: N/A*

### Phase 3: Searching for themes

To progress past phase two, several theme possibilities presented themselves from the open codes that helped answer the research questions and formed the structure and fundamentals for a process management framework. Emerging themes were created by combining the practical knowledge of this author, the study within this research—including research questions—and by condensing the initial open codes into a more solidified grouping.

The four research questions allowed for each grouping to become a starting theme that helped place the research within the view of this thematic analysis (TA). Table 3.6 clarifies this grouping and arrangement in detail.

**Table 3.6: Emerging Themes and Initial Open Coding Applied to Research Questions**

| EMERGING THEMES AND INITIAL OPEN CODING | |
|---|---|
| Research Question 1 | How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them? |
| Emerging Themes | Definition. |
| Open Codes | Communication. Understanding. Knowledge. |
| Research Question 2 | What kind of value chain operates within the Screen Industries, and how does this affect the phases of production and processes within? |
| Emerging Themes | Value. Impact. Efficiency. Autonomy. Communication. Education. |
| Open Codes | Access. Budget. Strategy. Performance. Competence. Expertise. Freedom. Flexibility. Opportunity. Correspondence. Articulation. Conversation. Knowledge. Understanding. Information. |
| Research Question 3 | What are the most effective management and leadership methodologies commonly applied within the Screen Industries? |
| Emerging Themes | Leadership. Management. Accountability. Collaboration. Personnel. |
| Open Codes | Authority. Meetings. Administration. Accountability. Liability. Culpability. Responsibility. Partnership. Teamwork. Participation. Staff. Network. Team. Work Hours. Freelance. Industry. |
| Research Question 4 | Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage? |
| Emerging Themes | Process. Workflow. Technology. Phases. Decisions. Deadlines. |
| Open Codes | Contracts. Schedule. Tasks. Function. Software. Solutions. Systems. Stage. Step. Development. Result. Output. Productivity. Waypoint. Status. Milestones. |

*Source: N/A*

### Phase 4: Reviewing themes

While the emerging themes and open codes found in phase three of this process give a solid start to creating standardised themes for this research, additional consideration must be taken into account that dramatically affects the output and usage of these themes and codes. For this

analysis to succeed, it must consider the application against the research questions while allowing for the adaptability to form the foundation of a process management framework designed explicitly for use within the Screen Industries.

With this in mind, the first research question was already complete; due to its simplicity as a construct, not in application, it allowed for the theme of Definition to be extracted, and the codes of communication, understanding, and knowledge were already attached and easily recognisable in their attachment to the theme. However, this theme only required the knowledge and understanding of what this research, and subsequently what the process management framework, classifies as the Screen Industries—a concept already defined by our literature studies and conclusions drawn from that analysis. It is, therefore, the case that in terms of thematic analysis (TA), no further research was required to take this further due to not only the explicit naming of what sectors the Screen Industries include (film, television, commercials, documentaries, video games) but its only requirement in pushing forward this research in defining what sectors are under exploration.

This process outlined the three outstanding research questions as the driving force for all research data gathered and analysed, and deeply integrated the findings into the research and process management framework output. The themes and open codes already created were further analysed for each question. From this continued analysis, changes and adaptations were made to develop and alter the existing themes and codes to encompass a more direct significance as applied to both the research questions and the process management framework. Any themes or open codes unassigned from this step were renamed and combined to create a clearer, more accurate vision of what this research study covers, what data has been collected, and how that data affects the output of the process management framework.

**Phase 5: Naming the themes**

With a clear vision of the themes and codes that can help drive this study, the fifth phase allowed for the correct naming of said themes and the attachment of accurate codes to each theme. This phase allows for a precise and definitive vision of the themes and codes found within the thematic analysis (TA) of the data collected from the interviews.

A total of nine themes emerged from this final breakdown, each with three codes attached, giving a total of twenty-seven separate codes used in this study. Table 3.7 provides a complete breakdown of all final themes and associated codes.

**Table 3.7: Thematic Analysis (TA) – Finalised Theming and Associated Coding**

| FINAL THEMES AND CODES (ORDERED ALPHABETICALLY) | | |
|---|---|---|
| # | THEME | CODES |
| 1 | Communication | Access. Comprehension. Interpretation. |
| 2 | Contracts | Freelance. Network. Work Hours. |
| 3 | Decisions | Deadlines. Productivity. Results. |
| 4 | Education | Expertise. Knowledge. Understanding. |
| 5 | Impact | Autonomy. Efficiency. Output. |
| 6 | Management | Authority. Meetings. Responsibility. |
| 7 | Personnel | Accountability. Collaboration. Team. |
| 8 | Technology | Software. Solutions. Systems. |
| 9 | Workflow | Development. Schedule. Tasks. |

*Source: N/A*

### Phase 6: Produce the report

With each theme named and associated codes attached, 624 direct quotes from the completed interviews were highlighted and linked to one or more codes, placing critical data under one of nine overarching themes. As this process progressed—combined with the in-depth investigation of interview responses and the study's clearly defined research goals—a natural grouping of codes and themes began to emerge. These groupings formed a hierarchical structure aligned with the research questions, adding further depth and refinement to the thematic analysis and revealing what the author has defined as "Pillars."

As identified in previous chapters, these Pillars represent core conceptual groupings—organising and condensing the themes and codes into a more structured and analytically useful framework. The three Pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—were initially shaped by the author's professional experience and were further validated through their prominence in both the

interview data and the broader literature. These Pillars ultimately form the foundation of the process management framework developed in this study.

Once the Pillars were established and the themes and codes refined, all direct quotes from the completed interviews were re-linked to the new structure. In addition, typed responses from open-ended survey questions were integrated into the thematic analysis to produce a more holistic view of the qualitative data. This process also enabled the alignment of quantitative survey responses—specifically, Likert-style items from the "My job…" and "On projects…" sections—with the relevant Pillars, allowing for deeper integration of qualitative and quantitative findings within the overall analytical framework.

This layered process of refining themes and mapping qualitative data to the Pillars created a strong foundation for cross-analysis with the quantitative findings. Qualitative themes were compared with statistical outputs from the survey data to identify areas of convergence, divergence, and complementary insight. This included linking coded participant narratives to key survey trends and aligning the Pillars with statistically significant variables. This integration occurred during the final phase of analysis, once each data strand had been independently explored, allowing for a balanced and systematic merging of insights. By integrating these strands, the study adopts a coherent mixed-methods approach in which both qualitative and quantitative data inform the development of the process management framework.

## 3.6. Ethical Considerations

Ethical rigour was maintained throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and strict confidentiality and anonymity protocols were followed in data reporting. The research adhered to institutional guidelines and international ethical standards, as outlined by Bryman (2016), thereby safeguarding the rights of participants and the integrity of the data collection process. These measures are particularly critical given the sensitive nature of operational and financial data in the Screen Industries. This research was conducted in full compliance with the *University of York Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance*, ensuring that participant confidentiality, informed consent, and data security were rigorously upheld. Fundamental ethical principles guide every phase of the research, from the

design to data collection, analysis, and reporting. Data collection, in the form of a literature review (secondary data), was compiled from publicly available sources, either printed or available online. Correct references and bibliography were used to the best of this author's ability to give the appropriate acknowledgements to authors and institutions cited. As primary research involves human subjects, ethical considerations are paramount when gathering data and reporting within this study. There is a moral obligation that any private or confidential information or opinions expressed in trust by the participants, or any out-of-record statements were not publicised or included in any official reference within this research documentation.

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The research was conducted following established ethical standards and guidelines, and under the ethical requirements set by the University, this study complied with the multifaceted ethical considerations found throughout research of this nature, ensuring that the research upholds the highest standards of integrity, respect, and responsibility. The author completed training in ethical research practices, which was crucial for maintaining the integrity of the study. Focus on

the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, as well as specific ethical considerations relevant to the study, was completed prior to any primary data collection, and ongoing education and discussion about ethical issues in research was a topic during supervision, ensuring that the author remained informed about current ethical standards and best practices.

Within the design of this research and with University ethics policies, participants gave their full consent before proceeding with any aspect of the study, as informed consent is a cornerstone of ethical research involving human subjects. The informed consent process was designed to ensure that participants understood the study and their role in it, and the process of obtaining informed consent in this study was thorough and adhered to the highest standards. Every effort was made to ensure that participants fully comprehend the information provided with *Participant Information Sheets* for both surveys (*Appendix B*) and interviews (*Appendix E*). These documents outlined all the information necessary to make an informed decision about participants' involvement, including the purpose of the research, procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their rights as research subjects. These information documents were provided prior to any involvement from potential subjects. It was acknowledged that participation is entirely voluntary. Completing any or all of the questions in both the surveys and interviews was at the complete discretion of each participant. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study without penalty or consequence. Additionally, participants were given ample opportunity to ask questions and receive clear, honest answers before they decided to participate. The author ensured that all questions were answered to the participant's satisfaction. In order to confirm the acceptance of each participant's involvement with this research, all participants were required to complete *Participant Consent Forms* (*Appendix C* for surveys and *Appendix F* for interviews), in which full consent was acknowledged. Their confirmation that they were fully informed and are aware of the data and analysis that was being collected is agreed upon. Consent forms were written in clear, concise, non-technical language, providing all necessary information without overwhelming the participant. Participants were given ample time to consider their participation and ask questions.

Ethical research requires foresight and diligence to identify and address potential ethical issues that may arise during the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were critical in protecting

participants' privacy and ensuring the research data's integrity. Information collected from participants was used solely for the purposes of the research, and all data collected from participants was handled with strict confidentiality. The only accessible data available post-research was anonymised and quantified to ensure that responses can not be used in any manner that could lead to the identification of any participant. The data was deposited using secure storage methods to protect it from unauthorised access. When reporting the results of the research, care was taken to ensure that individual participants cannot be identified, directly or indirectly, from the reported data.

Survey correspondents were not required to give any personal information, and neither were they required to complete the questionnaire or to answer every question—they did so at their own discretion. Each survey asked for basic personal information that cannot be traced to any specific person or participant, and no person or company was referred to in the final research paper. If responders wanted to be informed of the progress and final outcomes of this research, they were given the opportunity to divulge their name and email address; however, this information was only retained for the purposes of that correspondence and was not available outside of this author's own documents that were held on a personal safe and secure, password-protected hard drive. While the number of those interested in more information was disclosed within this research, no other data is divulged. All analyses remain anonymous, and the results of such analyses was quantified, meaning there were no implications for the participants or their companies in this part of the study.

Interviews were conducted privately via video calls using Zoom software, which ran from an SSL-encrypted link. The interviewees were assured that their responses were kept private and confidential. The author and participant ensured that they were in a setting that enabled open communication that was private, confidential, and suitable for the research and topics discussed. Permissions were asked and granted to participate in recording, transcription, and note-taking prior to each interview in writing. Confirmation of these facts were also clarified and accepted at the start of each interview before and after the recording had started. Each interviewee was recorded (both audio and video) with their permission to allow for more accurate data analysis, and these recordings are not shared or available to anyone besides the author and supervisors.

Notes, transcripts, and recordings were stored only on secured, password-protected offline drives, and only anonymised data is shared on University servers, which are encrypted to the highest possible standards. Any quotes from these interviews were used anonymously or by a pseudonym to retain the confidentiality of this compiled research.

Ethical considerations were deeply embedded in every aspect of this research, guiding the study's design, implementation, and reporting. The final data presented in this research study was anonymised in its entirety, with all private or confidential information removed and all remaining data was presented anonymously with the results quantified and pseudonyms used in place of any identifying information, meaning that there are no implications for the participants or their respective companies, clients, employers, and/or affiliates as part of this investigation. These measures ensure that the study not only contributes valuable insights into process management in the Screen Industries but does so in a manner that respects and protects the rights and dignity of all participants.

## 3.7. Limitations of the Study

Acknowledging and understanding the limitations inherent in any research study is crucial for maintaining the integrity and validity of its findings. Despite efforts to ensure a representative sample, the possibility of sampling bias remains, and bias may arise from the recruitment strategies used or the self-selection of participants, potentially limiting the generalisability of the findings (Patton, 2015; Teddlie and Yu, 2007). However, it must be noted that the author's access to professionals working within the Screen Industries can be seen as an asset to this research, as it is notoriously challenging to gain access to various sectors and individuals (Kuzel, 1999). Not only did the author encounter limitations with access, but the pandemic and subsequent industry strikes also created barriers to participation, further complicating recruitment efforts in an industry often guarded by legal agreements, such as Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs).

The reliability and validity of the instruments used for data collection, such as interview protocols and survey questions, influence the accuracy of the data. Misinterpretation of questions or interviewer bias may also affect the quality of the data collected. Employing a mixed-methods

approach, while robust, presents its own set of limitations. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data requires careful alignment of methodologies, and discrepancies between these data types may pose challenges in interpretation (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). The interpretative nature of qualitative research introduces subjectivity in the analysis and interpretation of the data. The author's perspectives, biases, and participant interactions could influence how data is understood and reported (Miles *et al.*, 2014). Additionally, the findings of the study were influenced by the time and location in which the research was conducted. Changes in industry practices, technological advancements, or cultural shifts may limit the applicability of the findings over time or across different contexts.

The study employs methodological triangulation (multiple data collection methods) and data triangulation (survey vs. interview perspectives) to reconcile potential discrepancies between qualitative and quantitative data (Denzin, 2012). These strategies facilitated a cohesive integration of the data, ensuring that the findings reflect a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The study acknowledged its temporal and spatial context by clearly stating the time and location of the research. Discussions in the findings and conclusions sections contextualised the results within the current industry landscape and explored their potential future applicability. To mitigate sampling bias, the study employed a purposive stratified sampling method (Teddlie and Yu, 2007), ensuring that participants represented different industry roles, production phases, and hierarchical levels. Efforts were made to ensure sample diversity, and rigorous pre-testing of interview protocols and survey instruments was conducted to enhance validity and reliability.

Given the author's industry background, bracketing was employed as a means of reducing researcher bias. Prior to engaging with qualitative data, the author documented pre-existing assumptions in a reflexivity journal, ensuring that emerging themes were shaped by participant narratives rather than personal experiences (Husserl, 1970; Moustakas, 1994). While this approach enhanced transparency and reflexivity, complete objectivity is not feasible in qualitative research, and researcher interpretation remains an inherent part of the analysis process.

While the aforementioned strategies were employed to mitigate limitations, it is crucial to consider their implications for the interpretation and application of the research findings. The potential for sampling bias and the contextual nature of the research necessitate cautious generalisation of the findings. The results are best understood as a reflection of the specific sample and context in which the study was conducted. Care should be taken when applying these findings to different populations or settings. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data offers a comprehensive view, but discrepancies between these data types require careful consideration. The findings were interpreted with an awareness of each method's inherent complexities and potential biases.

Future research could employ more extensive and diverse sampling strategies to enhance the generalisability of the findings. Larger sample sizes, with expanded geographic representation in underrepresented regions, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Conducting longitudinal studies would address temporal limitations, tracking changes in process management practices over time to provide insights into evolving industry trends. Comparative studies across different industry contexts—such as examining process management practices in non-Western markets—could offer a richer and more nuanced understanding of leadership, workflow management, and production challenges.

Despite these limitations, the study presents a rigorous examination of process management and leadership within the Screen Industries, offering practical insights while paving the way for future research. By building upon the insights gained and addressing these methodological challenges, future studies can deepen our understanding of process management frameworks in the creative industries, contributing to the advancement of academic knowledge and industry practice.

# 4. Data Findings

## 4.4. Presentation of Findings

This chapter presents the key findings from a mixed-methods investigation into process management in the Screen Industries. Drawing from quantitative survey data ($n$ = 503) and qualitative interviews with industry professionals ($n$ = 24), the chapter addresses the four central research questions. These explore how the Screen Industries are categorised internationally, how value is conceptualised and managed, what leadership frameworks are commonly applied, and whether a process management framework can be used to improve operational effectiveness and competitive advantage.

The chapter is structured in two main parts. First, the findings are presented separately for the quantitative and qualitative strands, identifying relevant trends, challenges, and sector-specific insights across different roles, production scales, and geographical contexts. This section focuses on presenting the data in a clear and accessible way, with supporting figures and tables included where appropriate.

Second, the chapter moves to an integrated synthesis of the findings in relation to the original research questions and the three core analytical pillars of the study: leadership, process, and value. This synthesis is organised around four key conclusions that emerged from the data: (1) Definition, (2) Core Operational Pillars, (3) Autonomy and Flow, and (4) the "Nobody Knows Anything" Principle.

These findings reflect both the operational realities and the cultural complexities of the Screen Industries, and together provide the conceptual foundation for the process management framework developed in *Chapter 5: Process Management Framework*. In presenting this analysis, the chapter highlights how sector-specific structures and practices influence operational outcomes and how a structured yet flexible framework may offer new ways to navigate the balance between creative autonomy and the demands of commercial production.

### 4.1.1. Data Findings: Surveys

A total of 503 fully completed survey responses were analysed, representing 95.99% of the 524 submissions received. These responses reflect a broad cross-section of professionals working across film, television, documentaries, commercials, and video games within the Screen Industries.

The survey captured demographic data, job role experiences, perceptions of leadership and workflow, and views on value and production dynamics. The findings presented here offer a high-level analysis of trends in operational practices and cultural attitudes across the sector.

**About you…**

This area provides information on the individual's basic demographics, including age range, location, sector involvement, stages of production worked, number and duration of projects, and number of others involved directly and indirectly with the individual. Not only is it an accessible introduction to the participant's survey, but it also gives a solid foundation for data that can be used in statistical analysis within this study.

**My job…**

This section offers participants varying options to agree, disagree, or stay neutral to questions that relate directly to their job role. Questions here focus specifically on the research questions and help set the foundations and direction for the requirements of the process management framework.

**On projects…**

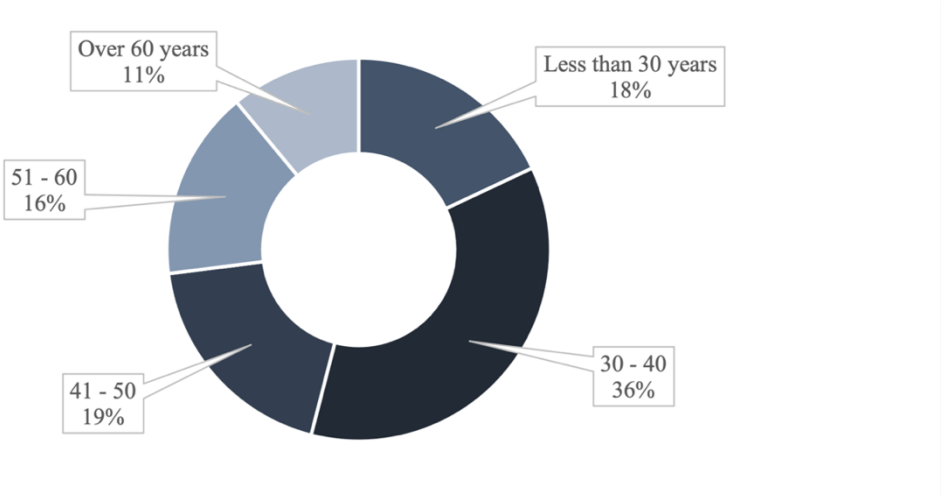
Part three asks questions on the broader scope of projects that individuals are involved with. Once again, this is built on varying agreeing, disagreeing, or neutrality in a participant’s responses. Still, it gives an overview of how the individual and their role fit into the larger picture of productions. This is the only section that explicitly asks participants to enter comments that can be analysed with qualitative methodologies.

**Finally…**

The final twenty-fifth question asks where the participant found this survey. This statistic shows which groups or organisations had the most extensive distribution or interest from members.

Age is a continuous variable that will forever change as professionals age out of the workforce and are replaced with younger team members. However, as captured in the data for this study, most respondents were between thirty and forty at the time of responding, and a healthy sample from all other demographics has been recorded. Only two failed to answer this question, and while this data is kept in the final spreadsheet, shown in *Appendix H*, this has been removed from the displayed data shown in Figure 4.1 for clarity purposes.

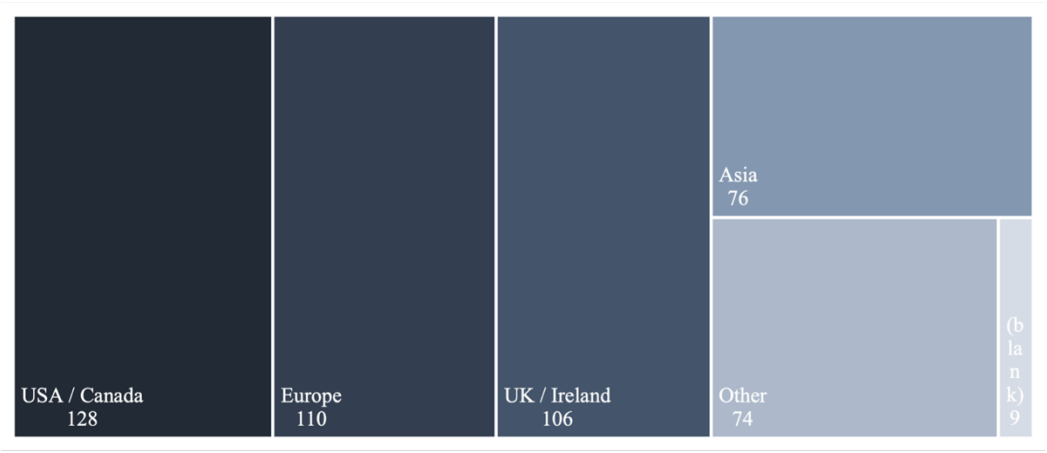
**Figure 4.1: Survey Responses – Age Range**




*Source: N/A*

This data gives a relatively even split between those aged forty or under (54%) and those older than forty years (46%). Considering this study's international and global focus and the Screen Industries themselves, responders within the US/Canada, Europe, and the UK/Ireland regions dominated the majority of collected questions, as shown in Figure 4.2. This is unsurprising due to the number of organisations within the Screen Industries that operate within these locations. However, the UK/Ireland and USA/Canada seem to have a more balanced age distribution, with younger professionals (under 30) relatively fewer in some regions.

**Figure 4.2: Survey Responses – Geographic Locations**




*Source: N/A*

Still, considerable input was gained from countries outside these regions, as documented in Table 4.1, including some participants who noted "Worldwide" as a location. This could show and emphasise the nomadic nature of the Screen Industries whereby short-term contractual work governs the workforce (Bealing and Krieble, 2017; Caves, 2002). While certainly not detrimental to the study's findings, it is also important to note that nine respondents did not complete this question but are included in the data shown in Figure 4.2.

**Table 4.1: Survey Responses – Other Specifically Mentioned Geographic Locations Matrix**

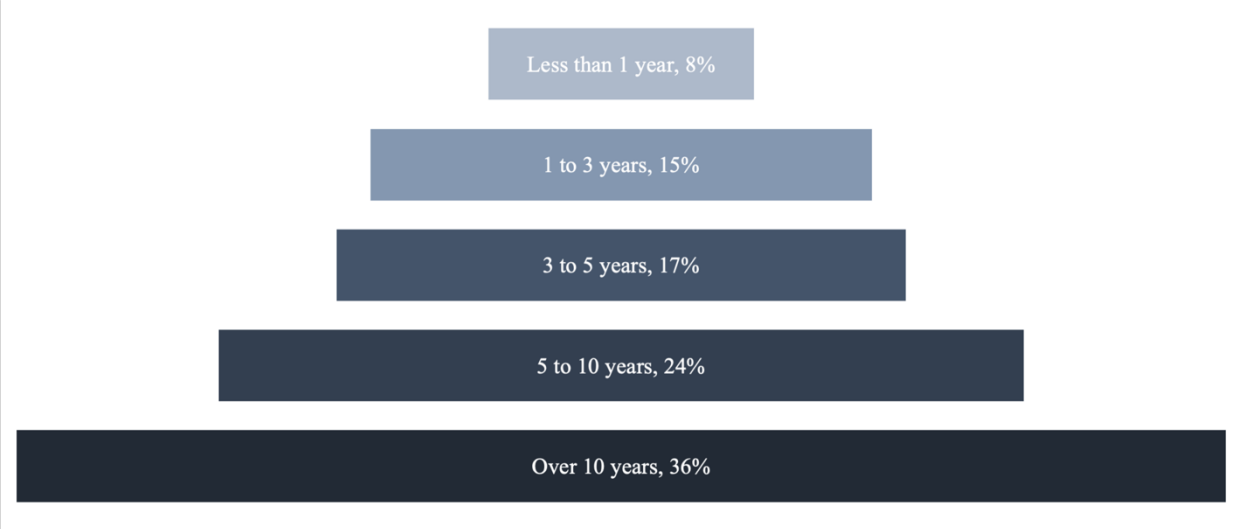
| SURVEY RESPONSES – ADDITIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS MATRIX | | |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | China | Egypt |
| India | Japan | Korea |
| Nepal | New Zealand | Singapore |
| South Africa | Thailand | Worldwide |

*Source: N/A*

36% of respondents to this survey have accrued over ten years of industry experience, making this the majority of data captured. The fewest responders have less than one year of experience, which equates to 8% of collected results. While this signifies that those with high levels of expertise and a long-term career in the Screen Industries were the dominant responses to the

survey questions, this causes some challenges to the data as newer entrants to Screen Industries are underrepresented in the findings displayed in this study, as shown in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3: Survey Responses – Experience**




*Source: N/A*

Those aged between 41-50 and 51-60 dominate with more industry experience, with the UK/Ireland and USA/Canada having a significant share of these professionals. Those indicating that they have less than one year of experience are predominantly under thirty years old, evenly spread across locations, indicating new entrants in various regions. Europe and Asia show a more mixed distribution of experience levels.

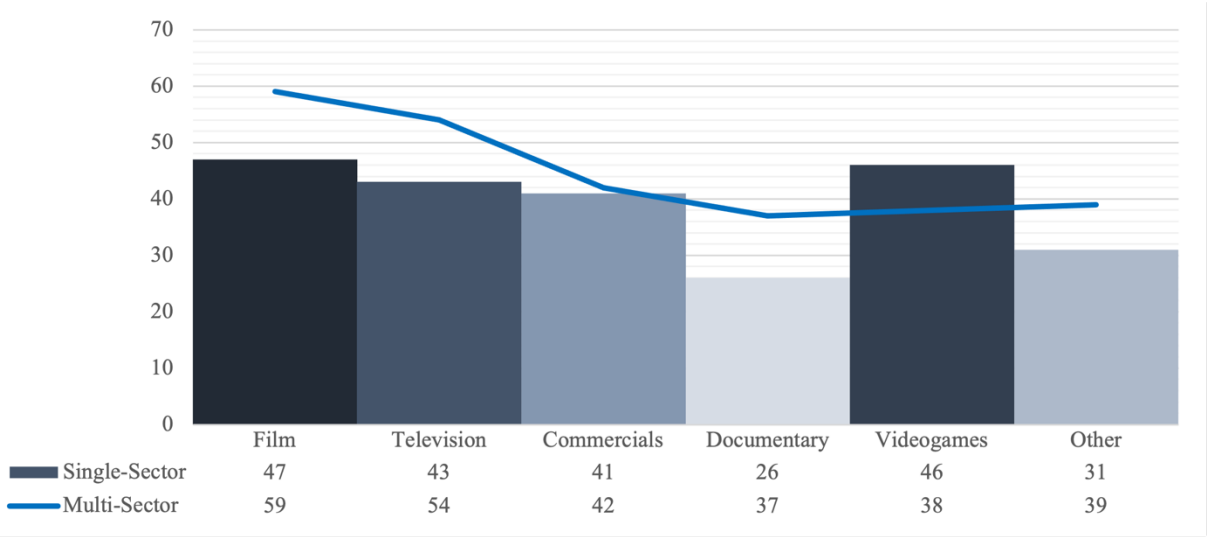
The definition of the sectors within the Screen Industries has been identified within this research as film, television, commercials, documentary, and video games; many of the skills are cross-disciplinary, and therefore, the option to choose one or multiple options was available within the distributed surveys. Additionally, responders could select “Other” if they wished to highlight extra sectors not covered in the initial main offerings.

This led to a close split between those focusing their discipline on just one sector (46.52%) and those who work in multiple sectors (53.48%). Those who responded with a single sector focus, a total of 234 people, indicated that they work only in one sector and do not branch out into other

sectors outlined within this research. This gave a relatively even focus distribution, with "documentary" and "other" showing a distinct lag in response popularity.

Further to those focusing on only one sector, 269 participants indicated that they split their work between multiple sectors within the Screen Industries. This suggests that a significant portion of professionals in the Screen Industries work across different sectors rather than staying in one. Film and television dominate this space, with almost half showing that workers in these sectors often cross-pollinate (Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4: Survey Responses – Single Sector Focus Responses**




*Source: N/A*

Interestingly, video games are the only single-sector focus that equals more than multi-sector responders (forty-six to thirty-eight responders), indicating that those who work in the video game sector predominantly stay within that specific field of expertise. Of course, there are variances here, and there are multi-sector participants who work in video games and others, but there are substantial observations to be made from this data. For instance, this may reflect the lack of cross-sector shifts for workers within video games; it could also indicate that work within the video games sector is more secure and stable, or indeed, it may highlight that the skills required to excel in this sector are not as easily transferrable. These are all assumptions gained

from this data, but what is clear is that those with a single-sector focus in video games outweigh those with a multi-sector focus.

Younger professionals (under 30) and less experienced professionals are more likely to work in a single industry. In comparison, older professionals (41+) with more experience are more represented in multiple sectors, suggesting that industry diversification happens with experience, possibly due to broader networks and skill sets ($\chi^2(4) = 18.73$, $p = .001$). Professionals in the Screen Industries are more likely to work in multiple sectors if their primary productions are project-based and freelance-heavy. Commercials, Television, and Documentary sectors have the highest multi-industry crossover. Film, Video Games, and highly specialised sectors tend to be more single-industry focused ($\chi^2(59) = 503.00$, $p < .001$).

As mentioned previously, several other sectors were recorded in the survey responses. 111 survey respondents indicated "Other" as their chosen sector. The majority of answers, eighty-one in total, were left blank and unanswered so that no further data could be gathered from a large percentage (72.97%) of responders in this category. However, the remaining thirty responses included written replies that indicated additional sectors. As explored within *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, these sectors could all technically be included in the definition of the Screen Industries due to combining identified sectors such as "Animation" (1.8%) into their specific outputs (film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games) and even combining "AR/VR/XR" (9% from combined categories) into video games as it is essentially interactive media. Table 4.2 includes frequencies and cross-tabulation to break down this data visually.

**Table 4.2: Survey Responses – Other Recorded Sectors**

| Total "Other" Responses | 111 | 100% |
|---|---|---|
| (blank) | 81 | 72.97% |
| animated content | 1 | 0.9% |
| Animation | 2 | 1.8% |
| animation, vfx, virtual reality | 1 | 0.9% |
| AR/VR | 1 | 0.9% |
| AR/VR/XR | 1 | 0.9% |
| Buyers/Sales | 1 | 0.9% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Documentary | 1 | 0.9% |
| Film trailers | 1 | 0.9% |
| Interactive media for kids | 1 | 0.9% |
| Live broadcast | 3 | 2.7% |
| Mobile games | 3 | 27% |
| Movie trailers | 1 | 0.9% |
| Music Videos, Fashion Videos, Dance Videos | 1 | 0.9% |
| Sports broadcasting | 1 | 0.9% |
| Theme Park Graphics | 1 | 0.9% |
| Theme Park Interactive Media | 1 | 0.9% |
| VFX | 2 | 1.8% |
| Virtual reality | 2 | 1.8% |
| VR/AR/XR | 1 | 0.9% |
| XR | 4 | 3.6% |

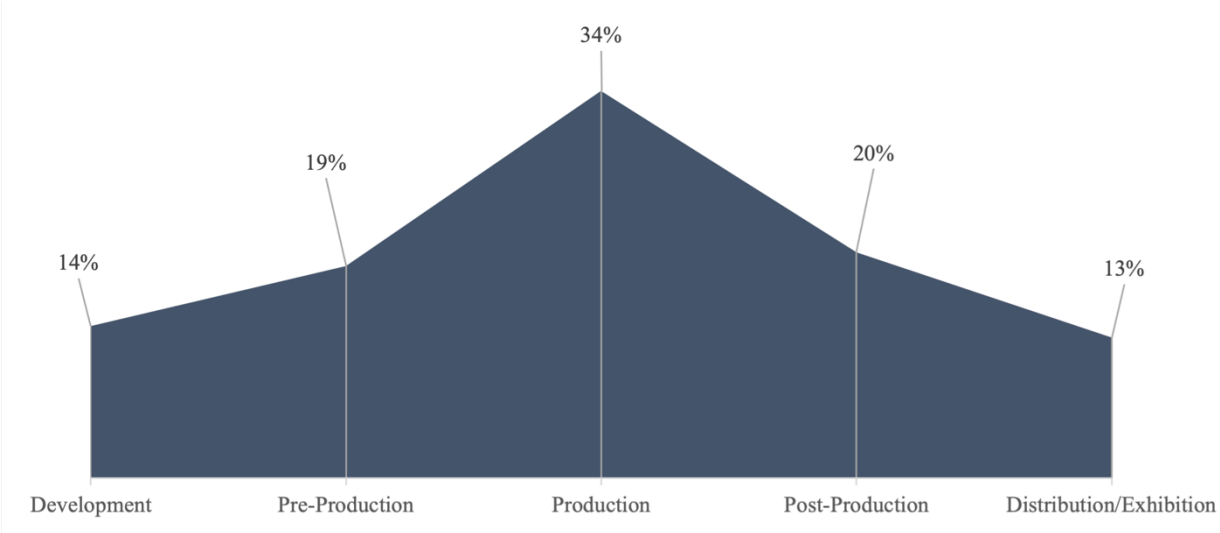
*Source: N/A*

Although all of these records can be merged into the existing established sectors within this research, several responses highlighted that even within the Screen Industries, some members believe their sector, or area of focus, needs to be independently addressed (broadcast, theme parks, trailers, etc.). Once again, the answers outlined in Table 4.2 could be easily integrated into the now unequivocally defined categories that represent the Screen Industries. A note back to "nobody knows anything" from Goldman (1983) and Caves (2002) must be made. While there is no denying the competencies of the survey respondents, it does offer insight into the lack of agreed-upon sector definitions, even within the professional industry participants.

As demonstrated, the sectors of the Screen Industries are often heavily contended; in contrast, the phases of production are generally stable and commonly acknowledged as 1) Development, 2) Pre-Production, 3) Production, 4) Post-Production, 5) Distribution, and 6) Exhibition. Phases five and six can, and are, often grouped together for ease of understanding and the similarity in their processes. After all, there is only an exhibition of the final product with the distribution of screen-media materials. With this in mind, and for the purposes of the survey, these phases were combined as a single answer to ensure everything was clear to those who participated. While

many responses to the survey indicated that individuals work in more than just one production phase, the compiled data shows a common trend set towards *Production*, as shown in Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5: Survey Responses – Phases of Production Trend**



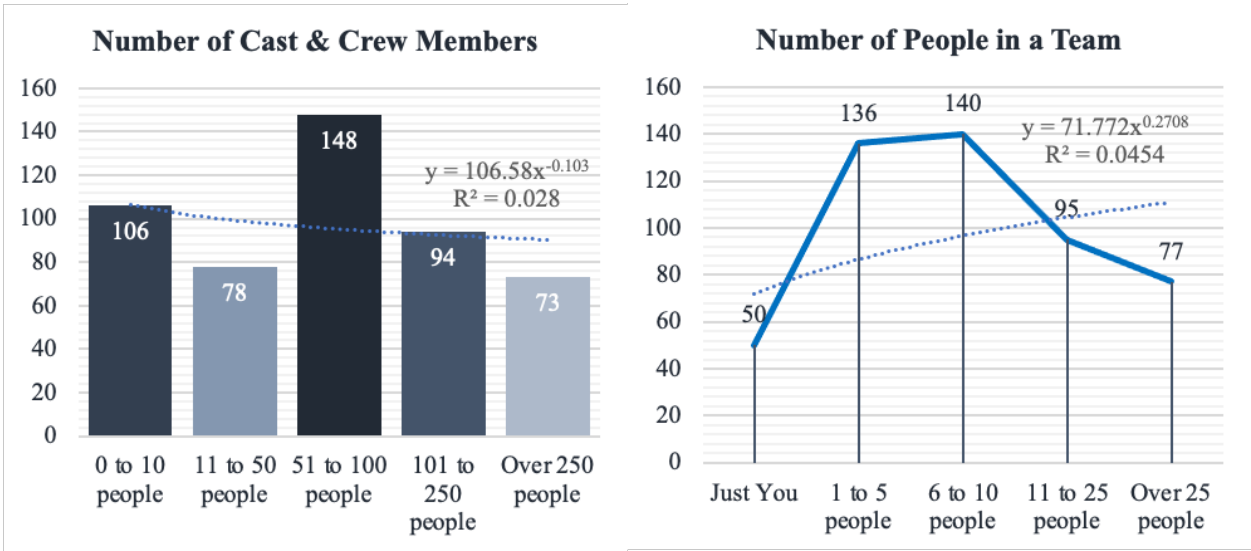

*Source: N/A*

There is an apparent even distribution between the earlier stages (development and pre-production) and the later stages (post-production and distribution/exhibition) of screen-related production. The data presented here clearly demonstrates that fact, and even though individuals may operate in multiple phases, the most common phase for workers in the Screen Industries is during the *Production* phase.

Curiously, the number of projects was somewhat evenly split between industry veterans and new entrants. 19% of responders had worked on one to five projects, only 15% worked on six to ten projects, 18% on eleven to twenty, the majority (26%) on twenty-one to fifty projects, and the remainder (22%) who indicated that they had worked on over fifty projects in their career. These projects often take between one month to three years to complete (71%), with some taking longer than three years (12%). Still, more often, they only last for days at a time (17%), indicating that projects within the five sectors of the Screen Industries are predominantly fast-paced with short durations. While many of these fast-paced projects can have more than 250 people working on their realisation, most working on them operate with around fifty-one to 100 people in their

organisations. Although some individuals work independently, working directly with between one and ten people is the most common, with many working with eleven or more people in their core group, department, or teams (Figure 4.6). These findings correlate directly with this author's own experience in these sectors.

**Figure 4.6: Survey Responses – Number of Cast & Crew Members / Number of People in a Team**




*Source: N/A*

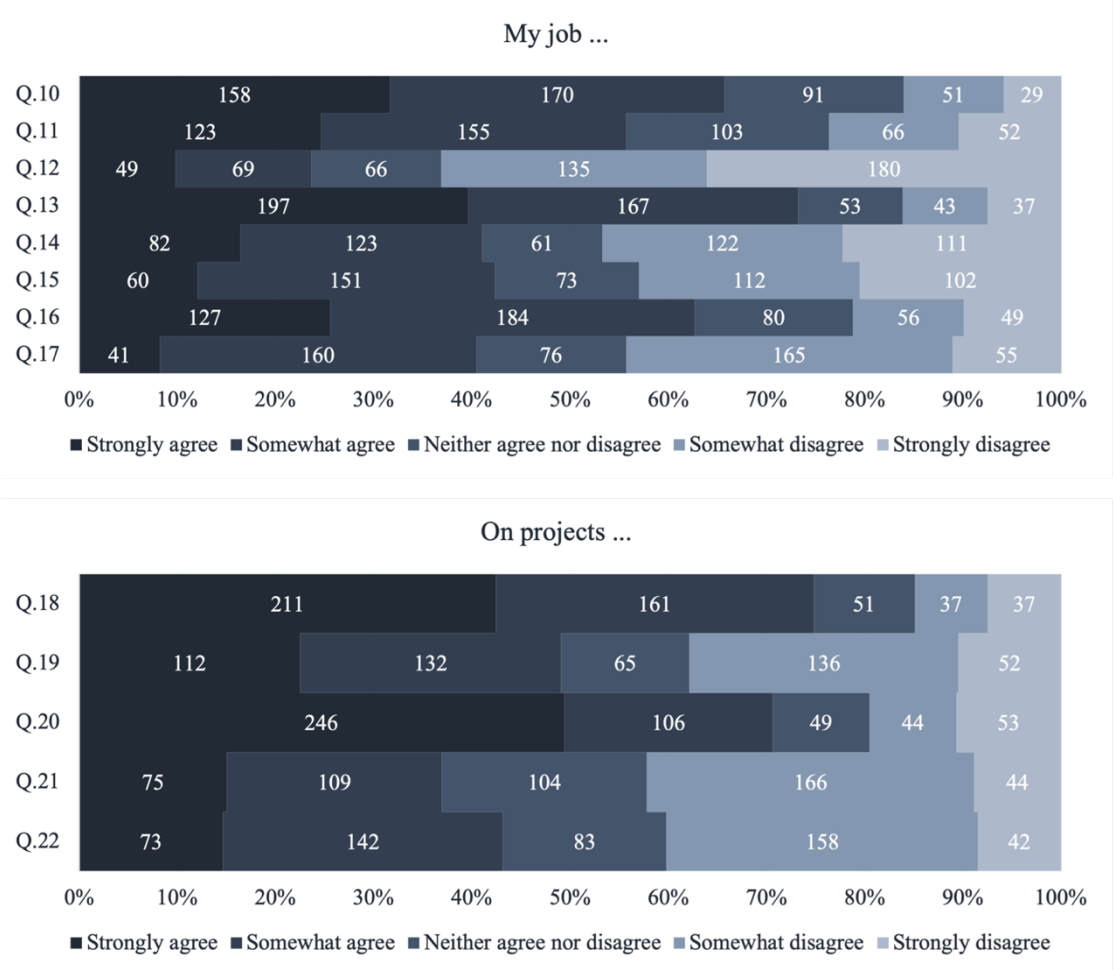
The analysis of the "About you…" section concludes with some interesting facts about the participants in this part of the study. Most respondents are located in the USA, Canada, Europe, the United Kingdom, or Ireland, have over ten years of experience, and are aged between thirty and forty. Participants indicated that many work in multiple phases of a project, but the majority of respondents operate within the *Production* phase within film, video games, television, and commercials, where they work closely in groups of one to ten people but are involved with projects that have an average of fifty to 100 in the workforce.

To allow for specificity in survey questions while maintaining the ability to keep statistical (quantitative) analysis at the forefront of the survey, thirteen questions were asked using a five-point unipolar Likert Scale (Likert, 1932), which gave responders the option of strongly agreeing or strongly disagreeing with statements while also allowing for neutrality or slight bias towards agreement or disagreement which each statement that was asked; please refer to *Appendix D* for

further clarity on survey questions numbered ten to twenty-two. These questions were included in sections two, "*My job…*" and three, "*On projects…*" of the survey. The structure of these statement questions gives quick data and feedback without requiring written (qualitative) input from participants.

"*Somewhat agree*" was the dominant answer to these questions, with "*Strongly agree*" closely following, while "*Strongly disagree*" was chosen least, and the most neutral answer, "*Neither agree nor disagree*", followed that. Figure 4.7 shows a histogram of the thirteen Likert Scale questions, eight targeted job-specific inquiries and five targeted specifics regarding the respondents' projects.

**Figure 4.7: Survey Responses – Likert Scale "My Job…" and "On Projects…" Questions**




*Source: N/A*

As shown in Figure 4.7, most participants agreed with the statements that were asked, with all but one question (question twelve) showing a dominant disagreement. Findings indicate a generally positive view of job autonomy and accountability, but a notable lack of control over work hours and project scheduling, suggesting structural inefficiencies in leadership and workflow planning. This allows us to conclude confidently from this collected data.

Focusing on "*My job…*", which comprises questions ten to seventeen, there are clear patterns within the answers and correlations between questions. Participants mostly agreed that their job allows them great freedom to make decisions and decide how they do their work, but they are not in control of their working hours, including their start and leave times or ability to partake in remote work. This highlights the presence of autonomy within their processes (tasks), but with strict control over the working times, which can heavily impact on flow.

Findings show that each individual is accountable for the standard and completion of their work, and while innovation and creativity in all assigned tasks are encouraged, conflicting demands can arise where methods and the order in which work needs to be completed are dictated. Again, this removes choice from the individual, putting control (leadership) at the forefront and, in turn, limiting the autonomy and freedom that they have in their tasks (process), which could remove innovation from their outputs (value). There was a mix of reactions as to whether jobs were the same on different projects, and some respondents noted that there could sometimes be interference from external sources, which can be detrimental to the outputs and workflows both to teams and individuals.

When working "*On projects…*" it was notable that teamwork is critical, with each team member carefully selected by leadership and dedicated to the success of a project. Unfortunately, communication between these teams and departments seems to be mixed, which could lead to unresolved conflicts for some productions.

While most responders agree that understanding project management methodologies, techniques, and tools is vital for the success of a project, not everything is structured and appropriately

scheduled. Often, tasks and required processes are distributed incorrectly, with content that is inaccurate and unclear objectives being set by leadership. This lack of understanding was further highlighted by a mix of positive and negative views on the effective management of planned goals and milestones to determine a current project's progression and success. This highlights apparent issues with the leadership and process management within the Screen Industries, which often dilutes the value of final creative content outputs. Again, this highlights the need for further education in this industry to remove the “nobody knows” approach (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002) that even this author has come across in their career.

Additionally, giving more autonomy to individuals, teams, departments, and their leadership could potentially open communication streams and lead to individual and group “flow” theory (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997), maximising innovation and final outputs (value) from processes (tasks). The benefits of autonomy and flow are manifold, and both autonomy and flow contribute to job satisfaction and well-being. Autonomy allows individuals to feel a sense of ownership over their work, leading to higher motivation and satisfaction (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Flow, on the other hand, provides a sense of fulfilment and joy in the work process itself, enhancing overall well-being (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997). These factors are crucial in an industry known for its high levels of stress and burnout.

Descriptive analysis revealed key trends in participant responses. The highest mean scores were observed for "Teamwork is critical" ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 0.87$) and "Accountability for work" ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.82$), indicating strong agreement regarding the importance of collaboration and responsibility in professional settings. Conversely, the lowest mean scores were associated with "Determining working hours" ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.02$) and "Project structure/scheduling" ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 0.94$), suggesting perceived limitations in autonomy over work schedules and inconsistencies in project planning.

To determine whether significant differences exist between job-based and project-based perceptions, paired-sample t-tests were conducted. Several comparisons yielded statistically significant differences, indicating distinct expectations for job roles versus project work. For example, "Accountability in my job" ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.82$) was significantly higher than

"Accountability on projects" ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.90$), $t(148) = 3.21$, $p = .0015$, suggesting that individuals perceive more direct responsibility in their job roles compared to project-based accountability. Similarly, "Encourages innovation in my job" ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.88$) differed significantly from "Encourages innovation on projects" ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.91$), $t(142) = 2.89$, $p = .0042$, indicating that employees feel more empowered to innovate within their primary roles than within specific projects.

Spearman's rank correlation analysis (Zar, 2005) was used to assess relationships between job and project-based perceptions. The results indicated moderate positive correlations in key areas. Notably, "Encourages innovation in my job" was positively correlated with "Understanding of project management is important" ($r = .38$, $p < .001$), suggesting that employees who value workplace innovation also recognise the significance of structured project management.

Additionally, "Accountability in my job" correlated with "Teamwork is critical on projects" ($r = .35$, $p < .001$), highlighting the connection between personal responsibility and collaborative success in project-based settings. These findings suggest that while professionals value teamwork and accountability in both job and project settings, their perceptions of responsibility and innovation differ between these contexts. The significant differences in paired comparisons underscore the need for tailored management approaches that align job roles with project expectations. Furthermore, the observed correlations imply that fostering innovation and accountability within job roles may positively influence project-based performance.

Questions twenty-three and twenty-four offered participants the opportunity to share their thoughts on what could be improved with leadership and management in the Screen Industries and if any issues affect their output and performance in their current role. These answers required written text input from participants, and there were 240 written responses to these questions. These have been analysed using thematic analysis (TA) and are discussed in detail within this chapter. However, responses to these questions indicated a lack of confidence in structured project planning and suggested that clear objectives and fair distribution are not widely recognised. There is significant scepticism about the fairness of project structures and the effectiveness of planning, but a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.33$, $p < .0001$) was found

between perceptions of project structure (Question 23) and project management effectiveness (Question 24).

The survey's final question asked where participants found access to the survey. This query gives insight into where the survey found the most success—in terms of response rate—and could also signify which distribution channel (organisation or other) is most active in the Screen Industries. While over half, 51.49%, did not answer this question, the remaining 48.51% who responded were relatively evenly dispersed between the three options: A screen guild, a union, or other—including organisations and social entities operating directly within the Screen Industries.

Of all 503 survey responses recorded, only forty-five (8.95%) declared they consented to be contacted with information on the study's progress and final outcome. While this author is grateful for the responses, the industry professionals' lack of interest in the results of this research study is discouraging when there is an evident lack of understanding of process management within the Screen Industries—evidenced within this research, the gaps in current literature, and the evident failure of many screen-media projects. This maintains the status quo of "nobody knows," a core theme woven throughout this research.

### 4.1.2. Data Findings: Interviews

A total of 24 interviews were conducted with professionals working across the Screen Industries. These participants represented a variety of roles, production scales, and specialisms, providing rich insight into leadership practices, workflow dynamics, and value creation within creative and commercial contexts.

Early analysis of interview transcripts revealed several recurring statements that directly align with the focus of this study. These insights have been condensed here to clarify key findings that the process management framework developed in this research seeks to address:

- A better understanding of the production process, including roles, responsibilities, and clarity around what each person actually does—linking back to the recurring "nobody knows anything" theme identified throughout this research.

- Improved communication between production phases, departments, and leadership, with more realistic and clearly defined goals across teams—highlighting a need for stronger leadership alignment to support better outcomes and clearer value delivery.
- Greater transparency in planning, more realistic time allocation, and the appointment of experienced individuals in critical roles—emphasising the importance of autonomy and conditions for achieving creative "flow."

In addition, many participants described barriers that prevent them from working to their full potential, which in turn negatively affect both individual and team performance. These include:

- A lack of decisiveness and late or unclear communication of changes from decision-makers who may not fully understand the creative and technical implications of those changes.
- Unrealistic budgets and schedules, often driven by a limited understanding of the work, roles, and processes involved across departments—particularly from non-creative or external stakeholders.
- Long working hours—typically ten or more hours per day—excluding travel, setup, preparation, or de-rigging time, contributing to fatigue and burnout.

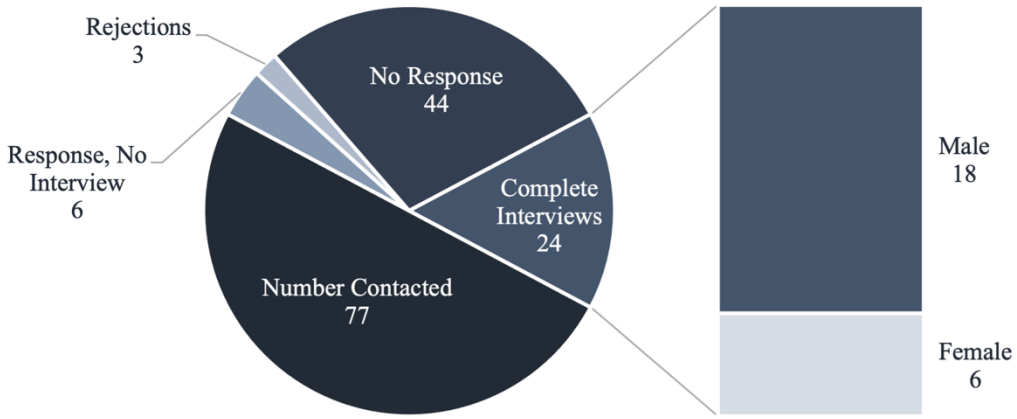
These insights formed a foundational layer of the qualitative analysis and directly informed the development of the thematic Pillars explored later in this chapter and operationalised in the SERPENT Process Management Framework.

The majority of interview participants identified as male, with six identifying as female. While gender was not a core focus of this study, the imbalance is consistent with broader patterns of underrepresentation and structural inequality across the sector (Ehrich *et al.*, 2022). A breakdown of gender identity is presented in Figure 4.8.

Only data from participants who formally consented and met the ethical criteria for inclusion is represented in this analysis. While additional informal conversations with other professionals

supported and echoed many of the emergent themes, these have not been included in the formal findings due to confidentiality limitations.

**Figure 4.8: Interview Responses – Basic Statistics**

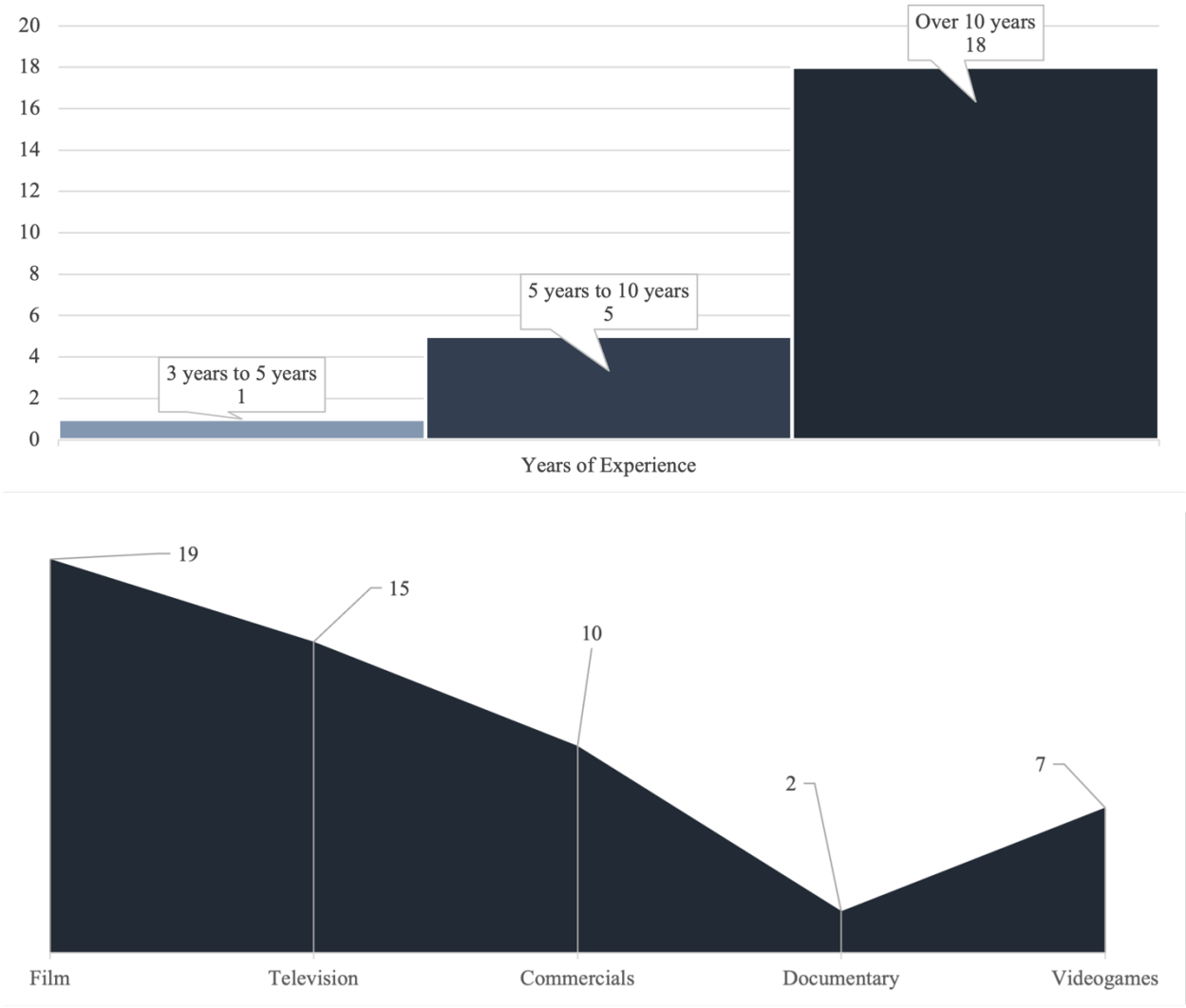



*Source: N/A*

Many participants (5) indicated they had five to ten years of experience within the Screen Industries. However, most interview participants (18) stated that they had over ten years of industry experience, with only one participant (1) having between three and five years.

Interestingly, only eight interviewees stated they had worked in only one sector of Screen Industries. In contrast, the remaining sixteen worked in two, three, or four sectors of the defined Screen Industries. These findings are displayed in Figure 4.9.

**Figure 4.9: Interview Responses – Years of Experience and Sector Experience**




*Source: N/A*

Like the survey responses, those with over 10 years of experience commonly worked across multiple sectors, including Film, Television, Commercials, and Videogames. Newer professionals (<5 years of experience) were more concentrated in single sectors, suggesting specialisation at earlier career stages. However, by using a Chi-Square test, the interview findings suggest that years of experience do not significantly determine whether a professional works in multiple sectors ($\chi^2(3) = 4.10$, $p = .24$), but the data does indicate a trend where those with over 10 years of experience tend to work across more sectors.

To retain the international focus of this research, it was essential to gain access to cast and crew currently working in the Screen Industries from multiple locations worldwide. While not all locations and territories could be captured, five significant territories were included due to the current locations of the interview participants, regardless of their nationalities.

Table 4.3 outlines the five global territories in which the interviewees were located, and it must also be noted that half of the participants mentioned that they had worked internationally or are currently working internationally as a requirement of their roles within the Screen Industries. This reflects an even divide between those with global experience and those with only domestic expertise within the sectors of the Screen Industries.

**Table 4.3: Interview Responses – Global Locations of Interview Participants and International Experience**

| COUNTRY (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY) |
|---|
| Australia |
| Mainland Europe |
| Singapore |
| United Kingdom / Republic of Ireland |
| United States of America / Canada |
| *Number of Participants Working/Worked Internationally: 12 (50%)*<br>*Number of Participants NOT Working/Worked Internationally: 12 (50%)* |

*Source: N/A*

Beyond the descriptive overview presented in Figures 4.8 and 4.9, deeper thematic analysis revealed several recurring patterns that reinforce the quantitative trends observed in the survey data. While years of experience and sectoral breadth were already noted at a demographic level, participants' narratives added insight into how cross-sector adaptability becomes essential for sustaining a long-term career in the Screen Industries. This theme was especially pronounced among professionals with over ten years of experience, many of whom described their ability to move fluidly between film, television, commercials, and videogames as both a necessity and a strength. In addition to career adaptability, participants voiced consistent concerns about leadership misalignment, workflow inefficiencies, and communication breakdowns—issues that appeared across roles, territories, and production scales. These were not isolated frustrations, but

systemic patterns that shaped how professionals navigated their working environments and delivered creative outputs under pressure.

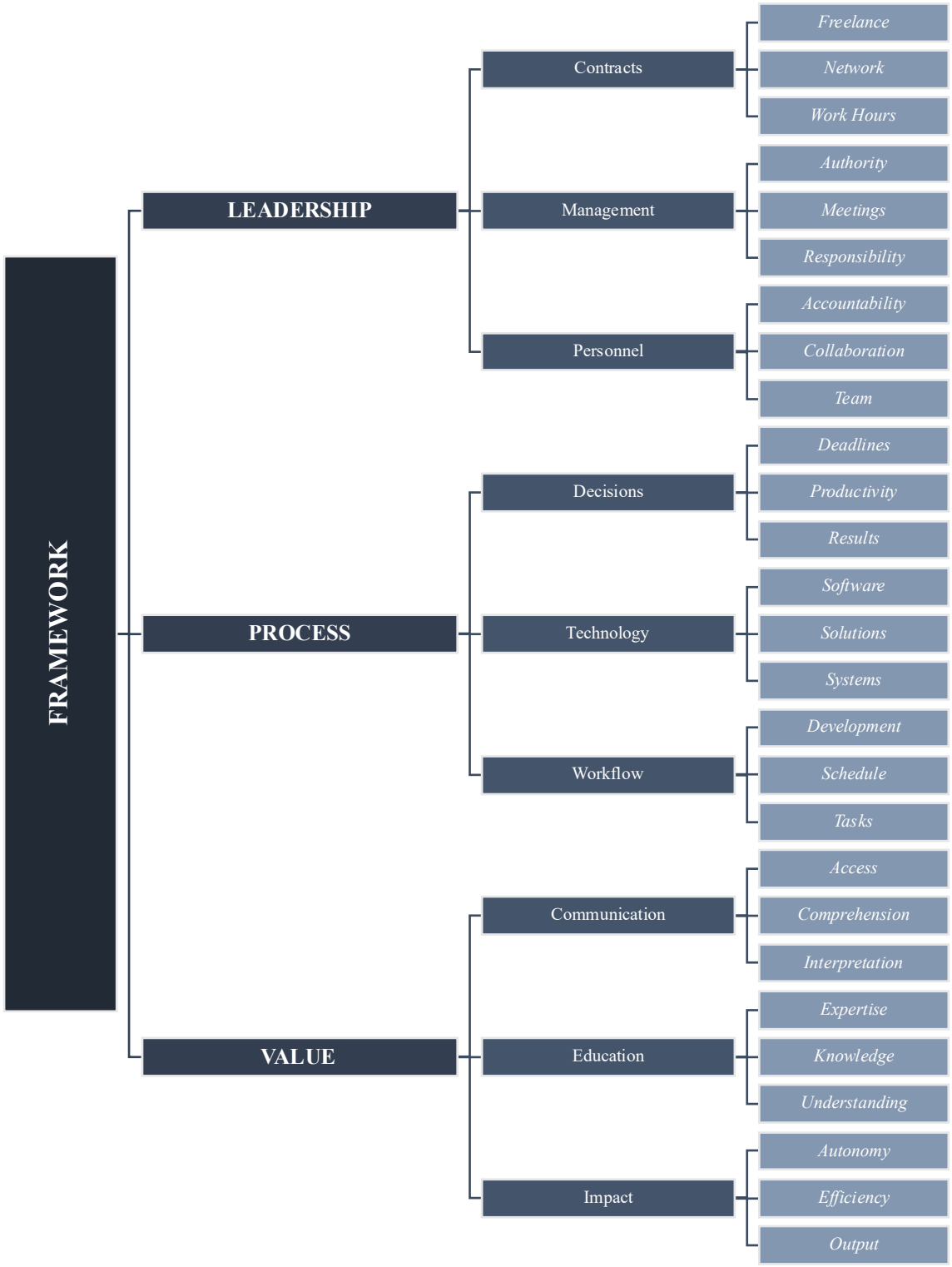
Thematic analysis enabled the identification and refinement of these patterns, revealing how leadership instability can erode team cohesion, how poorly structured workflows increase project risk, and how misaligned value perceptions—between creative teams, clients, and executives—can undermine efficiency and morale. These themes were organised into three core pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—which collectively underpin the process management framework proposed in this study.

As presented in Figure 4.10, the framework visually maps these pillars against the dominant themes and supporting codes derived from the interview data. Each theme created in this research represents a significant aspect of process management in the Screen Industries, reflecting the experiences, challenges, and strategies of professionals operating within this domain.

Respectively, themes are applied to a core pillar, reinforcing the adoption of the three-pillar structure (Leadership, Process, Value) and linking directly with the research data to support the development of an academically robust and practically relevant process management framework for Screen Industries productions. Figure 4.10 illustrates the relationships between codes, themes, and pillars, and the comprehensive list of coded quotations underpinning these connections contributed directly to the emergence of critical findings throughout this research.

These themes, reinforced by quantitative trends and practitioner insight, are carried forward into the development of the SERPENT Process Management Framework, presented in *Chapter 5: Process Management Framework*.

**Figure 4.10: Process Management Framework Foundations – Pillars, Themes, and Codes**




*Source: N/A*

## 4.2. Integration of Data

Data has been gathered from existing academic and published literature and combined with survey and interview responses from those actively working in the Screen Industries in roles classified as above-the-line (ATL) and below-the-line (BTL). Integrating primary and secondary research data, including quantitative and qualitative findings, represents a critical juncture in this research, marking the convergence of diverse data streams into a cohesive, comprehensive narrative.

The rationale for integrating all findings lies in the complementary strengths of the mixed methods approach, with quantitative data offering breadth, structure, and generalisability and qualitative data providing depth, richness, and context. These distinct yet complementary datasets capture the complexity and multifaceted nature of the information and outline the academic and practical output it is intended for. This integration enriches the research and offers a multidimensional perspective on process management in the Screen Industries, strengthening the stability and highlighting the prevalence of the three core pillars (leadership, process, and value) on which this research is built. Observed patterns from one component can be validated and enriched by insights from the others while fortifying the robustness of findings, leading to a holistic understanding of the research questions while offering nuanced and generalisable insights.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data further validates the three core research pillars of Leadership, Process, and Value. Survey results indicating structural workflow inefficiencies were mirrored in interviewee responses, particularly regarding unclear task delegation and frequent project rework cycles. Regression analysis found that process structuring was the most significant predictor of operational effectiveness (OE) ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$), aligning with industry professionals' concerns about workflow disorganisation.

The thematic coding of interview transcripts revealed several recurring keywords, with workflow structuring, leadership inconsistencies, and communication failures emerging as dominant themes. These themes closely align with quantitative survey responses, where 42% of respondents cited poor leadership alignment as a key challenge, and 37% strongly agreed that

project milestones lacked clarity. Further statistical analysis reinforced these findings. Regression modelling indicated that structured project planning ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$) was the strongest predictor of operational effectiveness (OE), while leadership effectiveness alone did not yield statistical significance ($\beta = -0.039$, $p = 0.365$). The results indicate significant differences in thematic emphasis, with workflow structuring concerns more prevalent in Film and Television (61%), whereas leadership inconsistencies were reported more frequently in Video Games (44%). These statistical differences suggest that sectoral nuances influence how leadership and process inefficiencies manifest in different production environments.

The emerging themes identified through thematic analysis align with statistical findings from the quantitative survey data. The three core pillars (Leadership, Process, and Value) were reinforced by statistical correlations, with project structuring ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$) having the strongest impact on operational effectiveness. To further assess the strength of thematic groupings, a multiple regression model ($R^2 = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$) was conducted, using Leadership, Process, and Value as independent variables predicting self-reported project success. The model confirmed that Process structuring had the highest predictive power ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$), followed by Value alignment ($\beta = 0.22$, $p = 0.003$), while Leadership had a weak predictive impact ($\beta = -0.05$, $p = 0.41$).

Correlation analysis also revealed a significant positive relationship (Spearman's $\rho \approx 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) between structured leadership directives and improved workflow efficiency, indicating that while leadership alone is not a primary predictor of success, its role is most effective when combined with well-defined processes. The survey findings thus serve as empirical validation for the thematic analysis, confirming that leadership, process structuring, and value conceptualisation are central to operational success in the Screen Industries.

The final refinement of themes was further supported by statistical insights, reinforcing the importance of structured project workflows and leadership alignment in ensuring operational effectiveness (OE). The strongest correlation ($\rho \approx 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) emerged between structured project frameworks and workflow predictability, supporting the thematic conclusion that process structuring is critical for industry success. Further correlational analysis revealed that Leadership

stability was positively correlated ($\rho = 0.38$, $p = 0.002$) with effective scheduling efficiency, unclear workflow structuring and process management had a moderate negative correlation ($\rho = -0.35$, $p = 0.004$) with reported project success, and Value misalignment was strongly associated ($\rho = -0.42$, $p < 0.001$) with increased project delays. These results provide quantitative validation for the importance of workflow organisation, suggesting that productions with more standardised project tracking systems experience fewer disruptions, reduced budgetary waste, and higher project efficiency.

Additionally, survey data showed that 58% of respondents believed their work schedules were unsustainable, reinforcing qualitative accounts of excessive workload and burnout within project-based roles. Interviewees described prolonged working hours, last-minute schedule changes, and unrealistic deadlines as key stressors, further illustrating the lack of structured process management.

The thematic analysis findings reinforce a widely acknowledged yet rarely addressed phenomenon in the Screen Industries—what Goldman (1983) and Caves (2002) famously described as the "nobody knows" principle. Several interviewees echoed this notion, highlighting widespread uncertainty in decision-making, task clarity, and leadership directives.

Specialist #5 highlighted the inefficiencies in unclear task delegation and project workflows, describing how a lack of communication often leads to wasted effort and misaligned outputs:

> *"You don't necessarily get it. There are projects where for a long time you can go without any bloody clue what's going on because nobody's answering your questions, and that's when nothing gets done, nothing of any use. There's times when you write into a void, you just produce stuff, send it out, and they go, 'Great, that's fine, thanks, here's the next task.' And you have no idea whether what you're doing is hitting or whether it's being edited by somebody else to fit, in which case somebody else is wasting time. They need to tell you if it's not working."*

This study's findings suggest that the industry's lack of structured process management contributes significantly to this uncertainty. Without clearer workflow structuring and accountability frameworks, inefficiencies and creative misalignment will persist across sectors.

Specialist #6 discussed how excessive workloads and unsustainable scheduling impact productivity:

> *"Again, these are people without experience in the trenches, so they make schedules and think they'll be adhered to. When it came to us, we would then schedule what we knew we had to do. If you don't know what you want to do and you're waiting, your deadline is getting closer, but you don't know what you have to do yet—that's insane."*

Specialist #7 described the long-term effects of burnout and unsustainable project timelines:

> *"I don't think I ever worked less than 60 hours a week. And then we were doing actual overtime that people were unofficially enforcing—it was seven days a week for six, seven months, 100-hour-plus weeks, 9 AM till midnight every day. People lost their families. Their kids would be in playpens next to the PlayStation towers, and you'd be fed out of troughs—it was just like an industrial slaughterhouse. But this was it, right? That was what we were supposed to do. And then they'd lay everybody off."*

The excessive workloads described by multiple interviewees, particularly in high-intensity production phases, highlight the consequences of inadequate process planning. Specialist #7's experience of 100-hour weeks and unsustainable scheduling is not an isolated incident but rather a reflection of an industry-wide expectation that prioritises output over structured workflow efficiency. This directly correlates with survey findings where 58% of respondents cited unsustainable work schedules as a barrier to project success. Addressing these issues requires a balance between process structure and creative flexibility—an equilibrium the SERPENT framework aims to achieve.

These findings suggest that addressing process structuring at a systemic level could significantly improve both productivity and work-life balance, contributing to a more sustainable production model across the Screen Industries. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings

demonstrates a consistent pattern—structural inefficiencies in leadership and workflow processes are not isolated issues but systemic challenges across all sectors of the Screen Industries. The statistical analysis confirms that structured process planning ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$) is the strongest predictor of operational effectiveness (OE), reinforcing the need for a process management framework that provides stability without stifling creative autonomy. These findings lay the groundwork for the development of the SERPENT framework, ensuring its relevance to industry challenges while remaining adaptable to the sector's fast-paced, project-based nature.

### 4.2.1. Data Integration with Key Findings

Building on the structured integration of data, this section consolidates the findings derived from the mixed-methods approach, highlighting their significance in shaping process management in the Screen Industries. By mapping emerging themes against both qualitative and quantitative insights, this study refines key operational patterns that inform leadership, workflow processes, and value generation across these sectors.

This synthesis of data reinforces the prevalence of four core findings: Definition, Three Core Pillars (Leadership, Process, Value), Autonomy and Flow, and the Nobody Knows Anything principle. These findings serve as the foundation for a structured framework that addresses inefficiencies while supporting creative and operational effectiveness.

**Definition**

Answered entirely from the outcomes of the first research question, the definition and categorisation of which sectors comprise the Screen Industries are contested worldwide in academia and with practitioners. This study explicitly outlines, defines, and categorises five sectors encompassing all Screen Industries' aspects without equivocation, namely; film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games.

**Three Core Pillars (Leadership, Process, Value)**

Established from the discoveries of the three remaining research questions, operational pillars form the foundations for this study's outputs, including the basis of a process

management framework. Entitled as 1) leadership, 2) process, and 3) value, these posts reflect the essential procedures and research findings that drive the outputs of this study. These pillars are strongly supported by both qualitative and quantitative findings. Survey data confirmed that structured project planning is the most significant factor in achieving operational effectiveness, as evidenced by a $\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$ in the regression model. Meanwhile, qualitative findings emphasised that workflow disorganisation, poor leadership communication, and inconsistent value perception contribute to inefficiencies. These findings were further corroborated by survey responses showing high levels of dissatisfaction with leadership alignment (42%) and unclear workflow structuring (37%). This integration of empirical and thematic insights strengthens the process management framework proposed in this study, reinforcing the practical application of structured process management to improve operational outcomes in the Screen Industries.

**Autonomy and Flow**

Found within literature and referred to during survey and interview responses, autonomy and flow are fundamental concepts realised for many who operate in the Screen Industries' sectors. Autonomy and flow are two concepts that break free from traditional methods of control but when realised or achieved, directly lead to the efficiency of practices found within the Screen Industries. Autonomy and flow are intrinsically linked as autonomy can facilitate flow through providing individuals with the freedom to explore their creativity and engage deeply with their work. When creative professionals have control over their processes, they are more likely to enter a flow state, characterised by intrinsic motivation, heightened focus, and increased productivity (Amabile, 1996). This relationship suggests that environments and management processes that promote autonomy are conducive to flow, resulting in greater innovation and satisfaction, whilst leading to more profound and authentic creative output.

**Nobody Knows Anything**

Primary and secondary research outlines that an inherent issue within Screen Industries is that nobody knows anything, from executives who cannot ensure the success of screen-related outputs to creatives who produce art for art's sake, managers who are unfamiliar

> with project controlling principles, and leaders who have a limited understanding of procedures and processes, married with the subjectivity of individual taste and preference, and rapid technological and cultural developments associated with globalisation. “Nobody knows anything” is not intended to disparage or undermine workers but serves as an acknowledgement of the nuanced and complex intricacies of highly specialised tasks and processes that must weave together to produce successful outputs that often have changing visions and scope.

These revelations are highlighted throughout this research, with emphasis added to the definition of the Screen Industries and the three core pillars that govern the output of this study. Autonomy and flow are valuable aspects for personnel involved with creating screen-related processes and equally crucial for leadership, which requires efficiency in their operations. While nobody knows anything, as evidenced by the literature and the findings of the primary research data, it cannot be stressed enough that this study offers insight into missing areas of knowledge for both academics and practitioners.

Each research question and associated findings will be explored in greater detail, depth, and analysis below. The proposed process management framework also provides a management structure that could help deconstruct process complexity and deliver efficiency in supervising tasks and projects.

The deductions of each of the four research questions help to consolidate and combine information that enhances the understanding this research brings and supports the key findings described above. Although the first research question has proven to stand alone in its conclusions—helping this research to give a definitive description of the sectors for the Screen Industries—the remaining queries ask pertinent questions that offer valuable insight into subjects that interweave with existing literature and carefully combine with collected data.

### 4.2.2. Screen Industries and Associated Sectors

**Research Question: How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?**

As a highly contested term, "Screen Industries" are often grouped or referred to entirely by another name or term. Originating in the late 1990s, the term "creative industries" (DCMS, 1998; DCMS, 2001: p.04; British Council, 2010: p.11) has become an accepted term in literature (see Pareja-Eastway, 2016; Paterson, 2020; Vallance, 2013; amongst others) that encompasses many industries, including those that are commonly associated with screen-related sectors. However, other terms, such as "creative class", "creative economy", and "cultural industries", have been substituted or used interchangeably (see Brewka, 2008; Caves, 2002; Cunningham, 2018; Florida, 2002, 2003; Hesmondhalgh, 2002, 2008; Holzmann and Mazzini, 2020; Howkins, 2001; Paterson, 2020; Towse, 2011, 2020; amongst many others), proving evidence that terminology and definitions are not always accurate. It was, therefore, evident from this substantial literature that a definitive definition of what sectors constitute the Screen Industries was required for this research to progress.

Upon further investigation, both the industry-led skills body for the "screen industries in the United Kingdom" and the "screen sector" skills development unit within Fís Éireann/Screen Ireland outline their screen-based contributions as film, television, animation, games, and VFX (ScreenSkills UK, 2021; Screen Skills Ireland, 2021). These groups present yet another but more focused classification that is less broad and far-reaching than others.

This data, reviewed and explained in detail during *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, and this author's prior experience, found the closely related adapted disciplines of film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games as a more accurate representation of the Screen Industries. As a result of this part of the study, it is evident that the Screen Industries need to have specific sectors attached to them and their definitions given clearly and concisely for both theoretical and applied implications in future discussions, research, and practice. These findings are described and presented below, in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: The Screen Industries and Associated Sectors**

| THE SCREEN INDUSTRIES | |
|---|---|
| Sector | Description |
| Film | The film sector or motion pictures, comprises the creative, technological, and commercial institutions of single output filmmaking. Included are any live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of short film or feature film endeavours. Motion pictures can be fiction or non-fiction, scripted or unscripted. |
| Television | The television sector comprises the creative, technological, and commercial institutions of episodic or serialised filmmaking. Included are any live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of episodic or serialised filmmaking endeavours. Television shows can be fiction or non-fiction, scripted or unscripted. |
| Commercials | The commercials sector, also referred to as advertisements (also called a spot, break, advert, ad, or TVC) is a span of screen-media produced and paid for by an organisation promoting, and aiming to market, a product, service or idea. Included are any live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of the advertisement. Commercials are scripted, and predominantly non-fiction tools for selling, but they can be satirical in some circumstances. |
| Documentaries | A documentary is a non-fictional film intended for instruction, education, historical record, or a documentation of reality. Some documentaries are created for satire, and are therefore a faux documentary. Included are any live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of the documentary. Documentaries can be stand alone or episodic, scripted, unscripted, or partly scripted, and cover a wide range of topics. |
| Video Games | Video games (also called games, computer games) are screen-related interactive entertainment that involves user input to generate feedback from any screen or display. Included are any real-time rendered animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of the video game, this includes augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), extended reality (XR), or experiential outputs. Games can be stand alone, episodic, or a combination of the two. |

*Source: N/A*

While the five primary sectors of the Screen Industries (Film, Television, Commercials, Documentaries, and Video Games) were validated through thematic analysis, further quantitative evidence suggests significant cross-sectoral movement among industry professionals. Survey data revealed that 53.48% of respondents worked in multiple sectors, while 46.52% specialised in only one. A Chi-Square test for independence ($\chi^2 = 11.67$, $p < 0.01$) found significant relationships between sectoral specialisation and leadership perceptions, indicating that those who work across multiple sectors are more likely to identify inefficiencies in leadership transitions and process structuring.

Specialist #1 described the volatility of cross-sector employment and the rollercoaster nature of industry work:

> *"It's not a merry-go-round, it's a roller coaster. You're not getting that weekly paycheck on a merry-go-round. You're on that roller coaster. So if you've been in the industry and have any common sense, you built up some savings, hopefully. But people spend the whole thing, and when a project wraps, they're scrambling for the next gig."*

Specialist #2 explained how post-pandemic shifts in employment patterns affected cross-sector stability:

> *"Coming back after COVID, you had a lot of that. You were missing talent, you had people who were new in positions that they shouldn't have been in, and it just made everything more difficult. Now we're seeing the same thing with the strike. People are going months without work, and when they do get a job, it's not necessarily in the same sector they were in before."*

Additionally, cross-sectoral employment rates varied significantly with film and television professionals being the most likely to transition across sectors (67%). Professionals working in the commercials sector showed the least crossover (29%), and video games professionals were the most sectorally isolated, with 76% reporting no experience outside gaming. These findings emphasise the fluidity of employment in the Screen Industries, reinforcing the need for standardised management frameworks that are adaptable across multiple production environments.

Specialist #3 discussed how working in multiple sectors provides a broader understanding of industry inefficiencies:

> *"I've worked in film, television, and commercials, and every time I switch between them, I see the same problems: leadership transitions that make no sense, processes that aren't documented, and people struggling to keep up with the constant shifts in expectations. It's no surprise that those who work across multiple sectors are the ones who see these inefficiencies most clearly."*

These insights reinforce that employment mobility across sectors exposes leadership gaps and process inefficiencies, making it critical to develop management frameworks that transcend individual sector constraints while maintaining flexibility for unique industry challenges.

### 4.2.3. Pillar 1: Leadership (Contracts, Management, Personnel)

**Research Question: What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?**

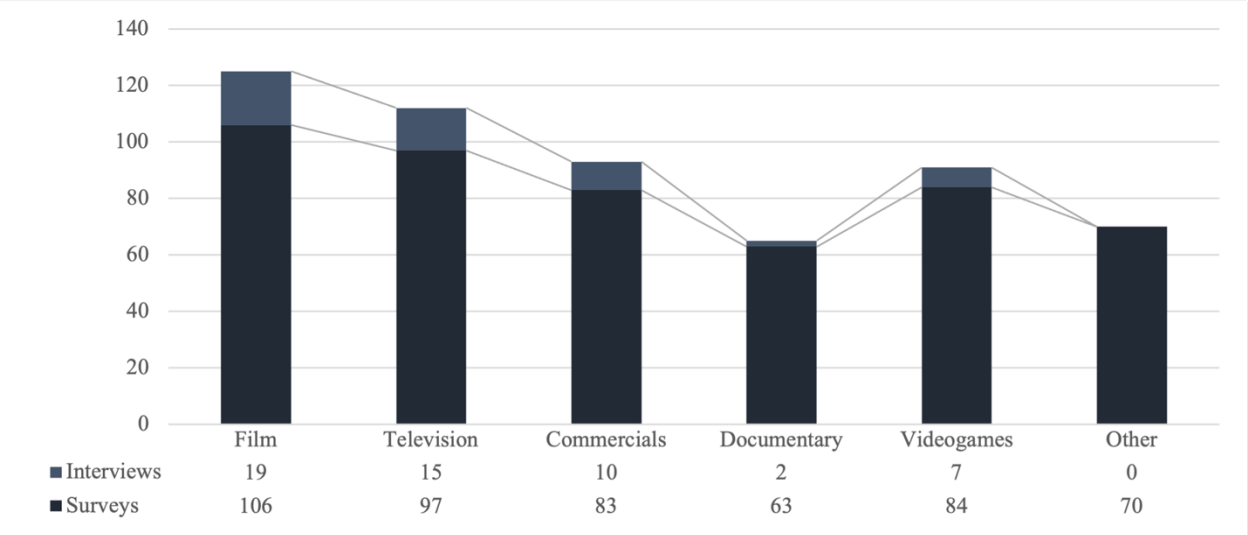
The Screen Industries face unique challenges in managing and leading creative people and creative processes. This pillar, leadership, helps identify critical challenges while tailoring research to be more relevant and compelling to practical operations within the Screen Industries' sectors. A systematic review of classical to contemporary literature makes this pillar theoretically comprehensive. At the same time, primary research data ensures a widespread understanding of the challenges and a deeper appreciation of adaptability and limitations from multiple perspectives.

Multiple findings underscore the inherent contradictions in leadership assumptions across the Screen Industries. Although specialists possess complex, highly transferrable skills, they often operate in freelance, high-pressure settings where leaders ascend rapidly—sometimes without extensive prior experience. As the data reveal, many leadership promotions occur "too quickly or to the wrong people," producing accountability gaps and operational misalignments. This phenomenon becomes especially toxic when paired with harsh working hours: individuals

reported 60–80 hour weeks under managers who lacked clear scheduling strategies, ultimately driving burnout and morale crises. Consequently, Pillar 1 (Leadership) emerges as a key determinant of whether ephemeral, short-term roles coalesce into a coherent, flow-supportive environment or whether they devolve into unstructured chaos that hurts operational effectiveness.

Built with fast-moving, innovative technologies and built on fast-paced project-based productions, the Screen Industries is a multifaceted, complicated puzzle that requires the guidance of strong leadership to drive and manage the endeavours and cross-disciplinary teams working within them, in order to achieve operational effectiveness (OE). While Specialists move between the different sectors of the Screen Industries, showing that their complex skills are highly transferrable, film and television are predominantly where international employment is found (Figure 4.11).

**Figure 4.11: Distribution Of Individuals Throughout the Screen Industries**




*Source: N/A*

The sectors of the Screen Industries are often "shrouded in mystery" (Specialist #2), with access hidden behind different gatekeepers, including studios, networks, businesses, people, legalities, and more. This peculiarity is apparent within all levels of the hierarchical structure. It is a genuine concern for several research participants, who felt that accessing people, finance, and

representatives (amongst others) posed challenges even for those with years of experience (noted by Specialist #1; Specialist #9; Specialist #14; Specialist #15, and others within this study).

Even when this author started their career in the Screen Industries, gaining access to the defined sectors took a lot of self-educating and a vast amount of effort. Not only did the applicable skills need to be developed to a standard that was "industry-ready," but it required the physical distribution of a CV/Resume (that fits the requirements of the studio and their current projects) and a showreel (a physical or digital short film that demonstrates completed visual work and appropriate skills, usually less than three minutes in duration), hand-delivered to the offices of specific organisations. Doing so gave this author the competitive advantage (CA) required to gain initial contractual employment, leading to a career for an individual without connections to the industry—an additional challenge due to the *mystery* and *secrecy* of the Screen Industries' sectors and inaccessibility for those not already connected (Specialist #2). It must be noted that skills and experience are seen as a higher qualification than any academic parchment for roles within the Screen Industries, and this was as true over twenty years ago as it is now. Employment in the Screen Industries is often a *who you know, not what you know* situation, with hiring managers wanting to:

> *"empower people who already are part of the community and to hire from that community because they are going to take care to get the right person"* (Specialist #15).

Participants, like Specialist #21, secured their first position because they knew someone and Specialist #10 was able to secure their subsequent roles from being asked during their current role as unceremoniously as:

> *"at the end of the show, he said, 'Hey, I've got another show in Virginia, do you want to work with me?'"*

This indicates that the *who-you-know* system continuously operates and is essential to gaining continued work within the Screen Industries, where "having a more democratic system of people being hired, managed, and disciplined" (Specialist #7) could be beneficial, especially with such prevalent short-term contractual-based employment. While these findings may not appear to hold significant importance to this study, it does highlight potential reasons for the "nobody knows

anything" (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983) phenomenon that is prevalent in the Screen Industries. Not only is it challenging to gain access within these sectors, but "there's a lot of competition with other people" (Specialist #2; Specialist #6), and once you're contracted, it:

> *"doesn't matter which rung you're in or which department. You're made to feel like you're really lucky" to have any work (Specialist #5).*

While those in video games are more likely to find full-time employment, permanent employment is generally uncommon within the Screen Industries, with those involved most often being freelancers where short-term contracts are standardised. Specialist #10 noted that it is often "considered a sporadic employment", with Specialist #6 stating that "there's no job security" and that "it's a very interesting dynamic" where "you pull together a whole bunch of literally subcontractors" in some adhocracy (see Mintzberg, 1980, 1989). From the point-of-view (POV) of a leadership role, such as having the authority to hire individuals, like a Producer, they would:

> *"put together a team over a period of six months, we'll work together for six months, and then we're all scattered to the winds" (Specialist #15).*

This has led to uncertainties regarding continued work and subsequent opportunities, including Specialist #6, who commented that:

> *"we'd shoot [film] for eight months, then we'd go on hiatus. So we weren't really sure until they had the rating sweeps, if we get another pickup"*

and Specialist #23 who was asked during recent contractual employment, "'What else do you do? […] What's your other job when there's no […] work?'". These shorter-term, temporary gigs may seem like negatives, but:

> *"people prefer to be freelancers because then they can charge a better duration, and they can write off a lot of things [taxes]"* (Specialist #8),

which makes sense for an industry where projects are not guaranteed to be long-running. However, this highlights issues with knowledge sharing and the retention of specialised skills for organisations operating in sectors where the reliance on expertise and experience is paramount. Unsurprisingly, the longer an individual works in Screen Industries, the greater the number of

projects one is involved with. This can be seen by examining the frequencies in the cross-tabulation of data from surveys in Table 4.5, which interview participants also confirmed.

**Table 4.5: Frequencies And Cross-Tabulation Of Experience Against Number Of Projects**

| How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries? | How many projects have you worked on in your career? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 - 5 projects | 6 - 10 projects | 11 - 20 projects | 21 - 50 projects | Over 50 projects | *Row Total* |
| Less than 1 year | 17 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 7 | *39* |
| *Row Percent* | *43.59%* | *5.13%* | *15.38%* | *17.95%* | *17.95%* | *100.00%* |
| 1 year to 3 years | 30 | 12 | 11 | 14 | 7 | *74* |
| *Row Percent* | *40.54%* | *16.22%* | *14.86%* | *18.92%* | *9.46%* | *100.00%* |
| 3 years to 5 years | 19 | 16 | 23 | 20 | 10 | *88* |
| *Row Percent* | *21.59%* | *18.18%* | *26.14%* | *22.73%* | *11.36%* | *100.00%* |
| 5 years to 10 years | 20 | 21 | 26 | 39 | 15 | *121* |
| *Row Percent* | *16.53%* | *17.36%* | *21.49%* | *32.23%* | *12.40%* | *100.00%* |
| Over 10 years | 10 | 21 | 22 | 53 | 73 | *179* |
| *Row Percent* | *5.59%* | *11.73%* | *12.29%* | *29.61%* | *40.78%* | *100.00%* |
| (No Response) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | *2* |
| *Row Percent* | *0.00%* | *50.00%* | *0.00%* | *0.00%* | *50.00%* | *100.00%* |
| *Column Total* | *96* | *73* | *88* | *133* | *113* | *503* |
| *Column Percent* | *19.09%* | *14.51%* | *17.50%* | *26.44%* | *22.47%* | *100.00%* |

*Source: N/A.*

It would be fair to assume that the more experience a person has, the more senior their position, with those with the most experience becoming the dominant leaders within their respective departments or on projects. While this can be true, survey responses and interview participants contradicted this belief, with many survey respondents and interview Specialists offering alternate experiences where "you're going to find that in many studios the leadership are people without experiencing the trenches" (Specialist #17). In film and television, "the person who started in the mail room is now an executive producer"; in video games, "the person who is the executive producer started as a games tester" (Specialist #1; Specialist #21). Specialist #21 continued to elaborate with older stories of how a "creative director of a game studio" started their career as an individual who:

> *"literally installed software on the computers. They were the IT junior" and "at that time was very much sort of the old boys' network. The people you got on with sort of back-*

*scratching, which seems to be quite a popular thing. People got promotions way above their abilities."*

This calibre of responses was commonplace throughout this study's interviews, highlighting that this is a recurring issue whereby productions are:

*"missing talent, you had people who were new in positions that they shouldn't have been, and it just makes everything more difficult"* (Specialist #10).

These conversations served to highlight that a lack of experience in such skilled sectors is troublesome, with promotions happening too quickly or to the wrong individuals, like:

*"people with one year on the show and they're coordinating and taking over lead positions. They don't have any right to be in those positions"* (Specialist #13; Specialist #18).

This is operationally problematic, and Specialist #1 stressed that rectifying this can be a long-winded process where, in one case:

*"the [person] in charge was an ass, and it took six years to get rid of [them], so six wasted years."*

These issues underscore more critical findings for this research, with some becoming leaders without the experience and comprehension of a leadership background or involvement with the specialised processes prevalent in these creative sectors. This enforces the belief that "nobody knows anything" (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983) and that there are missing knowledge gaps in management and leadership methodologies within the global Screen Industries. The hierarchical structure of leadership and management is, therefore, evidently not achieved through skillset, ability, or merit but instead through connections, longevity and networks.

The prevalence of inexperienced leaders stands out as a major operational stumbling block, often resulting in inefficient oversight of complex creative processes. In these settings, leadership that is "overly bureaucratic" or "removes autonomy during creative processes" directly impairs specialists' capacity to experience flow, undercutting both morale and project outputs. By

contrast, knowledgeable leaders who earned their stripes through hands-on experience and structured mentorship tended to preserve autonomy while setting realistic deadlines—an approach strongly linked to improved team morale. These findings affirm that ephemeral hiring structures in the Screen Industries should not justify hasty promotions; indeed, bridging the leadership skill gap is vital to ensuring stable workflows and consistent competitive advantage.

With the missing understanding of management experience and such complexities inherent within the Screen Industries, it is no wonder that leadership must face genuine difficulties while wrangling the talents needed to create screen productions. Specialist #5 commented that leadership and project management are "surprisingly hard work" and "actually trying to manage because your team changes is incredibly challenging." Leaders "vary in how hands-on they are" (Specialist #5), but all must be "approachable", yet sadly not all are (Specialist #1). This leads to several management approaches being tested, for better and worse, without the prior academic and theoretical knowledge required to deliver differing styles satisfactorily (see Indeed, 2021a, 2021b, for information on different management styles), an issue that needs addressing within the process framework created in this thesis. Survey responders noted that leadership needs to have an extremely clear idea of what they want to see in the finished production, as each decision has an effect on multiple people and departments. Limited changes, feedback rounds, and critiques can positively impact team morale and their outputs, helping promote operational effectiveness (OE) and gain efficiencies in processes (more on processes later). Responses continued relating to clients (and leadership) and the need for them to have "points of approval – with accountability for change", and while having clearly defined goals and outputs is logically beneficial, Specialist #19 offered further insight, saying that:

> *"I've worked with other bosses who've been much more, 'I want it a certain way, and I don't care how it's done. I just want this.' And you could probably argue that under that […] type of boss, although people are much more stressed and not feeling appreciated perhaps for the work they're doing, probably the end product is probably better."*

Specifically in the context of leadership styles, different approaches can influence how autonomy and flow are managed within teams. For example, a transformational leadership style, which emphasises inspiration, vision, and encouragement of innovation, is well-suited to fostering

autonomy and flow. In contrast, a more transactional leadership style, focused on clear structures and performance-based rewards, might be less conducive to flow but more effective in ensuring consistency and meeting deadlines (Bass, 1990a, 1990b). Effective management and leadership practices that balance these concepts will be crucial for navigating the complexities of the industry and ensuring the well-being of creative professionals. Ultimately, a nuanced understanding of autonomy and flow will enable stakeholders in the Screen Industries to create richer, more diverse, and engaging media experiences while supporting the health and creativity of those who produce them. These findings could signify a Results Only Work Environment (ROWE) (see GoROWE, 2014; Ressler and Thompson, 2013, for more information) may be an appropriate choice for an effective management and leadership methodology for those in the Screen Industries. Offering additional clarity, Specialist #17 said:

> *"I think if they have the right people, they will trust the people that need to make these decisions. It's the managers, and the production managers, and the supervisor, the administrative supervisors [leadership], who don't know what they're doing. They just want the deadlines met. They're not communicating with the people who know."*

Showing more opinions that *nobody knows anything* in these sectors, but the trust of individuals is an essential catalyst in productive teams (Lencioni, 2002). Interestingly, while it is acknowledged that "it's high-pressure work, and there certainly can be toxic environments there" (Specialist #24), "the outcome is that these stressed people will still get stuff on screen [produce] when it's needed to" (Specialist #8). This potentially gives insight into the requirement for deadlines, milestones, and other controlling factors associated with leadership that provide structure and goals to creative endeavours. It could also indicate that trusting the right individuals to complete their tasks without interference, giving autonomy, flow, and motivation (Csíkszentmihályi, 1975, 1988, 1996, 2000), could be potentially beneficial to the output and value of a project and its processes.

From an alternative perspective, the notion of autonomy itself can be problematic and is tokenistic and illusory. In many cases, the autonomy granted to creative professionals is constrained by the overarching control of production companies and external stakeholders (Deuze, 2007). In a landscape where financial backers often dictate the direction of projects; the

idea of complete creative freedom becomes compromised. This contradiction highlights the need for a critical examination of how autonomy is perceived and exercised within the Screen Industries. While autonomy can promote creativity, it can also lead to inconsistent quality, particularly when individuals lack the necessary skills or experience to manage their freedom effectively.

As quality control is paramount, the absence of sufficient oversight can result in uneven or substandard outcomes (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). This highlights the need for a balance between autonomy and guidance from a management perspective and how the interplay between autonomy and flow has significant implications for management and leadership within the Screen Industries. Ultimately, leaders must navigate the tension between providing creative freedom and ensuring that projects are completed on time and within budget. Therefore, effective leadership in these complex creative sectors often involves encouraging a culture of autonomy while maintaining clear goals and expectations.

Many survey responses confirm that working long hours over extended periods of time is a common trait in the Screen Industries. Specialist #3 observed, “I don’t think I ever worked less than sixty hours a week.” Specialist #5 commented, “I average, I would say, eighty-plus hour weeks. And the thing is, you’re on call the entire time.” Specialist #6 stated that there “can be a fair amount of abuse there. There can be extremely long days” and that productions “ask for too many hours without regard for what it does to health and mental health”. They also noted they “don’t mind doing those hours if it’s for a week”, offering that sometimes additional effort is necessary, but not for unreasonably prolonged periods. This Specialist (Specialist #6) could only list one job:

> *“where a production manager [leadership] has called me up and said, ‘I’m worried about the number of hours you’re doing.’”*

Similar statements were echoed throughout survey respondents, with responders stating that they are often “treated like cattle”, and many Specialists highlighting unreported overtime due to work statements looking “really bad because you’ve worked however many hours” (Specialist #5), and:

> *"really actual overtime that people were unofficially enforcing, it was seven days a week for six, seven months at one-hundred hour plus 9 am till midnight every day for six months" and "you'd be fed out of troughs, and it was just like an industrial slaughterhouse"* (Specialist #3).

This forces us to understand how autonomy and flow also present challenges and potential downsides, and how these are exacerbated when not managed effectively, again highlighting the distinct need for a management process framework that is both sensitive to the needs of the creators as autonomous individuals whilst working collectively within a process to achieve operational effectiveness. As identified in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, the pursuit of flow can sometimes lead to excessive work intensity, contributing to stress and burnout. As flow is often associated with long hours and intense focus, the pressure to maintain flow can have negative effects on mental health (Lemke, 2015b). Additionally, the industry's culture and presumption of overwork can exacerbate these issues, leading to a cycle of burnout and decreased productivity. Flow can, therefore, be critiqued as a potential tool for exploitation as the pressure to maintain this flow state often leads to prolonged work hours and unrealistic expectations from both management and peers, which is identified as a preexisting condition and expectation of the Screen Industries. This creates an environment where employees feel compelled to push themselves to maintain high levels of productivity, often at the expense of their well-being. Critics argue that the glorification of flow can contribute to a culture of overwork, where the boundaries between personal and professional life become blurred, leading to burnout and dissatisfaction (Lemke, 2015b; Sennett, 2008).

Reflective positional power and leadership approach, working hours and the conditions associated with the excessive stretches of overtime continued to emerge in this study, highlighting practices such as fear and anxiety from trying to claim overtime payments, zero compensation (financial or time) given, and statements of fatigue and errors appearing due to excessive work periods. This author posits that, as identified by Specialist #3, "as soon as overtime is tied to actual costs, people make different decisions." This seems accurate, with overtime and compensation for additional hours somewhat contested. Stricter, more structured approaches to project management and the creative processes inherent in these sectors could lead

to potential advantages in contracts, outputs, morale, and working conditions, leading to advantages and efficiencies in projects and organisations—a vital goal of this study's framework.

Despite the apparent negativity surrounding leadership, hours, and general work environments, there is a fierce alliance between staff members, with Specialist #8 commenting, "That's your one job, and then don't do someone else's job because you're taking someone else's job." This view gives an insight into the loyalty and respect given to the skilled workforce that function in the Screen Industries. With apparent silos, and teams working in vacuums, there were several mentions of how important collaboration is between departments and how trust is an essential value for all individuals operating within these sectors (see Lencioni, 2002, 2006, for team dysfunctions and silos). Operations that affect the workflow of individuals can drive contempt and frustration with the creative workforce; in particular, meetings are seen as an "institutional waste of time", and "most meetings can be an email or a message" (Specialist #14). This was also highlighted by Specialist #4, who commented:

> *"If I start at nine o'clock and I know I have a meeting at ten, that hour from nine to ten is useless because I know I can't get in the zone",*

a direct nod to the psychological concept of flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997), and the key findings of this study which highlight that by giving autonomy and flexibility to teams in the Screen Industries, individuals can achieve a greater sense of autonomy and flow, and ultimately contribute in a greater capacity towards operational effectiveness (OE). While there are questions as to whether creativity sparks "art for art's sake" (Caves, 2002), a topic highlighted throughout the interviews and even specific survey answers, such as "to me, the work I do isn't a job in my mind", it would appear that given the correct provisions, along with knowledgeable leadership, explicit unwavering goals, and the freedom to work separately (or in a team), driving towards the same target, it would theoretically allow for the best management of the processes required to create screen-related media efficiently.

**Key Findings of Pillar 1: Leadership**

⇒ Specialists have complex, highly transferrable skills and operate in competitive, high-pressure environments with long hours and sporadic employment. These settings require

strong leadership to facilitate workflows that allow the psychological concept of flow to be achieved and enhance process procedures and the value of outputs.

⇒ The findings identify contradictions in leadership assumptions and challenge the notion that experience naturally leads to leadership roles. It highlights that many leaders in the Screen Industries often ascend without significant experience in lower-level roles, contradicting the belief that leadership positions are earned through merit and experience. This phenomenon is illustrated by examples of leaders who began their careers in entry-level positions (e.g., IT juniors, mailroom workers) and rapidly advanced to senior roles without necessarily gaining the deep, hands-on experience expected in such skilled sectors. It highlights that promotions to a leadership role can happen too quickly or to the wrong people, leading to operational problems and accountability issues while causing access issues for those in and out of the Screen Industries.

⇒ The prevalence of inexperienced leaders is identified as a major operational issue, leading to inefficiencies and difficulties in managing complex creative processes. The misalignment between leadership skills and job requirements often results in poor decision-making and reduced team morale. In turn, inadequate and ineffective leadership, where management is overly bureaucratic and removes autonomy during creative processes, directly impacts a specialist's ability to experience flow and achieve operational effectiveness (OE), ultimately impacting competitive advantage (CA).

⇒ Autonomy and the psychological concept of "flow" are emphasised as crucial for creativity and operational effectiveness (OE). Yet, the pursuit of flow can lead to excessive work intensity, contributing to stress and burnout. The Screen Industries' culture of overwork, driven by the glorification of flow and autonomy, often blurs the boundaries between personal and professional life, leading to negative outcomes for mental health and overall productivity.

⇒ The research highlights the extreme working hours that are common in the Screen Industries, often leading to exploitation and burnout. Specialists reported regularly working sixty to eighty hour weeks, with some experiencing even longer hours during peak periods. The lack of compensation for overtime and the fear of claiming it due to potential repercussions underscore the industry's harsh working conditions, further stressing the need for better management and structured approaches to leadership.

⇒ The findings suggest a need for a management process framework that balances autonomy with structured leadership, addressing the complexities of creative processes while ensuring operational effectiveness (OE). This framework should be sensitive to the needs of creative professionals, recognising the importance of autonomy and flow while also mitigating the risks of overwork and burnout.

⇒ The study posits that with knowledgeable leadership, clear goals, and the right balance of autonomy, teams can achieve higher levels of creativity and operational effectiveness (OE). This requires a nuanced understanding of the unique dynamics within the Screen Industries and a commitment to fostering environments that support both individual and collective success.

### 4.2.4. Pillar 2: Process (Decisions, Technology, Workflow)

**Research Question: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?**

The cornerstone of this research is in leading organisations to gain competitive advantage (CA) from operational effectiveness (OE) through successful process management delivered in an accessible framework. The Screen Industries require specialised approaches due to their creative and collaborative nature, which adds to their operational complexities. This research aims to address the identified challenges of these sectors while incorporating insights from existing theories to create a robust tool for industry practitioners that is autonomous, flexible, and iterative in its application. Decisions and the strength to stick by those decisions are crucial to project success. Building on the recurring theme of constant rework, interviews confirmed that many decisions come late in the pipeline, triggering extensive, costly changes. Specialist #17 warned, “That’s where it all goes wrong. The inability to make decisions,” while multiple respondents linked these last-minute creative shifts to siloed departments using “closed systems” that block essential cross-team collaboration. In some cases, entire teams were left in the dark about updated scripts or asset versions, compounding confusion when schedules inevitably shifted. These operational complexities underscore the pressing need for a unifying process management framework. By clearly assigning decision-making checkpoints, championing transparent software solutions, and bridging departmental silos, project teams could better

preserve intangible synergy and reduce the negative ripple effects from a single delayed or contradictory decision.

Not alone in these suspicions, Specialist #10 shared the same concerns, stating:

> *"It really, really depends on the director [or any leadership] knowing what [they] want, and everything starts at the top,"*

with Specialist #7 commenting that:

> *"trying to keep on top of script changes and schedule changes and then seeing how that affects all of our pieces"*

causes difficulties in production:

> *"We all bitch about the same thing. We bitch about the constant changes of the script at all of this. Yeah, so what has happened is people no longer commit to anything"*

offered Specialist #6, who continued:

> *"I'm really surprised in the film industry, because if you go into an industry like the aircraft industry, they have a design of a plane, and out of each blueprint is more blueprints and detailed blueprints, and more, you know, right down to working drawings of every nut and bolt, you know, and you could almost say it was analogous for us. We have a script, and for each department has broken down that script into their nuts and bolts of what they need based on that script, and we have then given and the assistant directors have worked out a schedule and a budget. So we have what, where, when, and how much. We have those questions answered, you know, but nobody quite comes together with the kind of when it's always changing, the what is always changing, and the how much sometimes changing, and because you start a script and then the next thing you know you've broken your script down, you've got your massive reams and reams of paper and or your spreadsheet, and then next thing you know the script has changed and you're like 'oh!' Now it's very very easy, this is a kind of technical thing, it's very very easy for an, an assistant director to make a schedule from a script. They have Movie Magic and other software. And it's just wonderful because, you know, with a few*

*keystrokes, they can put a character into a scene and da, da, da, da, da. And they can break it all down."*

The findings highlight that departmental software often exists in "closed systems," accessible only to specific teams or licensed roles. While tools like Movie Magic, advanced scheduling apps, or game-specific engines can streamline tasks, they also create data silos if outsiders lack the necessary licenses or training. Multiple interviewees complained that crucial production info was "locked away," stalling them whenever they needed sign-offs from other departments. Consequently, an industry-wide process framework could encourage simpler, more universal solutions that centralise key data in easily shared repositories. This approach would not only reduce confusion and rework but also reinforce accountability by documenting exactly who changed what, when, and why—mirroring older "manilla envelope" workflows in a digital, collaborative environment.

Within the context of process, these findings evidence the continuous changes while highlighting that each department creates its own blueprints from an initial plan; this plan being the script for a film, the audio and visual guide for a commercial, or the game design document (GDD) for a video game, etc. However, as initial plans change, many challenges stem from these alterations, and inter-departmental communications, or tools and technologies, are not shared between departments. Perhaps this helps us to understand why "organisation is wildly different from department to department" (Specialist #5), and even in video games where agile methodologies—which account for change via iterative approaches—are the dominant project management technique, they still have the same issues, where "so frequently, the specifics of the specific milestones will go out the window" (Specialist #4), and:

*"constantly changing and changing and changing, which is what mobile games in my experience keep trying to do, which is why all mobile games look the same and find ninety per cent of them are terrible basically"* (Specialist #1).

From this information, we can assume that overall planning appears to start from one creative element that should drive a full production. But, due to the complexity of projects, it requires diversely skilled inputs from multiple departments that must create separate plans to achieve

successful outputs. This highlights the need for decisions to be made and scope to be defined early in production while reinforcing the need for autonomy and flow in each department. Maintaining flexibility and independence in assigned tasks is a characteristic of creative endeavours within the Screen Industries and is supported by Csíkszentmihályi's (1990, 1997) concept of flow, a key focus of this research. Still, deadlines, milestones, or some way of accounting for a process is critical to the success of productions where:

> *"you need constraints and accountability and some kind of external force in creative arts to make decisions that are effective"* (Specialist #3)

and remove the creation of "art for art's sake" (Caves, 2002: p.74). A survey responder offered that an agreed best practice for tasks and processes that people of all experiences can agree on would be beneficial. At the same time, they:

> *"find a lot of well-managed projects are undone by a lead creative who deviates from the schedule because they 'trust their gut' which causes avoidable mistakes that compound. A visual schedule with milestones does help, but there's an issue with impatience that persists, so it's always quite hard to stick to."*

Survey respondents and Specialists from interviews who work in animation and visual effects (VFX) in any sector of the Screen Industries commented on their schedules and how it is freely available to all working on the project in several visual charts. This starkly contrasts those in other departments where they may be given *shooting scripts*, daily *call sheets*, or *Day Out of Days (DOOD)* documents, amongst others, with information on start and end times and relevant filming information (see StudioBinder (2024) for reference, information, and templates to these kinds of documents).

With all of this in mind, it appears that a shared visual schedule, with agreed-upon milestones and deadlines that are autonomous and flexible in their processes but rigid in their delivery, would benefit all projects in every sector of the Screen Industries. It is vital that while the deadlines are fixed and immovable, each process is given to the correct Specialist who has full autonomy in how they complete their task. As stated by Specialist #1, "There's a difference between guiding and insisting and interfering," while Specialist #14 emphasised that they want

their inputs towards a project acknowledged instead of being "anonymous [role] number seven" and they "much prefer the model where I'm a partner." Deadlines are distinctly critical for keeping projects on track. Still, the correct management (leadership) of tasks and their cumulative and combined effort (process) must be tracked and attached correctly, as:

> *"often they were on me about deadlines for […] when the work prior to what we needed before us wasn't done",*

and:

> *"if you don't know what you want to do and you're waiting, your deadline is getting closer, but you don't know what you have to do yet, that's insane"* (Specialist #17).

Specialist #2 agreed and reminisced about days when tasks were assigned via manilla folders, where the last user would "check in" and "check out" the folder by marking their initials, the time, and the date they had it. They would use the folders to include their work and relevant information for the next person:

> *"I like the envelopes because you had a concrete way of seeing who did what. The proof was in the envelope"* (Specialist #2).

In an attempt to update the manilla envelope workflow, this could be replicated in a digital file system whereby users who access the file are tagged, their inputs recorded, and their changes preserved, leading to accountability for the work being done while being accessible by any project team members, and being mindful of environmental factors and zero-paper office structures. However, Specialist #3 made it clear to note that "the more I held people accountable, the more that rubbed certain people the wrong way", indicating that accountability, while imperative in a work environment, can be shunned by some.

The primary goal of any production is to create products that will be commercially successful, and the primary targets during operations are completing tasks (processes) within budget and schedule restrictions. By achieving these goals, operational effectiveness (OE) is accomplished, and it would be logical to assume open collaboration between teams and individuals.

However, while departments all work toward a "kind of common goal" with "a great deal of autonomy", they all have their separate "function in [their] little cell" where they have their "particular task that [they] know and do well" (Specialist #6). This emphasises that everyone involved in a project is working to create the same output, but "it's almost like they are working in a vacuum" (Specialist #10) without full knowledge or awareness of other Specialists' functions, and this was highlighted further by Specialist #16 who stated that "when I first got into that industry [the Screen Industries], I was surprised at how much it was delineated". This offers more support for the autonomy required by each individual in each department and gives even more of a precedent to remove silos (Lencioni, 2006) and drive collaboration further so that knowledge, techniques, and skills can be shared.

This lack of understanding of the whole process was demonstrated further by comments such as "things always go wrong, but that's no one's fault" and "every [production] has its issues" (Specialist #12). Of course, there is the argument that every project is:

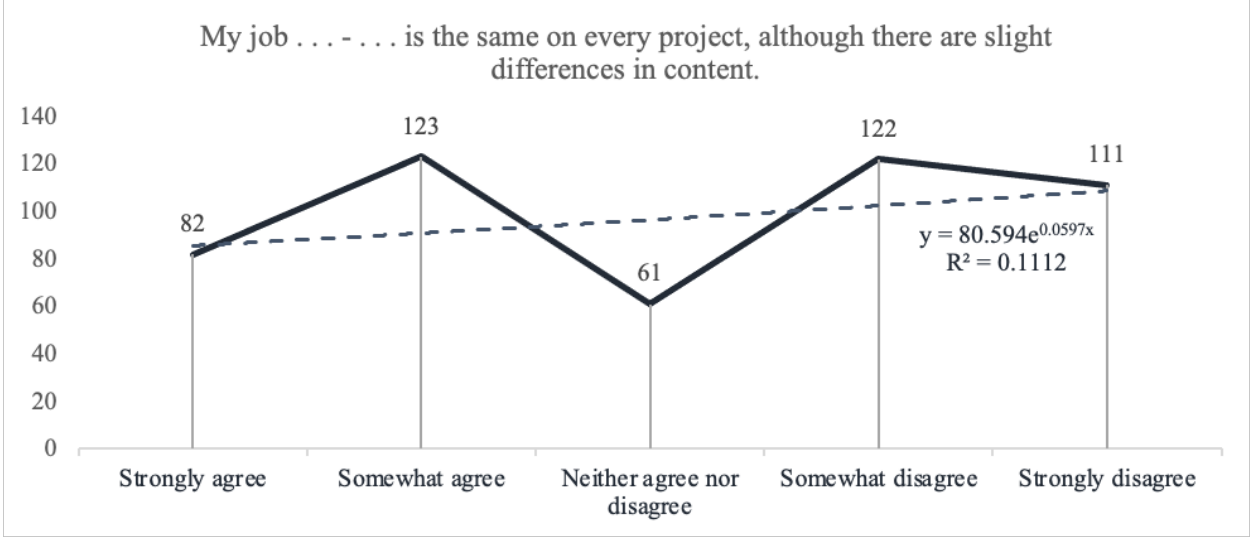
> *"bespoke. And there's never, no matter what show it is, there's never enough money to do everything you would wanna do or make it easy"* (Specialist #15).

However:

> *"the thing about the film industry is pretty much anywhere in the world, I could go to any film set anywhere in the world and know what to do. In a sense that there are regional variations […], sometimes things have different names, but we're all basically doing the same thing the same way. […] that division of labour pretty much is the same everywhere"* (Specialist #6).

While survey responses question the accuracy of this statement (Figure 4.12), we can summarise that some roles have similar tasks on every project, allowing for replication and standardisation throughout the Screen Industries. This enables tasks to be structured similarly within the framework presented in this thesis, adding a critical component to its structure

**Figure 4.12: Survey Responses – My job… is the same on every project…**




*Source: N/A*

These revelations conflict somewhat, but there is evidence that while a project may be unique, the processes behind the creation of screen productions are all similar in such a way that a framework could be set and followed by team members, no matter which project they are working on. This would then be transferrable to other projects and allow the same process management methodologies to be adhered to.

From the findings presented in this research, it is evident that a type of software or application is necessary to keep track of all processes and maintain an operational structure that is accessible to all members of the project. Many potential software solutions currently in use within the Screen Industries were mentioned in the survey responses and interview answers. Some are general applications used in private and professional settings, while others are specialist software applications targeted at specific skills or requirements of departments that operate within the Screen Industries. Several software applications and their description are listed below in Table 4.6 for an overview of technology discussions and their relevance to the Screen Industries.

**Table 4.6: Screen Industries – Key Software**

| KEY SOFTWARE (ALPHABETICAL ORDER) | |
|---|---|
| Blender | Blender is a free and open-source 3D computer graphics software tool set used for creating animated films, visual effects, art, 3D-printed models, motion graphics, interactive 3D applications, virtual reality, and, video games. Blender's features include 3D modelling, UV mapping, texturing, digital drawing, raster graphics editing, rigging and skinning, fluid and smoke simulation, particle simulation, soft body simulation, sculpting, animation, match moving, rendering, motion graphics, video editing, and compositing. Alternatives include Autodesk Maya, Autodesk 3ds Max, and other 3D software applications. |
| FaceTime | Developed by Apple Inc. FaceTime, a proprietary videotelephony product, is available on supported iOS mobile devices running iOS 4 and later and Mac computers that run Mac OS X 10.6.6 and later. FaceTime works by establishing a connection between two supported devices. Most Apple devices (such as iPhones, iPads, and Macs) introduced after 2011 support FaceTime. FaceTime is currently incompatible with non-Apple devices or any other video calling services. Alternative video and audio messaging is available through many providers including apps such as WhatsApp, Signal, Discord, Google Hangout, Snapchat, and many others. |
| Final Draft | Originally founded in 1990, the software is now owned by Cast & Crew Entertainment, and Final Draft is the industry standard software package predominantly seen as a screenwriting application for the writing and formatting of screenplays. Output from this software is tailored to meet submission standards set by the theater, television, and film sectors. The program can also be used to write documents such as stageplays, outlines, treatments, query letters, novels, graphic novels, manuscripts, and basic text documents. Alternatives include Movie Magic Screenwriter, Celtx, Fade In, WriterDuet, and more. |
| Flow Production Tracking | Previously Shotgun, and formerly known as ShotGrid, the now named Autodesk Flow Production Tracking is a cloud-based project management and review tool. This software allows users to track deadlines, manage budgets, customize workflows, application integrations, markup and playback media with review tools, and collaborate internationally with teams and clients. Alternatives include ftrack Studio, and Frame.io, amongst others. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Microsoft Office | Microsoft Office, Office365, or simply Office, is a family of client software, server software, and services developed by Microsoft. Standardised worldwide as the go-to office software, the range of applications includes a word processor (Word), a spreadsheet program (Excel), a presentation program (PowerPoint), an email client (Outlook), a database management system (Access), and a desktop publishing app (Publisher), amongst others. Alternatives are plenty, with many choosing Apple iWork (Pages, Keynote, Numbers), or online alternatives such as Google Suite/Docs. |
| Movie Magic | Owned by Entertainment Partners, Movie Magic refers to an array of software tools aimed at production management for the media and entertainment industry. Movie Magic software includes budgeting, scheduling, payrolls, residuals, and finance, all tailored towards the film and television sectors. Alternatives include Microsoft Excel, Xero Accounting, Gorilla Budgeting & Scheduling, and others. |
| SetKeeper | For all phases of production, SetKeeper gives organisations the control of who has access to the files, data, policies and procedures, including a complete archive once the project has completed. Alternatives include, DropBox, Box, and NAS systems, customized per production or studio-wide. |
| Unreal Engine | Unreal Engine (UE) is a 3D computer graphics game engines developed by Epic Games. Initially developed for PC first-person shooters, it has since been used in a variety of genres of games and has been adopted by other industries, most notably the film and television industry for virtual production. It features a high degree of portability, supporting a wide range of desktop, mobile, console, and virtual reality platforms. Alternatives include Unity3D, amongst others. |
| Zoom | Zoom also known as Zoom Meetings, is a proprietary videotelephony software program developed by Zoom Video Communications. Zoom is used by a variety of individuals and private and public organisations, including banks, schools, universities, healthcare providers, government agencies, and this within the Screen Industries. Alternative technologies include Skype, Slack, and Microsoft Teams, amongst others. |

*Source: N/A*

Multiple Specialists exclaimed that many professional software applications are “closed systems”, meaning that if you do not have access to the software, you cannot view or read the

data that these contain. While this may seem trivial, this was a genuine concern raised by several participants who insisted that these barriers meant that "information was often locked away and not communicated with team members who would benefit from critical information" that affects their roles and departments. This is undoubtedly a troublesome issue due to the reliance on multiple departments and clear communication to deliver production elements without sacrifice or interference that could disrupt time-critical outputs. Some kind of technology system accessible to all project members while being adaptable to various departmental workflows appears to be a needed development to help drive operational effectiveness (OE) within these sectors. Additionally, those involved with video games, in particular, mentioned that issues with legacy assets and software—components and applications from a previous older generation of content creation—often caused problems when working on newer and more advanced real-time rendering engines.

There is evidently no escaping the dependence on technology within the sectors of the Screen Industry. Advanced computer systems, processors, lenses, sensors, electronic simulations, audio enhancements, and so much more form the basis of many skills and departments, and with such a reliance on technology, it was no surprise that artificial intelligence (AI) was a factor that unnerves those within the Screen Industries. While there is evident concern about the possible loss of jobs within these sectors, participants like Specialist #20 were excited by the possibility that "AI is going to bring a plethora of libraries" that will help them complete their tasks quickly.

**Key Findings of Pillar 2: Process**

⇒ Decision-making emerges as a critical factor in the success of projects within the Screen Industries. The inability to make timely and firm decisions, often due to constant changes in creative elements, is a significant concern highlighted by several Specialists. The success of a project is often seen as dependent on the clarity and decisiveness of leadership, which cascades down to all departments. Leadership's role in maintaining a balance between creative autonomy and adherence to schedules is emphasised. A process management framework that incorporates decision-making checkpoints and accountability mechanisms could help mitigate these issues. By defining clear milestones and deadlines, and assigning decision-making authority at appropriate levels, such a

framework could improve project outcomes and reduce the risks associated with indecision. Constraints and accountability can help leadership make effective decisions promptly that stop constant changes, enabling specialists to find flexibility, independence, and flow in their assigned tasks (processes).

⇒ Processes are operationally complex, with each department working in its own silo, creating its own blueprints from an initial plan where autonomy in task execution is paramount to successful operations. This causes organisational differences between disciplines, adding complexities, challenges, and further disruptions should alterations be made to the main plan. As each division is responsible for similar tasks on each project, a standardised process management solution could help drive the efficiency of specialised departmental outputs. The absence of shared tools and technologies exacerbates these silos. Different departments often use specialised software that is not accessible to others, leading to a lack of transparency and collaboration.

⇒ Software and systems play a critical role in the functioning of departmental processes, yet these are often closed and locked systems that are not shared with all project members. Offering a system that is available to all project team members would enhance productivity and communications while providing clear visual workflows and timelines, helping all involved understand their contributions better.

⇒ A recurring tension exists between maintaining creative autonomy and the need for process discipline. While Specialists value their independence and creative input, there is a clear recognition of the need for constraints, accountability, and structure to ensure projects are completed successfully. The concept of "flow" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997) is used to support the need for autonomy in tasks. However, this autonomy must be balanced with fixed deadlines and milestones to maintain project momentum.

⇒ The findings suggest that while each project within the Screen Industries is unique, the processes involved in production share enough similarities that a standardised framework could be applicable across different projects. This framework would enable replication and consistency, improving overall operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA).

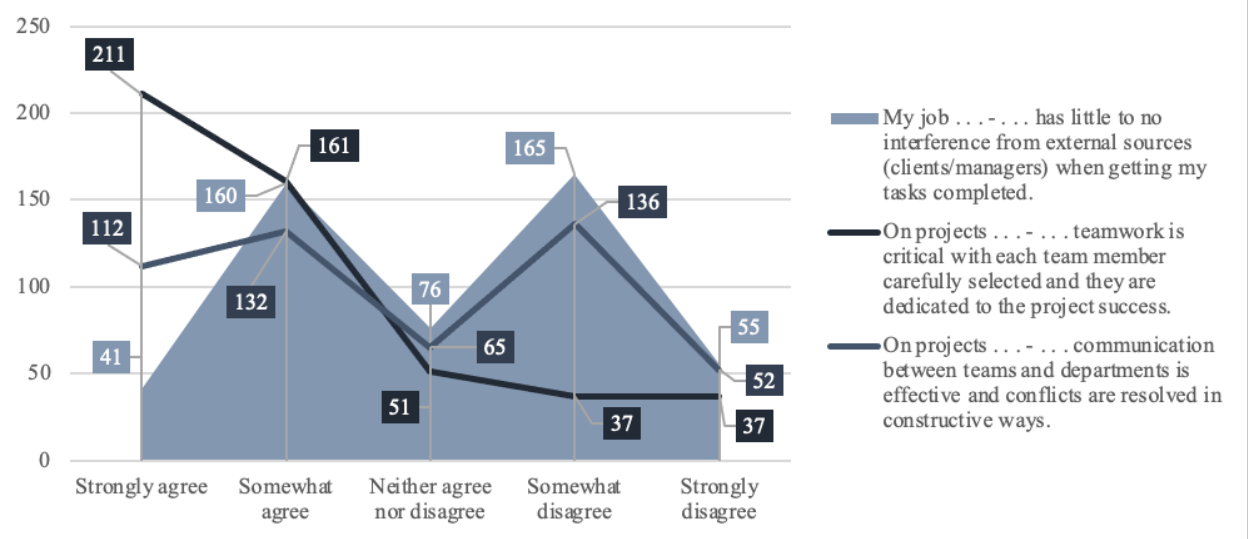
### 4.2.5. Pillar 3: Value (Communication, Education, Impact)

**Research Question: How is "value" conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?**

Often measured economically, with the return on investment (ROI) being the deciding factor if a project or intellectual property (IP) is *valuable* or not, this research targets operational effectiveness (OE) explicitly as its guiding factor of value, aligning with Porter (1985) and Wernerfelt (1984) and their vision of competitive advantage (CA) and resource-based-view (RBV), respectively. For the Screen Industries to operate efficiently, whereby existing value chains are explored, examined, criticised, and expanded upon, a heavy reliance on collaboration between staff and departments, often with varying and complementary skills, is required. Built on a substantial literature review that provides a theoretical basis and empirical investigations that offer practical insights into the practical application, the understanding of current process operations and their limitations is crucial for developing a framework that overcomes these shortcomings.

Communication and the workforce's ability to not only "be able to communicate" but also be "available for communication" (Specialist #1) are essential to the successful cohesion of such teams. Survey responses agreed that teamwork is critical to a project, with members being specifically selected for their roles and each individual being dedicated to the success of a project. Interference from leadership, including managers and clients, seems to be mixed, which could be linked to specific roles and their exposure or buffering from leadership. Additionally, communication between teams and departments, with effective conflict resolution, was also reportedly mixed (Figure 4.13).

**Figure 4.13: Survey Responses – Communication, Teamwork, And Interference**




*Source: N/A*

The topic of communication was iterated throughout the study by both survey respondents and interview participants. It ranged from verbal to written communication in the form of messages, emails, and documentation, including knowledge-sharing and practices beneficial for collaborative teamwork—this important issue is addressed in the proposed framework. Specialist #3 noted their frustration in the lack of production notes, where knowledge is "just hearsay and hope, and institutional knowledge across […] projects if you survived that long." "Maybe there's a standardised way of explaining the process," commented Specialist #18, who added:

> *"for people who don't really know much about the processes we go through as a starting point, and then kind of you see something here, then you see something here",*

as an explanation for team members and leadership to help with the understanding of the complexities of production. Once operational effectiveness (OE) is achieved within a production, teams operate share nuanced practices (process) that are a product of these complexities of production, which include preferred software, programmes, approaches, a shared language and ways of doing, whilst all working towards a shared domain or goal—the output (value).

This gives us a compelling argument to use a staged approach to break complicated processes into more manageable phases, acknowledging the complexities and nuances associated, while

ensuring the autonomy and flexibility required for specialists to operate within a state of flow. This is a further justification for the creation of the process management framework that forms part of this thesis output. For those working in long-running productions, there were acknowledgements of how processes are already mapped, and Specialist #19 elaborated on this topic by stating:

> *"I think the nice thing about working at [project name] is that all the systems are set up and in place, and sometimes, they, sometimes, they sort of creak depending on the personalities involved, so some people are better than others, or care about certain elements more than others."*

Having this prescribed workflow is unmistakeably beneficial, and while individuals bring their distinct nuances, it would appear to give a solid foundation for the processes that go into creating screen-related media productions. However, it is critical to note that this prescribed workflow must be relevant and reflective of the nuances and specialisation associated with the complex tasks of production (process) within the Screen Industries, and is effectively borne from professionals working and excelling within their domain (ideally from a leadership context) and sharing and applying their knowledge for the benefit of the production and subsequent output (value). It is when Specialists are able to achieve a state of flow as a result of feeling they have the ability and knowledge, with clear understanding, expectations, and tasks that have been clearly communicated to them, that operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA) can be fully realised.

Communication feeds into the knowledge, understanding, and availability of educational resources within Screen Industries' processes. "The more filmmakers that can educate themselves on the process, the better the results will be" (Specialist #14). Yet "it's really hard to prepare people for the film industry, even if you've done a film degree," exclaimed Specialist #5. "I don't think even that fully prepares you until you're on set. There's nothing quite like it," they continued, and it is transferrable to all sectors of the Screen Industries. Specialist #24 noted that:

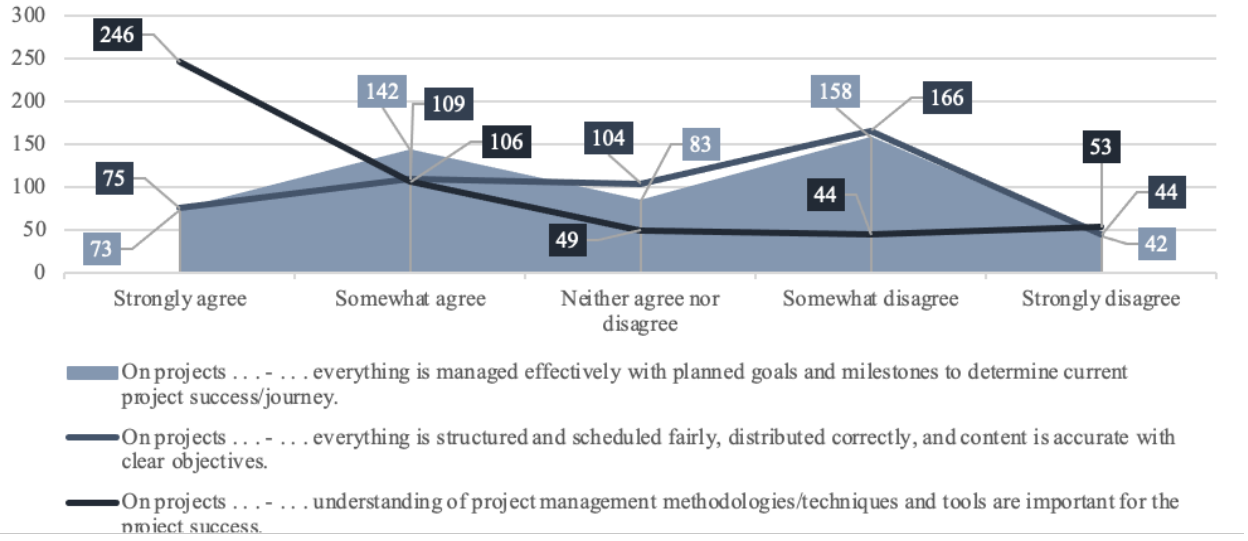
> *"a lot of the productions that I'm on are very similar actually. There's kind of a template there to a certain degree,"*

which indicates that education could be better, and a process management framework would be beneficial so that a common workflow could be learned and attached, negating the lack of preparation that Specialist #5 commented on. Specialist #6 also commented on this from a leadership point of view (POV), stating that "there's very little qualification in our industry on sort of management theory" and they:

> *"might have qualifications as an accountant. They've been on training courses […], but nobody has taught them in theoretical, you know, business management. Very little. Some of them have, because they have created, have had lives outside the film industry, but nobody's really interested in any of that."*

This apparent lack of understanding was confirmed in survey responses, with the majority of responders agreeing that the understanding of project management is important, but the actual management, structure, and planning of projects and associated tasks vary from good to bad. Again, this makes the nobody knows principle (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983) an integral part of the Screen Industries, and one which this study hopes to mitigate to some degree. The lack of understanding of project management methodologies is highlighted in Figure 4.14, amongst other data from survey responses.

**Figure 4.14: Survey Responses – Communication, Teamwork, And Interference**




*Source: N/A*

The understanding of interdepartmental disciplines, their hierarchies, responsibilities, and overall processes in production is vital. Participants from both surveys and interviews agreed that planning is an essential procedure for the successful and timely completion of production elements, contributing to the favourable completion of projects. Better planning enabled faster workflows and outputs to be achieved and helped stop what survey responses stressed as "project paralysis from indecision or changes" happening throughout production due to the shared understanding that "changes later in a project's production have big impacts," linking back to decisions and project scope changes that can have adverse effects on already complicated productions. Specialist #15 correctly notes that every project is:

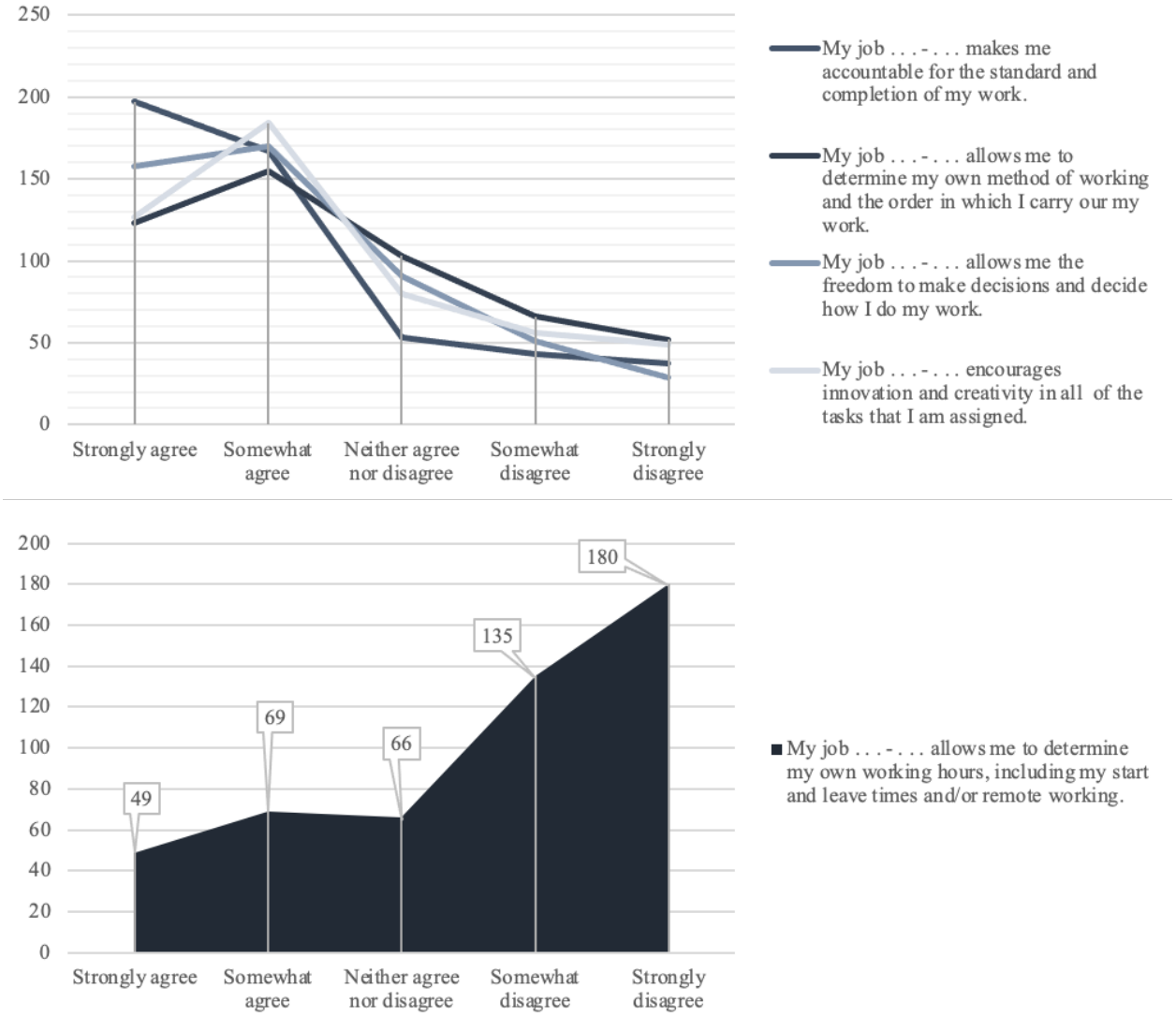
> *"bespoke. […] And it's hard to plan for everything, but you go into it with a good plan, and then you work with people that are flexible and can manoeuvre."*

This continues the reasoning for good planning and the requirement for a framework that would give a solid foundation for preparing all future projects in the Screen Industries. One survey response writes that "there's no one looking for shortcuts", and this statement is confirmed by Specialist #6 acknowledging that "nobody's really analysed it [processes] with the sort of, you know, […] forensic level", and even though large auditing companies have been enlisted to review workflows and find out why profits and outputs aren't where they should be, it was the current teams that gave the answers, in turn costing organisations hundreds of thousands for nothing (Specialist #17), proving that:

> *"you couldn't get a […] consultant that comes in and tells you how to run a movie set. They wouldn't know"* (Specialist #6).

This supports the need for understanding and having practical experience of the complex processes involved with projects in the Screen Industries is paramount to managing those developments. There is a strong belief that workforces are held accountable for their work, they can determine their own methods of working, have the freedom to make decisions, and are encouraged to be creative and innovative in all tasks that they are assigned. Yet, with all this autonomy, the ability to self-govern working hours or, if work is completed remotely, is removed and dictated by leadership (Figure 4.15).

**Figure 4.15: Survey Responses – Autonomy VS Working Hours**




*Source: N/A*

This flexibility in tasks, but not in work hours, should allow for the implementation of solid deadlines and milestones. Still, throughout this research, it has been found that these are movable and changeable due to decision-makers changing their minds, and a survey responder commented that "schedules always shift, they always move." There is no contest to the fact that managing creative processes is a complex challenge where even thinking about a task is considered work, and:

> *"it has to be all right for you [workers] to say, yeah, I've got nothing really to show, but we've been working on this, this and this,"*

With:

> *"the worst time is when you're being monitored continuously and assessed continuously based on, you know, data points that you have to hit, that have no relevance to how you have to do your task"* (Specialist #1).

Without tangible results, schedules become a movable goal that dramatically negatively affects project performance and output. With the specialisms found within the Screen Industries, the knowledge gained by working in any of these sectors is invaluable to individuals, teams, and organisations. However, combining these skills with theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding of process management seems to be a missing component. It is understandable why these knowledge zones are missing due to Screen Industries' nomadic employments, transient culture, and fast-paced production. There is a vast amount of conclusive evidence found within this research that points towards the requirement of some framework adaptable to all sectors of the Screen Industries and can give a starting point for managing creative, technical, and commercial processes.

Survey open-ended responses frequently invoked intangible measures like personal fulfilment or brand pride, yet these remain overshadowed by short-term economic imperatives in many leadership decisions. Interviewees recounted budget or schedule-driven directives that quashed creative experiments, thus undermining the project's uniqueness and reducing potential "value" from a viewer's perspective. Meanwhile, intangible synergy—manifested in staff morale and collaborative fluidity—often becomes a casualty of last-minute cost-saving pivots. Consequently, "value" stands at the intersection of creative ambition and operational pragmatism. If leaders adopt stable processes while preserving each department's flow, intangible brand equity and staff motivation can indeed translate into higher financial returns over time.

**Key Findings of Pillar 3: Value**

⇒ Value in the Screen Industries is measured predominantly through economic returns, with little to no discussion relating to the operational effectiveness (OE) of processes that lead to competitive advantage (CA) and faster, better outputs (value). By focusing on processes driven by strong leadership, there is an opportunity to positively change OE, increase CA, and deliver expedited outputs that, in turn, increase the value of production and end results.

⇒ Value is at once financial (ROI, audience metrics) and creative (artistic satisfaction, brand-building). The integrated data show that ensuring healthy autonomy for teams—paired with structured oversight—enables a more consistent synergy. A well-conceived approach to scheduling, leadership alignment, and resource management fosters intangible brand equity and staff morale, fuelling intangible aspects that can spill into higher financial returns. This addresses Research Question #2 from a more intangible vantage: "value" is both the impetus and the outcome of better processes and leadership synergy.

⇒ Teamwork, collaboration, and communication are critical to a project's success and the knowledge (value) shared between project team members. However, the research identifies gaps in communication, both within and between departments, which can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and errors, with potential financial impact. The need for standardised communication practices and the sharing of production notes and knowledge is highlighted, as well as the potential benefits of creating a shared visual schedule with agreed-upon milestones and deadlines.

⇒ While autonomy is essential for creative work, the research finds that there is often a lack of accountability, with some individuals resistant to being held responsible for their tasks. This tension between autonomy and accountability needs to be managed carefully to ensure project success. The research supports the idea that each Specialist should have full autonomy in how they complete their tasks, but within the constraints of fixed deadlines and a clear understanding of their role within the broader project.

⇒ Standardisation of process is removed due to the transient nature of the workforce in these sectors. Creating a consistent set of staged processes could present a way to regulate projects to increase knowledge and understanding, leading to efficiencies that could drive value.

⇒ Prescribed and standardised systems, such as those found in serialised television shows, can enhance knowledge and the availability of educational resources, an area that Screen Industries lacks, reinforcing the "nobody knows" principle outlined in this paper. These uniform systems offer more opportunities for specialists to achieve a state of flow due to clearly defined expectations and enhanced communications found in these predetermined setups and could be a solution towards achieving OE and maximising workflows.

#### 4.2.6. Cross-Analysis Observations and Pillar Integration

The data from both surveys and interviews repeatedly demonstrate that stable leadership (Pillar 1) combined with well-defined processes (Pillar 2) fosters an environment where value (Pillar 3) is consistently generated and sustained. This value extends beyond immediate financial returns to include creative achievement, professional development, and reputational standing within the Screen Industries. Conversely, weaknesses in any of these areas negatively impact overall success—chaotic leadership leads to increased rework, excessive rework reduces morale, and declining morale ultimately affects both creative and financial outcomes. Although each production is short-term, strong leadership and structured processes create a foundation for lasting professional relationships, allowing skilled professionals to return to projects where they know what to expect. This continuity builds reputational capital for teams, directors, or studios that adopt structured approaches to production, reinforcing Pillar 3 as a critical factor in long-term industry positioning and sustainability.

While creative tasks require autonomy, unlimited flexibility can result in scope creep, continual revisions, and staff frustration. Effective production balances structured constraints (deadlines, approvals) with creative autonomy, ensuring that while each department determines its own approach, all efforts align with broader project goals. This balance reflects how value—in terms of both high-quality creative outputs and professional satisfaction—is shaped by the interplay between leadership expectations and structured processes.

The three pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—demonstrate that the Screen Industries, encompassing film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games, operate within high-pressure, often freelance-based production cycles. The “nobody knows anything”

phenomenon underscores the lack of universal industry standards, further highlighting the need for structured approaches that integrate both creative flexibility and operational discipline.

Pillar 1 (Leadership) provides insight into leadership challenges such as inexperienced managers, excessive workloads, and inconsistent decision-making. Pillar 2 (Process) emphasises the importance of structured workflows, illustrating that leadership must balance autonomy, accountability, and the use of scheduling or communication tools to maintain clarity and direction. Together, these findings point to leadership approaches that combine structured discipline (budgets, schedules) with an understanding of how to support creativity through trust and well-defined expectations.

Pillars 2 (Process) and 3 (Value) confirm that structured, repeatable frameworks yield both immediate operational improvements—such as reduced miscommunication and more efficient workflows—and long-term advantages, including professional retention and reputational benefits. Interview and survey data affirm that even in industries reliant on short-term contracts, implementing standardised or iterative processes reduces unnecessary revisions, improves morale, and ensures consistency across projects.

Pillar 3 (Value) extends beyond financial gains to include the sustainability of creative careers, team well-being, and brand positioning. When processes are inconsistent or leadership is unclear, teams face unnecessary stress, and the quality of outputs declines. Conversely, structured processes and leadership that respect autonomy enable creative professionals to produce their best work while maintaining efficiency, ultimately strengthening both individual career progression and long-term industry credibility.

Ultimately, the interaction between Leadership, Process, and Value demonstrates that even in industries driven by short-term projects and creative demands, strong leadership combined with structured workflows enhances both creative and operational success. The combined analysis strongly supports the feasibility and benefits of a structured yet flexible process management framework. By uniting transient teams, maintaining autonomy while preventing inefficiencies, reducing unnecessary revisions, and fostering long-term value in both professional relationships

and project outcomes, such a framework provides a genuine competitive advantage (CA) in these fast-paced, project-based industries.

## 4.3. Research Implications

Throughout this study, emphasis has been placed on identifying competitive advantage (CA) through operational effectiveness (OE), specifically tailored to the five defined sectors of the Screen Industries—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games. In addressing the research questions, this investigation demonstrates how balancing autonomy, creativity, and structured oversight enables high-quality outputs despite the inherent unpredictability of project-based work. By integrating theoretical concepts (such as flow, autonomy, and value) with primary data from both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) sources, this chapter explores how the findings address each research question while contributing to both scholarly and industry discourse.

### 4.3.1. Theoretical Implications

A key theoretical contribution of this study is its emphasis on the interdependence between creativity and structure in the Screen Industries. While existing literature frequently focuses on either artistic outputs or financial success, this research underscores the dynamic relationship between leadership, process, and value—three foundational pillars that must be effectively managed for teams to sustain both creative freedom and operational stability:

1. Refined Definitions and Sector Clarity

   *Research Question 1: How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?*

   The study clarifies long-standing ambiguities in industry classification, differentiating screen industries from broader creative sectors. Terms like "creative industries" or "cultural industries" often blur the specificity of screen-based work. By clearly delineating the five sectors—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—this research provides an academically grounded framework that future studies can use to further refine sector categorisation or facilitate cross-industry comparisons.

2. Leadership vs. Management in Creative Contexts

   *Research Question 3: What are the most effective management and leadership methodologies commonly applied within the Screen Industries?*

   Findings reveal that leadership in these industries often prioritises short-term problem-solving over long-term development, with many individuals rising to senior positions without formal managerial training. This study extends mainstream management theories—such as Bass's distinction between transactional and transformational leadership—into an industry where creative objectives frequently intersect with unrelenting production deadlines. These findings highlight the need for leadership models that accommodate short-term projects while maintaining organisational effectiveness.

3. Autonomy, Flow, and Overwork

   *Research Question 2: How is "value" conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?*

   While the concept of "flow" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997) is often associated with creative value and high performance, the findings of this study reveal a more complex picture. Participants described environments where autonomy was high but structure was lacking, leading not to enhanced creativity but to stress, confusion, and eventual burnout. These insights suggest that value in the Screen Industries is not solely generated through creative freedom, but rather through a balance of autonomy and structured support. The effective management of value, therefore, includes realistic planning, clear communication, and leadership that aligns creative potential with operational demands—particularly within high-pressure, project-based environments. This reframing of value highlights the need for leadership and process design to be understood not as constraints, but as enablers of sustainable creative output.

4. Reframing "Nobody Knows Anything"

   *Research Question 4: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?*

While Goldman's (1983) statement originally referred to the unpredictability of commercial success, this research expands its application to day-to-day management in the Screen Industries, where inconsistent leadership, shifting production goals, and undefined processes introduce inefficiencies. By linking this concept to management frameworks, the study underscores the need for adaptable yet standardised process management approaches tailored to high-pressure, short-term productions.

### 4.3.2. Practical Implications

From an applied perspective, the study identifies several ways in which screen-media productions can strengthen their competitive positioning by integrating structured operational oversight with flexible creative workflows. By focusing on the three core pillars—leadership, process, and value—this research highlights the potential to customise established business methods to fit the needs of highly creative, short-term projects.

1. Structured Leadership for Short-Term, High-Pressure Projects
   *Research Question 3: What are the most effective management and leadership methodologies commonly applied within the Screen Industries?*
   Participants frequently cited undertrained or hastily promoted leaders as a key source of disorganisation. This suggests an industry need for targeted leadership training—such as condensed managerial programs or role-specific coaching—designed specifically for project-based creative environments.

2. Balancing Flow and Overwork
   *Research Question 2: How is "value" conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?*
   While autonomy is often seen as a key driver of creative value, the findings of this study suggest that without structured workflows and realistic boundaries, it can lead to excessive overtime and professional burnout. In this context, value is not only found in the creative output but also in the sustainable conditions that support its production. Producers and managers play a crucial role in managing this balance by implementing

structured processes such as milestone-based workflows, scheduled non-disturbance periods, and mandated rest intervals. These strategies reinforce the idea that managing value in the Screen Industries involves not just creative freedom, but also safeguarding well-being and sustaining long-term productivity across all phases of production.

3. Decision-Making Checkpoints and Accountability
   *Research Question 4: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?*
   Many productions suffer from continuous script or design revisions, which increase costs and delay timelines. Implementing structured approval checkpoints—where deliverables are reviewed and locked before moving to the next stage—can significantly reduce unnecessary rework and late-stage disruptions.

4. Technology Integration and Shared Systems
   *Research Question 4: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?*
   Several participants reported inefficiencies caused by decentralised production tools, inconsistent communication, and reliance on outdated spreadsheets. Consolidating budget tracking, scheduling, and creative assets into a unified, real-time system can improve transparency, accountability, and cross-departmental collaboration.

5. Enhancing Project-Level Competitive Advantage
   *Research Question 4: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?*
   In an industry driven by short-term contracts and project-based reputations, production teams and studios that consistently deliver well-structured, on-time outputs gain a competitive edge. Maintaining a reputation for reliable project execution fosters stronger relationships with investors, sponsors, and distributors while attracting top creative talent for future productions.

Collectively, these reinforce the need for a structured yet adaptive process management framework tailored to the unique challenges of the Screen Industries. By formalising the interplay between leadership, process, and value, the framework proposed in this study provides a viable model for enhancing operational effectiveness while maintaining the creative flexibility essential to screen-based work. Future research can build upon this foundation to refine, validate, and adapt the framework for different production contexts within the industry.

## 4.4. Outlining Key Findings

The in-depth investigations carried out throughout the duration of this research study produced four critical findings driven by the outlined research questions—1)Definition, 2) Core Pillars (Leadership, Process, Value), 3) Autonomy and Flow, 4) Nobody Knows Anything.

The academic and practical readings clearly showed that the definition of Screen Industries is heavily disputed among academics, governments, and professionals worldwide. Therefore, this author was required to create a decisive description of exactly which creative sectors encompassed the Screen Industries as a whole—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games. Further studies could use this research as a definitive guide to what sectors are incorporated in the Screen Industries without equivocation.

Success in the creative and market-driven Screen Industries is often impossible to predict, as nobody truly knows what projects will lead to triumph. There is a constant struggle between the freedom to innovate and the need for commercial success. Balancing artistic autonomy and flow with the requirements of the ever-changing market is a significant challenge. Production companies in these sectors could potentially benefit from a process management framework designed specifically for their needs. This framework could help in achieving the right balance between creative freedom and operational efficiency, thus helping to ensure success in screen-media projects.

Three core operational pillars—leadership, process, and value—have been established as the fundamental measures of project success. The complexity of the productions within these sectors requires the breakdown of tasks (processes) into manageable segments, which can be driven by

these operative pillars. Thus, they form the foundations of a process management framework designed explicitly for the Screen Industries. This framework provides a structured methodology that integrates leadership alignment, workflow optimisation, and value-focused project execution, ensuring that creative teams can operate efficiently without compromising artistic integrity. By segmenting complex processes into manageable, iterative phases, this framework enables autonomy while maintaining accountability, reducing production inefficiencies and reinforcing operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA).

Collaborative teams require freedom and trust to drive innovation, and this requires open communication, the flexibility to embrace change, and the autonomy to produce a flow state in which Specialists can be fully immersed in their tasks. To achieve this, there must be little restriction or interference from external sources, breaking free from traditional control methods and promoting competitive advantage (CA) and operational effectiveness (OE).

Due to the subjectivity of what is good or bad from the Screen Industries' outputs (products/completed works), an inherent feature and common trait for these sectors is that there is often a nobody-knows principle whereby a limited understanding of what will work is usually present. While subjectivity cannot be predicted, operational factors such as leadership, process, and value can emphasise the failure or success of a project and help mitigate risk from a production and creation point-of-view (POV).

These key findings have been derived from the conclusions drawn from this research and, if applied correctly, like in the case of a framework, have the opportunity to drive operation effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA). As discussed in the data findings, once OE is achieved within a production, teams share nuanced practices (process) that are a product of these complexities of production, which include preferred software, programmes, approaches, a shared language and ways of doing, whilst all working towards a shared domain or goal—the output (value). This gives us a compelling argument to use a staged approach to break complicated processes into more manageable phases, acknowledging the complexities and nuances associated, while ensuring the autonomy and flexibility required for specialists to

operate within a state of flow, whilst functioning as part of a whole. This is a further justification for the creation of the process management framework that forms part of this thesis output.

# 5. Process Management Framework

## 5.1. Introduction and Context

Due to the nuances, complexities, precise demands, and skills of the departments within the Screen Industries, the study of existing frameworks—generalised or sector-specific—is a considerable undertaking, as demonstrated throughout this research study. Primary data evidenced an understanding of what and how tasks are completed in these sectors. However, there was still substantial confirmation that general business acumen and the more specific process management elements were missing parts of knowledge, understanding, and education—leaning back into the nobody knows concept from Goldman (1983) and Caves (2002). *Chapter 2: Literature Review* offers a wealth of existing frameworks being adapted and adopted in the Screen Industries while presenting information and broader topics in management and leadership, giving academic listings of theories and methodologies. These readings, and with the findings from primary data findings, including the need for autonomy and flow, as well as the three core pillars, formed the theoretical underpinning for this research study and, in alignment with the research questions, produced valuable information that has been applied to every part of this thesis. Within this process management framework chapter, we will explore the practical applications of these theoretical hypotheses before outlining a custom-built process management framework for the Screen Industries, named the SERPENT Framework.

The creation of this process management framework energises academic and practical advancements in managing processes for the Screen Industries. By referencing existing methodologies, we can anchor the study in existing comprehension and provide a structured approach to the framework's creation, grounding it within existing literature and currently used practices and expanding it to be fit for purpose instead of the presently adopted and adapted methods. While these current techniques offer solutions, this research evidences that to cater to the unique demands of project-based work, a specialised explicitly created framework would offer enhanced advantages, ensuring flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to the unique factors these sectors convey. A specific framework will enable practices that facilitate the integration of multi-disciplinary skills while maintaining the integrity of the creative vision, creating more efficient process completion. The understanding of existing frameworks must be

strengthened to amplify further the theoretical and practical relevance of this proposed framework. The evolution of process management theories has transitioned significantly from classical models, which primarily focused on efficiency and standardisation, to contemporary approaches that prioritise agility, innovation, and adaptability.

Classical Models of process management were developed from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, forming the basis for the standardisation of managing processes. Introduced by Frederick Taylor in the early 1900s, Scientific Management (Taylorism) emphasised the standardisation process management with a focus on timing studies and task specialisations to enhance the productivity of workers' outputs. Max Weber, the creator of Bureaucratic Management, focused on role definition and hierarchical organisational structures to increase the effectiveness and efficiencies in organisations. Henri Fayol's theory was that of Administrative Management, whereby instead of focusing on hierarchies, the attention was on management functions and principles like unity of command and division of work.

In reaction to the mechanistic views of Classical Models, which did help to improve the efficiencies of factory workforces but neglected the humanitarian aspects of the workforce, the Transition Era of process management dawned in the mid-20th century. One approach offered by Elton Mayo's Hawthorne Studies, emphasised the importance of social relations and employee satisfaction for productivity. At the same time, Systems Theory introduced a holistic view of an organisation, incorporating feedback loops and the environment where organisations are seen as an interrelated system.

Modern approaches followed in the late 20th century and continue today, with several practices adapted for use within the Screen Industries. TQM—Total Quality Management—emerged with a focus on continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, incorporating tools and methods like Six Sigma used to improve business processes by reducing defects and errors, minimising variation, and increasing quality and efficiency. Automotive manufacturer Toyota provided Lean Management (Liker, 2004; Ohno, 1988; Womack, Jones, and Roos, 1990), emphasising waste reduction, output efficiency, and value maximisation. Business Process Reengineering (BPR) introduced the idea of radically redesigning core business processes to improve productivity,

cycle times, and quality, dramatically. Initially crafted for software development and often adopted in video game creation, Agile Management emphasises flexibility via iterative progress through small increments and adaptability to change. Knowledge Management (KM) focuses on running and exploiting knowledge and learning to enhance organisational performance and adaptability in the markets. These theoretical foundations for modern process management have been explored and enhanced with more contemporary theories and frameworks like Innovation Management, which focuses on fostering a culture of innovation and leveraging ideation, project management, and organisational adjustments to maintain competitive advantage (CA). Digital Transformation and Business Agility have enhanced these methodologies and approaches, which involve using digital technologies to transform services or businesses by modifying existing business processes, culture, and customer experiences. See Drucker (1954), Hammer and Champy (1993), Mayo (1933), Taylor (1911), Weber (1947), and Womack, Jones, and Roos (1990) for key foundational texts and significant works that detail the evolution of process management theories from their inception to contemporary applications.

Alternative methodologies exist on the periphery of these classical and contemporary approaches. While less commonly implemented than other modes, alternative systems often propose a more diverse and possibly extreme technique for process management. Although they would be unsuitable for all organisations, these practices could prove helpful to the Screen Industries, where production procedures are complex and unique. One such alternative that seems to have potential within the Screen Industries is the Results Only Work Environment (ROWE), created and developed at Best Buy stores in the USA by Cali Ressler and Jody Thompson (GoROWE, 2014; Ressler and Thompson, 2013). ROWE works on the principle that the only thing that matters is the results, not how you get there. It liberates managers and employees within an organisation where tasks and deadlines are given, but the individual is held accountable and responsible for their assignment. However, with such freedom given, some feel that there is a greater lack of control, with staff performance not being as measurable—a characteristic required within the Screen Industries to track inter-connected outputs and prevent or manage risks correctly.

Each of the approaches listed above provides an inspirational role in informed management practices' historical and theoretical underpinnings as they have evolved over time, helping align the development of the SERPENT Framework developed herein. Their foundations guide, inform and inspire this study, fostering a continued theoretical exploration and development cycle. Perfectly fitting and in keeping with the phased approach to this research, conclusions and inferences from primary and secondary data, guided by the research questions, form a conceptual lens through which the data is viewed, analysed, and interpreted. The inquiries and findings that have led to this point allow for the creation of a robust theoretical foundation where statistics and personal accounts (mixed methods) are collected to develop a theoretical process management framework designed exclusively for film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games.

Acknowledging the nuances and complexities of process management in the Screen Industries has not been neglected during this study. Creative projects operate in fast-paced, dynamic, shifting environments where provisional plans rarely come to fruition. Project scope often changes, and uncertainty regarding the finished product can be seen even during later stages of production (Petrović *et al.*, 2017). Project management methodologies have been applied to some sectors of the Screen Industry, particularly video games, which predominantly operate on an agile delivery method, where a product is released and updated in iterative cycles. Various adaptations of established methodologies have been applied to other sectors or departments. While they present a logical and potentially valid means of controlling processes, no methods have been designed specifically for or in relation to productions in Screen Industries. This is an evident oversight, as this could potentially be the root cause of some of the more pressing issues that lead to workforce engagement, health, and the ability to add value to projects via operational efficiencies. Academics like Briand and Bellemare (2006), Clegg and Courpasson (2004), and Hodgson (2004) have accredited that management has been strengthened and reinvented, shifting into technologies that govern project management. This is still true, with technology driving innovation of screen-media outputs and purposely designed software that enables teamwork and organisational tracking. However, interviewed Specialists noted that these technologies are not permanently shared and not always applicable to each department, opening an opportunity for the development of this framework to support, adapt, and apply to all departments while

addressing the specific challenges, dynamics, and nuances of process management within the Screen Industries.

While numerous established methodologies (e.g., Agile, Lean, Waterfall, ROWE) have been adapted in the Screen Industries, none has been purpose-built for the unique blend of creativity, rapid project turnover, and collaborative autonomy that defines these sectors. Consequently, this chapter proposes the SERPENT Framework—a theoretical yet practically grounded approach that re-envisions process management for film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games. Informed by the research questions and the principle that "nobody knows anything" (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983), SERPENT balances flexible autonomy with structural guidelines, thereby offering a novel lens for enhancing operational effectiveness and competitive advantage in screen-based productions.

In summary, the SERPENT Framework is directly informed by the four research questions, addressing the unique needs of the Screen Industries. It categorises these industries (Question 1) by defining their core operational factors, ensuring the framework's applicability across diverse sectors like film, television, and video games. It explores how value is conceptualised and managed across production phases (Question 2), aligning operational processes with both creative integrity and efficiency. By analysing existing management and leadership methodologies (Question 3), the framework incorporates best practices while introducing innovations suited to dynamic, project-based environments. Finally, it validates its applicability (Question 4) by demonstrating its potential to improve operational effectiveness (OE) and offer a competitive advantage (CA).

### 5.1.1. Key Research Findings and Structural Pillars

Research questions have shaped the structure of this research, from initial conceptual stages through secondary data review and primary data collection to the analysis and findings. Four key findings, 1) Definition, 2) Three Core Pillars (Leadership, Process, Value), 3) Autonomy and Flow, and 4) Nobody Knows, were identified, analysed, and concluded from this study's findings. The definition of precisely which sectors define the Screen Industries, and their operational factors formed the first research question. This opened the initial key finding of the

study, categorising film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games as the decisive sectors. Questions two, three, and four required a complex amalgamation of primary and secondary research to highlight the importance of autonomy and flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997) within process execution, and the realisation that the statement "nobody knows" (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983) is a correct representation of process management knowledge within the defined sectors of the Screen Industries. Of similar importance, the three core pillars (leadership, process, and value) were built on nine themes developed following thematic data analysis of this study's primary research. Table 5.1 offers a full breakdown of each pillar, linked themes, and associated codes while giving context to their findings.

**Table 5.1: Pillars, Themes, Codes, and Content Description**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LEADERSHIP** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 1** | THEME | Contracts | CODES | Freelance. Network. Work Hours |
| | THEME | Management | CODES | Authority. Meetings. Responsibility. |
| | THEME | Personnel | CODES | Accountability. Collaboration. Team. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Leadership, built on the themes of Contracts, Management, and Personnel, focuses on the inimitable challenges of managing and leading creativity for people and productions. | | |
| **PROCESS** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 2** | THEME | Decisions | CODES | Deadlines. Productivity. Results. |
| | THEME | Technology | CODES | Software. Solutions. Systems. |
| | THEME | Workflow | CODES | Development. Schedule. Tasks. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Process includes themes of Decisions, Technology, and Workflow, directing attention to successful process management, which gives competitive advantage (CA) from operational effectiveness (OE) in the Screen Industries. | | |
| **VALUE** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 3** | THEME | Communication | CODES | Access. Comprehension. Interpretation. |
| | THEME | Education | CODES | Expertise. Knowledge. Understanding. |
| | THEME | Impact | CODES | Autonomy. Efficiency. Output. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Value offers Communication, Education, and Impact as its themes for contributing to understanding creative process operations while overcoming challenges and limitations. | | |

*Source: N/A*

Each of the three pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—guides the conceptual architecture of the SERPENT Framework. Leadership underpins how project goals are set, delegated, and evaluated; Process informs the step-by-step structuring, decision checkpoints, and use of relevant technologies; and Value drives communication, education, and the tangible or intangible outcomes that creative industries seek to maximise. By grounding SERPENT in these pillars, the framework not only addresses recurrent workforce challenges identified in this study (e.g., overwork, indecisive leadership, communication gaps) but also ensures that autonomy and flow are preserved. In short, SERPENT operationalises the findings from *Chapter 4: Data Findings* by systematically linking each theme and code to the practical demands of screen-related productions.

Combined, these pillars, themes, and their associated codes form the building blocks used to push the development of the theoretical constructs that generate this chapter's SERPENT Framework. Designed explicitly for the sectors defined in this research, namely film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games, and accounting for the uncertainty, or unknowability, based on the nobody knows principle, this framework offers a structure that gives knowability and operational organisation, works towards mitigating risk, and is responsive to the balance of autonomy and flow that is needed throughout all aspects of the Screen Industries' productions.

### 5.1.2. Applied Research Context

Research design, methodology, data collection, and mixed-methods approaches to analysing data have played pivotal roles in the conceptual underpinnings of this process management framework. The comprehensive exploration found in this research informs and guides the structure's methodological approach, ensuring that it is coherent and consistent with the existing constructs and effectively led by the answers to the research questions and core pillars of leadership, process, and value. Staged research has informed the creation of survey questions, interview guides, observation protocols, and theoretical interpretations of the study's findings that can be translated into practical strategies for the Screen Industries. The insights gleaned from the study offer actionable guidance for enhancing process management practices, fostering innovation, and navigating industry challenges that set the footing for a process management

framework designed specifically for the sectors operating in the Screen Industries. Aligning this framework with the applied research methods ensures coherence from study to implementation. It facilitates a more rigorous and systematic creation of a structure that is not only theoretically robust but also practically applicable, offering valuable guidance to industry practitioners, which is a sharp change from industry practices that rely on adapted methodologies.

Defined by the investigation within this study—Leadership, Process, and Value are the core pillars that create the starting foundations of the SERPENT Framework. Each pillar has three themes attached, with a further three codes attached to each theme (a total of three pillars, nine themes, and twenty-seven codes) promoting research-led grounding to create a paradigm steeped in academic and practical rigour. From this foundation, every aspect of the framework can be attributed to a pillar, theme, and code, learning from existing process management perspectives and applying new methods within the specific context of the Screen Industries.

In the development of this framework, creativity, collaboration, and technology are central components. Creativity—whether innovative, technical, administrative, or of another nature—necessitates both flexibility and autonomy throughout each process and task. As discussed in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, and further substantiated in *Chapter 4: Data Findings*, creativity is essential across the entire value chain. However, it also requires well-defined temporal constraints to ensure effective scheduling and budgeting. While these temporal boundaries are necessary, guidance on task execution should remain optional to preserve the autonomy and flow that are crucial in managing tasks characterised by high uncertainty. This significance was underscored by several specialists who emphasised the need for efficiency and meaningful work over mere appearances. One specialist remarked:

> *"an eight-hour day sitting around looking busy is not the same as four hours of actually getting production work done."*

Another highlighted the value of results-oriented work by stating:

> *"if someone produces finished results in three hours and spends six walking around outside and at the gym. That's great. It doesn't matter, right?"*

Additionally, it was noted that "emotions need to be present in anything you do" to foster innovation through autonomy and flow. This innovation must occur within a timeframe established by leadership, which should not be restrictive but realistic, to ensure the achievement of successful outcomes and value creation.

Collaboration, as highlighted in survey findings and feedback from Specialists, is crucial to the success of projects due to the high degree of specialisation within each department. This skilled workforce requires effective communication channels while maintaining the autonomy necessary to apply their expertise successfully. The integration of these elements adds complexity to the framework, necessitating careful consideration of the cross-disciplinary roles involved. By abstracting concepts with precision and competence, it becomes possible to develop workable definitions, indices, and measures that contribute to a comprehensive methodological framework applicable across all sectors, departments, and individuals.

Technology—its application to the Screen Industries, the workflow of its staff, and the adoption by its consumers—rests at the core of any production. As technology constantly changes, any framework created must be adaptable enough to allow for the use of all technologies while giving no interference to the processes being managed.

Accordingly, SERPENT evolves from an empirical-theoretical foundation: it leverages the primary data on leadership indecisions, workflow disruption, and value misalignment uncovered in *Chapter 4: Data Findings*, while drawing upon well-established project management theories like Agile or Waterfall. However, unlike those preexisting methods, SERPENT directly tackles idiosyncrasies of screen productions: ephemeral employment structures, creative autonomy, and frequently shifting project scopes. This dual basis—grounded in both data-driven insights and classical process management literature—ensures that the SERPENT Framework retains academic rigour yet remains agile for real-world screen-industry contexts.

## 5.2. Theoretical Constructs and Framework Foundations

It is widely accepted that social research should be embedded within a theoretical framework (Gilbert, 2001), as "a theory highlights and explains something that one would otherwise not see,

or would find puzzling" (p.17). In contexts where existing theories fail to fully explain a phenomenon, Thomas Kuhn (1970) describes the need for a shift in paradigms—broad, radical changes in perspective that allow for new understandings to emerge. Within the Screen Industries, current management paradigms have been frequently borrowed from traditional business sectors and adapted in ways that often overlook the distinct conditions of creative, project-based environments. This research has demonstrated that such models, when applied without context, can introduce significant inefficiencies and structural challenges.

Through the exploration of leadership, process, and value across all six production stages (see Honthaner, 2010, p.1), this study argues for a new practice-based framework—one that offers structured, context-specific guidance tailored to the operational realities of the Screen Industries. While the framework is grounded in empirical findings rather than abstract theory, its development is nonetheless underpinned by key theoretical assumptions, as noted by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021). These include the belief that process design must reflect sector-specific dynamics, that leadership must be adaptive to creative workflows, and that value must be understood both in financial and intangible terms.

The SERPENT Framework thus contributes both theoretically and practically: it addresses gaps in the literature, challenges conventional models of creative project management, and provides a sector-specific, research-led structure that can enhance operational effectiveness across screen-based productions.

There is often a reliance and great dependency on micro-organisations formed within the larger organisational structure of a company. These micro-organisations (departments) contain teams of specialists selected for their abilities to complete specific project obligations (tasks/processes) successfully. For a brief time, these teams work intensively until process completion and are split from the micro-organisation as contracts end (Caves, 2002). Specialist #1 noted that thinking about a task is also the equivalent of working on a task, insisting that the progression of some tasks leads to intangible results until final delivery—something that adds additional challenges to the monitoring of duties but fits with the need for autonomy and areas of flexibility in process tracking. Situations like this require planned autonomy stages, but perhaps the inclusion of

tangible outputs that can help others in the team understand progression would be beneficial. Interview Specialist #20 highlighted the importance of task prioritisation due to rapid changes that can lead to more tasks being added than available time scheduled—once again, displaying a genuine need for flexibility in this framework. This Specialist also emphasised the importance of communication between departments and the ability to reorder tasks as circumstances change during production.

A roadmap can provide a broad overview of a project without getting "bogged down with the minutia of it" (Specialist #4), and milestones attached to the roadmap can inform a project's progression. The roadmap's "broader points" allow for a more accessible view to stakeholders, clients, and leadership. In contrast, the more detailed milestones provide a more comprehensive understanding for department heads (HODs). Tasks assigned to each milestone can then have deadlines attached with iterative deliverables, offering complex data that teams will need to complete responsibilities successfully. These three levels allow communication of project considerations throughout all levels of the hierarchical structure which is commonplace within the Screen Industries. With the potential for so much trust and responsibility given to each individual for each task, consequences and rewards should be clearly and accurately communicated at the beginning of each assignment (Hellreigel *et al.*, 2001; Porter, 1987), with consideration given to setting boundaries and the risk of burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 2007). Additional contemplation must be assigned to the setting of combined goals, shared objects, collective operations, and reporting metrics to ensure that working silos and interdepartmental politics and turf wars are kept to a minimum (Lencioni, 2006).

Using the existing phases of production (*Chapter 2: Literature Review* – Figure 2.2) as foundations, the framework needs to operate in clearly set phases. Projects move through each phase from concept through to the completed product, and as each phase has its own set of working parameters, the created framework must be flexible and adaptable enough to be applicable at each stage and for any project-related considerations. Lencioni's (2002) narrative on the five dysfunctions of a team (*Chapter 2: Literature Review* – Figure 2.7) recognises that a workforce, from the most junior to the most senior member, must trust each other, engage in unfiltered positive conflict, commit to decisions and action plans, hold each other accountable,

and focus on achieving individual and collective results. This enforces responsibility while keeping the team answerable for the successful completion of a project, giving unprecedented autonomy that can lead to extended periods of flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997), producing better results quicker. Operating in a Results Only Work Environment (ROWE) (GoROWE, 2014; Ressler and Thompson, 2013) complements Lencioni's (2002) philosophy by focusing on results, or scope, as the most essential constraint. This is in stark contrast to Agile methodologies (Hodgson and Briand, 2013; Richet, 2013; Wysocki, 2009), which work on the principle that everything is variable, and attention to the cost and time of a project is used to visualise the scope. These project management constraints must be considered within the created framework and adaptable to any tasks associated with the structure (see Oisen, 1971; Newell and Grashina, 2004; McGhee and McAliney, 2007 for details on The Project Management Triangle). Each project should adhere to well-defined project management methodologies (PMI, 2017, 2018, 2021), and flexibility in task completion should be at the forefront of planning due to its ability to increase innovation.

From these diverse process management doctrines—Waterfall for linear clarity, Agile for iterative adaptability, ROWE for results-focused autonomy—SERPENT selectively integrates features that resonate with the Screen Industries' creative and logistical demands. Waterfall's phased structure informs SERPENT's need for definable production stages, while Agile's sprints help address frequent script or scope changes. Meanwhile, ROWE's emphasis on results over rigid scheduling underpins the flexible autonomy that fosters creative "flow." Yet none of these frameworks alone can accommodate the intense collaboration, departmental silos, rapid skill turnover, and unique budgetary constraints found in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games. Consequently, SERPENT builds upon each approach's strengths while embedding new controls—decision gateways, milestone-based accountability, department-agnostic scheduling—that fill the gaps uncovered in this research.

The combination of both ROWE and Agile seems to offer the most significant opportunity to enable autonomy within processes while maintaining iterative cycles that allow for changes and keep certain aspects of control for project leadership. Decisions, and more importantly, the changes to those decisions, were noted as one of the most definitive factors in project

complications and issues. Therefore, the project goal or scope should be considered the most crucial aspect, factor, or constraint within this new framework, as without an output, any of the processes assigned to the project have only a negative value. A continuously monitored project schedule should allow for leadership, or any project member, to view and analyse the project in its entirety, including the specific details of each process at any time during production. By enabling this, individuals and teams can break down planned project tasks (processes) and project milestones to check their progress towards the project goal, offering more accountability and responsibility for assigned processes. Project and team communication is of the utmost importance and can be facilitated in many ways, including meetings, calls, notes, and emails. Adding communications to the main framework enables an accessible repository system where all team members can follow goal visibility, process communications, schedules, and the tracking of tasks within a project. Of course, this will require technology, including the dependency on software and applications, which will play a significant role in keeping project communication open and accessible.

### 5.2.1. Applied Theoretical Underpinning of Framework

There is a complex interplay between established theories and the distinctive dynamics of the Screen Industries, highlighting how concepts are adapted and applied to optimise creative workflows, project management, and technological integration. The process management framework offered in this thesis is supported by the research findings and brings unparalleled flexibility and support for existing workflows and methodologies found within the Screen Industries and beyond. Due to the apparent unlimited abilities in which the framework allows other modes of working, this section provides an overview of some existing techniques that would be most suitable for incorporation into the model.

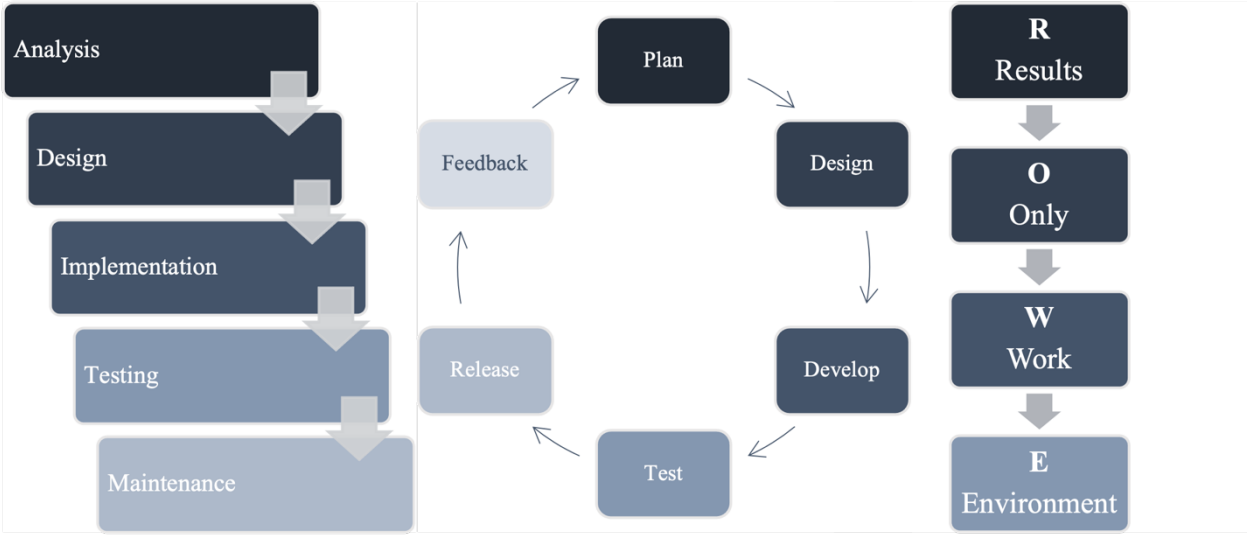
The proposed framework offered within this research study is not an adaptation but a specifically designed structure for the Screen Industries, relying upon the three core pillars of leadership, process, and value. There is no reliance on any other existing methodologies; still, the integration of current methods—which are more than likely to be familiar to some managers—is welcomed and can integrate fully with the proposed framework. In particular, and what is presented here, are methods from traditional approaches, contemporary practices, and alternative methodologies

(Cottmeyer, 2010; Drucker, 1954, 1998; Hammer and Champy, 1993; Mayo, 1933; Ressler and Thompson, 2013; Richet, 2013; Taylor, 1911; Weber, 1947; Womack, Jones, and Roos, 1990; and many others) combined with frameworks created by Patrick Lencioni (2002; 2006) and the idea of autonomy that leads opportunities to gain flow as devised by Csíkszentmihályi (1990, 1997).

In developing a fusion model, this framework capitalises on each methodology's core strengths—Waterfall's structured phases, Agile's iterative loops, and ROWE's emphasis on autonomy—without locking productions into an overly rigid scheme. By harnessing the "best-fit" features of each, the framework directly responds to the Screen Industries' unique demands: frequent scope shifts, brief production cycles, high collaboration, and a persistent need to preserve creative flow. The resulting synergy ensures that while leadership retains crucial oversight of schedules and milestones, departments and individuals can continuously refine processes, adapting to real-time feedback and shifting production priorities.

While many of these concepts are pertinent to the Screen Industries, this research has demonstrated the need for even more flexibility and further structure in the approach specific to film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video game operations. Taking the lead from the mixed-methods approach found within this research study, the framework development can benefit from a hybrid approach to enable flexibility and autonomy that is structured and contained to give competitive advantage (CA) and operational efficiency (OE). Due to this, waterfall (traditional), agile (contemporary), and ROWE (alternative) methodologies are incorporated, taking the best and most fitting elements of these existing practices and combining them into a fusion model (Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1: Waterfall, Agile, and ROWE Methodologies**




*Source: Adapted from Cottmeyer, 2010; Drucker, 1954; Hammer and Champy, 1993; Mayo, 1933; Olson, 2009; Ressler and Thompson, 2010, 2013; Richet, 2013; Taylor, 1911; Weber, 1947; Womack, Jones, and Roos, 1990.*

Waterfall, a traditional project management methodology, removes flexibility in place of a strict regime that focuses attention from beginning to end, with no room for backwards movement. This removes indecision, forces accountability, and could provide a starting point for projects that are not yet operational. Figure 5.1 offers a visual representation of the Waterfall methodology (including Agile and ROWE), with Table 5.2 outlining the steps within a Waterfall project and where these steps could be used to fit into this proposed framework.

**Table 5.2: Waterfall Methodology Procedures**

| Waterfall Stages | Description |
|---|---|
| Analysis | A dependency of the Waterfall methodology is that all project requirements must be gathered and understood upfront. Written requirements, usually contained in a single document, are used to describe each stage of the project, including the costs, assumptions, risks, dependencies, success metrics, and timelines for completion. While this is not always possible in the Screen Industries, applying this stage and all following stages to the project setup only, enables a greater understanding of the project and its requirements as production progresses. |
| Design | It is during this phase that designs for creative, technical, or administrative problems set out during the analysis stage can be accomplished. An overview design is created first, |

| | |
|---|---|
| | describing the purpose and scope of the project. Once complete, this overview is transformed into a physical design that creates a roadmap for production. |
| Implementation | Once the design is complete, implementation can start. In this stage, leadership can add phases, departmental time blocks, milestones, and even tasks to the roadmap. This should allow for a full project plan to be created without the restrictions of complexity. |
| Testing | HODs are added to this stage ensuring that the roadmap is accurate and complete, spotting any errors or needs for change due to specialist requirements. Task and process dependencies should also be added at this stage. If significant changes are required during this stage, this may mean going back to the implementation phase for further negotiations. |
| Maintenance | Once the roadmap is complete and a project started, the maintenance phase begins. As issues are found and change requests come in from the workforce, leadership and HODs must take responsibility for updates and newer versions of the roadmap. |

*Source: Adapted from PMI (2017, 2018, 2021).*

While a Waterfall-based approach helps enforce upfront clarity and decision-making—reducing the risk of endless revisions—many creative productions require iterative experimentation that extends beyond a single linear pass. Several interview participants noted that script rewrites, design changes, or last-minute client feedback can invalidate earlier "locked" phases. Consequently, despite Waterfall's usefulness in early planning and scope-setting, the Screen Industries demand an additional layer of flexibility to accommodate continuous refinements and creative breakthroughs. This is where Agile's iterative model becomes indispensable within the overall framework.

The restrictions of the Waterfall methodology are opposed by agile methods, whereby cycles of iterative loops that can be revisited take precedence over strict structure and hierarchical workflow. Combining Waterfall—to help make decisions and finalise scope during the early stages of creative production—and agile—to facilitate iterative process and task development—would potentially create a harmonious translation between those project phases that need firm structure and others which need more freedom and autonomy. Table 5.3 details the agile process and can be visually referenced in Figure 5.1.

**Table 5.3: Agile Methodology Procedures**

| Agile Stages | Description |
|---|---|
| Plan | The first stage in agile is project initiation, creating a plan. It involves establishing a vision of the project, defining its scope, objectives, and goals. Planning often includes an initial list of tasks and a backlog of additional processes. At this stage, the objective is to get all involved parties has a common understanding of the tasks that need to be completed and the reasoning behind them. |
| Design | The design phase refers to the early stages of envisioning how the finished task will look. Teams collaborate on plans and analyses, with the end goal of refining the project vision that was established during the plan. They might also define initial requirements, conduct feasibility studies or run risk assessments. The purpose of inception is to establish the task's course and guarantee that it will satisfy both project objectives and process requirements before moving on to the more iterative and execution-oriented phase. |
| Develop | This phase involves cross-functional teams who implement prioritised features from the task roadmap and backlog. Depending on the Agile methodology, this takes from one to four weeks (usually two), but for the processes of the Screen Industries, this timing is undefined. Working iteratively makes it possible to quickly adapt to shifting requirements. The iterative stage allows for frequent corrections and ensures that tasks are delivered in small, regular increments, aligned to a three-stage focus. |
| Test | Agile puts strong emphasis on testing—making sure tasks and processes operate together, correctly. Teams need to collaborate closely with each other to establish approval criteria and make sure that each feature complies with the specified requirements. This method enables quick feedback, aids in maintaining quality, and guarantees that the outputs will continue to be dependable and fit for purpose. |
| Release | During the release phase, tasks are classed as complete and are evaluated by HODs and leadership. |
| Feedback | Successful feedback ends the Agile method, and closes the task fully. Unsuccessful feedback, involves giving prioritised changes and the cycle moving back to the Plan or Design stage. |
| ^ Repeat Process (Optional) ^ | |

*Source: Adapted from Bergmann and Karwowski, 2019; Wysocki, 2009.*

Although Agile's iterative loops grant partial flexibility, participants from this research frequently noted the importance of personal autonomy for achieving peak "flow" states. ROWE (Results Only Work Environment) addresses this by focusing purely on deliverables, trusting professionals to choose their own methods and schedules. In a creative context—like animating a

film sequence or refining a game mechanic—this autonomy can be essential for innovation, provided that overall deadlines and budgets remain intact. Consequently, the framework integrates ROWE-inspired “autonomy windows” at critical junctures, allowing specialists to self-manage task execution while retaining milestone checkpoints for leadership approval.

ROWE could be implemented during the agile workflow for processes where a task's correct and timely completion is the only concern (leadership), and it is essential to realise that the workforce creates results (process), and with less interference, outputs (value) can be expedited as specialists experience flow. Offering this level of freedom does not mean that changes cannot be made, although this does limit the autonomy of a specialist, using the RAPID decision model could be a rapid way to implement change during these more flexible processes. However, tasks need to be created so that these and any other methodologies can be implemented, and by utilising a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM), in combination with a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and Organisational Breakdown Structure (OBS), leadership and Heads of Departments (HODs)—or any stakeholders or decision makers—can easily visualise the amount of work and personnel a project will need, while also identifying any gaps or deficiencies in workforce or requirements to complete a project successfully.

The initial formation of stand-alone tasks could be added to a list, also known as a “backlog” in agile terminology. Generated tasks should include a name that makes the task easily recognisable and contain any associated information or explanation essential to aid in a task’s completion (think descriptions or direction from leadership). Additional fidelity could be added by assigning a priority rating, such as a number from one to ten, a colour rating, or a rating based on personal or organisational preferences. The preferred priority rating is not essential, but it is important to acknowledge that each task has a priority—this allows team members to see which tasks are classified as the most important quickly. This rating may also dictate the assignment of each task to specified individuals who may perform better in specific processes. Although not completely necessary, should the creator(s) of the task understand the specialism and workflow, another task component could be added—a time limit. This could act as a best guess for those less experienced or, for those more experienced, indicate the allocated and expected time for task

completion. This retains flexibility in this framework, allowing the creator(s) of the tasks to have little or no knowledge of the specific requirements that go into the processes of each task.

Adding tasks to a list or "backlog" is a solid start to project planning, and even if the production is in a *nobody-knows* situation, best guesses can be used until supplementary knowledge is added to the project team. It allows for specialists (those who will complete the tasks) to grab hold of their assignments, indicate which tasks they are working on, highlight which tasks are "blocked" and require further input, and remove finished tasks from the backlog to a task "complete" list. This simple system describes what is known as a Kanban board, a technique to help distribute and organise tasks to specialist team members for input and completion, and an example of this system, which could prove potentially helpful when implemented into the proposed framework, can be seen in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2: Task/Process Kanban Backlog with Priority Ratings**

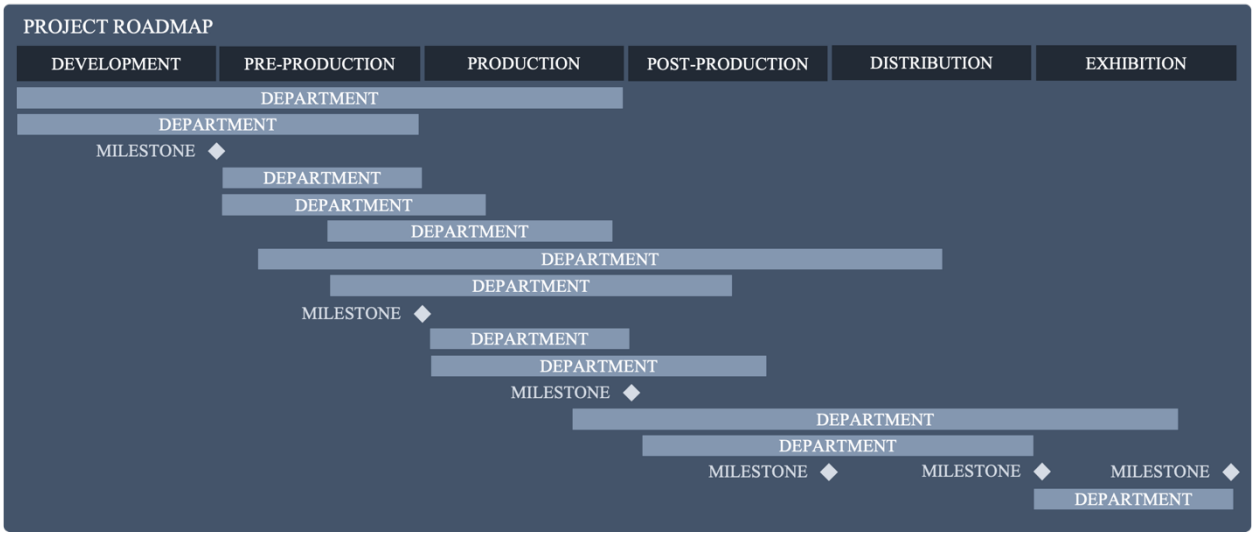

*Source: N/A*

Kanban boards excel at granular task allocation—helping specialists visualise and self-select tasks from a priority backlog—yet many productions also need an overarching "big picture." By pairing Kanban's day-to-day workflow with a Gantt-driven roadmap, leadership and heads of departments can align micro-level autonomy with macro-level progress tracking. This dual approach is especially effective in the Screen Industries, where a department's workload (e.g.,

costume, VFX, animation) must be continuously integrated into the project's overall timeline. Each completed Kanban card also reflects a tick on the Gantt chart, ensuring that what's happening at the specialist level translates smoothly into broader milestone achievements.

These three workflows—waterfall, agile, and ROWE—offer potential methods that could be easily integrated with the process management framework proposed in this chapter. Kanban boards give a fast, visual way to interpret task (process) allocation and required duties, and a "Roadmap" in the form of a Gantt chart could offer a graphical interface for the whole project timeline where production phases, milestones, department work hours, and dependencies could be envisioned. Visualising a project and its progression benefits all project team members, including leadership and stakeholders. It can help motivate and encourage the workforce, keep tasks on track, and highlight possible bottlenecks and roadblocks. While there are many options for the display of projects, a Gantt chart (Wilson, 2003) offers unprecedented fidelity and the flexibility needed for the intricacy and diversity often found in productions that run within the Screen Industries. Figure 5.3 provides an essential visual guide to an example of a potential Gantt chart roadmap. It includes an example of all six production phases (not overlapping), several examples of milestone deliverables, and numerous example time blocks for the operations of departments.

**Figure 5.3: An Example Roadmap Including Phases, Departments, and Milestones**




*Source: N/A*

The concepts presented here and their impact within the Screen Industries were initially discussed in this author's MBA study, whereby the TEMPLAR—Task Environment Management Process for Linear Agile Results—framework was generated (Jones, 2015). Since the creation of TEMPLAR in 2014 and its publication in 2015, aspects of this methodology have been trialled and expanded, contributing a significant role in the professional practice of this author. The guides to existing methods outlined in this section have proved to be the most successful and applicable to work within multiple sectors of the Screen Industries. Therefore, it is envisioned that these techniques are the most logical solutions to project management that can be used with the SERPENT Framework proposed in this chapter.

### 5.2.2. Metrics, Reporting, Technology, and Systems

The example roadmap pictured in Figure 5.3 offers an unparalleled analysis of progression, delays, and process efficiencies if monitored correctly. Project information and analysis, or metrics if preferred, can be achieved at any point during a project's progression using information obtained by an examination made to a roadmap based on the Gantt chart practice. Statistics towards a main project goal are obvious and read at three stages: the beginning or start of production, the middle and central point of operations, and the end upon project completion. Further analytics can be obtained from each milestone, including progression towards their progress and failures or impediments that may arise during production. Specific data can be gleaned from each departmental activity timings, including information gathered during the procedures' start, middle, and end. These time blocks often include a combined data metric for all tasks assigned to that department, giving a collective breakdown of information that can help provide an overview of departments' efficiencies. Data can also be found and analysed for every task attached to the roadmap. Using the Kanban example to incorporate tasks, basic information on the task name and priority listing gives data quickly, while data relating to the brief, effort, and results of the task provide additional depth that can be analysed as part of department, group, or individual performance. The data obtained from Gantt charts are predominantly statistical and offer information on the timing (efficiency) of tasks, departments, and milestones. Production reports could be available at each stage, giving an overview and deep-dive. While these prove extremely useful for finding efficiencies or the culprit behind an issue, they need more insight

into understanding competency or incompetency. To see further details on processes in this framework, the individual assigned to a task could include written details that are added to processes as each stage progresses. This would give valuable information on efficiencies or issues, and as it is only applicable upon completing a process, it would be manageable for the individual. Communication between teams should be encouraged through various channels to combat further problems. This could be through face-to-face communication, video and audio calls, email, or messages through any applicable systems. Although vilified by specialists who participated in this research, meetings can be a necessary evil as long as they are kept to a minimum, have set agendas, and revolve around time limits that do not impact workflow (Lencioni, 2002, 2006).

Various tools and systems can be easily integrated into the proposed framework and outlined methods within this chapter. Relying predominantly on a Gantt chart (Wilson, 2003) to display the complexities of production, progress can be analysed visually using calendars, time limits, and timeframes. This also means that any system that can replicate the creation and application of a Gantt chart can be used as a suitable technology to facilitate an entire project and visual roadmap. There are several software, systems, applications, and tools to enable digital communications to project members. While the framework offered in this thesis is not application-specific, interview specialists and survey responders commented on several tools and systems that they have personally found applicable to enabling more communication within the sectors of the Screen Industries. Due to the connection of this author to the industry, the majority of these communication solutions have been used throughout this study or in both paid and unpaid professional settings. While many applicable options exist, several standouts are most suitable for integration with the framework proposed in this thesis. These more applicable selections include (listed alphabetically):

- Apple iWork (Pages, Numbers, Keynote)
- Atlassian
- Autodesk Flow Production Tracking
- Autodesk ShotGrid
- Basecamp

- Final Draft
- Google Suite (Docs, Sheets, Slides)
- Merlin Project
- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Microsoft Project
- Mondays.com
- MovieMagic (Budgeting and Scheduling)
- OpenProject
- Slack
- Smartsheet
- StudioBinder.com
- Trello
- **There are many others…*

Although SERPENT remains tool-agnostic, carefully chosen digital platforms can significantly enhance its effectiveness. For instance, Trello or Jira can track immediate tasks and sprints, while more specialised tools like ShotGrid excel in handling complex visual effects pipelines. To maintain transparent oversight, leadership can implement a central Gantt chart or Kanban board accessible to all departments, ensuring real-time visibility of milestone targets and resource allocation. Ultimately, the most critical factor is consistency: by standardising how tasks, deadlines, and approvals are recorded, every stakeholder can follow SERPENT's progression, from initial Setup to final Turnout, regardless of the chosen software.

### 5.2.3. Post Project Review (PPR)

Implemented between one and two months after completion, a Post-Project Review (PPR) aims to evaluate a completed project and identify positives and negatives that can be learnt from it. Considered to be an indispensable project-closing activity, if done diligently, lessons learned provide valuable insights and provide critical understandings to the successful planning of future efforts (Ilyas, Hassan, and Ilyas, 2014).

PPRs are not a process or session to allocate blame but work most effectively using reflective models focused on individuals' self-identified learning moments, both positive and negative. They intend to promote collaboration and agreement on workflows, document learning, and incorporate best practices into future projects. This practice is similar to an After Action Review (AAR), developed by the US Army and now used by all US military services and by many other non-US organisations.

An AAR analyses the intended outcome (action) and actual outcome (consequence) of an action and identifies practices to sustain, improve, or initiate, implementing those changes at the next iteration of the action. Project leadership or an independent facilitator can establish, create, and execute a PPR (or AAR), and objectively completing this procedure requires a high level of commitment. Outcomes of this review process should be logged and written to produce common findings and denominators in a document that should be saved and updated at all future project completions. This not only leaves a record of learned outcomes but shows the progression efficiencies and highlights flaws from one project to the next.

While PPRs and AARs are a common procedure in many industries, this is something that is inherently missing from the Screen Industries. Specialist #16 was the only interviewee to mention this kind of practice in relation to technology and military sectors, noting its absence from the Screen Industries and how it could be beneficial. No other participant from surveys or interviews made any note of this kind of procedure, and it is certainly not something that has been common from this author's experience in several sectors of the Screen Industries. However, the benefits of combined learning from each project would benefit this industry significantly, although the short-term contract-based transient nature of employment in these sectors instantly makes this task far more complicated than those operating in industries where permanent contracts are normalised.

Table 5.4 outlines a proposed method for implementing Post Project Reviews (PPRs) for the sectors of the Screen Industries. This adds to the overall framework for managing processes and projects, scaling from large to small.

**Table 5.4: Post-Project Review Stages**

| Stage | Title | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | PPR Setup | 1. Identify<br>a. Identify comments and recommendations that could be valuable for future projects.<br>2. Document<br>a. Document and share findings, analysing and organising results.<br>3. Store<br>a. Create or store the PPR documentation in a repository that is accessible for current and future project teams. |
| 2 | PPR Measurements | 1. Measure<br>a. Determine the extent to which the project met its objectives.<br>2. Improve<br>a. Examine all aspects of the framework to identify further improvements.<br>3. Feedback<br>a. Find and combine feedback from all project members to obtain detailed feedback. |
| 3 | PPR Evaluation | 1. Analyse<br>a. Scrutinise and evaluate findings adding quantitative data and qualitative meanings for future review.<br>2. Modify<br>a. Amend and adjust the framework or specific processes that have been highlighted for change.<br>3. Create<br>a. Create or change the document to outline best practices and solutions for future projects. |
| ^ Repeat Process (Optional) ^ | | |

*Source: N/A.*

By incorporating a Post-Project Review (PPR) stage into this framework—complementing the preceding Waterfall/Agile/ROWE components—the Screen Industries gain a structured mechanism for reflection and continuous improvement. While PPRs remain uncommon in these

sectors, interview participants who experienced them in other fields (e.g., tech or military) emphasised their value for capturing lessons learned. Adopting a standardised PPR ensures that insights from previous productions—such as more efficient scene scheduling or better coordination between make-up and camera teams—are not lost when the short-term workforce disperses. Instead, they feed directly into future planning cycles, driving iterative enhancements at the studio or departmental level.

The theories, methodologies, and practices discussed in this chapter bring us to a pivotal point in this paper. As process and project management techniques employed within Screen Industries are adapted and adopted from methods developed for other applications, it is imperative that a framework explicitly created for these sectors is adaptable and flexible enough to incorporate many differing working approaches. By considering all of the above, the aforementioned SERPENT Framework can now be discussed in detail, outlining a complete structure that is systematic and comprehensive while being adjustable and malleable enough to be considered an alternative to existing schemes or a combination of many.

A significant challenge in screen-based productions is retaining institutional memory when teams disband upon project completion. SERPENT addresses this through a standardised Post-Project Review (PPR) at the Turnout stage. Here, leadership captures insights about workflow bottlenecks, effective collaboration patterns, and creative breakthroughs, assembling a repository of best practices. Even if freelancers move on, the studio retains documented experiences—such as more efficient green-screen setups or preferred editing pipelines. Future productions can then consult this knowledge base, ensuring that each new project benefits from the lessons learned previously, thus strengthening overall process maturity over time.

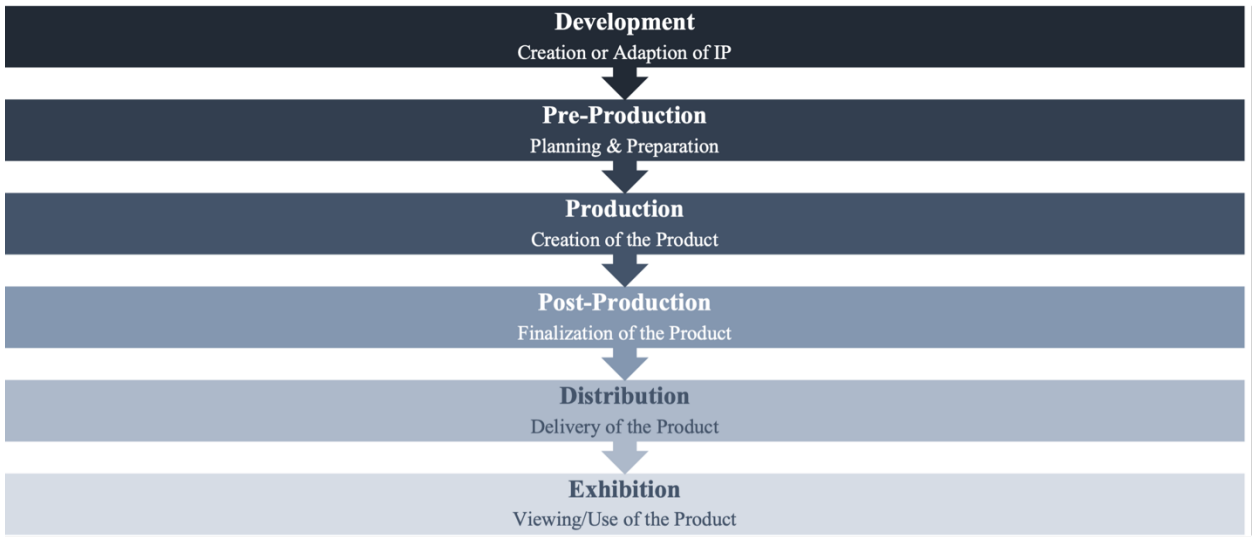
## 5.3. The SERPENT Framework

SERPENT—Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, Turnout—is designed explicitly for the Screen Industries, steeped in academic foundations, underpinned by Specialist insights achieved through this PhD research, and over two decades of practical author experience. The SERPENT Framework is defined by its snaking workflow, 3-stage TED (Task, Element, Detail) Process, and input/output (I/O) PILLAR Operations, all described in this

section. Additionally, the SERPENT Framework encapsulates the complexities of creative content creation while expediting creative freedom, efficiency, autonomy, and structure into a configuration that increases value for screen-based intellectual property (IP) production through the advancement of process management required for successful project completion. Its features remove complexity from intricate and complicated processes, enable specialist workforces to operate in unconventional workflows, and allow the combination of existing methodologies to be implemented when and where required.

It is envisioned that all projects should start with predefined goals and matching scope to instantly give operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA) by mitigating risk and associated negative connotations to project progression. As previously mentioned, using a Gantt chart to show a project's timeline or "Roadmap" offers set timings for the beginning, middle, and end of production and gives a visual representation of the project and its timescale (see Figure 5.3). The Screen Industries must progress through six production phases (Honthaner, 2010), including: 1) Development, 2) Pre-Production, 3) Production, 4) Post-Production, 5) Distribution, and 6) Development (see Figure 5.4 for clarity on these production phases). Adding these phases to a roadmap will instantly give a clear vision of the project, its initial timings, and its overall scope that should be locked—for project integrity and stakeholder security—even when changes occur.

**Figure 5.4: Phases of Production**



*Source: N/A*

The six production phases define the key stages of screen-related media projects, each introducing unique challenges and operational variations. Projects can incorporate as many or as few of these phases as necessary, depending on their specific requirements. Given the complexity and highly specialised nature of activities within the various departments of the Screen Industries, it is beyond the scope of this research to provide a detailed breakdown of every function within each phase. However, this broad perspective allows for an exploration of the flexibility and advantages offered by the SERPENT Framework in managing these dynamic project environments. By considering all production phases, the framework provides a structured yet adaptable roadmap applicable to a wide range of projects within the Screen Industries.

### 5.3.1. Building a Roadmap

The first step to the SERPENT Framework is to create a project roadmap that includes all phases in which the project exists. For a generic project, we can start at the beginning of the development phase (phase one), end at the exhibition phase (phase six), and have a middle between production and post-production, phases three and four, respectively. Once attached to a calendar, this gives us a start date, end date, and mid-point for the project. We gain a project overview (roadmap) and have actionable dates attached to the production, which will act as reporting points for leadership to assess the progression and associated metrics. At this stage, we only require a project's start and end date (markers) to plan the roadmap effectively. This offers the most autonomy for organisations, allowing them to block sections of time without committing to details that may not be available during the project's starting moments. The roadmap offers an essential timeframe for when leadership can measure phases, project progression, and critical points in development, such as the beginning (start of the project), middle (the mid-point of a project), and end (the delivery of a finished production). No decision-making on specific processes, tasks, or outputs is needed, offering enhanced freedom often required within the Screen Industries. Phases of production can follow each other, as shown in Figure 5.5, or they can overlap, depending on the requirements of a project.

**Figure 5.5: Linear Phases of Production**


*Source: N/A.*

Continuing the top-down approach to building this roadmap introduces us to the SERPENT Framework's snaking system workflow.

### 5.3.2. SERPENT Workflow

With phases attached to a roadmap, productions may often add milestones, deadlines and tasks (backlogs of work) to the Gantt chart. However, at this point, the deployment and utilisation of the SERPENT Framework must be started, with each phase forcing flexibility and adaptability unparalleled in other existing frameworks.

This framework's proficiencies must be instantly apparent to all departments, including leadership and management, and the earlier installation of this workflow should lead to more significant results. Users must be able to easily exploit its decisive organisational protocol, which can successfully input into the operational behaviours of a production.

This emphasis on the practicality of the framework should empower the audience and instil confidence in its application. For each of the seven letters in the SERPENT Framework, a workflow is created, with the first stage leading to the next, and so on, in a linear flow, shown in Figure 5.6.

**Figure 5.6: Linear Flow of the SERPENT Workflow**


*Source: N/A.*

The seven workflow stages accompanying the SERPENT Framework are Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, and Turnout. Each stage represents a specific step that a project should work through and can be evaluated and monitored during each production phase. By fitting the SERPENT Framework to the roadmap before other elements, like milestones and work breakdown structures (WBS) etc., a project can lean into the workflow, removing complexities and relying on the structure provided to offer defined goals and the ability to apply monitoring and statistical tools at pre-defined locations within a production. Table 5.5 defines and describes each acronym and its associated stage of the workflow, clarifying its use and requirements within the SERPENT Framework.

**Table 5.5: The SERPENT Framework Acronym and Workflow Stages**

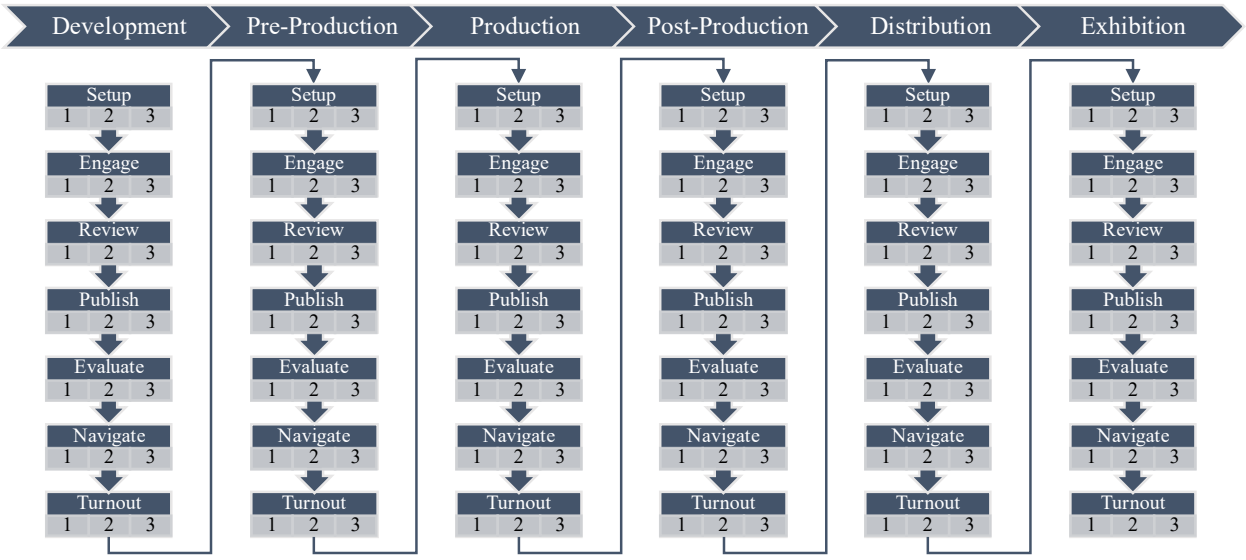
| **The SERPENT Framework Workflow** | | |
|---|---|---|
| S | Setup | The initialisation of a SERPENT Workflow. The **Setup** stage represents the beginning of any production phase that it is attached to and should have considerations that are in line with starting a project or progressing into a new phase using the SERPENT Framework and its associated structures (TED/PILLAR). |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E | Engage | Engagement—where the workforce E**ngage** and execute their assignments—is a critical component where the majority of TED Processes will take place in a project. This stage contributes the main volume of work that will lead to project value, and leadership should allow for specialists to complete their tasks without interference to promote a *flow* state. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| R | Review | The **Review** stage allows leadership to review outputs from the **Engage** stage and approve or reject completed TED Processes. Rejection will require further engagement from specialist, which could affect project schedules. Approval will allow completed tasks to be published. |
| ↓↑ Forward or Reverse Direction ↓↑ | | |
| P | Publish | The **Publish** stage of a completed TED Process pushes the outputs to other departments and specialists so that they can start their assigned TED Process using assets that they were dependent upon. |
| ↓↑ Forward or Reverse Direction ↓↑ | | |
| E | Evaluate | Evaluating outputs should be a continuous cycle, however this stage allows for leadership and specialists to **Evaluate** completed TED Processes for their quality (including dependent TED Processes). Higher quality assets (outputs) add more value to a production, and it may be deemed necessary to send some lower quality outputs back for engagement, should timings and budgets allow. |
| ↓↑ Forward or Reverse Direction ↓↑ | | |
| N | Navigate | Upon passing evaluation, outputs are deemed fit for purpose and can then **Navigate** specific workflows and complex activities that are found within the Screen Industries' projects. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| T | Turnout | The final stage, **Turnout**, enables output to be turned out and signed off as completed. This is the point of no return, and any output released from this stage cannot be cycled back into the SERPENT Workflow. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| At each SERPENT Workflow stage, three TED Processes must be created and include attached PILLAR Operations. | | |

*Source: N/A*

Although each letter of the SERPENT Framework is an acronym for the underlying stage, its snake-like workflow, once attached to multiple production phases, is a defining feature of this framework, which can be seen clearly in Figure 5.7.

**Figure 5.7: The SERPENT Framework Applied to a Full Project**




*Source: N/A.*

Figure 5.7 displays all production phases with the SERPENT Framework attached and linked, displaying the snaking workflow and how each phase of production is structured due to the implementation of the SERPENT Framework throughout the project. In this example project, the SERPENT Framework has now been attached at its most basic level, demonstrating its ease of application in complex projects that span multiple production phases.

At this point, any known or expected milestones could be added to the roadmap. Milestones allow for additional points to measure project progression or highlight specific pre-determined dates for deliverables. With milestones optionally added, we can move our focus back to the SERPENT Workflow and discuss the three separate TED processes that are connected to each SERPENT stage (displayed as numbers 1, 2, and 3 in Figure 5.7)—another critical aspect of this proposed framework.

### 5.3.3. TED Process

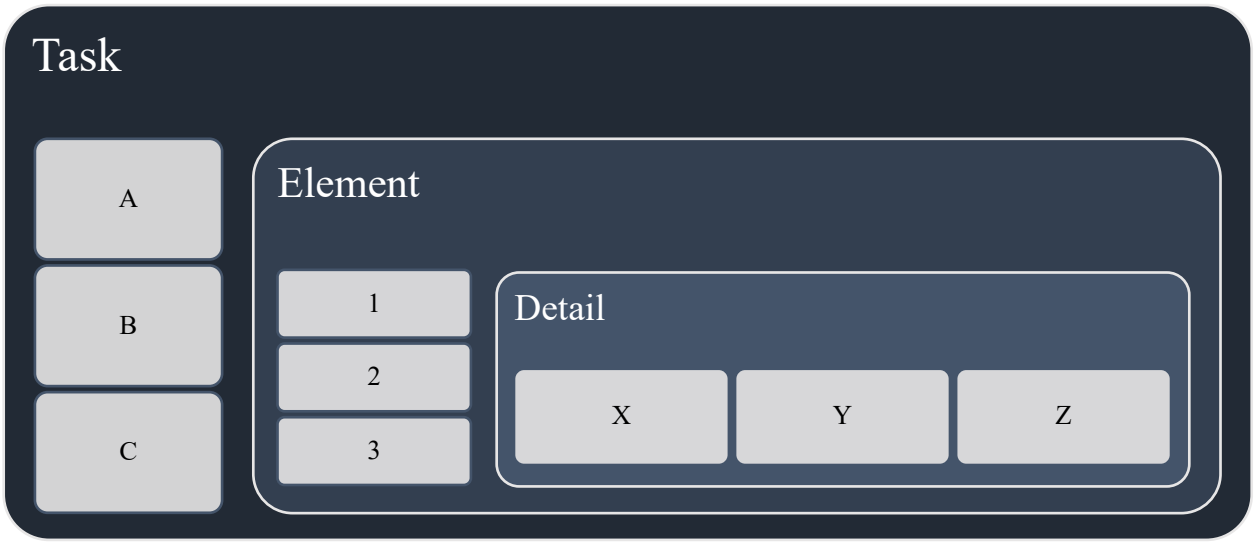
As every part of the SERPENT Framework is designed to combat the complexities inherent within the Screen Industries, TED (Task, Element, Detail) Processes have been developed to bring structure and order to the breakdown of complicated functions—like specialised tasks and the SERPENT Workflow. TED stands for Task, Element, Detail. The premise behind this concept is that every process can be broken into three separate phases, and each of those phases can be broken into another three stages, repeated indefinitely until the complexity of the process is broken into manageable components and elements that, once combined, collectively fill the requirements of any complex procedure.

This *three-stage focus* simplifies any process into a staged effort that can be broken down simply as A-B-C, 1-2-3, or X-Y-Z. Added to the SERPENT Framework and its workflow, it allows every stage to be broken into three phases, where complexities are removed, monitoring can be applied, and data can be accessed.

When engaged during every aspect and every production process within the Screen Industries, it allows those with specialised skills to break processes into manageable sections whereby metrics and data can be gained as processes progress. This also allows those with experience in other areas to offer this framework as the basis for operations and processes without a complete understanding of each process.

It additionally enables those working on projects with constantly changing variables to create a roadmap for production, combined with progression metrics, that is easily adaptable yet retains a project structure necessary for leadership and driving the success of productions within the Screen Industries. An overview of the TED Process, at its most basic level, is illustrated in Figure 5.8.

**Figure 5.8: TED Process Overview**

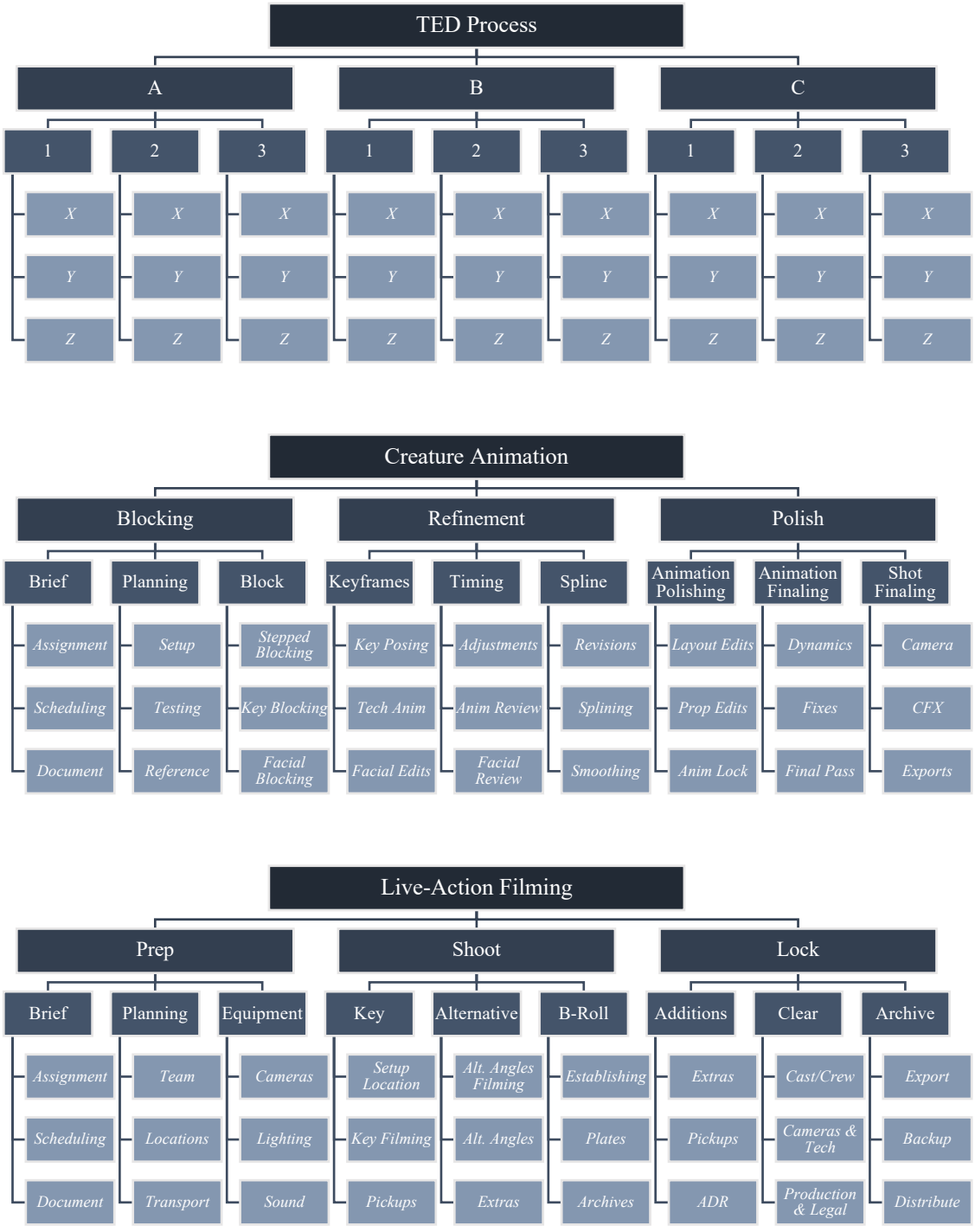



*Source: N/A.*

A TED Process us broken into three parts, T (Task), E (Element), and D (Detail), with each of those broken into a further three steps. T or Task includes A, B, and C parts, each giving a high-level overview of the task at hand. E or Element is broken into 1, 2, and 3 elements that provide a more granular explanation of the components required to complete the process (task). Finally, D or Detail offers X, Y, and Z sections to give detailed descriptions of the process requirements.

Three TED Processes are added to each SERPENT Workflow and can define any process deemed a requirement for a production—something that is project-specific and is displayed above as “Process 1”, “Process 2”, and “Process 3”, in Figure 5.7. To illustrate the supremacy of the TED Process as applied to real-world situations, an example of the basic setup of a TED Process is illustrated in Figure 5.9; also included are two potential examples of this method used in practice for real-world productions. The first example is the task of animating a creature from the viewpoint of a 3D character or creature animator. The second is filming a scene from the point-of-view of a camera operator or DP (cinematographer/Director of Photography). Both examples take place during the “Production” phase of a project, and each Task, Element, and Description exemplifies how a TED Process can effectively take a complex task and offer a clear breakdown of the process that is understandable for experienced and inexperienced individuals alike.

**Figure 5.9: TED Process Model with Practical Real-World Examples**



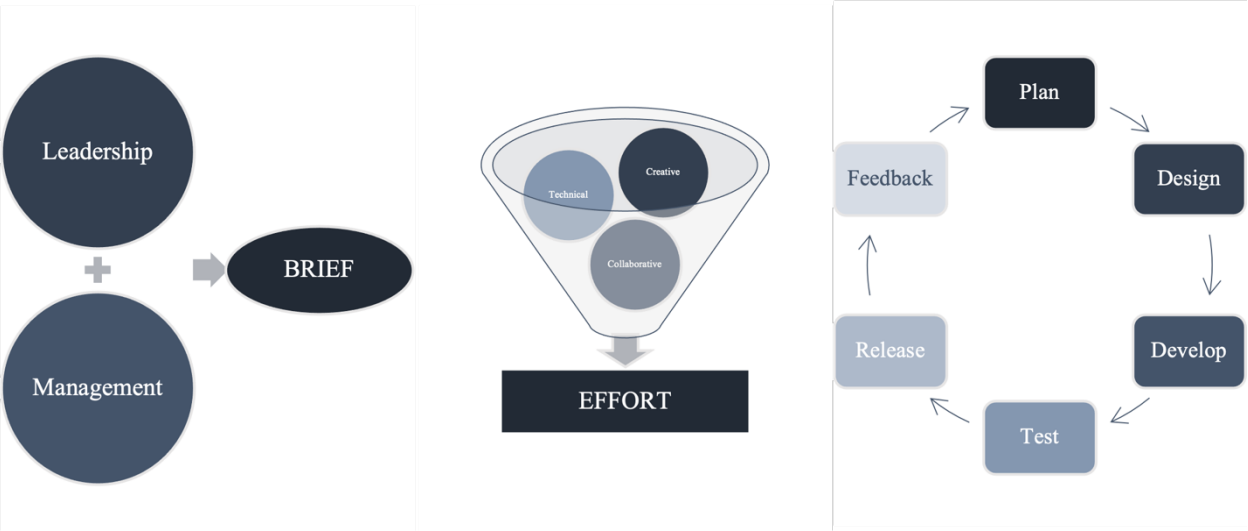

*Source: N/A.*

Tasks, or processes, are the most complicated element of the roadmap. They require specialists to execute them and leadership with knowledge and experience of the department and the specific processes required for completion. While this splitting of processes could continue indefinitely, it is advised that nine segments (A-B-C. 1-2-3. X-Y-Z) are the furthest any task should be divided. More divisions will not only confuse those responsible for the task's result, but they could also hinder comprehension of the roadmap and SERPENT Framework. The three-stage focus offered in the TED Process is at the heart of this framework, breaking down complexities into meaningful, manageable sections for everyone involved. Each of the nine divisions presents opportunities for structured “value-adding activities” (Porter, 1985), where specialists can execute tasks with autonomy, minimising external interference while enhancing efficiency and creative flow. This autonomy fosters productivity and innovation, ensuring that completed outputs contribute meaningfully to the overall value chain. A TED Process can be developed and integrated into task lists or workflow structures, aligning with project priorities while remaining adaptable to constraints such as dependencies and time limitations. These processes can be strategically positioned within a specific SERPENT stage, ensuring that tasks are executed in a way that balances flexibility with operational effectiveness, ultimately enhancing the competitive advantage of the production.

Three TED Processes clarify the focus of each stage of the SERPENT Framework. However, as demonstrated in Figure 5.9, the TED Process should also be applied to every task in a project. Therefore, it is beneficial to assert that the initial creation of tasks should also follow a three-stage principle whereby leadership and management can direct high-level requirements (the Brief), and department leads can collaborate on the timings and specifics required (the Effort), leaving specialists to engage and complete the tasks (the Output). By adopting this approach, we incorporate input from all organisational levels while enabling the workforce to select their own working methods. This strategy is expected to enhance motivation, happiness, and creativity (Arden, 2003) by empowering individuals with trust. The resulting autonomy is anticipated to foster innovation and productivity, thereby facilitating the emergence of flow—a state of deep concentration and complete absorption in an activity (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997). The presence of flow, in turn, contributes to task efficiency and overall operational effectiveness.

Figure 5.10 shows an example of this three-stage focus applied to creating tasks whereby the specialists operate using agile methodologies.

**Figure 5.10: A Three-Stage Focus Applied to Task Creation**




*Source: N/A*

The TED Process is at the heart of the SERPENT Framework and is referenced during each stage of a project's development. Not only does this process structure the framework's design, but it also eases the understanding of processes, granting the ability to understand complex practices by dividing them into smaller, more manageable sections indefinitely until knowledge and understanding are logical and accessible to all project team members. Each project that wishes to utilise this framework follows this three-stage approach in every part of the setup, progression, and completion of Screen Industries' production.

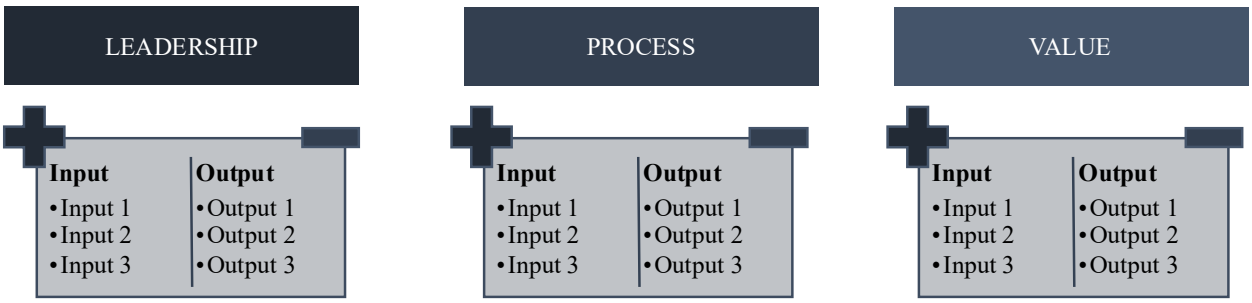
### 5.3.4. PILLAR Operations

One final aspect of this structure directly relates to the key findings of this research study: the three core pillars—leadership, process, and value. There is a workflow for each step of the SERPENT Framework; three TED Processes are attached to drive insight, output, and metrics, while PILLAR Operations are required to complete the SERPENT Framework and progress each stage with conviction. PILLAR Operations refers to inputs and outputs (I/O) for leadership, process, and value—the three core pillars and foundations of this framework. Just as the

progression each TED Process needs to be created using a three-stage principle with execution moving through A-B-C, 1-2-3, and X-Y-Z phases, the completion of each SERPENT Workflow step must have three inputs and outputs (I/O) completed for each PILLAR Operation.

Each PILLAR—leadership, process, and value—is assigned inputs that need to be monitored and accepted by project or organisation leadership and stakeholders. For instance, an input for leadership may include "task creation," and the subsequent output would refer to "a backlog of tasks." An example of a process input could be "3 project pitches", with the output being "copy, artwork, and layout for 3 pitches." For value, "IP development" might be the input, with the output showing "IP visualisation and content." An example of how this would look within the SERPENT Framework attached to each TED Process is shown in Figure 5.11.

**Figure 5.11: PILLAR Process Example**




*Source: N/A*

Again, each PILLAR Operation requires three inputs and three outputs related to each of the core pillars. This not only forces critical thinking into the TED Processes being added to each SERPENT Workflow but also strengthens an explanation for each stage a project passes through, meaning that changes—which have been evidenced to be one of the biggest issues within the Screen Industries—are justified and delivered with conviction to all project team members.

While SERPENT emphasises creative freedom and iterative workflows, it also benefits from clearly defined metrics that capture success. Key Performance Indicators might include on-time milestone completion rates, budget variance, and revisions per production phase—metrics typically found in project management approaches. However, given SERPENT's creative focus,

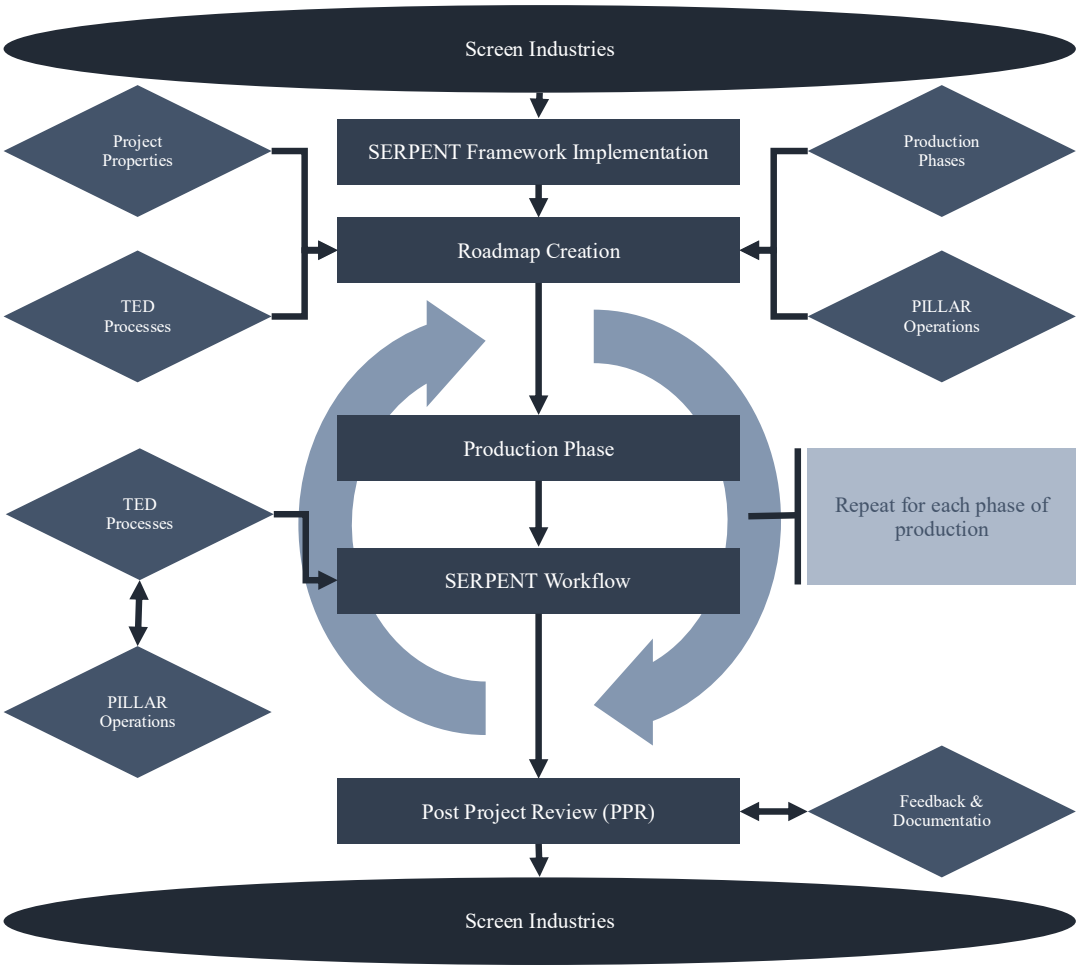
additional qualitative measures, such as team satisfaction surveys or client/producer feedback on creative flow, can offer insights into intangible value creation. By tracking both quantitative (e.g., cost savings, schedule adherence) and qualitative (e.g., morale, innovation scores) KPIs, management gains a nuanced view of how SERPENT drives efficiency, fosters creativity, and ultimately strengthens competitive advantage.

### 5.3.5. Framework Integration

Integrating process management theories into the Screen Industries requires a nuanced understanding of these sectors' unique characteristics, intricacies, complexities, and challenges. Productions are often transient and dynamic, and the project-based nature of creation presents challenges with process continuity, knowledge transfer, and resource management. Due to the links with traditional, contemporary, and alternative methodologies (Cottmeyer, 2010; Drucker, 1954; Hammer and Champy, 1993; Mayo, 1933; Ressler and Thompson, 2013; Richet, 2013; Taylor, 1911; Weber, 1947; Womack, Jones, and Roos, 1990) this proposed framework should be able to fit into organisations that are already using these adopted models. However, before any project transitions to this framework, it is essential that the procedures employed are fully understood and the foundations in which this framework revolves are fully embraced.

A project preparing to apply this framework should be ready to adopt and stand by these methods completely. An explanation of the SERPENT Framework and associated systems should be prepared and provided to every member of the organisation prior to their role starting, and any comments or questions received and responded to enable precise and careful communication of the model. Figure 5.12 offers a complete visual overview of a project integrating the SERPENT Framework, including all of its associated components.

**Figure 5.12: SERPENT Framework Integration for Screen Industries**




*Source: N/A*

Agreement on workflows from all team members is crucial, and understanding SERPENT, TED Processes, PILLAR Operations, the three-stage focus, and the combination of hybrid approaches like Waterfall, Agile, and ROWE methodologies, combined with Lencioni's (2002) five dysfunctions and Csíkszentmihályi's (1990, 1997) concept of flow is of the utmost importance. Progress reporting and how a hybrid methodological approach can be implemented should be understood to enable flexibility in the framework and define where authority is given, and control is relinquished to allow autonomy and innovation to flourish in processes, working towards operational effectiveness and 'flow'. Due to the nature of the Screen Industries, several additional and project-specific factors may affect how a roadmap, phases, SERPENT Workflows, TED Processes, and PILLAR Operations are set. While these factors may cause

framework adoption challenges, the proposed framework's flexibility can adapt and change as required for specific project needs.

One of SERPENT's core advantages is its facilitation of transparent, multi-departmental collaboration. By using shared digital boards or software-agnostic solutions (e.g., Kanban, Gantt charts) alongside scheduled milestone checkpoints, each department—such as art, costuming, lighting, or marketing—sees how its tasks align with the greater production schedule. This visibility prevents siloing, where teams unknowingly hinder one another's progress. Instead, each creative function remains informed about upstream and downstream dependencies, fostering real-time communication and collectively owned milestones. As a result, cross-functional teams can integrate new ideas or address challenges with minimal disruption to overall workflow.

It is logical to include skilled and experienced leadership and team members at the earliest convenience of a project developed within this framework to allow for the accurate setting, placement, prioritisation, and assignment of the SERPENT Framework and all associated TED Processes. As already mentioned, communication between all team members must be kept open. The logistics of how communication is facilitated is to be decided by the organisation. Still, a central software system containing all framework elements, including communication ability, would be preferential. Tracking of TED Processes, while primarily the responsibility of leadership and HODs to manage and oversee, should be pursued by all team members, giving accountability to and responsibility for the tasks that they have been assigned and the overall progress of project elements up to their completion. By fostering environments and practices that promote genuine autonomy and accountability across the entire workforce, the SERPENT Framework facilitates the development of more robust metrics. Additionally, it ensures transparency regarding any necessary changes or modifications essential to the production processes within the Screen Industries, as well as the constantly evolving parameters of projects.

*Appendix I* outlines the SERPENT Framework, including its implementation and operations. Implementing the SERPENT Framework will require workforces to adapt and accept new working strategies, opening their minds to possibilities that may seem daunting at first but could

potentially help their daily activities and promote the ability to enter flow with unparalleled autonomy. For leadership, stakeholders, and organisations, implementing new workflows can be challenging and utilising a Project Risk Management Control (PRMC) concept should be a core factor in adopting any new methodology. By effectively implementing a PRMC, a systematic approach to controlling the risks associated with adopting new knowledge applications, like the SERPENT Framework, can help prevent issues arising before, during, and after the transition period. The smooth operation of moving from one technique to a new one can be achieved using a Loop of Control (Elkjaer and Felding, 1999) to mitigate potential risks and keep control of projects as they convert.

### 5.3.6. Scalability

This research has shaped the proposed SERPENT Framework, created with the average Screen Industries project in mind—highly creative, constantly changing, and inherently complex with many specialist areas and moving parts that must all collaborate over transient and turbulent working conditions. The framework offers unmatched flexibility in its design and genuine autonomy to those managing and executing processes. Scalable from the most minor project to the largest, the framework's most impressive feature is its adaptability to all conditions that exist within the Screen Industries. Infinitely extendable or collapsible, the roadmap, based on a Gantt chart system with attached production phases, offers complete control over the timings of a project.

Templates can be created and edited as required, and should an example project, like that shown in *Appendix J*, be made for a set time period, that timeline can be extended or shrunk, depending on available time limits and project needs. The ability to edit, change, and reorganise project templates as desired is limitless, and roadmaps can be combined to create an overview for productions that are serialised or episodic in kind, as demonstrated in *Appendix K*. Additionally, any TED Process attached or separated from the SERPENT Workflow can be scaled, moved, or removed without concern, and milestones share similar freedoms. While micro-projects running for hours or days could still utilise this framework, it would be questionable if such complexity and ability to produce extensive reporting would be needed for projects at this small scale. This would be up to the organisation's discretion. However, it is uncertain if projects on the most

miniature scale are complex enough to warrant a full project framework methodology like the one offered here.

### 5.3.7. SERPENT Framework Differentiation

SERPENT integrates the linear clarity of Waterfall, the iterative adaptability of Agile, and the autonomy-first mindset of ROWE, but transcends these models by centring on the intangible, creative essence inherent to screen productions. Where Agile typically treats scope as flexible, SERPENT fixes the creative vision at the forefront and allows schedules and tasks to flex around it. Where Waterfall imposes rigid sequential stages, SERPENT redefines phases so that departmental autonomy is preserved. Finally, while ROWE discards most project controls, SERPENT retains accountability through milestone checkpoints to prevent runaway creativity or indefinite overtime. This hybridisation directly addresses the dynamic, high-collaboration environment found in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games, offering a structured-yet-unconstrained model for managing creative outputs.

Unlike a pure Waterfall or Agile approach, this framework merges fixed-scope phases—essential for clarifying creative vision—and iterative cycles—crucial for refining creative outcomes or responding to late-breaking ideas. Where ROWE grants radical autonomy, the framework tempers it with scheduled checkpoints and departmental reviews (drawn from Waterfall/Agile) to keep short-term productions on track. Ultimately, it tailors known management philosophies to the high-collaboration, risk-laden environment of film, TV, commercials, documentaries, and games, emphasising creative flow while preventing indefinite revisions or budget overrun.

In essence, the SERPENT Framework distinguishes itself from Agile, Waterfall, and other established frameworks by fully embracing the unpredictable, creative core of screen productions. It offers a structured yet flexible blueprint that:

1. Enables teams to select working methods within set deadlines (“the workforce selects their own working methods”), harnessing autonomy to promote innovation. . The framework envisions a results-focused environment where each department or individual can decide how best to meet milestones or deadlines, as long as the scope and final output

are maintained. This does not mean chaos or a lack of project oversight; rather, leadership sets clear deadlines, budgetary parameters, and scope definitions, while each specialist or team chooses the techniques, tools, or schedules that best suit their creative or technical process. These autonomous methods are still monitored through SERPENT's milestone checkpoints, ensuring alignment with overall production goals.

2. Scales from small indie crews to large studios like Ubisoft, Disney, ILM, etc., since the fundamental pillars (Leadership, Process, Value) remain consistent, and the milestones or iteration cycles can be expanded. By distributing the same fundamental pillars—Leadership, Process, Value—across multiple divisions or project teams, issues around leadership turnover, creative dissonance, or overworked teams can be mitigated if SERPENT's milestone-based accountability and transparent scheduling are systemically enforced at each departmental level. For instance, if creative leads adopt consistent decision checkpoints and unify their multiple development hubs with a single SERPENT-based protocol, the risks of miscommunication or untracked overtime can be significantly reduced.

3. Operates on any technological platform, requiring only a shared project-tracking tool or repository where tasks, deadlines, and approvals are transparent to all. SERPENT does not require any proprietary software; it is fundamentally tool-agnostic. Whether a production uses project management suites like Trello, ShotGrid, or Microsoft Project, or simpler spreadsheet systems, the framework only demands that task breakdowns, deadlines, and decision checkpoints be visible to all relevant personnel. The essential requirement is a central repository where scheduling data and milestone progress are easily accessed, ensuring that each individual or department can see how their autonomous tasks integrate into the larger production schedule.

By weaving together decision checkpoints, iterative loops, scope clarity, and intangible creative freedom, the SERPENT Framework elevates process management for an industry that thrives on both artistry and efficiency.

## 5.4. Limitations and Future Developments

The SERPENT Framework is critical in interpreting the findings of this research and provides an integral role and foundation for making informed choices, ensuring coherence and alignment in production. It amalgamates collected data and further refines analysis to create a framework that offers new insights and values to projects in the Screen Industries. However, there are several limitations to this proposed framework and its application to the Screen Industries.

Firstly, while every effort has been made to provide a thorough overview of projects and productions within the combined sectors of the Screen Industries, there is no definitive way to ensure all nuances, intricacies and complexities have been covered. Second, there is unlimited potential to incorporate varying existing methodologies into the proposed framework. As such, while every effort has been made to select the most prominent or applicable solutions, only a limited number have been discussed within this text, leaving many other potential techniques under-researched. Finally, while the framework has been built from existing theoretical knowledge, the author's practical experience and immersion in the Screen Industries' sectors, including the feedback and input from professionals in this field, the final output—the SERPENT Framework has not been tested or explored in a real-world project, yet it is still a viable output and framework borne from exposure, experience, reflection, immersion, feedback, and an in-depth understanding of the complexities and processes and the subsequent needs and gaps of projects within the Screen Industries. Applying the SERPENT Framework and generating live feedback and results is far beyond the scope and remit of this study, but it offers future researchers the opportunity to explore the framework further in a practical setting rather than theoretical.

The interpretation of research findings ensures that the analysis is deeply rooted in the study's conceptual underpinnings and contributes meaningfully to the fields of creativity and process management. It subsidises the theoretical discourse on process management and highlights how the study's interpretations offer new insights, challenge existing paradigms, and suggest refinements to the theoretical models.

The snaking workflow is a defining feature of the SERPENT Framework, offering a visually exciting but practically applicable structure that can expand and decrease in size and scope depending on the requirements of a project. The SERPENT Workflow contains staged divisions that require sequential completion, giving a structure to unwieldy productions, and the TED Process provides a construction template for task creation and execution while breaking complex processes into logical and manageable pieces. PILLAR Operations give leadership, process, and value inputs and outputs that can be monitored for project progression and enforce barriers to changes that could derail productions. This forces strategic thinking for changes to projects operating within the SERPENT Framework.

This framework, and the study that has brought it to this point, set new directions for future research. The Screen Industries operate in a continuously evolving environment where the landscape of process management theories is also changing but often not implemented. New and ongoing research is required to keep pace with new developments, industry changes, and emerging trends. While the process management framework provides a solid foundation for projects and future studies, this research journey is an ongoing exploration, discovery, and understanding process that continues rather than ends with the SERPENT Framework identified here. Process management is a definitive gap in current literature pertaining to Screen Industries, and even with this study's significant findings and subsequent framework, this is an area of relevance and requirement for further academic and practical exploration. This research has adapted throughout, and each new finding brought the need for more innovation at each stage. Future studies can build upon the process management framework established by this study, exploring new dimensions, adapting to changing industry contexts, technological advancements, and innovating in theoretical and methodological approaches. Further research could deepen one's understanding of existing theoretical constructs and contribute to refining, expanding, or challenging them in unique and industry-focused ways.

The SERPENT Framework emerges as a crucial and impactful tool for addressing the unique challenges of process management within the Screen Industries. These sectors—characterised by their complexity, specialised demands, and dynamic environments—often require methodologies that current general or adapted frameworks cannot fully address. Traditional approaches fall

short in capturing the nuances of project-based work typical in film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video game production.

Developed to meet these specific needs, the SERPENT Framework offers a tailored, structured approach that integrates autonomy, flow, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. It builds on existing theories while innovating to fill gaps in business acumen and process management knowledge identified in the research, addressing the "nobody knows" concept highlighted by Goldman (1983) and Caves (2002). By focusing on key findings such as the importance of autonomy and flow, and the three core pillars of leadership, process, and value, the framework enhances both operational efficiency and creativity.

The research underscores the limitations of existing general and sector-specific methodologies and reveals the need for a specialised approach. It contextualises classical models and contemporary practices like Agile and Lean Management within the Screen Industries' unique demands. The SERPENT Framework's adaptability and flexibility make it a robust solution, incorporating multi-disciplinary skills while preserving creative vision. It also considers alternative approaches, such as the Results Only Work Environment (ROWE), offering potential novel solutions for these industries.

As the Screen Industries evolve with emerging technologies like virtual production, AI-assisted editing, or global remote collaboration, SERPENT can likewise adapt. Ongoing research could refine certain phases—such as Review or Evaluate—to account for machine-learning-driven workflows or real-time feedback from distributed teams. Additionally, further pilot studies across various genres (e.g., animated features, interactive streaming content) could highlight where SERPENT excels or requires fine-tuning. This evolutionary approach ensures that SERPENT remains a dynamic framework, capable of accommodating both present and future innovations in creative media production.

In conclusion, the SERPENT Framework is designed to address the complexities of process management within the Screen Industries, enhancing operational effectiveness (OE), driving innovation, and providing a competitive advantage (CA). Its development is guided by the

research findings, ensuring it meets the specific needs and challenges of these dynamic and diverse sectors.

## 5.5. Concluding Details and Link to Research Questions

This chapter has demonstrated how the SERPENT Framework—by synthesising theoretical insights with empirical data—provides a robust, industry-specific approach to managing screen-based productions. To ensure clarity regarding the overarching aims of this research, the following points explicitly address each of the four research questions guiding this thesis:

1. **How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?**
   SERPENT situates film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games within a spectrum of highly collaborative, creativity-driven sectors. International co-productions and the global distribution of content highlight the need for adaptable processes that cope with cultural, funding, and regulatory variations. In Chapter 5, the framework's discussion of fluid workflows, milestone checkpoints, and autonomy windows illustrates how the operational complexity of these industries (e.g., ephemeral employment structures, tight deadlines, creative churn) can be addressed through a structured yet flexible management approach.

2. **How is "value" conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?**
   SERPENT integrates Porter's Value Chain perspective to recognise that each phase—Development, Pre-production, Production, Post-production, Distribution, and Exhibition—contributes distinct forms of value. Beyond financial returns, the framework accommodates intangible value such as artistic innovation and creative flow. Through decision gateways, milestone-based accountability, and a consistent emphasis on Leadership, Process, and Value, SERPENT ensures that value creation and preservation remain central, shaping how teams allocate resources, respond to late-breaking ideas, and measure success at each stage.

3. **What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?**
   While popular management philosophies (e.g., Waterfall, Agile, ROWE) have been adapted in varying degrees, Chapter 5 reveals their inherent gaps when confronted with the unique pressures of short-term, high-intensity creative projects. SERPENT addresses these gaps by carefully integrating the strengths of these models into a singular framework. It preserves Agile's iterative feedback loops, Waterfall's clarity of phased delivery, and ROWE's focus on outcomes and autonomy. This tailored fusion reflects the most effective aspects of each approach—elevated by empirical insights specific to screen-media production.

4. **Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?**
   The culmination of SERPENT's design is to streamline production schedules, enable creative autonomy without chaos, and maintain cost control—all of which collectively foster operational effectiveness (OE). The framework's deliberate checkpoints and scope alignments further support competitive advantage (CA) by reducing risk, improving team coherence, and preserving the creative spark that ultimately differentiates a film, series, or game in the marketplace. Whether scaling to a major studio such as Ubisoft or serving small indie teams, SERPENT's built-in adaptability demonstrates that a cohesive process management system can indeed enhance both project outcomes and strategic positioning within the screen industries.

SERPENT is purpose-built for film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—collectively known as the Screen Industries—where unpredictable creativity and rapid project turnover are the norm. While Agile and Waterfall originated in software or engineering contexts, and ROWE emerged from corporate or knowledge-work environments, none of these were explicitly conceived for the collaborative, intangible, and iterative nature of cinematic or game development. By contrast, SERPENT addresses these specific conditions head-on, fusing elements from each established methodology into a single, industry-centric design. It incorporates structured phases and milestones (from Waterfall), iterative feedback loops (from

Agile), and autonomy-first principles (from ROWE), thus striking a hybrid balance between creative freedom and operational discipline. This balance is especially important given the risk of late-breaking creative changes and the need to preserve a project's overarching scope and budget.

Beyond simply integrating familiar process management approaches, SERPENT explicitly recognises the centrality of "creative flow" in screen productions. Where Agile and Waterfall often prioritise deliverables, iterative cycles, or phase gates, SERPENT goes further by carving out autonomy windows that encourage specialists to enter and sustain their highest levels of inspiration. These autonomy windows are bounded by structured checkpoints that keep the project on track, ensuring that crucial deadlines and budget targets remain visible. This focus on creative flow and iterative autonomy is deeply intertwined with SERPENT's snaking workflow—Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, Turnout—which aligns with the classic six production phases of Development, Pre-production, Production, Post-production, Distribution, and Exhibition. Neither Agile nor Waterfall directly references these media-specific stages, but SERPENT's custom mapping provides a clearer blueprint for managing tasks in real-world creative projects.

A further point of differentiation lies in SERPENT's pillar-based approach to Leadership, Process, and Value. While frameworks like Waterfall, Agile, or ROWE each have individual strengths—be it efficiency, iteration, or autonomy—they do not explicitly revolve around these three pillars that emerged from empirical data as critical drivers of success in screen-based productions. SERPENT centres leadership decisions, process steps, and value creation as interconnected elements, ensuring that each phase and milestone aligns with tangible or intangible outcomes essential to media projects (e.g., audience engagement, narrative coherence, and artistic integrity). This sense of structure extends to the TED (Task, Element, Detail) process, which goes beyond user stories or linear phases to accommodate the ephemeral "creative bursts" and last-minute pivots typical in film and game environments.

Moreover, SERPENT distinguishes itself by being both empirically grounded and theoretically informed. While other methodologies have proven track records in more general settings, they

are often not backed by direct evidence from the Screen Industries. In contrast, SERPENT arose from doctoral research pinpointing leadership indecision, unclear process flows, and misunderstandings of "value" as frequent stumbling blocks in screen-media production. By building on recognised theories (including Agile, Waterfall, ROWE, and Porter's Value Chain) yet tailoring them to industry-specific data, SERPENT maintains academic rigour while addressing the precise demands of creative, large-scale endeavours. Additionally, it offers scalability and adaptability that accommodate everything from small independent individuals and teams to large, international operations. SERPENT's milestone-based accountability supports large teams spread across multiple studios or countries, while its autonomy windows permit flexible workflows that can handle regional and departmental nuances.

Finally, SERPENT is deliberately designed to achieve operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA). It does so by incorporating risk mitigation, up-front clarity, iterative adaptation, and explicit links between process decisions and value creation. While Agile, Waterfall, or ROWE might each improve efficiency or autonomy in a generic sense, SERPENT frames these elements as key levers for thriving in a high-stakes media landscape where box-office returns, streaming metrics, or game sales can hinge on both creative innovation and timely delivery. By weaving autonomy and structure together, anchoring each project phase to industry-relevant pillars, and integrating methods for continuous oversight and feedback, SERPENT fills a critical gap in existing project management philosophies. It not only preserves the artistry and unpredictability at the heart of screen productions but also imposes a level of coordinated control and performance measurement essential for delivering high-quality content on schedule and within budget.

## 5.6. Statement of Application

The SERPENT Framework has been specifically developed to accommodate the dynamic, diverse, and inherently complex nature of the screen industries, effectively balancing managerial control and creative autonomy within the production process. The framework explicitly permits leadership to utilise any project management tool, software, or methodology with which they feel most confident or comfortable. This flexibility means that whether utilising traditional management approaches such as Waterfall, iterative models such as Agile, or alternative, results-

oriented approaches such as ROWE, management can adopt the approach best suited to their operational style and project-specific demands. Within the structure of SERPENT (Setup – Engage – Review – Publish – Evaluate – Navigate – Turnout), management retains full responsibility for setting overarching timelines, defining key milestones, monitoring overall progress, and ensuring clear communication of deadlines and deliverables.

Equally central to the SERPENT Framework is its explicit provision of designated autonomy windows for creative personnel, operationalised through the TED Process (Task, Element, Detail). Within these clearly delineated phases, managerial control deliberately recedes, granting creatives full autonomy and freedom to choose their methods, processes, and tools to complete assigned tasks. The only control management maintains during these autonomy segments is strictly limited to defining and enforcing task deadlines. This approach creates intentional spaces where creative teams can achieve optimal flow states, enhancing innovation, productivity, and the overall quality of creative outputs without being constrained by excessive oversight.
The SERPENT Framework places significant emphasis on fostering efficient collaboration across all production departments, each with its own specialised workflow requirements and deliverables. By utilising any shared project management or tracking system chosen by the organisation, the SERPENT Framework remains entirely software-agnostic. It ensures departmental activities, dependencies, and interdepartmental communications are consistently transparent and effectively coordinated. This visibility significantly reduces departmental silos, mitigates the risks associated with miscommunication, and promotes smoother, more integrated progress throughout every phase of production.

By explicitly embedding areas of autonomy within structured timelines, the SERPENT Framework significantly enhances operational effectiveness (OE). It achieves timely project delivery without sacrificing creative integrity or quality. Clear roles, defined expectations, and explicit deadlines reduce common industry risks such as project delays, scope creep, or budget overruns. Simultaneously, the inherent flexibility allows management and teams to adapt processes fluidly, responding rapidly and innovatively to emerging trends or market demands, thus securing a clear competitive advantage (CA).

Finally, scalability is a key strength of the SERPENT Framework, allowing it to be equally effective across diverse production environments—from smaller independent films to large-scale international projects. By maintaining its core conceptual pillars—leadership, process, and value—it accommodates a range of project scales and industry-specific contexts. This adaptability ensures that the framework remains relevant, practical, and effective, addressing unique sectoral challenges while preserving the structured yet flexible balance essential to success within the rapidly evolving screen industries.

# 6. Conclusion

## 6.1. Summary of Findings

Encapsulating a journey of discovery, extensive exploration, and a breadth of implications, this chapter provides a reflective synthesis of the research, its contributions, findings, challenges, and the broader impact on the field of process management within the Screen Industries. The sectors of the Screen Industries have been defined as spanning—film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—all of which are characterised by complex creative processes, multi-layered collaboration, and the constant interplay of artistic vision and logistical constraints. Each phase of production demands meticulous planning, coordination, and execution of the non-linear workflows that need and embrace autonomy and innovation to succeed. Combining creativity, artistry, technology, and business ventures often involves substantial financial investment from key stakeholders with no guaranteed return on investment (ROI). Projects are subject to diverse market demands and international audience preferences and operate in non-linear workflows that offer transient, short-term contractual obligations to a highly specialised workforce. This study has attempted to tame and make reason for sectors operating within these creative content productions by answering four key research questions and proposing a new process management framework (SERPENT) tailored to the unique operational demands for organisations and individuals working within the Screen Industries.

In pursuit of these goals, the research positioned operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA) at the forefront. Building upon both quantitative and qualitative data, the study explores how the Screen Industries can structure workflows, ensure creative autonomy, and streamline processes for better project outcomes. The SERPENT Framework, developed from industry insights and academic research, offers a structured approach to integrating leadership, process management, and value creation.

Several major themes and patterns emerged from the data, each tied to one of the four research questions. These insights collectively reveal the process management landscape within the Screen Industries—highlighting core challenges, common strategies, and potential best practices for a more cohesive, industry-focused management approach. The following four research

questions framed and guided all aspects of this study and formed the theoretical underpinning and practical direction during primary and secondary data collection:

**Question 1: How are the Screen Industries categorised internationally, and what core operational factors define them?**

Establishing a definitive classification for the Screen Industries is inherently complex due to the varied definitions offered by governments, organisations, and academic sources. In this study, a practical classification emerged by categorising the Screen Industries into five distinct sectors: film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games. Although each sector has its own creative objectives and target audiences, they share common operational characteristics—such as reliance on short-term contractual work, collaborative production processes, and the integration of creativity, technology, and international market demands (Field, 2018). This classification approach not only provides clarity on the international distribution of these industries but also highlights the underlying operational factors that define them, thereby addressing the first research question.

This is an initial challenge for anyone looking to encapsulate what the Screen Industries actually are. Just as a colour can have many shades with varying names, trademarks, patents, and copyrights associated with it, the definition of the Screen Industries is equally convoluted. While it is a fairly universal description for creative sectors creating content for screen-related media and can easily be used in generalised conversation, the terminology is entwined with general creative, culture, and digital sectors. Additionally, the definition itself is a far more complex topic that governments, industry, and academia have obscured throughout its existence. While using a specific definition may not seem problematic, it allows for the cross-contamination of meanings, and understandings, broadening the scope of what is classified as “Screen Industries.” Therefore, explicitly identifying and naming the sectors involved with the Screen Industries was an essential first step to classifying which sectors to study, which sectors would benefit most from this research, and which sectors the process management framework is tailored for. Highlighted by literature found in academia, governmental, institutional, and professional

organisations, a definitive categorisation outlining the exact and specific sectors changes depending on several factors. Changes by country definition, group or organisation definition, or the relaxed way in which individuals group what their belief of the Screen Industries are—a conclusive definition and categorisation is required. From the findings within this research, five specific creative sectors are named and categorised to give a definitive classification for the international Screen Industries. In conclusion to this question, the five categorised sectors that form a definitive definition of the Screen Industries are:

**Film**

Fictional (scripted or unscripted) motion pictures (film) are live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of short films or feature films.

**Television**

Singular, episodic or serialised live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of fictional or non-fictional TV shows.

**Commercials**

The span of screen media produced and paid for by an organisation promoting and aiming to market a product, service or idea that can be live-action, animated, or visual effects elements that go into the creation of the advertisement.

**Documentaries**

A nonfiction film, including live-action, animated, or visual effects elements, intended for instruction, education, historical record, or documentation of reality.

**Video Games**

Screen-related interactive entertainment that involves user input to generate feedback from any screen or display includes real-time rendered video, animation or visual effects elements that go into creating the media, including AR/VR/XR outputs.

**Question 2: How is "value" conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries, and in what ways does this influence the phases of production and associated processes?**

Understanding how "value" is conceptualised and managed within the Screen Industries requires a nuanced perspective that goes beyond conventional financial metrics. By adopting Porter's Value Chain framework (Porter, 1985), this study reveals that value in the Screen Industries is a multidimensional construct. While financial returns—such as box office revenue, streaming numbers, and game sales—are important, participants emphasised that true value also encompasses elements like workflow stability, creative autonomy, and leadership alignment. This dual perspective implies that projects are designed around uncertain yet potentially lucrative opportunities, a notion encapsulated in the adage "nobody knows anything" (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983). In this context, operational effectiveness hinges on processes that minimise wasted effort while empowering creative flow, thereby ensuring that value is continuously generated and managed effectively throughout various production phases.

Value, measured in financial terms, is often used to determine the worth of a project or intellectual property (IP) through key performance indicators such as return on investment (ROI). However, while numerical returns provide a tangible benchmark, the broader landscape of value creation encompasses not just financial gains but also the operational efficiencies that drive sustainable success.

Beyond direct monetary assessments, the practical costs associated with innovative content creation—ranging from labour and resource allocation to technological infrastructure—play a crucial role in shaping overall project viability. In this regard, regression analysis revealed that structured workflows significantly predict operational effectiveness ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$), reinforcing the notion that well-defined and optimised processes contribute to both cost efficiency and enhanced value generation.

While financial metrics remain a central aspect of valuation, this study highlights the critical role of production efficiency in establishing long-term competitive advantage (CA). Streamlined workflows and proficient execution not only lead to cost reductions but also enable organisations to accelerate time-to-market, improve adaptability, and enhance the likelihood of successful implementation. In an increasingly fast-paced and innovation-driven marketplace, firms that refine their production methodologies gain a decisive edge, leveraging efficiency as a key driver of sustained value creation and strategic differentiation

The conceptualisation of value is also shaped by sector-specific dynamics, as different industries emphasise distinct aspects of intellectual property (IP) creation, use, and licensing. While value is generally derived from these core activities, the weight assigned to each component varies significantly depending on the unique priorities and operational models of a given sector. For example, in the film and television sectors, value is often closely tied to audience engagement, box office performance, streaming viewership, and commercial viability. The financial success of a production is typically measured through ticket sales, subscription growth, advertising revenue, and syndication deals. In contrast, the video game sector places a stronger emphasis on user interactivity, innovation, and long-term player engagement and upselling through downloadable content (DLC). Here, factors such as gameplay mechanics, user retention, microtransactions, and community-driven content creation significantly influence a game's market value.

These sectoral differences highlight the need for adaptable value-assessment frameworks that account for industry-specific priorities while maintaining a structured approach to efficiency and risk management. Standardised systems that integrate creative autonomy with optimised workflows become essential in this context, allowing for the reduction of production uncertainties while preserving the innovative essence of creative projects. Such systems ensure that production teams can navigate the inherent risks of creative industries—such as fluctuating market demand, shifting consumer preferences, and high development costs—without stifling artistic freedom (Amabile, 1996; Csíkszentmihályi, 1990, 1997). By balancing structured processes with creative flexibility, organisations

can enhance both the artistic and commercial value of their intellectual properties, ultimately driving sustained success in their respective industries.

By integrating Porter's Value Chain framework with empirical evidence and qualitative insights, this research advances both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the context of the Screen Industries. The value chain model, which categorises business activities into primary and support functions, provides a structured approach to analysing how creative enterprises generate, deliver, and sustain value. By applying this framework to the unique operational dynamics of film, television, and interactive media production, this study identifies key areas where efficiency gains, process optimizations, and strategic resource allocation can drive sustainable growth.

The incorporation of empirical findings further strengthens the argument that well-structured process management systems are essential for enhancing operational effectiveness (OE) and securing competitive advantage (CA). By evaluating data-driven relationships between workflow efficiencies and production outcomes, this research highlights how streamlined processes contribute to cost control, improved time-to-market, and higher-quality outputs. Moreover, qualitative insights—gathered from industry professionals—shed light on the practical challenges and opportunities in implementing such systems. These insights emphasise the need for balancing creative flexibility with operational discipline, ensuring that innovation is not hindered by rigid workflows but rather supported by strategic infrastructure.

By bridging theory and practice, this study offers actionable recommendations for industry stakeholders seeking to enhance their process management capabilities. These recommendations may include adopting digital workflow tools, optimizing resource allocation, fostering cross-departmental collaboration, and leveraging data analytics for real-time decision-making. Ultimately, by refining internal operations and aligning them with value-generating activities, organisations within the Screen Industries can position themselves for long-term success in an increasingly competitive and rapidly evolving market.

**Question 3: What are the most effective management and leadership frameworks commonly applied within the Screen Industries?**

The study reveals that the Screen Industries commonly adapt or blend established management frameworks such as Agile, Waterfall, Lean, and ROWE with direct leadership approaches, often reflective of Transformational Leadership styles. However, the volatile, project-based nature of creative work means that these adaptations are frequently partial, failing to fully address issues such as intense inter-departmental collaboration, high workforce turnover, and unpredictable project scopes. Many industry professionals rely heavily on experience-based intuition rather than on formalized frameworks, resulting in recurrent challenges like scope creep and budget overruns. The emergent theme of "Leadership Indecision and Role Confusion" underscores the need for a more integrated approach that combines elements of transactional and transformational leadership, ensuring clarity and accountability. Such an approach can bridge the gap between traditional management models and the unique demands of screen production, thereby addressing the third research question.

Transformational leadership, where leaders engage and influence their teams directly, is the most commonly practised management methodology within the Screen Industries. However, this research has shown that there are serious leadership failures within these sectors, and much of what happens during projects operates in a scenario where nobody really knows what the best course of action is and if something will be successful or not. While some practices are specific to the Screen Industries, traditional and contemporary methodologies developed for other industries or purposes have been adapted to lesser or more significant effect. Adopting these methods requires wrapping constructs to the specific ways the Screen Industries' sectors work. Due to the fast-paced and transient nature of the work and workforce in these sectors, the adapted methodologies only partially help efficiently manage such collaborative, complicated and highly specialised processes. Flexibility, autonomy, and freedom are highly influenced by the requirements for the workforce within the Screen Industries and have led some sectors to rely on agile methodologies to provide iterative approaches to process management. While this has

had some success, the theories behind these methods are designed so that the scope can change—something that happens often, but as the research proves, should be less frequent as changes cause the most problems and issues with the operations of a project.

Within this research, a spectrum of perspectives were collected and analysed and while the generalised media familiarises us with the voices of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), Studio Executives, Producers, Directors, and other well-known job roles, unsung heroes like those running specific departments (HODs) in production are often those who manage and show leadership throughout a project. When the correct people are in the correct roles, these positions are filled by vital workforce members with intricate knowledge of their respective departments and the skills required to complete tasks and processes in these collaborative and specialised environments, including effective communication skills and the ability to engage and operate within a team that promotes and recognises the importance of autonomy and flow. Using ingenuity and innovation to create, manage, lead, maintain, and complete processes that add to the value of creative production, HODs have the demanding job of tackling challenges as they appear daily. Knowledge in these roles is generally gained from experience, and as this research shows, the more time in the industry, the more experienced the individual due to project exposure, sector immersion, and knowledge learnt that is not easy to gain, or indeed likely to be gained in formal education, but associates more with apprenticeships and learning on the job. While it was noted that each project is bespoke, the tasks and processes are often similar or, at the very least, familiar. Although this is not currently practised, it offers the opportunity for a framework (like the SERPENT Framework defined in this research) to provide a foundation whereby these complex tasks can be managed by those individuals without the specific tacit knowledge required to be in the role of a department head.

**Question 4: Can a process management framework be applied to the Screen Industries to drive operational effectiveness and give a competitive advantage?**
Building upon the identified challenges and partial solutions, the study proposes the SERPENT Process Management Framework as a tailored solution for the Screen

Industries. Grounded in both empirical evidence—from surveys, interviews, and observations—and theoretical underpinnings drawn from Agile, Waterfall, ROWE, and Porter's Value Chain, the SERPENT framework is designed to balance creative autonomy with structured oversight. Its foundation is built on three interlocking pillars: Leadership, Process, and Value. This structure ensures that every phase of production, from development through exhibition, is aligned with project goals and stakeholder expectations while maintaining the flexibility required for creative innovation. By integrating iterative loops, milestone gateways, and autonomy windows into a single cohesive workflow, the framework demonstrates how structured process improvements can yield measurable enhancements in operational effectiveness and competitive advantage (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018; Hair *et al.*, 2019). This comprehensive approach addresses the fourth research question by proving that a dedicated process management framework can effectively manage the complex, non-linear processes inherent in the Screen Industries.

Many process management techniques and methods are already applied to the global Screen Industries. Each one of those frameworks has been adapted and adopted from more traditional industries where linear workflows are more common, and the innovation and complexities found in the multi-disciplined workforces of the Screen Industries are not considered. As such, the implemented models give varying success rates and cannot guarantee the smooth flow of processes within these diverse sectors. However, as several adopted process management frameworks are already in place, this research offers a solution explicitly designed for the Screen Industries and can incorporate established methodologies that are already commonly integrated and understood. This hybrid framework provides additional flexibility and autonomy at all stages of a project's lifecycle and is adaptable for any productions that develop creative content for screen media.

The invention of the SERPENT Framework is steeped in an academically rigorous foundation formed on three pillars (leadership, process, and value), combining traditional, contemporary, and alternative methodologies. Designed to explicitly structure creative

productions so that staged approaches to complex phases, complicated processes, and innovative outputs are created with operational effectiveness (OE), leading to competitive advantage (CA) for the organisations that adopt this framework and methodology. This new process management framework addresses the identified trials in the Screen Industries' sectors and incorporates insights from existing theories and learned knowledge from analysed data, making it solidly grounded in academia and a robust tool for industry practitioners.

These questions were addressed sequentially and cumulatively, yielding empirical evidence and theoretical insights that culminated in the SERPENT Process Management Framework. The subsequent sections summarise how each research question was answered, emphasising the robust underpinnings of this new framework and its alignment with practitioner needs.

### 6.1.1. Overview of the Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, utilising quantitative and qualitative analysis in a staged approach so that one data set could feed directly into another, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Its benefits include taking us beyond one-dimensional explanations and being well-suited to exploring the breadth and complexities of the data's intricacies, providing a comprehensive understanding of definitions, value chains, process management, and leadership within the Screen Industries. The complexity and complicated nature of the subject justify the choice of a mixed-methods research design and generates a meticulously crafted blueprint that guides the initial stages of the investigation through to the ending conclusions. Being inherently flexible and adaptable enabled more dynamic exploration into the topic and continuous refinement of the study.

The sequential nature of the design facilitated focus on investigating complicated, non-linear, and subjective sectors. From secondary to primary data to transcripts and observational notes, extensive linear and non-linear notetaking styles using the Cornell Notes Format (Pauk and Owens, 2010) were a standard feature in this research. Quantitative methods allowed for the measuring and statistical analysis across a large sample group, providing a broad and generalisable understanding. Basic measurements, tendencies, variability, spread, dispersion, and

frequencies helped to combine, analyse, and evaluate the complex data collected throughout this research. These statistics were studied, measured, and combined to conclude relevant results that feed into theoretical and practical knowledge. To limit the generalised approach of quantitative data, a phenomenological and narrative approach to this data explored how individuals experience a particular phenomenon from their perspective and qualify the accuracies of numerical data. The study employed a pragmatic approach that integrated Thematic Analysis (TA) and Grounded Theory to analyse qualitative data. TA, following Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2020) six-phase approach, was used to identify initial codes that captured key concepts such as leadership indecision, creative flow, and budgetary risk, drawing on relevant literature from the creative industries. Simultaneously, elements of Grounded Theary (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) were incorporated to allow new themes to emerge inductively from participant data. Although classical Grounded Theory emphasises "bracketing" prior knowledge, a fully blank-slate approach can be challenging when significant literature exists. Therefore, this hybrid method provided a structured framework for coding while remaining open to unexpected patterns, resulting in an analysis that was both theoretically informed and deeply reflective of industry practitioners' realities (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

The interplay of quantitative and qualitative sequential stages ensured statistically valid results that apply to the realities of the Screen Industries. Qualitative data contextualises the quantitative analysis of this study, and both act as complementary findings that aid in the investigation, forming a deliberate and strategic approach to the research design.

### 6.1.2. Key Findings and Conclusions

Several major themes and patterns emerged from the data, linking them to the research questions. These provide a comprehensive overview of the process management landscape within Screen Industries, illuminating the challenges, strategies, and potential best practices that could be used in a framework specifically designed for these complex and nuanced sectors. These research findings prompted a reflective reassessment of the validity and applicability of theoretical constructs already adapted and adopted, and these reviews contribute to a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the accepted paradigms operational in projects. Refining and expanding these existing theoretical constructs leads to a more precise definition, broader

conceptualisation, and re-contextualisation of the constructs operating within the Screen Industries. Challenging these established paradigms contributes to the understanding and refining of existing models, and the research stimulates new scholarly debates. The findings of this research offer alternative views on definitions and management processes related to the global Screen Industries. This research addresses the unique challenges of these diverse sectors by proposing a tailored process management framework. The dynamic nature of creative projects, marked by high unpredictability and iterative processes, necessitates a specialised approach that traditional management models often fail to accommodate (Mamer, 2005; Honthaner, 2010). Guided by the four research questions, this exploration and framework dives into a multitude of topics and discussions that bridge gaps identified in four key research areas:

**Definition**

Current literature does not definitively categorise the sectors encompassing the Screen Industries. While governments, organisations, and individuals have attempted to consolidate this classification, opinions are contested, with many conflicting views and theories. This study defines film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games as the five sectors comprising the Screen Industries. From the research undertaken in the study, this text explicitly outlines and categorises these sectors without question or equivocation. It also recognises the complex operational demands of these sectors, including balancing creativity with logistical constraints (Jones and Smith, 2020).

**Three Core Pillars (Leadership, Process, Value)**

Findings from this research enabled the creation of three pillars that enveloped the structure of the SERPENT Framework, which was created in response to the need for a process management method designed explicitly for the sectors of Screen Industries. Initially generated from thematic analysis (TA) that combined qualitative data from interviews and some survey questions, open codes were condensed into twenty-seven codes that were refined into nine themes. These themes form the basis for the analysis of collected data and were further advanced, with consideration given to the research questions, to create three pillars, which this research has embraced as its core philosophy

for data output and which the proposed process management framework stands upon. These pillars and associated themes and codes are:

**Pillar 1: Leadership**

Theme: Contracts

*Codes: Freelance, Network, Work Hours*

Theme: Management

*Codes: Authority, Meetings, Responsibility*

Theme: Personnel

*Codes: Accountability, Collaboration, Team*

**Pillar 2: Process**

Theme: Decisions

*Codes: Deadlines, Productivity, Results*

Theme: Technology

*Codes: Software, Solutions, Systems*

Theme: Workflow

*Codes: Development, Schedule, Tasks*

**Pillar 3: Value**

Theme: Communication

*Codes: Access, Comprehension, Interpretation*

Theme: Education

*Codes: Expertise, Knowledge, Understanding*

Theme: Impact

*Codes: Autonomy, Efficiency, Output*

These findings and the created process management framework address how the value chain's stages—development, pre-production, production, post-production, distribution, and exhibition—intersect with each phase's unique needs and overlapping processes (Irving and Rea, 2015).

**Autonomy and Flow**

Flexibility and adaptability are prominent in all sectors of the Screen Industries. Due to their prevalence from an organisational and production viewpoint, workforces rely on autonomy to bring innovation to their creative content endeavours. This autonomy, where specialists have the freedom to experiment and perform without restrictions, drives value into complex processes and supports their ability to realise flow—a concept that enables a person to be fully immersed, energised, and focused on an activity—colloquially known as "in the zone." This flow state increases innovation, and while it breaks free from traditional methods of control, it enables individuals to perform at a higher level, increasing productivity and output. The created framework explores effective management practices, such as Agile and hybrid methodologies, which cater to the Screen Industries' need for flexibility and responsiveness (Brown and Taylor, 2021).

**Nobody Knows**

A statement found in literature and made several times in the recording of primary data sources. There is an overwhelming acceptance that "nobody knows" when managing processes within the Screen Industries, amongst other broader topics. Applicable to all defined sectors, many operations seem to be running on the nobody knows principle, and this includes not knowing what screen-media outputs will be successful to a limited understanding of assignments and responsibilities. Not intended to ridicule or criticise specialists in the Screen Industries, "nobody knows anything" serves as an acknowledgement of the complexities that form the highly specialised processes that must intertwine and operate together to create revolutionary outputs for screen-related media productions. The proposed framework is designed to enhance operational effectiveness (OE) by integrating flexibility with structure, addressing the need for a model that supports creative dynamics while maintaining process efficiency (Pick *et al.*, 2015; Townley *et al.*, 2009), leading to competitive advantage (CA). It offers a configuration and grounding that enables organisations using the SERPENT Framework to intentionally target the nobody knows dilemma, providing a more transparent

workflow arrangement that reduces uncertainty and enhances the clarity of operational aspects of production.

## 6.2. The SERPENT Framework

Defined by its snaking workflow, 3-stage TED (Task, Element, Detail) Process, and PILLAR Operations focused on inputs and outputs (I/O), the SERPENT—Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, Turnout—Framework has been devised from decades of practical experience, theoretical learning, and expert inputs. It is intended to encapsulate the intricacies of creative content creation and accelerate operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA) by promoting innovation, proficiency, independence, and structure for processes that create value for screen-based intellectual property (IP) production. There are continuous implementations of the findings within the framework with autonomy and flow featuring as drivers for innovation while structured timelines guide milestones that embrace the uncertainty of screen-media projects. Following the six production phases found in all sectors of the Screen Industries, this process management framework is designed to remove complexity from intricate and complicated processes, enabling unconventional workflows combined with existing and alternative management methods. Guided by data collected in this study, built on traditional, contemporary, and alternative project and process management methodologies combined with specialist Screen Industries knowledge, expertise, and all research findings, the SERPENT Framework emerged from a comprehensive overview of the requirements needed to manage successful projects in these sectors. The framework is the final output of this study, and it contributes to operational insights and innovations by providing practical strategies, best practices, and actionable recommendations derived from the research data. While templates for varying processes in the proposed framework are provided as a starting point and examples, software, an application, or similar technology is not required to enable the SERPENT Framework to have the impact needed in these sectors. Its flexible approach and compatibility with existing methodologies make it readily adaptable to a range of software solutions currently used in the Screen Industries. The ability to comply with many external systems makes the SERPENT Framework approachable and extendable, increasing its contributions to academia and practice.

At its core, SERPENT is built on three structural pillars: Leadership, Process, and Value. Leadership, as defined in the framework, establishes clear objectives, fosters engagement, and assigns accountability; Process introduces a phased approach that integrates milestone checkpoints with iterative loops, thereby preventing unchecked scope creep while still permitting innovation; and Value underscores the financial, creative, and intellectual outcomes central to screen-media success, in line with Porter's Value Chain perspective that emphasises how each production phase contributes to, or detracts from, overall value (Caves, 2002; Field, 2018). Simplifying processes and procedures are accomplished through a *three-stage focus* (a TED Process) that simplifies complexities into staged efforts of A-B-C, 1-2-3, or X-Y-Z, and this practice has been embraced throughout the framework. Not only does this allow complex tasks to become more manageable, but it enables tracking and metrics to be applied at every step, ensuring project monitoring can be performed in a structured charter without interference to specialists who require autonomy and flow to work efficiently, produce the best outputs, and offer the most significant value. Three core pillars of leadership, process, and value give this framework its main foundations. Leadership drives the project and tasks, while process offers abilities to create outputs, and value is earned from successfully completing those outputs. Additionally, PILLAR Operations are attached to each TED Process, forcing tasks to have inputs and outputs (I/O) based on the three core pillars. This technique ensures that everything in the SERPENT Framework has direct links to each core pillar, compelling knowledge-based thinking during project creation and further critical thinking during changes happening throughout production. By focusing on leadership, process, and value, the framework aims to improve communication, collaboration, and overall project efficiency, providing a competitive edge in the rapidly evolving Screen Industries landscape (Kim, 2023; Lee, 2022).

Furthermore, SERPENT emphasises autonomy and flow by incorporating designated autonomy windows that allow creative specialists to achieve a "flow state," thereby maximising innovation, while structured checkpoints and milestone tracking maintain overall project coherence and ensure that changes in one department do not adversely affect the collective output. The framework is also highly adaptable, being tool-agnostic—whether tracking is done via paper-based Kanban boards or through advanced software or existing tools—and it scales seamlessly from small indie projects to large-scale productions operating across multiple continents, unified

by standard milestones and open communication channels. By reducing inefficiencies through clarity of roles, milestone gating, and iterative process loops, SERPENT not only enhances operational effectiveness (OE) but also confers a competitive advantage (CA) in an industry where uncertainty is common and "nobody knows" which project will succeed. Although SERPENT began as a theoretical vision, its empirical grounding and flexible, modular design—anchored by the TED (Task, Element, Detail) process—position it as a robust tool for uniting creativity with rigorous project management, capable of being trialled in real-world productions to address longstanding uncertainties in the Screen Industries (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018; Hair *et al.*, 2019)

## 6.3. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study presented in this thesis makes a substantial contribution to both theoretical and practical realms by addressing a critical gap between conceptual academic models and real-world applications, particularly as they pertain to the Screen Industries. Until recently, scholarly literature has underexplored the processes underpinning film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games—sectors defined in this research as the definitive categorisation of the Screen Industries (see also *Chapter 2: Literature Review*). As a result, these industries have lacked robust, sector-specific frameworks to manage the non-linear, collaborative, and highly creative workflows central to their outputs.

By situating the research around four guiding research questions, this investigation not only sheds light on the unique operational dynamics of screen-based production but also proposes actionable strategies for operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA). The empirical evidence from surveys and interviews underpins each conceptual development, ensuring that the resulting Process Management Framework—the SERPENT Framework—is both academically rigorous and industry-relevant.

From a methodological standpoint, this research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative (surveys, statistical analysis) and qualitative (interviews, thematic coding) techniques. While Thematic Analysis (TA) guided the initial coding around known challenges in creative industries, principles from Grounded Theory allowed new themes to

emerge without being fully restricted by prior assumptions. Although classic Grounded Theory often emphasises "bracketing" existing knowledge, the pragmatic stance taken here balances established literature with field-based discoveries—an especially pertinent choice given that the Screen Industries, by their nature, blend longstanding production norms with rapid innovation and "nobody knows anything" unpredictability (Caves, 2002; Goldman, 1983).

This dual analytical stance enriches the process management framework by capturing both anticipated and unexpected insights, which strengthen the argument that Screen Industries demand bespoke process management models. In doing so, this study transcends typical "one-size-fits-all" approaches to process management, highlighting contextual specificity as a key theoretical contribution.

By emphasising Porter's Value Chain rather than a monolithic, strictly global chain, this study underscores the creative-intellectual property nexus that is central to screen productions (Porter, 1985). Traditional process management theories, such as Waterfall, Agile, or Lean, tend to focus on achieving efficiency in relatively predictable settings. In contrast, the Screen Industries operate across multiple international markets and rely heavily on short-term, project-based teams, which demand more flexible and autonomy-centric methodologies. The SERPENT Process Management Framework responds to these needs by integrating three interdependent dimensions: Leadership, which fosters accountability and a clear vision; Process, which incorporates iterative checkpoints to maintain rigour without stifling creativity; and Value, which systematically ties each operational step to both tangible financial returns and intangible creative outputs. This triadic structure—Leadership, Process, and Value—extends current theoretical discourse by demonstrating how factors such as creative flow, knowledge assets, and team morale can be anchored within a value chain framework, thereby bridging the gap between conventional management models and the dynamic realities of the creative sectors.

Practically, the SERPENT Framework delivers evidence-based guidance for industry stakeholders including producers, heads of department, and creative leads who aim to streamline budgets, schedules, and cross-functional collaboration without compromising artistic freedom. The framework's hybrid approach—drawing elements from Agile, Waterfall, and ROWE—

highlights the need for contextually aware process management. Production teams can adjust milestones and autonomy windows to accommodate the unpredictable nature of creative outputs, thereby ensuring that processes remain both flexible and efficient. Furthermore, the study demonstrates how the integration of modern technological tools, such as advanced project management software and collaborative platforms, can help eliminate workflow inefficiencies. This aligns with Porter's view that value creation in creative industries involves not only tangible deliverables but also the efficient flow of intangible knowledge. Moreover, while the SERPENT Framework is specifically tailored to the Screen Industries, its design also offers insights applicable to other sectors that require iterative and collaborative creativity, such as digital media, technology startups, and streaming content providers. This cross-industry applicability is underpinned by the framework's balance of structured phases, which ensure accountability, and flexible autonomy, which fosters innovation.

Central to the SERPENT Process Management Framework are three interlocking pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—that work synergistically to bridge the gap between creative vision and operational efficiency. The Leadership pillar is essential for establishing decisive oversight, setting clear creative direction, and fostering team cohesion. By ensuring that strategic goals are communicated effectively and that all stakeholders are aligned, robust leadership creates a stable foundation for navigating the uncertainties inherent in the Screen Industries. The Process pillar introduces a structured yet flexible framework, exemplified by the TED (Task, Element, Detail) approach, which channels creativity within defined time and budgetary constraints. This systematic process enables the timely tracking of progress, the early identification of bottlenecks, and the efficient allocation of resources, thereby mitigating the risks associated with project delays and cost overruns. Complementing these is the Value pillar, which draws on Porter's Value Chain concept (Porter, 1985) to underscore that every operational activity—from development through distribution—must contribute to the overall worth of the production. Value, in this context, is not limited to financial returns; it also encompasses intangible creative outputs such as storytelling, design innovations, and audience engagement. Together, these pillars ensure that the intangible aspects of creativity are effectively integrated with tangible performance measures, such as schedule fidelity and budget adherence. This alignment directly addresses the research questions by clarifying how the Screen Industries are

categorised (Research Question 1), how value is conceptualised and managed (Research Question 2), and how leadership and process structures contribute to operational effectiveness and competitive advantage (Research Question 3 and Research Question 4). In an international, rapidly evolving marketplace, this balanced synergy empowers organisations to harness creative potential while maintaining rigorous operational controls, thereby forging a sustainable competitive edge.

The application of the SERPENT Framework has demonstrated measurable gains in operational performance. By streamlining tasks, clarifying ownership through milestone checkpoints, and preserving the creative "flow" so vital to screen productions, teams experience clearer timelines, reduced rework, and stronger budget discipline—even amid last-minute creative shifts. Over multiple iterations, these efficiencies generate a durable competitive advantage (CA). In an environment where "nobody knows" which intellectual property will ultimately succeed, the ability to rely on a predictable, consistently effective process becomes a strategic differentiator. This capability enables quicker pivots, optimised resource allocation, and innovation without compromising project integrity. The framework's foundations align closely with Porter's Value Chain principles, which emphasise the cumulative value of each production phase. In doing so, this section reinforces how structured workflows and clear leadership practices are essential for enhancing operational effectiveness (OE) and securing competitive advantage in the Screen Industries.

Building on the integrated approach established through the SERPENT Framework, this study also acknowledges the complexity of modern screen production workflows. By incorporating diverse elements—from rapidly shifting technologies to the specialised freelance workforce— it adopts a holistic view of process management that accommodates the multifaceted nature of production, from concept ideation through post-production and distribution . Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all model, the framework positions leadership, creative autonomy, and value creation as interdependent forces. In doing so, it further demonstrates how value is conceptualised and managed (Research Question 2), extending beyond financial metrics to include process stability and creative empowerment. Simultaneously, it illustrates how a tailored process management framework can enhance operational effectiveness and secure competitive

advantage (Research Question 4). These insights contribute not only to policy development and strategic decision-making within the Screen Industries but also to ongoing research into the integration of intangible creative assets in production management (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018; Field, 2018).

### 6.3.1. Operational Efficiency (OE) and Competitive Advantage (CA)

The SERPENT Process Management Framework delineates a series of operational strategies that collectively deliver a competitive edge in an industry characterised by artistic risk and rapid change. Central to the framework is the principle of structured autonomy, whereby teams benefit from flexible, autonomy-centred workflows that foster innovation, yet remain tethered to essential milestone checkpoints that ensure budgets, timelines, and project scopes remain viable—a critical requirement given the short-term, project-based nature of screen work and the ephemeral character of creative flow (Field, 2018). Furthermore, the framework adopts a three-stage focus for scalable processes by utilising a TED (Task, Element, Detail) approach. This layered breakdown enables projects to systematically track outputs, identify bottlenecks, and allocate resources more effectively, which in turn fosters faster decision-making and reduces rework, thereby amplifying operational effectiveness. Equally important is the emphasis on risk mitigation and proactivity; the inherently uncertain environment of screen productions—often encapsulated by the adage “nobody knows anything” (Goldman, 1983; Caves, 2002)—underscores the need for proactive risk assessment. By implementing consistent check-ins throughout the production process, from Setup through Engage and Review, leadership can detect and address potential issues early, preventing catastrophic downstream effects on both financial outcomes and creative coherence. Additionally, the framework offers scalable guidelines for policy and long-term adoption, providing organisations with structured recommendations for hiring, training, departmental collaboration, and technology adoption. As organisations refine these internal policies based on the SERPENT Framework, they effectively embed best practices into everyday workflows, which is essential for sustaining a competitive advantage in a global market.

Crucially, these operational strategies are anchored in Porter’s Value Chain logic, which posits that each phase—from Development and Pre-production through Post-production and

Distribution—either adds or subtracts value depending on the alignment of leadership, processes, and creative outputs (Porter, 1985). By embracing the triadic pillars of Leadership, Process, and Value, the framework ensures that intangible creative elements, such as innovation and team morale, are systematically integrated with tangible financial metrics and operational controls. This balanced approach not only enhances immediate operational effectiveness but also positions organisations to adapt to long-term technological shifts, such as virtual production and AI-assisted editing, and to thrive amidst transnational collaborations. The forward-looking nature of the SERPENT Framework encourages new scholarly inquiry into measuring intangible creative capital and adapting leadership structures to remote or hybrid production models, while simultaneously providing a practical blueprint for studios, production houses, and individual creatives seeking robust oversight without compromising artistic vision (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018; Hair *et al.*, 2019). In sum, the theoretical and practical implications of this study underscore the necessity of a tailored, context-sensitive approach to process management that harmonizes creative freedom with structured oversight, thereby transforming how leadership, teams, and stakeholders collaborate to generate enduring value in the Screen Industries.

### 6.3.2. Included Appendices

To maintain transparency, the information and data in this thesis's appendices include details relating to primary data collection, primary data display, and the proposed SERPENT Framework. Primary data collection consists of the final survey questions, final interview questions, participant information sheets for surveys, participant information sheets for interviews, survey participant consent forms, and interview participant consent forms. Primary data analysis is thoroughly explored throughout *Chapter 4: Data Findings*, where findings and conclusions are drawn. However, the anonymised raw data from survey responses is included in the appendices. Elements of the proposed theoretical SERPENT Framework are included in the appendices, with overviews on structure, framework deployment, implementation, operations, and details on creating SERPENT Framework templates and adapting the proposed framework to suit serialised or episodic content.

## 6.4. Research Limitations

Several challenges were faced during the research process, from methodological complexities to data interpretation hurdles, accessibility to the Screen Industries and even the lack of education relating to process management within the sectors. Concepts and perspectives that emerged from the research findings added new insights and greater depth and richness to the understanding of the various sectors, their leadership, value chains, and operations. The implications of these insights dramatically advance theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding in the field, filling gaps in the literature and offering fresh viewpoints that are current and applicable to the global Screen Industries while providing a foundation for new lines of theoretical inquiry.

As research demonstrated, experience is held with greater esteem than education, even though this study acknowledged the real need for greater understanding and knowledge of process management. This led to disinterest for some members who were asked to participate but declined, and this negatively influenced the findings' applicability and relevance due to the limited reach of some specific specialists. The Screen Industries operate within tightly controlled environments, and gaining access to industry professionals and confidential production insights can often be restrictive and difficult. Even with this author's twenty (and more) years of experience in multiple sectors, gaining access to some specific individuals was not a possibility. Many did not respond to requests; others required access through a third party, such as an agent or attorney. For some that did respond, due to the secretive nature of projects and productions held under legalities such as non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), amongst others, they were unwilling to accept and sign the declaration forms required for ethical data collection, meaning their testimony or any communication of any kind could not be used within this investigation—again, limiting the research's reach to potential valuable specialists who could offer further diversity to the data.

During the majority of this study, profound changes and catastrophic happenings have occurred in the landscape of Screen Industries. A global pandemic slowed the production of many, if not all, projects in all sectors. Major closures within well-established video game developers, as well as troubled game releases, shook some sectors, and massive strikes that affected film and television worldwide had a negative impact on the Screen Industries and the workforce,

disrupting this research and halting access to some potential participants who were either not available afterwards or had left the industry for good due to the instability, or related reasons.

This study was developed over several years, although data collection only ran for a period of six consecutive months. Even though the sector relies on the fast pacing of technological changes, which could lead to a reflection of time-specificity in relation to the findings, it is the belief of this author that the findings are accurate upon completion and will stay accurate for an unprecedented amount of time due to the limitations of process management knowledge inherent within the Screen Industries and the sectors that operate within them.

The study employed purposive stratified sampling to ensure a targeted and representative analysis of the Screen Industries workforce (Patton, 2015; Miles *et al.*, 2014). Surveys were distributed through industry organisations, such as unions, guilds, and professional networks, ensuring balanced representation across sectors (Kuzel, 1999), with 503 responses collected.

For the interviews, purposive sampling selected 24 professionals with extensive, cross-sector experience. The majority of participants were male, with 75% having over ten years of experience. The sample also included international perspectives, enriching the study's understanding of global production processes and leadership structures.

While this approach effectively captured a broad spectrum of data, the study acknowledges that a larger sample size could have provided more comprehensive insights into the industry's dynamics. The sampling methods, while robust, may introduce some elements of unreliability, bias, or limitations in generalisability. Additionally, the author's personal observations during data collection could have inadvertently influenced the depth of the data, introducing subjectivity. However, the research methodology was designed to mitigate these issues, ensuring the conclusions remain valid and relevant.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, integrating both quantitative statistical data and qualitative insights. This combination allowed for a holistic view of the data, where quantitative findings could be cross-verified with qualitative anecdotes and vice versa. Such a strategy not

only enriched the data analysis process but also helped to minimise potential biases from both the author and the participants. The quantitative analysis provided a solid statistical foundation, ensuring that the conclusions drawn were backed by empirical data. On the other hand, qualitative data brought depth to the understanding of the numbers, adding context and personal insights that statistical methods alone could miss. Together, this mixed-methods approach facilitated a more enmeshed and comprehensive data set, leading to findings that were both critical and reflective of real scenarios and circumstances within the Screen Industries.

While acknowledging the potential limitations due to sampling methods and the inherent biases in any research, the study strived to provide an impartial and neutral reporting of the findings. The goal of this research was to present the Screen Industries as accurately as possible, reflecting the complexity and diversity of the field. The findings contribute valuable insights into the functioning and dynamics of these industries, providing a foundation for further academic study and industry analysis. This research offers practical insights that can inform policy-making and strategic decision-making within the Screen Industries.

The process management framework developed through this study enables organisations to better understand the processes their teams are engaged in and provides a structured approach that could enhance various aspects of project management. However, the successful implementation of such a framework requires consideration of contextual factors, industry dynamics, and organisational culture. As industry practices evolve, organisations must adapt their workflows to align with both creative and operational demands.

While this research acknowledges the diverse cultural influences shaping the Screen Industries, it does not assume a one-size-fits-all approach. Best practices can be adapted and shared across different industry contexts, ensuring that the proposed framework remains relevant to professionals working in a variety of production environments. Although it is impossible to capture the experiences of all individuals globally, every effort has been made to incorporate perspectives from a broad international participant base through both survey and interview responses.

The proposed process management framework offers a breadth and depth that gives flexibility and autonomy to managing complex processes that apply to the highly skilled sectors of the Screen Industries that operate in a global and international field. Every effort was made to study varying methodologies, including traditional, contemporary, and alternative theories, that gave a rounded and 360-degree approach to the research. As suggested throughout the research, some methods are more suited to the Screen Industries, and therefore, some existing theories may be slightly overlooked. However, the generality of the proposed constructs created in this research and their utility in analysing and interpreting the research findings should prove to be a functional framework that is extendable to many ways of working, allowing for complex process management abilities while not stifling creative innovation.

The study presented contributes significantly to our understanding of process management within the Screen Industries, enhancing both research skills and fostering personal and professional development for the author. The invaluable contributions of supervisors, peers, industry professionals, and research participants played a crucial role in steering both the theoretical and practical dimensions of this research. Their diverse perspectives and collective expertise enriched the research process and outcomes, challenging existing perceptions and offering critical insights against traditional methodologies, scholarly debate, and industry critique. This collaborative engagement facilitated the enhancement and improvement of the proposed SERPENT Framework, while also allowing for further development and reassessment of established theories.

This process has not only advanced academic discourse but has also contributed to the evolution of process management frameworks within the field. Transitioning directly from industry to academia, the author was introduced to a new level of scholarly rigour and complexity. This higher academic standard demanded a comprehensive understanding and application of complex concepts, which was instrumental in achieving a satisfactory standard across all study areas.

The literature review, while mandatory, was complemented by selected readings aimed at deepening the author’s comprehension of academic demands and nuances at this elevated level of scholarship. Furthermore, to tackle more complex subjects, the author engaged with online

resources, including videos and articles. A post-graduate certificate was pursued and achieved during this time, which provided additional insights into the research field. Additionally, attending several classes held at the university, which covered topics pertinent to this research, data collection, and general research methods, facilitated learning and growth throughout the study.

This author began this investigation to understand, even after twenty years of practical application in the industry and involvement in hundreds of projects, why processes are often managed inefficiently, and the same issues keep arising. However, the insights gained from this exploration are far more substantial than what could have been anticipated at the beginning of this journey. The author now possesses an enhanced knowledge of process management, with skills in general academic approach, ethics and integrity, research, analysis, investigative questioning, and many other aspects significantly broadened by this undertaking. It has been a privilege for the author to delve into a topic that is often under-acknowledged in academic circles and to produce outputs of data and findings that can dramatically improve theory and practice within the field of process management for the Screen Industries.

A key component missing from this research, however, which would add substantial value to the findings, is the study's limitations in terms of applying its process management framework in practical settings. The implications of this mean that the framework, while theoretically robust, has not been implemented in practice and cannot, therefore, be recognised as an established framework with real-world feedback detailing its strengths and weaknesses.

Should future research allow for the implementation of the framework in real-world settings, detailed studies and analysis could be completed on the pros and cons of the framework. This would enable researchers to edit and change aspects that need improvement, and develop a finalised framework that could potentially be implemented internationally, supported by future-backed proof of concept. The study’s theoretical focus without a practical application leaves a significant gap in its contribution to the field. The framework developed through rigorous academic research is still pending validation from practical application, which could substantiate or challenge its effectiveness in real-world settings. This lack of empirical testing highlights the

necessity for future research to bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring that the theoretical constructs developed can be effectively applied to improve processes within the Screen Industries.

However, the outputs from this research are not only academic in nature but also have the potential to impact practical applications significantly. The developed framework, if applied successfully, could revolutionise the way processes are managed within the industry, addressing long-standing inefficiencies and improving overall project execution.

The journey through this PhD process has not only enhanced the author's understanding and capabilities within their field but has also equipped them with the tools necessary to contribute meaningfully to both scholarly research and practical implementations. This research has made significant strides in advancing our understanding of process management within the Screen Industries. The collaborative efforts, extensive research, and theoretical development undertaken provide a strong foundation for future studies and practical applications. The insights and frameworks developed through this research hold the potential to create substantial improvements in process management practices, thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of project execution within the industry. The ongoing journey of research and development in this area is crucial for the continuous improvement and evolution of process management theories and practices, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in the face of changing industry dynamics and technological advancements.

Acknowledging the limitations of a study is not merely an exercise in academic rigour; it is a crucial step that enhances the value and applicability of the research findings. This research, conducted within the Screen Industries, employs a robust mixed-methods approach that, despite its comprehensive nature, operates within certain confines that need to be critically evaluated for a fuller understanding of its outcomes. The very acknowledgement of these limitations paves the way for a nuanced interpretation of the results. It is important to consider that the conclusions drawn are deeply influenced by the specific contexts in which the data was gathered.

This context-specific interpretation helps in drawing relevance to particular situations rather than overextending the findings to broader, perhaps unrelated, areas. Such a focused approach prevents the pitfalls of over-generalisation, which can lead to the misapplication of results and theories in practice. The limitations highlighted in this research serve as a starting point for further scholarly inquiry. They encourage future researchers to pose new questions that may not have been considered in the current study and to explore additional dimensions of process management in the Screen Industries. This is particularly important given the dynamic nature of the Screen Industries, where technological advancements and changing consumer behaviours continuously reshape production and management processes.

Future research could greatly benefit from addressing the gaps identified in this study. For instance, adopting innovative data collection and analysis methods could mitigate some of the current study's limitations. The advancement in digital technologies and methodologies offers new tools and techniques that can enhance the rigour and breadth of research findings. For example, the use of artificial intelligence in data analysis or virtual reality in studying production processes could provide deeper insights and more reliable outcomes. Moreover, the thorough examination of these limitations is fundamental in developing effective strategies for future research. This involves not only identifying new areas of inquiry but also refining research methodologies to ensure they are robust and adaptable to the changing landscape of the Screen Industries.

This strategic contemplation helps in advancing the field of process management by ensuring that future studies are better equipped to handle the complexities of the industry. The critical reflection on the limitations of the current study also contributes significantly to its integrity and reliability. It demonstrates a commitment to transparency and rigour, which are essential in fostering trust and credibility in research findings. Such reflection ensures that the conclusions of the study are grounded in a realistic assessment of its methodological strengths and weaknesses. This research also plays a role in the cycle of continuous improvement in academic research and industry practice. By openly discussing the limitations and suggesting ways to overcome them, the study contributes to a broader culture of ongoing enhancement and refinement in both

scholarly inquiry and industry operations. This is crucial in fields like the Screen Industries, where innovation is key to sustainability and success.

Furthermore, the contemplation of these limitations encourages a deeper, more thoughtful engagement with the complexities and dynamics of process management. It fosters a more refined understanding of how different factors such as technological changes, regulatory environments, and market demands interact and influence management practices within the industry. The study's approach to dealing with its limitations is not merely about acknowledging flaws but rather about setting a proactive, constructive path forward. It encourages the academic community and industry professionals to engage in a thoughtful dialogue about the efficacy of current research methodologies and the applicability of research findings. This dialogue is essential for the evolution of process management practices in the Screen Industries, ensuring that they remain robust, relevant, and responsive to the ever-changing industry landscape. Through this continuous cycle of reflection, research, and refinement, the study not only contributes to academic knowledge but also to practical advancements in the Screen Industries, enhancing both the theoretical and practical understanding of this dynamic field.

## 6.5. Concluding Recommendations

This research has examined a broad array of topics—ranging from project workflows and creative autonomy to strategic operational management—and, in doing so, has clarified how process management within the Screen Industries can be systematically refined to drive operational effectiveness (OE) and competitive advantage (CA). By investigating how sectors such as film, television, commercials, documentaries, and video games define and manage their value—as conceptualised through Porter's Value Chain—the study not only advances current academic understanding but also offers concrete recommendations for future research. These recommendations form a constructive pathway for further inquiries into the development, adoption, and adaptation of new process management frameworks. The insights derived from the study suggest that a comprehensive, tailored framework like SERPENT could be extended to different creative contexts, thereby enabling industry practitioners to navigate an increasingly complex and competitive global landscape.

A pivotal contribution of this thesis is the SERPENT Process Management Framework. Developed through extensive empirical research and informed by decades of industry experience, SERPENT is characterised by a distinctive snaking workflow—Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, Turnout—supported by a three-stage TED (Task, Element, Detail) structure and anchored by three core pillars: Leadership, Process, and Value. The framework's design encapsulates the complexity of screen productions by breaking down intricate creative processes into manageable, iterative steps, all while preserving the creative flow essential to artistic innovation. In practical terms, the framework promotes structured autonomy, enabling teams to benefit from flexible, autonomy-centred workflows that are continuously aligned with critical milestone checkpoints, ensuring that budgets, timelines, and project scopes remain intact. This dual emphasis on flexibility and control is crucial given the short-term, project-based nature of screen work, where rapid shifts in creative direction are commonplace (Field, 2018). Moreover, SERPENT's modular design, which incorporates scalable tools ranging from basic Gantt charts to advanced project-tracking software, ensures that its principles can be adapted to diverse production environments—from small indie projects to large-scale studios. By systematically linking leadership, process, and value at each operational stage, the framework not only enhances decision-making and resource allocation but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement that is essential for sustaining competitive advantage.

Looking forward, this research recommends broadening industry-specific investigations to further refine and validate the SERPENT Framework. Given the global and interdisciplinary nature of screen-based media, future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to track the long-term impact of process management interventions. For instance, following productions that implement SERPENT over several years could illustrate how operational effectiveness evolves in response to shifting technologies and market conditions. In addition, comparative cross-cultural analyses could shed light on how regional differences in production practices affect the adoption of standardised workflows and leadership models, thereby revealing both universal best practices and the need for localized adaptations (Yin, 2018). Emerging technologies—such as AI-driven editing and virtual production techniques—present further opportunities to integrate advanced tools into the framework, potentially redefining how value is created and managed within these industries. Such technological integration would not only support more efficient

production processes but also enhance the framework's responsiveness to rapid industry changes (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

An interdisciplinary approach is also strongly recommended for future research. The complexities inherent in screen production require insights drawn from multiple fields, including business management, information technology, creative arts, and organisational behaviour. By combining robust quantitative metrics with rich qualitative insights, future studies can develop a more holistic understanding of how creative processes, leadership practices, and operational strategies interrelate. Collaborative platforms such as public symposia and academic-industry consortia could further facilitate the exchange of best practices, thereby ensuring that process management innovations are both timely and applicable. This integration of disciplines will help bridge the gap between theory and practice, fostering an environment where emerging research can directly inform industry strategies and vice versa.

In addition, future research should focus on fostering sustainable, ethical, and inclusive practices within the Screen Industries. As these industries continue to expand globally, they face increasing scrutiny regarding environmental impact, fair labour practices, and data privacy. Embedding sustainability and ethics into the pillars of leadership, process, and value will be crucial for developing responsible process management strategies. For example, exploring workflows that minimize resource wastage or designing policies to mitigate burnout in fast-paced, project-based environments could form the basis of new best practices. Ethical guidelines should also be integrated to ensure that emerging technologies and data-driven insights are implemented in ways that respect intellectual property rights and privacy. Such responsible innovation is key to maintaining public trust and ensuring the long-term viability of creative industries.

Finally, continuous learning and adaptability are essential in an industry characterised by rapid change. Both academia and industry must commit to iterative refinement of process management frameworks, such as SERPENT, by regularly collecting feedback and incorporating it into future iterations. Investment in mentorship and educational initiatives is vital to equip future practitioners with both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to navigate the

evolving landscape of screen production. By embedding formal structures of knowledge transfer in an industry that has traditionally relied on tacit expertise, process management practices can evolve to meet emerging challenges and opportunities. Ultimately, these recommendations emphasise that the SERPENT Framework is not a static model but a dynamic tool that can be continuously improved to foster innovation, efficiency, and competitive advantage in the Screen Industries (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2019).

## 6.6. Final Reflections

This thesis embarked on a multifaceted journey to categorise, analyse, and optimise process management in the Screen Industries. The investigation uncovered key insights that deepen our understanding of how creative industries operate and highlight the need for a tailored approach to bridge gaps between traditional management practices and the dynamic realities of screen production. The findings underscore the importance of bespoke frameworks, like SERPENT, that integrate leadership, process, and value to enhance operational effectiveness and provide a competitive edge in an ever-evolving industry landscape.

The personal and professional transformation experienced throughout this research was substantial. Drawing extensively on practitioner experience, the study required a transition from a purely professional mindset to one steeped in academic rigour. This shift involved adapting from US English to British English conventions, reflecting the higher standards of scholarly writing, and adopting new methodologies that balanced Thematic Analysis with elements of Grounded Theory. Furthermore, navigating challenges such as limited data access—often complicated by non-disclosure agreements, agent-based gatekeeping, and global disruptions—forced the author to refine the methodological approach and develop a more resilient research framework. These challenges ultimately enhanced the author's ability to integrate practical industry wisdom with rigorous academic insights.

The contributions and takeaways from this study are equally profound. At the heart of the research is the SERPENT Process Management Framework, developed around three core pillars—Leadership, Process, and Value—and refined through extensive industry data. This framework illuminates how intangible creative flow can be systematically managed without

compromising the iterative freedom that is essential in the Screen Industries. Moreover, the study's mixed-methods approach demonstrated that frameworks originally developed for other fields, such as Agile, Waterfall, and ROWE, can be effectively hybridised for the Screen Industries when tied to Porter's Value Chain. This integration clarifies how intangible creative capital contributes to overall value, thereby addressing the persistent "nobody knows anything" dilemma and reinforcing the potential for process management to drive competitive advantage. The research further emphasises that robust process management can transform both daily workflows and strategic decision-making by uniting creative autonomy with structured oversight.

Ultimately, the four central research questions guiding this thesis—categorising the Screen Industries, defining and managing value, identifying effective leadership approaches, and testing a new process management framework—have converged in the SERPENT model. This framework articulates a clear, empirically informed workflow that is grounded in established theories but also allows for creative flexibility. SERPENT addresses the dynamic, collaborative nature of screen productions, offering a pathway to improved operational effectiveness and positioning adopters to gain a competitive advantage in a market shaped by artistic unpredictability and increasing demand for innovation. By balancing structured processes with creative autonomy, this research advocates for a more adaptable, forward-looking future for the Screen Industries.

Looking ahead, the findings of this thesis open numerous avenues for further exploration. Future research should consider empirical trials of the SERPENT Framework in active screen productions to validate and refine its phases, autonomy windows, and milestone criteria. Comparative regional studies could reveal how local cultural norms and funding models might necessitate adjustments to the framework's three pillars, while technology-focused research could examine the impact of emerging tools—such as AI-driven editing, real-time rendering, or virtual production—on leadership and process decisions. These future directions underscore the importance of continuous learning and adaptation in an industry characterised by rapid technological and market changes. As streaming wars intensify and immersive virtual reality experiences become more prevalent, structured yet adaptive process management will be crucial

for harnessing talent, controlling costs, and delivering innovative content that satisfies both producers and audiences.

In conclusion, the Screen Industries now stand at a pivotal juncture where artistry, data-driven insight, and organisational design converge. The SERPENT Process Management Framework—born from extensive empirical research and enriched by practical industry insights—demonstrates that a strategic synergy between autonomy and structured oversight can yield better, more sustainable outcomes. This thesis is more than an academic endeavour; it is a mosaic of contributions from industry professionals, academic mentors, and research participants. While it is impossible to quantify the depth of gratitude owed to each, it is essential to acknowledge that each word in this thesis is a tribute to their support and belief in the value of this research. As this final chapter closes, this author is filled with gratitude for every piece of advice, every word of encouragement, and every gesture of support received throughout this journey. This thesis stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, the importance of support networks, and the boundless possibilities that open up when people come together in the pursuit of knowledge.

For now, this concludes this research and its adventure into the process management of the Screen Industries. There is no better way than to complete this work on the same note that ends many exceptional screenplays…

The End.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Distribution and Organisation Selection

The following organisations, guilds, unions, and societies were specifically approached for their expertise and connection to the Screen Industries. Those institutions that helped distribute the survey questions outlined in this study are listed here alphabetically.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Actor's Equity New Zealand** | *New Zealand* |
| **American Film Institute (AFI)** | *USA* |
| **Animation World Network** | *Global* |
| **Art Director's Guild of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Art Director's Guild, IATSE 800** | *USA* |
| **ARTSENICO** | *France* |
| **Australian Director's Guild** | *Australia* |
| **Australian Production Design Guild** | *Australia* |
| **Australian Guild of Screen Composers** | *Australia* |
| **Australian Screen Editors** | *Australia* |
| **BAFTA** | *UK* |
| **BECTU** | *UK* |
| **British Film Council** | *UK* |
| **British Film Institute (BFI)** | *UK* |
| **Camera Guild of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Computer Graphics Society** | *Global* |
| **Creative Scotland** | *UK* |
| **Creative UK** | *UK* |
| **Crew Stories and Connections** | *Global* |
| **Digital Imaging Technicians Guild (DIT)** | *Ireland* |
| **Directors and Editors Guild of NZ** | *New Zealand* |
| **Director's Guild of America (DGA)** | *USA* |
| **Director's Guild of Canada** | *Canada* |
| **Director's Guild of Cyprus** | *Cyprus* |
| **Doc Edge** | *New Zealand* |
| **European Federation for Costume and Production Design** | *France* |
| **Federation of Television and Radio Artists** | *USA* |
| **Film Cymru** | *UK* |
| **Film and TV Charity** | *UK* |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Film Hairstylists Guild** | *Ireland* |
| **Irish Guild of Set Directors** | *Ireland* |
| **Irish Screen Make-Up and Effects Guild** | *Ireland* |
| **Irish Screen Editors** | *Ireland* |
| **Irish Society of Cinematographers** | *Ireland* |
| **Location Guild of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Modelmakers Guild** | *Ireland* |
| **New Zealand Writer's Guild** | *New Zealand* |
| **Northern Ireland Screen** | *UK* |
| **PACT** | *UK* |
| **PASC – Pan-Asia Screen Collective** | *Asia* |
| **Producer's Guild India** | *India* |
| **Producer's Guild of America (PGA)** | *USA* |
| **Production and Accounts Guild of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Production Guild Great Britain (PGGB)** | *UK* |
| **SAG-AFTRA, Screen Actors Guild** | *USA* |
| **Screen Australia** | *Australia* |
| **Screen Composers Guild** | *Ireland* |
| **Screen Craft Rights** | *UK* |
| **Screen Director's Guild** | *Ireland* |
| **Screen Music and Sound Guild of NZ** | *New Zealand* |
| **Screen Producers Australia** | *Australia* |
| **Screen Producers Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **ScreenSkills** | *UK* |
| **SIGN** | *UK* |
| **SPADA – Screen Production and Development Associates** | *New Zealand* |
| **Stunt Guild Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Stunt Register Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839** | *USA* |
| **The Screen Industry Guild of Aotearoa** | *New Zealand* |
| **The Time Project** | *UK* |
| **VFXAI – Visual Effects Association of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Writer's Guild of America, East (WGAE)** | *USA* |
| **Writer's Guild of America, West (WGAW)** | *USA* |
| **Writer's Guild of Ireland** | *Ireland* |
| **Writer's Guild Great Britain (WGGB)** | *UK* |

# Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet – Surveys

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (ANONYMOUS RESEARCH)

Stewart Jones

PhD
University of York
School of Arts and Creative Technologies (ACT)
Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media
Student #: 207050509

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The University of York would like to invite you to take part in the following project:

**Screen Industries – Theoretical Process Management Framework.**

Before agreeing to take part, please read this information sheet carefully and let us know if anything is unclear or you would like further information.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

This project is being performed by Stewart Jones (sj1341@york.ac.uk) who is a post-graduate researcher (PGR) actively researching their doctorate degree (PhD) under the supervision of Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk) and Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk). The work is being conducted according to restrictions that have been subject to approval by the TFTI Ethics committee. The Chair of the TFTI Ethics committee can be contacted on ACT-ethics@york.ac.uk.

The objective of this study is to research the possibilities of creating a theoretical process management framework specifically designed for the Screen Industries which, for the purposes of this study, include film (feature and short), television, documentaries, commercials, and/or videogames. This will form the foundations for better management of Screen Industry projects. Taking part in this research will involve completing a survey of 25 questions that should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

Please note that to comply with the approved Ethics requirements of this work, we do not intend to discuss sensitive topics with you that could be potentially upsetting or distressing. If you have any concerns about the topics that may be covered in the research study, please raise these concerns with the researcher.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. If you wish, we will provide you with access to the final research findings once the research has been completed. If you would like to receive access to these, you can indicate as such on the consent form.

## WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been identified as someone who has involvement, interest, knowledge, and skills within the Screen Industries, and you have been selected to take part in this research study in order to obtain data that is not only relevant, but is based on practical experience. Your expertise will not only contribute to the study, but will also ensure that the research collected is diversified and of the highest quality.

## DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

No, participation is optional. If you do decide to take part, you will be given a copy of this information sheet for your records and will be asked to complete a participant consent form. If you change your mind at any point during the research activity, you will be able to withdraw your participation without having to provide a reason. To withdraw your participation, you need to let the researcher know, by emailing Stewart (sj1341@york.ac.uk), and your data will be deleted as soon as possible.

## WILL I BE IDENTIFIED IN ANY OUTPUTS?

No. Your participation in this research activity will be treated anonymously and you will not be identified in any outputs.

## PRIVACY NOTICE

This section explains how personal data will be used by Screen Industries: Theoretical Process Management Framework at the University of York.

For this project, the University of York is the Data Controller. We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. Our registration number is Z4855807.

## WHAT IS OUR LEGAL BASIS FOR PROCESSING YOUR DATA?

Privacy law (the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018) requires us to have a legal reason to process your personal data. Our reason is we need it to perform a public task.[1]

This is because the University has a public function, which includes carrying out research projects.[2] We need to use personal data in order to carry out this research project.

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[1] This refers to UK GDPR Article 6 (1) (e): processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.
[2] Our charter and statutes states: 4.f. To provide instruction in such branches of learning as the University may think fit and to make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge in such manner as the University may determine.

Information about your health, ethnicity, sexual identity and other sensitive information is called "special category" data. We have to have an additional legal reason to use this data, because it is sensitive. Our reason is that it is needed for research purposes.[3] All research projects at the University follow our research ethics policies.

## HOW DO WE USE YOUR DATA?

Your data will be used and processed for the explicit purposes outlined in this notice; for the research data gathering and analysis of the project: Screen Industries – Theoretical Process Management Frameworks.

## WHO DO WE SHARE YOUR DATA WITH?

Your data will be shared with the following third-parties, who will have access to the raw data including all answered questions from the anonymous surveys:

- Supervisors:
  - In order to check the validity of the collected data.

By agreeing to take part in this research, your data may be used in the final PhD dissertation, various data reports, and further publications. Anonymised data may be reused by the research team or other third parties for secondary research purposes.

As well as this, we use computer software or systems to hold and manage data. Other companies only provide the software, system or storage. They are not allowed to use your data for their own reasons.

We have agreements in place when we share data. These agreements meet legal requirements to ensure your data is protected.

## HOW DO WE KEEP YOUR DATA SECURE?

The University is serious about keeping your data secure and protecting your rights to privacy. We don't ask you for data we don't need, and only give access to people who need to know. We think about security when planning projects, to make sure they work well. Our IT security team checks regularly to make sure we're taking the right steps. For more details see our security webpages.

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[3] This refers to UK GDPR Article 9 (2) (j): processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

## HOW DO WE TRANSFER YOUR DATA SAFELY INTERNATIONALLY?

If your data is stored or processed outside the UK, we follow legal requirements to make sure that the same level of privacy rules still apply.

## HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP YOUR DATA?

The University has rules in place for how long research data can be kept when the research project is finished. For this project, data will be kept for a minimum of 10 years.

## WHAT RIGHTS DO YOU HAVE IN RELATION TO YOUR DATA?

You have rights over your data. This sheet explains how you can stop participating in the study, and what will happen to your data if you do. This information is in the section "Do I have to take part?"

If you want to get a copy of your data, or talk to us about any other rights, please contact us using the details below.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns about how your data is being processed, please contact:

- **Researcher:**
  - Stewart Jones (sj1341@york.ac.uk).
- **Supervisors:**
  - Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk).
  - Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk).

If you have further questions, the University's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@york.ac.uk or by writing to: **Data Protection Officer, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD.**

## RIGHT TO COMPLAIN

If you are unhappy with how the University has handled your personal data, please contact our Data Protection Officer using the details above, so that we can try to put things right.

If you are unhappy with our response, you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office by post to **Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF** or by phone on **0303 123 1113**.

# Appendix C: Participant Consent Form – Surveys

## SCREEN INDUSTRY: THEORETICAL PROCESS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (ANONYMOUS RESEARCH)

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES (ACT)**

**DEPARTMENT:** Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media (TFTI)

**PROJECT TITLE:** Screen Industry: Theoretical Process Management Framework

**RESEARCHER:** Stewart Jones (#207050509) (sj1341@york.ac.uk)

**SUPERVISORS:** Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk), Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk)

Thank you for your interest in this University of York PhD research study. Your responses will have a significant impact on the findings and conclusions of the investigation whereby we aim to create a theoretical framework for the management of processes in the screen industry, including those in film, television, documentaries, commercials, and/or videogames.

| **Please read the following statements carefully and tick the appropriate box:** | **YES** | **NO** |
|---|---|---|
| I have read the information sheet about this project | ☐ | ☐ |
| I agree to take part in this project | ☐ | ☐ |
| I consent to answering survey questions in this research | ☐ | ☐ |
| I understand my right to withdraw and/or have my data destroyed | ☐ | ☐ |
| I understand that my participation in this project will be treated anonymously | ☐ | ☐ |
| I am over the age of 18 | ☐ | ☐ |

Participant Name: _____

Researcher Name: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher Signature: _____

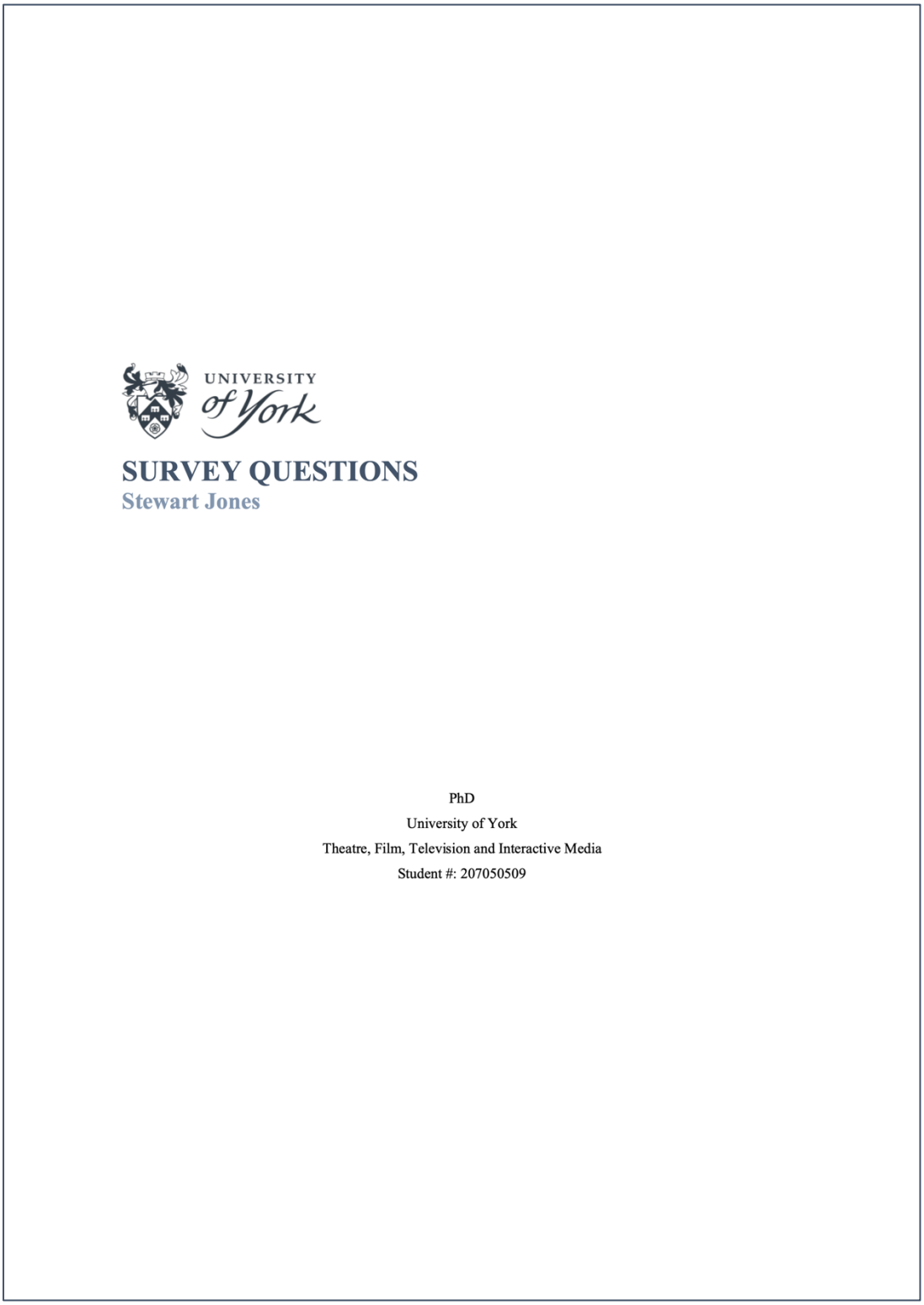
Date: _____

Date: _____

If you wish to be informed about the outcomes of this research, please provide your email address:

_____

# Appendix D: Survey Questions



UNIVERSITY of York

**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

**Stewart Jones**

PhD
University of York
Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media
Student #: 207050509

## INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Stewart Jones and I am a PhD researcher currently exploring process management frameworks within the Screen Industries at the University of York, UK. The purpose of this study is to investigate, identify, and expand upon established project management and working methodologies within the film, television, documentary, commercial, and videogame sectors—defined as the "Screen Industries" for the purposes of this research. Your views and opinions are incredibly important to this investigation and supply some of the primary data and information which will be used within the study.

Please be advised that your responses are treated in the strictest confidence and any information you provide will be handled in accordance within the guidelines outlined within the Participant Information Sheet. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may end your participation at any time whilst completing the survey, and/or choose not to answer specific questions, but your complete participation enhances the accuracy and results of the collected research data and findings revealed.

Answering this survey should take approximately 10 minutes.

Many thanks in advance for your time and contribution.

## SURVEY

***About you . . .***

1. How old are you?

☐ Less than 30 years ☐ 30 - 40 ☐ 41 - 50 ☐ 51 - 60 ☐ Over 60 years

2. Where are you located?

☐ USA/Canada ☐ UK/Ireland ☐ Europe ☐ Asia ☐ Other

Other – please include more information here . . .

3. Which sector do you predominantly work in within the Screen Industries? **multiple choice*

☐ Film ☐ Television ☐ Documentary ☐ Commercials ☐ Videogames

Other – please include more information here . . .

4. In which stage(s) of production do you work? **multiple choice*

☐ Development ☐ Pre-Production ☐ Production ☐ Post-Production ☐ Distribution/Exhibition

5. How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries?

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1 year to 3 years ☐ 3 years to 5 years ☐ 5 years to 10 years ☐ Over 10 years

6. How many projects have you worked on in your career?

☐ 1 – 5 Projects ☐ 6 – 10 Projects ☐ 11 – 20 Projects ☐ 21 – 50 Projects ☐ 60+ Projects

7. What is the average duration of the projects that you work on?

☐ Days or Weeks ☐ 1 – 6 Months ☐ 7 – 12 Months ☐ 1 – 3 Years ☐ Over 3 Years

8. How many people are in the organization you work for? (Number of employees/contractors/freelancers, etc.)

☐ 0 - 10 ☐ 11 - 50 ☐ 51 - 100 ☐ 101 - 250 ☐ Over 250

9. How many people do you usually work with? (In your specific department/group)

☐ Just You ☐ 1 - 5 ☐ 6 - 10 ☐ 11 - 25 ☐ Over 25

***My job . . .***

10. Allows me the freedom to make decisions and decide how I do my work.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

11. Allows me to determine my own method of working and the order in which I carry our my work.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

12. Allows me to determine my own working hours, including my start and leave times and/or remote working.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

13. Makes me accountable for the standard and completion of my work.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

14. Is the same on every project, although there are slight differences in content.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

15. Has clearly set tasks, with levels of importance, and there are no conflicting demands.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

16. Encourages innovation and creativity in all of the tasks that I am assigned.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

17. Has little to no interference from external sources (clients/managers) when getting my tasks completed.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

***On projects . . .***

18. Teamwork is critical with each team member carefully selected and they are dedicated to the project success.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

19. Communication between teams and departments is effective and conflicts are resolved in constructive ways.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

20. Understanding of project management methodologies/techniques and tools are important for the project success.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

21. Everything is structured and scheduled fairly, distributed correctly, and content is accurate with clear objectives.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

22. Everything is managed effectively with planned goals and milestones to determine current project success/journey.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Sometimes ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

23. From your experience, what do you think could be improved with the leadership and management of projects in the Screen Industries?
[Add your comments here.]

24. In your opinion, what part and/or stage of your job is the most problematic and impacts your output and performance in your role?
[Add your comments here.]

***Finally . . .***

25. Where did you find this survey?

☐ A Screen Guild ☐ A Union ☐ Other

Other – please include more information here . . .

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is valued and very much appreciated.

# Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet – Interviews

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (ANONYMOUS INTERVIEWS)

Stewart Jones

PhD
University of York
School of Arts and Creative Technologies (ACT)
Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media
Student #: 207050509

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The University of York would like to invite you to take part in the following project:

**Screen Industries – Theoretical Process Management Framework.**

Before agreeing to take part, please read this information sheet carefully and let us know if anything is unclear or you would like further information.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

This project is being performed by Stewart Jones (sj1341@york.ac.uk) who is a post-graduate researcher (PGR) actively researching their doctorate degree (PhD) under the supervision of Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk) and Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk). The work is being conducted according to restrictions that have been subject to approval by the TFTI Ethics committee. The Chair of the TFTI Ethics committee can be contacted on ACT-ethics@york.ac.uk.

The objective of this study is to research the possibilities of creating a theoretical process management framework specifically designed for the Screen Industries which, for the purposes of this study, include film (feature and short), television, documentaries, commercials, and/or videogames. This will form the foundations for better management of Screen Industry projects. Taking part in this research will involve joining an interview via video-calling using Zoom. You will be asked to answer questions related to your own experiences while working in the Screen Industries and by your contribution to the stages of development for Screen Industry projects. Focus is given to jobs/roles and project within these sectors with emphasis on the leadership and management of such topics. Sessions will be recorded with both video and audio, and will last no longer than 60 minutes.

Please note that to comply with the approved Ethics requirements of this work, we do not intend to discuss sensitive topics with you that could be potentially upsetting or distressing. If you have any concerns about the topics that may be covered in the research study, please raise these concerns with the researcher.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. If you wish, we will provide you with access to the final research findings once the research has been completed. If you would like to receive access to these, you can indicate as such on the consent form.

## WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been identified as someone who has involvement, interest, knowledge, and skills within the Screen Industries, and you have been selected to take part in this research study in order to obtain data that is not only

relevant, but is based on practical experience. Your expertise will not only contribute to the study, but will also ensure that the research collected is diversified and of the highest quality.

## DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

No, participation is optional. If you do decide to take part, you will be given a copy of this information sheet for your records and will be asked to complete a participant consent form. If you change your mind at any point during the research activity, you will be able to withdraw your participation without having to provide a reason. To withdraw your participation, you need to let the researcher know, by emailing Stewart (sj1341@york.ac.uk), and your data will be deleted as soon as possible.

## WILL I BE IDENTIFIED IN ANY OUTPUTS?

No. Your participation in this research activity will be treated anonymously and you will not be identified in any outputs.

The following output of your participation are held in the strictest confidence:

- The Recording of Audio and Video / Transcription:
    - Accessible only by the researcher and supervisors of this project.

## PRIVACY NOTICE

This section explains how personal data will be used by Screen Industries: Theoretical Process Management Framework at the University of York.

For this project, the University of York is the Data Controller. We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. Our registration number is Z4855807.

## WHAT IS OUR LEGAL BASIS FOR PROCESSING YOUR DATA?

Privacy law (the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018) requires us to have a legal reason to process your personal data. Our reason is we need it to perform a public task.[1]

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This is because the University has a public function, which includes carrying out research projects.[2] We need to use personal data in order to carry out this research project.

Information about your health, ethnicity, sexual identity and other sensitive information is called "special category" data. We have to have an additional legal reason to use this data, because it is sensitive. Our reason is that it is needed for research purposes.[3] All research projects at the University follow our research ethics policies.

## HOW DO WE USE YOUR DATA?

Your data will be used and processed for the explicit purposes outlined in this notice; for the research data gathering and analysis of the project: Screen Industries – Theoretical Process Management Frameworks.

## WHO DO WE SHARE YOUR DATA WITH?

Your data will be shared with the following third-parties, who will have access to the raw data including, but not limited to, video recordings, audio recordings, and transcripts:

- Supervisors:
  - In order to check the validity of the collected data.

By agreeing to take part in this research, your data may be used in the final PhD dissertation, various data reports, and further publications. Anonymised data may be reused by the research team or other third parties for secondary research purposes.

As well as this, we use computer software or systems to hold and manage data. Other companies only provide the software, system or storage. They are not allowed to use your data for their own reasons.

We have agreements in place when we share data. These agreements meet legal requirements to ensure your data is protected.

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[2] Our charter and statutes states: 4.f. To provide instruction in such branches of learning as the University may think fit and to make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge in such manner as the University may determine.

[3] This refers to UK GDPR Article 9 (2) (j): processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

## HOW DO WE KEEP YOUR DATA SECURE?

The University is serious about keeping your data secure and protecting your rights to privacy. We don't ask you for data we don't need, and only give access to people who need to know. We think about security when planning projects, to make sure they work well. Our IT security team checks regularly to make sure we're taking the right steps. For more details see our security webpages.

## HOW DO WE TRANSFER YOUR DATA SAFELY INTERNATIONALLY?

If your data is stored or processed outside the UK, we follow legal requirements to make sure that the same level of privacy rules still apply.

## HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP YOUR DATA?

The University has rules in place for how long research data can be kept when the research project is finished. For this project, data will be kept for a minimum of 10 years.

## WHAT RIGHTS DO YOU HAVE IN RELATION TO YOUR DATA?

You have rights over your data. This sheet explains how you can stop participating in the study, and what will happen to your data if you do. This information is in the section "Do I have to take part?"

If you want to get a copy of your data, or talk to us about any other rights, please contact us using the details below.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns about how your data is being processed, please contact:

- **Researcher:**
  - Stewart Jones (sj1341@york.ac.uk).
- **Supervisors:**
  - Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk).
  - Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk).

If you have further questions, the University's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@york.ac.uk or by writing to: **Data Protection Officer, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD.**

## RIGHT TO COMPLAIN

If you are unhappy with how the University has handled your personal data, please contact our Data Protection Officer using the details above, so that we can try to put things right.

If you are unhappy with our response, you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office by post to **Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF** or by phone on **0303 123 1113**.

# Appendix F: Participant Consent Form – Interviews

## SCREEN INDUSTRY: THEORETICAL PROCESS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (ANONYMOUS INTERVIEWS)

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES (ACT)**

**DEPARTMENT:** Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media (TFTI)

**PROJECT TITLE:** Screen Industry: Theoretical Process Management Framework

**RESEARCHER:** Stewart Jones (#207050509) (sj1341@york.ac.uk)

**SUPERVISORS:** Dr. Peter Merrington (peter.merrington@york.ac.uk), Dr. Bob Townley (bob.townley@york.ac.uk)

Thank you for your interest in this University of York PhD research study. Your responses will have a significant impact on the findings and conclusions of the investigation whereby we aim to create a theoretical framework for the management of processes in the screen industry, including those in film, television, documentaries, commercials, and/or videogames.

| **Please read the following statements carefully and tick the appropriate box:** | **YES** | **NO** |
|---|---|---|
| I have read the information sheet about this project | ☐ | ☐ |
| I agree to take part in this project | ☐ | ☐ |
| I consent to being interviewed for this project | ☐ | ☐ |
| I consent to the interview being video recorded | ☐ | ☐ |
| I consent to the interview being audio recorded | ☐ | ☐ |
| I understand my right to withdraw and/or have my data destroyed | ☐ | ☐ |
| I consent to being anonymously quoted via a pseudonym or similar method | ☐ | ☐ |
| I am over the age of 18 | ☐ | ☐ |

Participant Name: _____

Researcher Name: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher Signature: _____

Date: _____

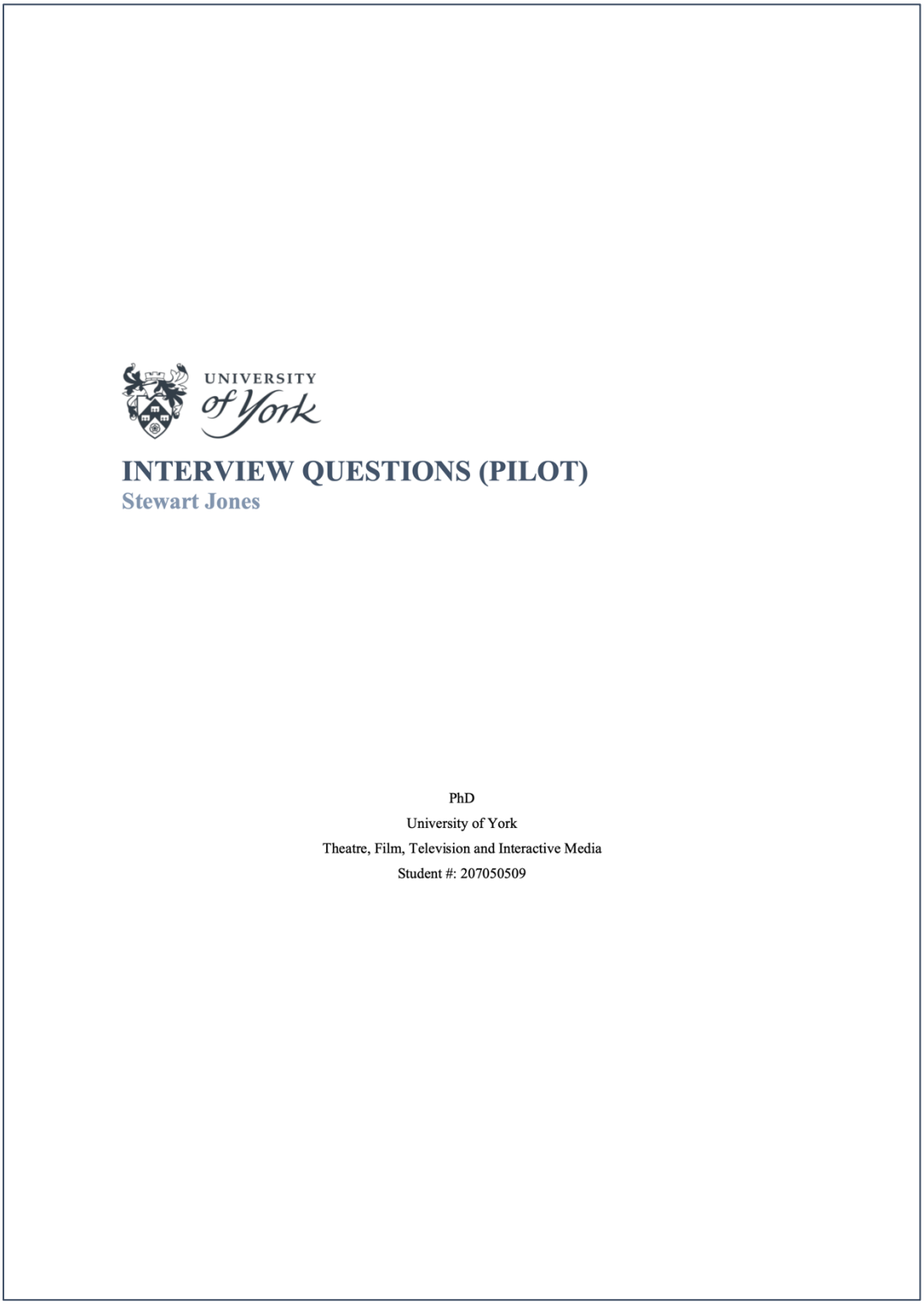
Date: _____

If you wish to be informed about the outcomes of this research, please provide your email address:

_____

# Appendix G: Interview Questions

## Pilot Interview Questions



UNIVERSITY of York

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (PILOT)**

**Stewart Jones**

PhD
University of York
Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media
Student #: 207050509

# INTRODUCTION

These interview questions have been formulated by using the research questions as a fundamental base while consideration has been made to include specific and core elements found in the survey questions. Interviews are semi-structured, whereby the main focus will be to answer the questions outlined in this paper while giving the freedom and opportunity to the interviewee to explore additional topics that may be useful to the research. There are a total of 10 main questions, numbered 1 to 10.

A round of 4 "Pilot Interviews" will be processed to gather data on each question and to asses if the line of questioning will be beneficial to the research, or if improvements can be made.

Each interview will be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes.

## SCRIPTED INTRODUCTION

Hello, and thank you for agreeing and consenting to be part of this research.

My name is Stewart Jones and I am a PhD researcher currently exploring process management frameworks within the Screen Industries at the University of York, in the United Kingdom. The purpose of this study is to investigate, identify, and expand upon established project management and working methodologies within the film, television, and videogame sectors. Your views and opinions are incredibly important to this research and supply some of the primary data and information which will be used within the study.

Your responses are treated in the strictest confidence and any information you provide will be handled in accordance within the guidelines outlined within the Participant Information Sheet. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may end your participation at any time, and/or choose not to answer specific questions, but your complete participation enhance the accuracy and results of the collected research data.

This interview session will take no longer than 90 minutes.

As we've already discussed, this will be a recorded session that will be held only for the purposes of this research, and if you could just confirm that you're happy for me to continue to record our interview that would be great.

Thank you.

## QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries, and what do you do?
2. Which phase(s) of production do you work in?
3. How many projects have you participated in?
4. How long does a project usually last?
5. Can you describe the working environments of these projects?
6. How many hours per day do you work, and do you ever have to work overtime?
7. How are projects managed, and how are tasks and activities distributed and monitored?
8. Is there any specific software that you use for project management or activity/task tracking?
9. What would you say is the most problematic aspect of your job or the Screen Industries from your experience?
10. Have you had any other jobs outside of the Screen Industries?

# Final Interview Questions

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Stewart Jones**

PhD
University of York
Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media
Student #: 207050509

# INTRODUCTION

These interview questions have been formulated by using the research questions as a fundamental base while consideration has been made to include specific and core elements found in the survey questions. Interviews are semi-structured, whereby the main focus will be to answer the questions outlined in this paper while giving the freedom and opportunity to the interviewee to explore additional topics that may be useful to the research. There are a total of 10 main questions, numbered 1 to 10, with options of branching dialogue, labelled a, b, c, etc., if the interviewee displays interest or knowledge in those areas.

Each interview will be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes.

## SCRIPTED INTRODUCTION

Hello, and thank you for agreeing and consenting to be part of this research.

My name is Stewart Jones and I am a PhD researcher currently exploring process management frameworks within the Screen Industries at the University of York, in the United Kingdom. The purpose of this study is to investigate, identify, and expand upon established project management and working methodologies within the film, television, and videogame sectors. Your views and opinions are incredibly important to this research and supply some of the primary data and information which will be used within the study.

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This interview session will take no longer than 60 minutes.

As we've already discussed, this will be a recorded session that will be held only for the purposes of this research, and if you could just confirm that you're happy for me to continue to record our interview that would be great.

Thank you.

## QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries, and what do you do?
    a. Push question for more information, if unusual!
    b. Which sector do you work in?
    c. Where is your work predominantly located?

2. Which phase(s) of production do you work in?
    a. Which do you find most rewarding?
    b. Which do you find most troublesome/difficult?
    c. Have you worked in other sectors or phases of the Screen Industries?

3. How many projects have you participated in?
    a. >1: How similar or different are they?
    b. Which was your favourite project?

4. How long does a project usually last?
    a. Are you actively involved in the project during the whole duration?
    b. In your experience, what kind of things are likely to cause delays?

5. Can you describe the working environments of these projects?
    a. Does it work well?
    b. What could be done to make these environments better?
    c. How many people?
    d. Would you describe it as diverse and multicultural?

6. How many hours per day do you work, and do you ever have to work overtime?
    a. Do you think that this is too many hours to work?
    b. If a lot: Have you any idea as to why there are so many hours and so much overtime?

7. How are projects managed, and how are tasks and activities distributed and monitored?
    a. Would you say that everything is structured and scheduled with clear, planned goals, and objectives?
    b. Do you always know what your responsibilities are?

8. Is there any specific software that you use for project management or activity/task tracking?
    a. No: Have you used any programs in the past that might be helpful?
    b. Yes: Are these systems sufficient, and do you have any ideas for better solutions?

9. What would you say is the most problematic aspect of your job or the Screen Industries from your experience?
    a. How is communication in the industry?

b. Is there interference from any outside sources, like clients or managers/executives?
c. In your opinion, what do you think could be done to help improve your work/job?

10. Have you had any other jobs outside of the Screen Industries?
    a. Yes: Does any of your experience from outside of the industry help your job now?
        i. Yes: Are there any similarities in how projects are managed inside and outside of the Screen Industries?
    b. Finally, do you have any thoughts that could help workflow in the industry? Could there be a framework in place that could help with the management of Screen Industry projects?

# Appendix H: Collected Data

## Survey Responses

| How old are you? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Less than 30 years* | *30 - 40* | *41 - 50* | *51 - 60* | *Over 60 years* |
| 0 | 92 | 178 | 95 | 82 | 56 |

| Where are you located? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Asia* | *Europe* | *Other* | *UK / Ireland* | *USA / Canada* |
| 9 | 76 | 110 | 74 | 106 | 128 |
| **Text responses to 'Other'.** | | | | | |
| *Australia* | 4 | *Japan* | 3 | *South Africa* | 1 |
| *China* | 1 | *Korea* | 1 | *Thailand* | 4 |
| *Egypt* | 2 | *Nepal* | 1 | *UK/Europe/USA* | 4 |
| *India* | 3 | *New Zealand* | 2 | *UK/USA* | 1 |
| *Ireland and canada* | 1 | *Singapore* | 3 | *Worldwide* | 3 |
| *(blank)* | 90 | | | | |

| Which sector do you predominantly work in within the Screen Industries? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single-Sector | | | | | |
| *Film* | *Television* | *Commercials* | *Documentaries* | *Videogames* | *Other* |
| 47 | 43 | 41 | 26 | 46 | 31 |
| Multi-Sector | | | | | |
| *Film* | *Television* | *Commercials* | *Documentaries* | *Videogames* | *Other* |
| 59 | 54 | 42 | 37 | 38 | 39 |
| **Text responses to 'Other'.** | | | | | |
| *animated content* | 1 | *Film trailers* | 1 | *Theme Park Graphics* | 1 |
| *Animation* | 2 | *Interactive media for kids* | 1 | *Theme Park Interactive Media* | 1 |
| *animation, vfx, virtual reality* | 1 | *Live broadcast* | 3 | *VFX* | 2 |
| *AR/VR* | 1 | *Mobile games* | 3 | *Virtual reality* | 2 |
| *AR/VR/XR* | 1 | *Movie trailers* | 1 | *VR/AR/XR* | 1 |
| *Buyers/Sales* | 1 | *Music Videos, Fashion Videos, Dance Videos* | 1 | *XR* | 4 |
| *Documentary* | 1 | *Sports broadcasting* | 1 | *(blank)* | 81 |

| In which stage(s) of production do you work? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Development* | *Pre-Production* | *Production* | *Post-Production* | *Distribution/Exhibition* |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 182 | 254 | 463 | 270 | 168 |
| * Combined totals from single and multi-sector. | | | | | |

| **How long have you been involved with the Screen Industries?** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Less than 1 year* | *1 year to 3 years* | *3 years to 5 years* | *5 years to 10 years* | *Over 10 years* |
| 1 | 39 | 74 | 88 | 121 | 179 |

| **How many projects have you worked on in your career?** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *1 - 5 projects* | *11 - 20 projects* | *6 - 10 projects* | *21 - 50 projects* | *Over 50 projects* |
| 0 | 96 | 88 | 73 | 133 | 113 |

| **What is the average duration of the projects that you work on?** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Days or weeks* | *1 to 6 months* | *7 to 12 months* | *1 to 3 years* | *Over 3 years* |
| 2 | 86 | 128 | 109 | 120 | 58 |

| **How many people are in the organization you work for? (Number of employees/contractors/freelancers, etc.)** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *0 to 10 people* | *11 to 50 people* | *51 to 100 people* | *101 to 250 people* | *Over 250 people* |
| 4 | 106 | 78 | 148 | 94 | 73 |

| **How many people do you usually work with? (In your specific department/group)** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *Just You* | *1 to 5 people* | *6 to 10 people* | *11 to 25 people* | *Over 25 people* |
| 1 | 50 | 136 | 140 | 95 | 77 |

| **My job . . .** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **. . . allows me the freedom to make decisions and decide how I do my work.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 4 | 29 | 51 | 91 | 170 | 158 |
| **. . . allows me to determine my own method of working and the order in which I carry our my work.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 4 | 52 | 66 | 103 | 155 | 123 |
| **. . . allows me to determine my own working hours, including my start and leave times and/or remote working.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 4 | 180 | 135 | 66 | 69 | 49 |
| **. . . makes me accountable for the standard and completion of my work.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 37 | 43 | 53 | 167 | 197 |
| **. . . is the same on every project, although there are slight differences in content.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 4 | 111 | 122 | 61 | 123 | 82 |
| **. . . has clearly set tasks, with levels of importance, and there are no conflicting demands.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 5 | 102 | 112 | 73 | 151 | 60 |
| **. . . encourages innovation and creativity in all of the tasks that I am assigned.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 4 | 49 | 56 | 80 | 184 | 127 |
| **. . . has little to no interference from external sources (clients/managers) when getting my tasks completed.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 6 | 55 | 165 | 76 | 160 | 41 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **On projects . . .** | | | | | |
| **. . . teamwork is critical with each team member carefully selected and they are dedicated to the project success.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 6 | 37 | 37 | 51 | 161 | 211 |
| **. . . communication between teams and departments is effective and conflicts are resolved in constructive ways.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly Disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 6 | 52 | 136 | 65 | 132 | 112 |
| **. . . understanding of project management methodologies/techniques and tools are important for the project success.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 5 | 53 | 44 | 49 | 106 | 246 |
| **. . . everything is structured and scheduled fairly, distributed correctly, and content is accurate with clear objectives.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 5 | 44 | 166 | 104 | 109 | 75 |
| **. . . everything is managed effectively with planned goals and milestones to determine current project success/journey.** | | | | | |
| *(blank)* | *Strongly disagree* | *Somewhat disagree* | *Neither agree nor disagree* | *Somewhat agree* | *Strongly agree* |
| 5 | 42 | 158 | 83 | 142 | 73 |

| Where did you find this survey? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *(blank)* | *A Screen Guild* | *A Union* | *Other* |
| 22 | 95 | 82 | 67 |

| From your experience, what do you think could be improved with the leadership and management of projects in the Screen Industries? |
|---|
| A basic understanding of scheduling and the impact it has on departments, coupled with actual concern for the wellbeing of those doing the work. |
| A completed script and a shooting schedule are completed and locked in once we start shooting. |
| A fuller understanding for all parties. |
| Access to industry standards - or any kind of standards at all |
| Actual management processse |
| An agreed on best practice that people of all experience can agree on. I find a lot of well managed projects are undone by a lead creative who deviates from schedule because they 'trust their gut' which causes avoidable mistakes that compound. A visual schedule with milestones does help- but there's an issue with impatience that persists so it's always quite hard to stick to. |
| Be aware of how changes affect everyone in the production |
| Be honest with the budget |
| Better communication with all crew members |
| Better communication with staff of all levels |
| Better distribution of management |
| Better instruction from end user |
| Better knowledge |
| Better planning, most of what I deal with are issues that could have been handled earlier in the pipeline but leaders kick the can down the road. "Fix it in post" can save a bit of time and money on set, but you do that too many times and now Post has to deal with more than they originally signed up for but have to do and it takes time and money that are often not available. |
| Better understanding of creative leaders |
| better understanding of mine and my teams jobs |
| Better understanding of time restraints |
| Better understanding of what I do |
| Better understanding on all parts and freedom to express the ideas in each project. |
| Clear communication on what is expected throughout the day for example how many shots will each scene take and what are they so we can get ahead. |
| Clearer goals given to all departments, more care taken and consideration given for departments that work the longest hours. |
| Clearly articulated deadlines and milestones from clients, adequate pre production periods and lead time for requests, less "fix it in post" mentality from clients and producers/better client expectation management from producers |
| Clients need points of approval - with accountability for change |
| Collaborate better |
| communication |
| Communication, feedback and patience |
| Communication! Proper training for inexperienced producers |
| Crew health and safety |
| Discussions and planning |
| Each decision has asn affect on multiple people |
| Education |

| |
|---|
| Egos need to be kept out of the equation. Good luck with that! |
| Enough time allocated for jobs to be completed properly. |
| Every show feels the need to reinvent the wheel, and sometimes those that oversee the work pipeline have very little experience. |
| Everyone needs clear goals and to be on the same page. Often goals or visions for the future might conflict. |
| Everything |
| experience  at the top |
| Fairness |
| Give to everyone percentages to have a leverage to work better |
| Greater empowerment to speak and contribute for more junior members of the team... to a point |
| Greater inter departmental communication |
| Hard to suggest a workable solution here. Primarily because my experience is in working for small or medium size independent companies, in which owners are to differing degrees always involved in production, so there is no such thing as a learning curve. If a project fails, by going over budget or not being recommissioned, then owners feel it in their pocket, and repercussions for freelancers can be swift and immediate. There is no room to learn from mistakes. And from the owner/manager perspective I do understand why that is, but from a creative perspective it's wholly counterproductive. I guess to me the solution would be about placing greater emphasis on a "follow me" leadership style, rather than the default "you'll go where I tell you" one that most managers take. |
| Having a more democratic system of people being hired, managed, and disciplined. All the power remains at the top with one individual, and if they lack emotional intelligence, it trickles down quickly and affects morale. |
| I work primarily on commercials. Sometimes a commercial is shot in one day, meaning cast and crew have to sometimes work an especially long day. The project could be stretched out to another day. This would allow cast and crew to get rested. I would guess for budget reasons they do not do this. I also think there could a project management tool used in the industry. Requirements come from many people and in my experience there is a lot of back and forward calls and messaging to organise shoots. |
| Improved communication and transparency on workload and any changes to the workday / schedule |
| It is becoming apparent that quality of the top tier, or producers is spread thin. Experience is lacking and trusting crew is diminished. I’m not sure how it can be improved. It seems that, with the volume of work, the lack of good production people is apparent |
| Knowing more about what we really do |
| Knowledge of how teams work together |
| Leadership needs to have an extremely clear idea of what they want to see in the finished production |
| Leadership should be more aware of the actual process of production |
| Less managers managing, more skilled staff |
| longer pre-production times, hiring more qualified UPMs |
| Management needs more realistic expectations of manpower, budgets and time required to complete their requests |
| Managing workload, being more open to working from home (better since covid), realistic expectations re what can be achieved in a set time/ by a set person/s/ within a set budget. |
| More active specific training for each department |
| More care given to scheduling longer days/departments |
| More communication between the relevant departments. Bringing post production people onboard during pre production. |
| More prep |
| More time- an understanding of the work that goes into completion and success of project |
| More understanding of other peoples culture |
| More understanding of the work we do |

| |
|---|
| Moving towards being completely digital, and eliminating paper processes. We're close to being there, but some people are still stuck in their ways, and want to continue doing things like they did it pre-pandemic. |
| Much better communication between pre- and post-production; involving post specialists in the pre process; managers who thoroughly understand the creative and technical requirements |
| no idea |
| No idea. |
| Often non-creatives will be involved which screws with planning |
| People with more experience in key roles |
| Product scoping and schedules/budgeting |
| Real knowledge of project management in other industries like cars would be beneficiasl overall |
| Same shit, different project |
| Speaking from Camera Department perspective it would be good to have more involvement in the pre-production stage of the project for camera assistants. For example Focus Pullers attending recces. |
| Talent should not have as much control as they do |
| teach basic management skills |
| The biggest problem in this industry (and probably all industries) is that the people who make decisions about how workers do their job, have usually never done that job before. |
| Time estimation based on what is achievable in a 9-5 workday and Monday to Friday work week, and not relying on compulsory unpaid overtime to complete assigned tasks |
| Too many feedback rounds |
| too many manager layering |
| Training for HODs in management workflows would help. There is a lot a micromanaging, clearly defined roles would help |
| Training in each department skilling |
| Understand that changes have big impacts |
| Understandiung of the full production process |
| Web TV productions, digitisation of archives. |

| **In your opinion, what part and/or stage of your job is the most problematic and impacts your output and performance in your role?** |
|---|
| Allow creative outputs with changes without team disruption |
| Be honest with the budget |
| Better communication |
| Better critique with priorities |
| Budget |
| Budget issues |
| Budgetary constrains |
| Changes at last minute |
| Changing decisions |
| Choices made during Production (or poor planning during Pre-Production) creates problems and more work during Post-Production. |
| Client’s opinions about art |
| Clients/Producers who "visit" and have input while they are not actually involved in the production process. |
| communication |
| Communication |
| Communication on a cultural level |
| Communication problems and unrealistic expectations when discussing and delivering scope of work |
| Decision makers need to make decisions |

| |
|---|
| Delivering shots- the getting creative and technical sign off can be very subjective |
| Development and implementation |
| Director changes |
| Fairness on payments |
| Feedback rounds and critique |
| Funding |
| Funding and confirmation of funding. |
| Give clear rounds of feedback, further chasnges require more money and time |
| Give decision makers the power to decide and not be overruled |
| I cannot begin to do any part of my job, until people turn in start paperwork and timecards to me. If they do not do their start work prior to their first day of work, it can become problematic. If they wait until the end of their first week, and turn in their start paperwork, and weekly timecard at the same time, I have to take the time to process the start work (which could have been done earlier in the week) and I won't be able to start on paying their timecard until later the next week. If I have a crew of 250 people that all wait to do the first step of getting paid, then it puts me behind in paying them. |
| idiots promoted to producer |
| independent features that hire guild members but do not want to perform guild obligations |
| Keep tasks on track |
| Knowledge and training - not enough of it |
| Lack of capacity to run our own department. Overridden by lack of experience and distrust |
| Lack of decisiveness |
| Last minute change of plan for the next shot undoing the work we've just done |
| Last minute changes in shooting schedules. |
| Last minute changes of script, schedule or director requirements/requests. An AD (usually a 1st AD) or Producer would be more effective if they stepped in between lower ADs and Director's last minute requests. |
| Limit feedback |
| Long work hours. |
| Make clients accountable |
| Management hiring me to do my job the way they want me to do it, but then not giving me the tools and/or manpower to do that job, and still expecting it to get done. |
| More practical scheduling |
| Non-creatives should stay in their lane' |
| Not having enough prep time with the equipment in the camera rental house |
| Overservicing clients with high-fidelity intermediate results, which require extensive reverse-engineering when making amends, and managers afraid to pitch low fidelity work to clients, putting enormous pressure on production to maintain the illusion that even our 'rough drafts' are near perfect |
| Post production is often challenging because you work with people who are not familar with the project or haven't been involved until the end. |
| Pre-production |
| Pre-production is by far the most difficult, especially when working with new teams. |
| Pre-production time line. About 1/10th the adequate time to communicate with client about their needs and expectations and planning the deliverables is what is usually budgeted |
| Prep before the shoot |
| Prep is wasted due to missing scripts and schedule. This means no one can deliver their best and work becomes a guessing game, more pressurised |
| Preproduction |
| Preproduction and production not understanding post production |
| Prioritize needed changes and edits rather than just somebodys rabdom ideas |
| Producers changing their minds |

| |
|---|
| producers trying to save money only to cost them selves more |
| Production |
| Scheduling and pre production tends to have quite a narrow scope with a view to servicing a limited number of departments, these shortcomings or nearsightedness is made manifest during production withe impractical schedules, locations etc. impacting productivity |
| Screenplay edits on-set |
| Script changes |
| Standard practice is 11 hour working days which excludes travel time |
| Tech scouts and pre pro meeting the day I need to set up all pickups. Unrealistic timelines. |
| The budgets are too small for show creators' expectations, and the schedules are too tight. There's too much outsourcing, and it often doesn't work. Now there's rumors of outsourcing storyboards, an integral part of the process which failed miserably the last time it happened. It's far too much work  cleaning up the mess from outsourced work due to underbidding and terrible schedules. |
| the criticism that prevails my work when it is unnecessary |
| The hours and the schedule changing and being able to manage child care appropriately |
| The hours we are expected to work |
| The most problematic part of my job is the small stretch of time between the tech scout and shoot day, productions can be dishonest about what the scene involves and make changes to the scenes and that puts our property in a position of liability |
| Tied to the above, the most challenging part of the process is ongoing feedback during production (both from owners and network execs). For example, it's very often  more useful to watch something that's not working, in order to fix and make better, than something that is 'kinda' working but boring. With new series or one-offs, you're essentially building a new car from scratch, with fresh of the drawing board schematics. If it isn't road-worthy at rough cut, the feedback is all too often 'what the fuck is this?'. Production should be a fear-free, ongoing conversation right up to delivery - all too often it's a slamfest, that forces people into indecision. And it doesn't need to be. |
| Time |
| Too many people having "ideas" |
| Under crewing |
| Usually marketing for theatrical or streaming becomes the biggest problem point. |
| When decisions are made they are stick to |
| When I have a problem employee that I have legitimate rights to fire is blocked by an unreasonable supervisor, and creating a toxic work environment. |
| When talking with clients that don't have open minds but they rather do sth very simple |
| Working Hours |
| Working hours and daily job duration |

## Pillars, Themes, and Codes

| **LEADERSHIP** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Contracts | Management | Personnel |
| *Freelance* | *Authority* | *Accountability* |
| *Network* | *Meetings* | *Collaboration* |
| *Work Hours* | *Responsibility* | *Team* |
| **PROCESS** | | |
| Decisions | Technology | Workflow |
| *Deadlines* | *Software* | *Development* |
| *Productivity* | *Solutions* | *Schedule* |
| *Results* | *Systems* | *Tasks* |
| **VALUE** | | |
| Communication | Education | Impact |
| *Access* | *Expertise* | *Autonomy* |
| *Comprehension* | *Knowledge* | *Efficiency* |
| *Interpretation* | *Understanding* | *Output* |

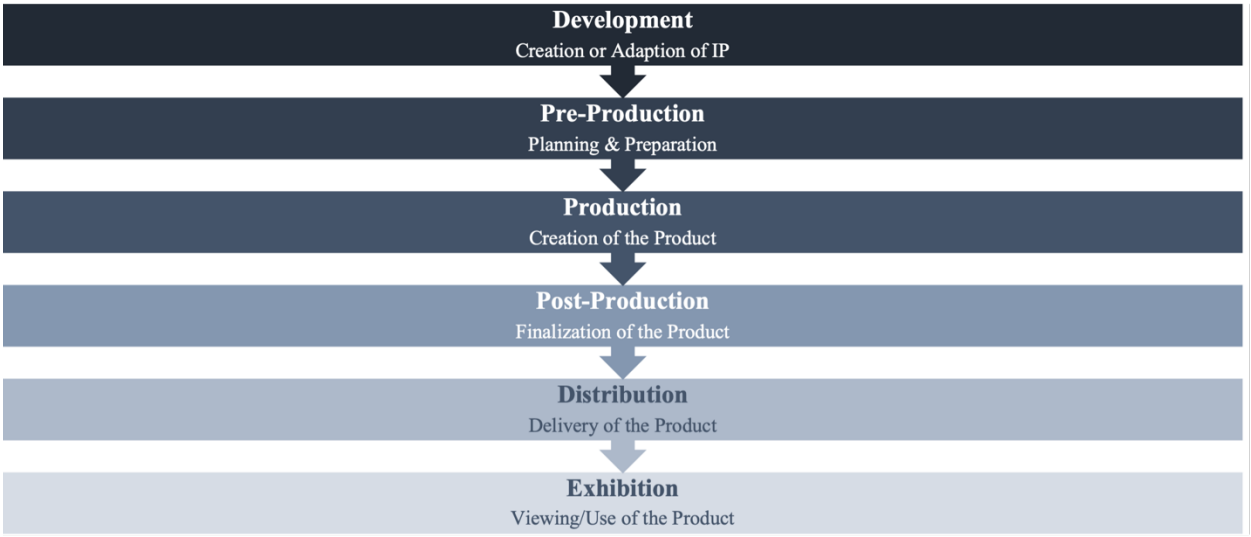
# Appendix I: SERPENT Framework Implementation and Operations

## Foundational Pillars

| LEADERSHIP | PROCESS | VALUE |
|---|---|---|
| •Contracts<br>•Management<br>•Personnel | •Decisions<br>•Technology<br>•Workflow | •Communication<br>•Education<br>•Impact |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LEADERSHIP** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 1** | THEME | Contracts | CODES | Freelance. Network. Work Hours |
| | THEME | Management | CODES | Authority. Meetings. Responsibility. |
| | THEME | Personnel | CODES | Accountability. Collaboration. Team. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Leadership, built on the themes of Contracts, Management, and Personnel, focuses on the inimitable challenges of managing and leading creativity for people and productions. | | |
| **PROCESS** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 2** | THEME | Decisions | CODES | Deadlines. Productivity. Results. |
| | THEME | Technology | CODES | Software. Solutions. Systems. |
| | THEME | Workflow | CODES | Development. Schedule. Tasks. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Process includes themes of Decisions, Technology, and Workflow, directing attention to successful process management, which gives competitive advantage (CA) from operational effectiveness (OE) in the Screen Industries. | | |
| **VALUE** | | | | |
| **PILLAR 3** | THEME | Communication | CODES | Access. Comprehension. Interpretation. |
| | THEME | Education | CODES | Expertise. Knowledge. Understanding. |
| | THEME | Impact | CODES | Autonomy. Efficiency. Output. |
| | DESCRIPTION | Value offers Communication, Education, and Impact as its themes for contributing to understanding creative process operations while overcoming challenges and limitations. | | |

## Framework Implementation and Operations Applied to Production Phases



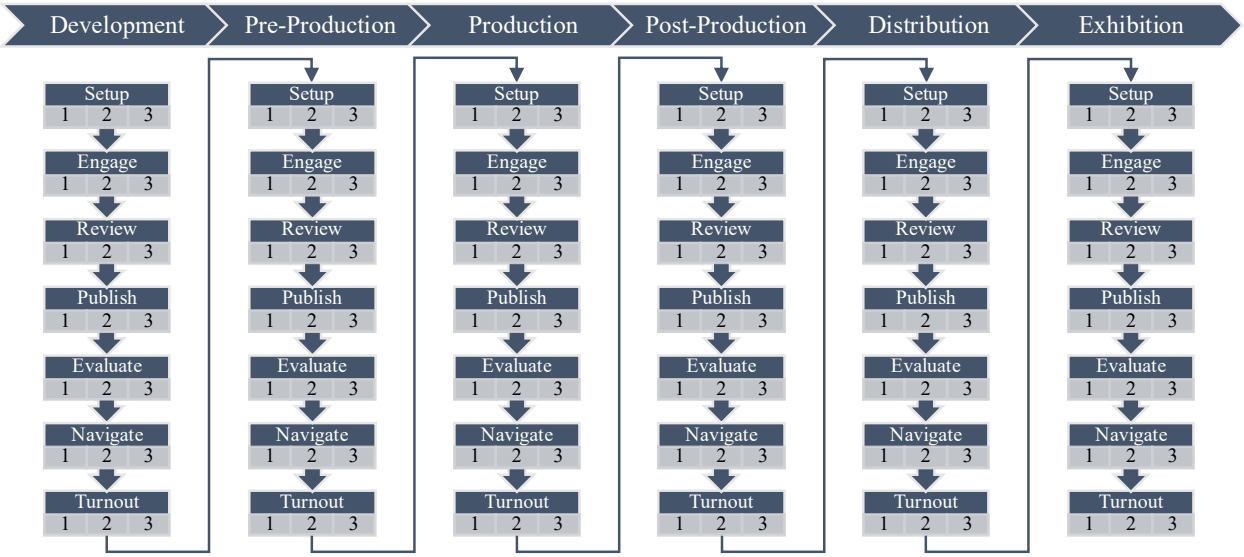

| | |
|---|---|
| **DEVELOPMENT** | Project Details |
| | Stakeholders |
| | Funding |
| **PRE-PRODUCTION** | Roadmap |
| | Schedule |
| | Budget |
| **PRODUCTION** | Execution |
| | Monitoring |
| | Adaption |
| **POST-PRODUCTION** | Execution |
| | Monitoring |
| | Adaption |
| **DISTRIBUTION** | Execution |
| | Monitoring |
| | Adaption |
| **EXHIBITION** | Reporting |
| | Post-Project-Review (PPR) |
| | Project Closure |

## SERPENT Workflow Stages

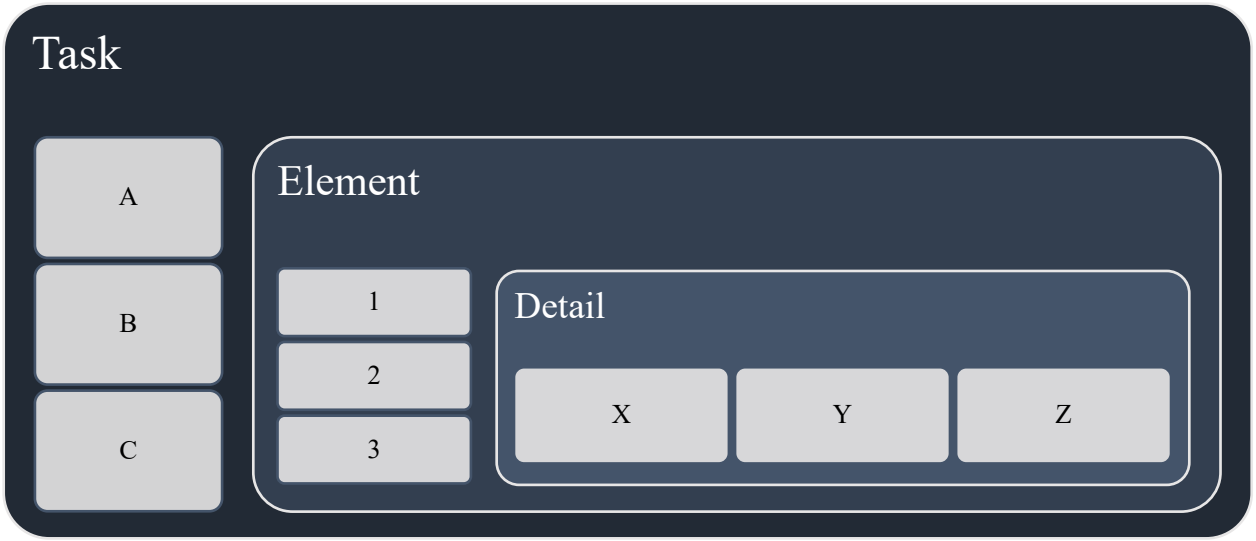

| The SERPENT Framework Workflow | | |
|---|---|---|
| S | Setup | The initialisation of a SERPENT Workflow. The **Setup** stage represents the beginning of any production phase that it is attached to and should have considerations that are in line with starting a project or progressing into a new phase using the SERPENT Framework and its associated structures (TED/PILLAR). |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| E | Engage | Engagement—where the workforce E**ngage** and execute their assignments—is a critical component where the majority of TED Processes will take place in a project. This stage contributes the main volume of work that will lead to project value, and leadership should allow for specialists to complete their tasks without interference to promote a *flow* state. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| R | Review | The **Review** stage allows leadership to review outputs from the **Engage** stage and approve or reject completed TED Processes. Rejection will require further engagement from specialist, which could affect project schedules. Approval will allow completed tasks to be published. |
| ↓ Forward or Reverse Direction ↑ | | |
| P | Publish | The **Publish** stage of a completed TED Process pushes the outputs to other departments and specialists so that they can start their assigned TED Process using assets that they were dependent upon. |
| ↓ Forward or Reverse Direction ↑ | | |

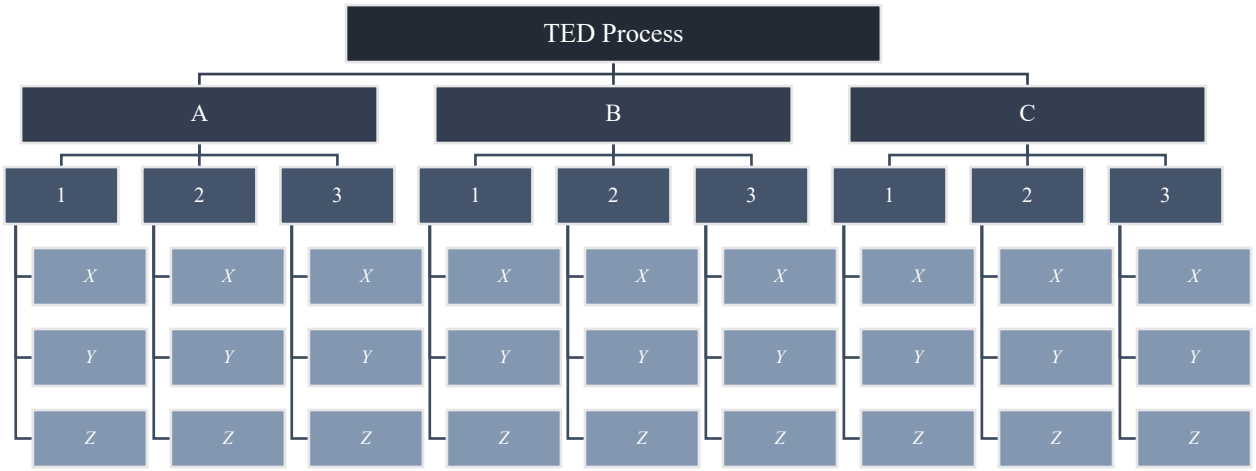
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E | Evaluate | Evaluating outputs should be a continuous cycle, however this stage allows for leadership and specialists to **Evaluate** completed TED Processes for their quality (including dependent TED Processes). Higher quality assets (outputs) add more value to a production, and it may be deemed necessary to send some lower quality outputs back for engagement, should timings and budgets allow. |
| ↓ Forward or Reverse Direction ↑ | | |
| N | Navigate | Upon passing evaluation, outputs are deemed fit for purpose and can then **Navigate** specific workflows and complex activities that are found within the Screen Industries' projects. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| T | Turnout | The final stage, **Turnout**, enables output to be turned out and signed off as completed. This is the point of no return, and any output released from this stage cannot be cycled back into the SERPENT Workflow. |
| ↓ Forward Direction Only ↓ | | |
| At each SERPENT Workflow stage, three TED Processes must be created and include attached PILLAR Operations. | | |

## The SERPENT Framework Applied to a Generic Screen Industries Project

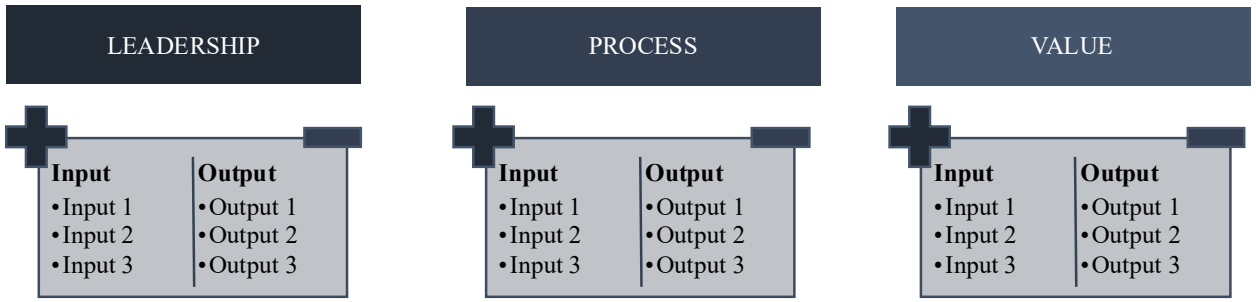


## TED Process Overview

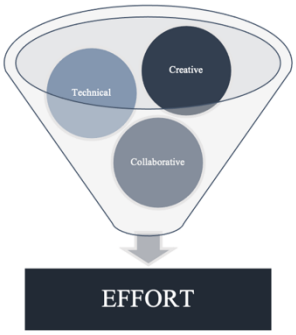



## PILLAR Process Overview



## Task Creation Using a Three-Stage Focus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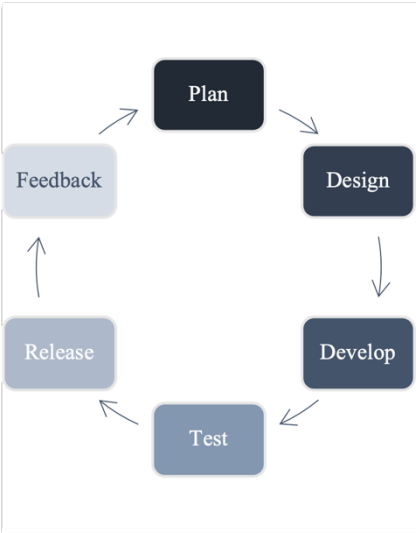
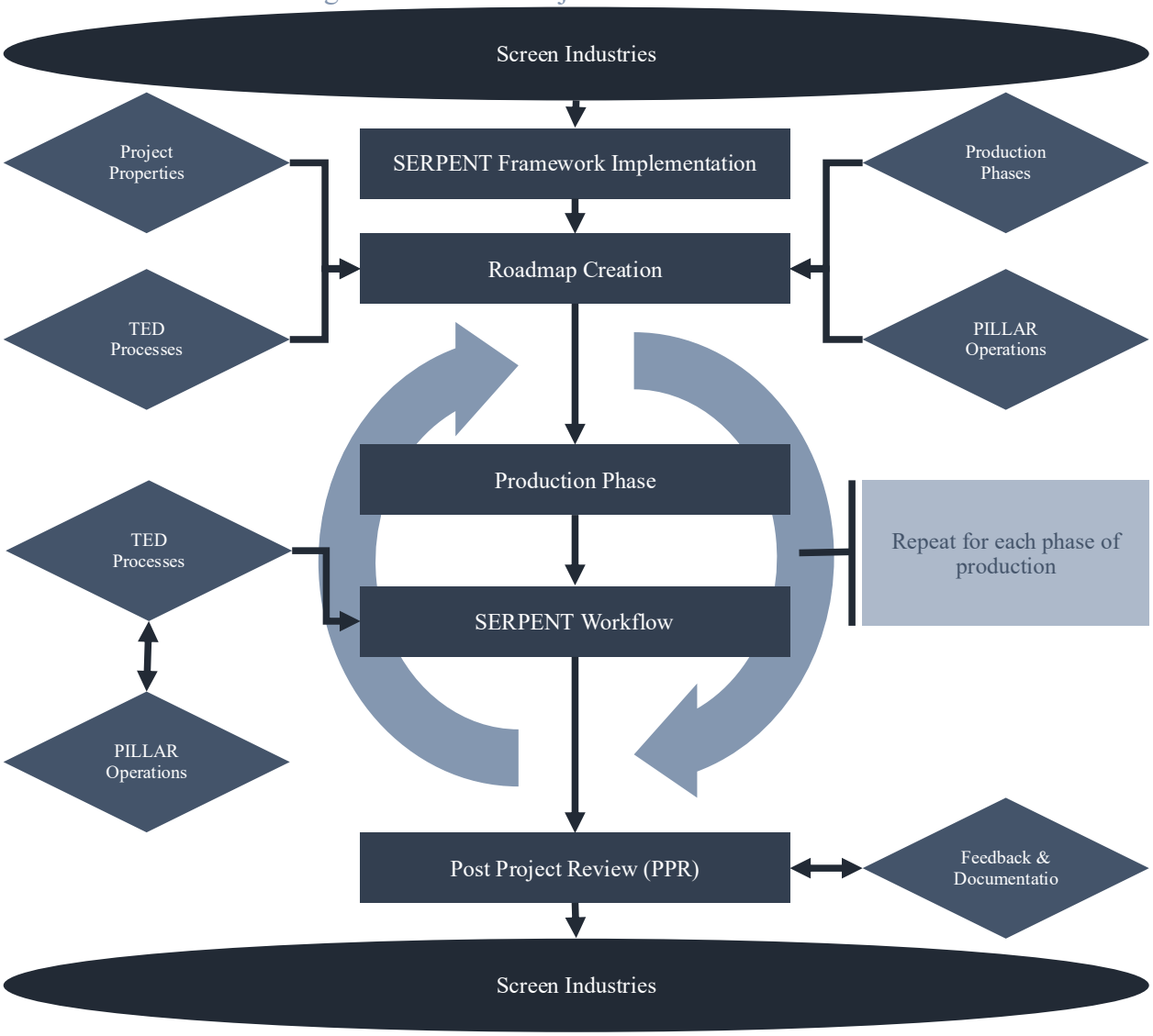


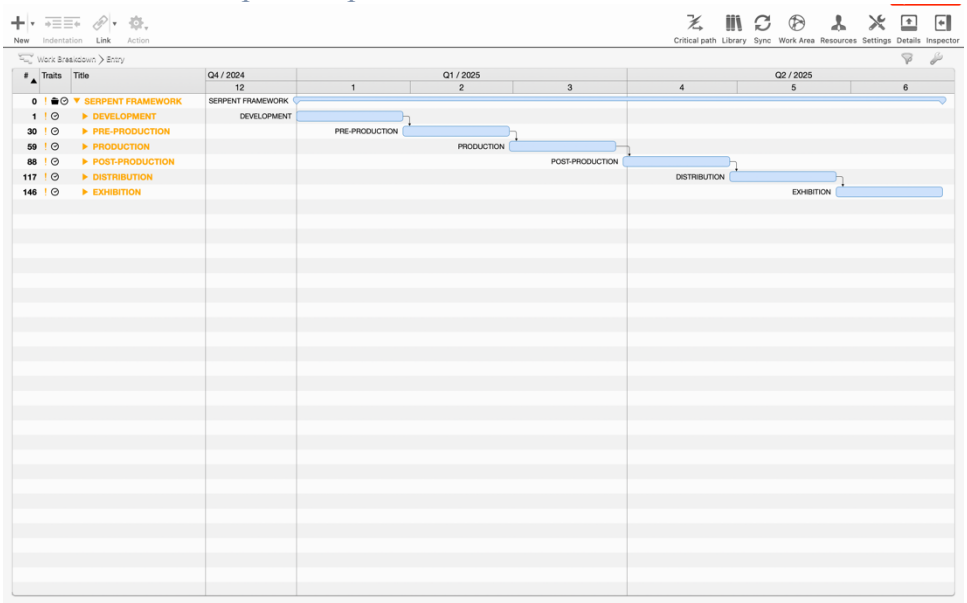
## SERPENT Framework Integration for New Projects/Productions



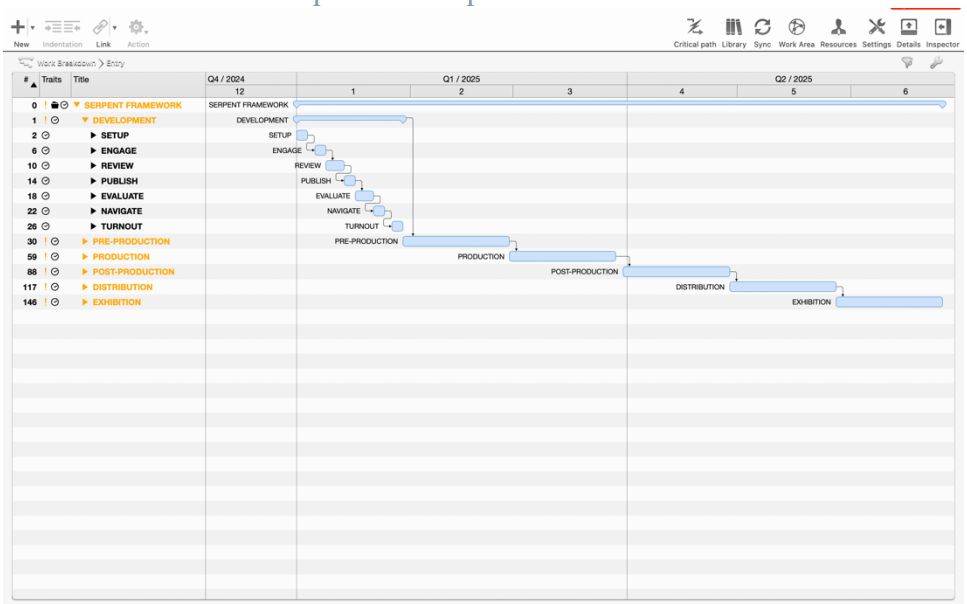
# Appendix J: SERPENT Framework Example Templates

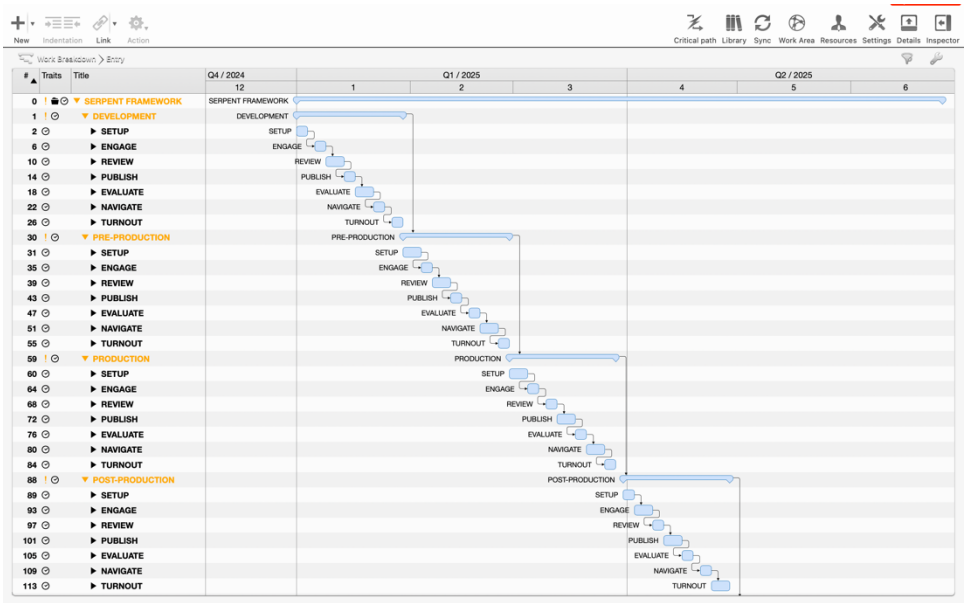
Templates can be created from existing projects and should be retained in Gantt chart form or similar, depending on the production needs. Here are several examples of templates using production phases.

## Basic Production Phase Example Template

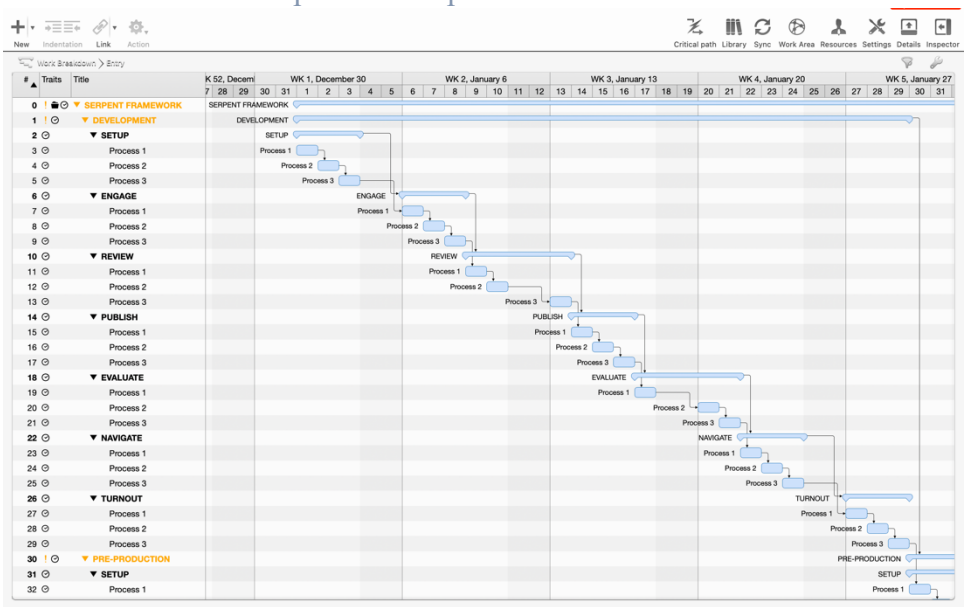



## Basic SERPENT Framework Example Roadmap



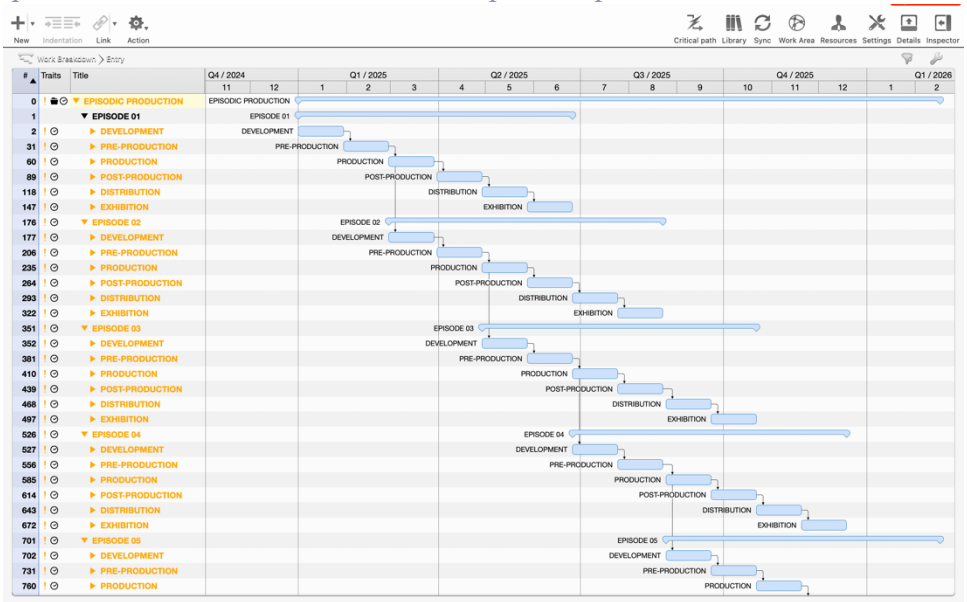



## Full SERPENT Framework Example Roadmap



# Appendix K: Serialised/Episodic SERPENT Framework Adaption

## Serialised/Episodic SERPENT Framework Example Template



# Index

This is a quick reference list for a glossary of important terms, abbreviations, and acronyms that appear throughout this PhD dissertation and its extended field of related interest.

| | |
|---|---|
| **3D** | Three Dimensional |
| **4Ts** | 1) Talent, 2) Tolerance, 3) Technology, 4) Trust |
| **AAR** | After Action Review |
| **ABC** | Activity-Based Costing |
| **AFI** | American Film Institute |
| **Agile** | A style of contemporary project management |
| **AI** | Artificial Intelligence |
| **ATL** | Above-the-line |
| **Autocratic Leadership** | A management style where one individual controls all the decisions and takes very little inputs from others |
| **BFI** | British Film Institute |
| **BPR** | Business Process Reengineering |
| **BTL** | Below-the-line |
| **Bureaucratic Leadership** | An efficient management style that follows a hierarchical structure where decision-making follows a clear chain of command based on established rules and regulations |
| **CA** | Competitive Advantage |
| **Call Sheet** | A call sheet is a term for the daily live-action filming schedule, using the director's shot list, the production schedule and other logistics considerations. |
| **CCPM** | Critical Chain Project Management |
| **Charismatic Leadership** | A concept of organisational leadership wherein the authority of the leader derives from the personal charisma an individual |
| **Contingency Management Theory** | Organisational theory that claims there is no best way to organise a corporation, to lead a company, or to make decisions. Instead, the optimal course of action is contingent (dependent) upon the internal and external situation |
| **Convergent Thinking** | Thinking and ideas focused on reaching one well-defined solution to a problem |
| **CPM** | Critical Path Method |
| **CSH** | Critical System Heuristics |
| **DCMS** | Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Deadlines** | A narrow field of time, or a particular point in time, by which an objective or task must be accomplished |
| **Democratic Leadership** | Also known as participative leadership or shared leadership, is a leadership style in which members of the group participate in the decision-making process |
| **DOOD** | Day Out of Days Report |
| **Divergent Thinking** | A thought process used to generate creative ideas by exploring many possible solutions |
| **DLC** | Downloadable Content |
| **DP** | Director of Photography |
| **ERP** | Enterprise Resource Planning |
| **Flow** | (Concept) A state of mind that occurs when a person is totally immersed in an activity |
| **Gantt Chart** | A bar chart that illustrates a project schedule, designed and popularized by Henry Gantt between the years 1910–1915 |
| **GDD** | Game Design Document |
| **HETV** | High-End Television |
| **HOD** | Head of Department |
| **I/O** | Input/Output |
| **IP** | Intellectual Property |
| **IPR** | Intellectual Property Rights |
| **IT** | Information Technology |
| **JIT** | Just-In-Time |
| **KM** | Knowledge Management |
| **Laissez-Faire Leadership** | A hands-off approach to leadership and gives others the freedom to make decisions |
| **Milestone** | Tools used in project management to mark specific points of importance along a project timeline |
| **MVP** | Minimum Viable Product |
| **NDA** | Non-Disclosure Agreement |
| **Nesta** | National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts |
| **OBS** | Organisational Breakdown Structure |
| **OE** | Operational Effectiveness |
| **OECD** | The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| **PERT** | Project Evaluation and Review Technique |
| **PILLAR** | Leadership, Process, Value |
| **PILLAR Operation** | PILLAR (Leadership, Process, Value) Input/Output |

| | |
|---|---|
| **PMBOK** | Project Management Body of Knowledge |
| **PMI** | Project Management Institute |
| **PMP** | Project Management Professional |
| **PoM** | Process of Management |
| **POV** | Point Of View |
| **PPR** | Post Project Review |
| **PPS** | Project Planning and Scheduling |
| **PRINCE2** | A structured project management method and practitioner certification programme |
| **PRMC** | Project Risk Management Control |
| **Project Management Triangle** | Also known as Triple Constraint, Iron Triangle, and Project Triangle, it is a model of the constraints in project management - time, cost, scope = quality of output |
| **R&D** | Research and Development |
| **RAM** | Responsibility Assignment Matrix |
| **RAPID** | Recommend, Agree, Perform, Input, Decide |
| **RBV** | Resource-Based View |
| **ROA** | Return on Assets |
| **ROI** | Return on Investment |
| **ROWE** | Results Only Work Environment |
| **SERPENT Framework** | Setup, Engage, Review, Publish, Evaluate, Navigate, Turnout |
| **Scientific Management Theory** | A theory of management that analyses and synthesises workflows |
| **Screen Industries** | Combined sectors of Film, Television, Commercials, Documentaries, and Videogames (including AR/VR/XR and interactive media) |
| **Scrum** | An agile team collaboration framework that prescribes for teams to break work into goals to be completed within time-boxed iterations, called sprints |
| **Servant Leadership** | A leadership philosophy in which the goal of the leader is to serve |
| **Shooting Script** | A version of a screenplay used during the production of a film that provides a plan for what footage to shoot to help tell the story. |
| **SME** | Small to medium-sized enterprises |
| **SMT** | Self-managed Team |
| **Sprint** | Time-boxed periods, during which a product owner, scrum master, and scrum team work to complete a specific product addition |
| **Stakeholders** | A party that has an interest in a company and can either affect or be affected by the business |
| **SWOT** | Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat |

| | |
|---|---|
| **TDABC** | Time Driven Activity-Based Costing |
| **TED Process** | Task, Element, Detail |
| **TQM** | Total Quality Management |
| **Transactional Leadership** | A type of leadership style that focuses on the exchange of skills, knowledge, resources, or effort between leaders and their subordinates |
| **Transformational Leadership** | A theory of leadership where a leader works with teams or followers beyond their immediate self-interests to identify needed change |
| **TV** | Television |
| **UNCTAD** | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| **UNESCO** | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| **VC** | Value-chain |
| **VFX** | Visual Effects |
| **Waterfall** | A style of traditional project management |
| **WBS** | Work Breakdown Structure |
| **WIPO** | World Intellectual Property Organisation |