

Human Resource Management in the Music Industry: Chances and Risks of New Platforms such as “SynchronStage”

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Science in

International Management

Submitted to Eva Aileen Jungwirth-Edelmann, MA

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

25.05.2017

Date

Abstract

Topic: Human Resource Management in the Music Industry: Chances and Risks of New Platforms such as “SynchronStage”.

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Content: This thesis investigates the topic of Human Resource Management (HRM) in the music industry, specifically looking at online HRM platforms and the entailed opportunities and challenges for both managers and musicians. The relevance why the researcher has decided to investigate the issue more closely derives from the small time frame of existing HR practices in the music industry and the increasing impact of technology on managerial duties.

For the purpose of this thesis, nine qualitative interviews were conducted by the researcher. One interview was held with a Viennese music manager and founder of the online HRM platform “SynchronStage” and eight interviews were conducted with professional musicians from various musical genres. The results from the interviews were afterwards compared to relevant literature, to display similarities and/or differences of Human Resource departments in the music industry to traditional HR departments.

The main results of the interviews revealed that online platforms such as “SynchronStage” can be more efficient than traditional HR departments based on the time and money that can be saved for managers. Flexibility and access to a broader market are the main advantages for musicians. A disadvantage, which was mentioned by musicians regarding online HR platforms, is the missing personal component, when everything is managed online. Lastly, managers in the music industry should have, besides traditional management skills, a profound musical understanding.

Supervisor: Eva Aileen Jungwirth-Edelmann, MA

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Motivation and Cognitive Interest

According to Alexis Jenkins “Music is the art of organizing tones, rhythms, tempos in a successive combination to create melodies and harmonies” (2013). Music is a major component of everyday life. Nowadays people listen to different kinds of music depending on their emotional status, which can lead to either a positive or a negative mood. It is proven that parts of the brain are affected when listening to music (Crouse, 2015). Music can increase people’s intelligence, as well as make people happier and more productive (Alban, n.d.). Over the years there have been many studies which tried to investigate how music affects the human mind. It can not only have a strong impact on listeners’ moods and feelings but can also improve the performance of employees in an organisation (Crouse, 2015). A study conducted by Mindlab International showed that nine out of ten workers performed their tasks better while listening to music. There are even certain music genres which are recommended for performing various jobs: listening to classical music helps workers when dealing with numbers while ambient music increases the accuracy of employees when solving equations (Davidson, 2016).

“The true beauty of music is that it connects people. It carries a message, and we, the musicians, are the messengers” (Rob Ayers).

The researcher’s interest in choosing this particular topic derived from the long experience of being a musician. Playing drums since the age of six as well as being in several bands increased the researcher’s experience in the music business. The cooperation with music labels led to an intensive contact with Human Resource managers in the music industry in Austria. According to De Magalhaes (2015) the concept of Human Resource departments in the music industry began to evolve in the 1990s. Before that, there were mainly a few A&R (Artist and Repertoire) scouts in charge of finding new talents and bands. Technological advances made it easier for musicians to produce and record CD’s for less cost and in larger quantities. Therefore, to meet the rising demand, major labels transformed their A&R departments into Human Resource departments.

As the concept of Human Resource Management (short: HRM) in the music industry is relatively new, there is a need to investigate the methods in this particular area more closely.

Due to the increasing importance of technology in businesses there has been a shift from traditional HR (Human Resource) Management practices to a more modern approach (Bodi, n.d.).

With the advances in the computer technology as well as the internet, online HRM platforms began increasingly gaining importance. Whereas traditional managers were confronted with a lot of time-intensive paperwork, online platforms provide the possibility to clearly structure and store the data online. These advances can help a company to save time as well as money in the long run (Lewis, n.d.).

1.2 Outline of the Research: Aim, Questions, Hypothesis and its Limitations

The primary aim of this thesis is to investigate Human Resource Management and the corresponding practices, techniques and methods in the music industry. The thesis will give a clear insight into the practices of HR managers to provide a better understanding for HR departments when it comes to hiring, firing and working with musicians. Secondary research will focus on traditional Human Resource Management as well as Human Resource Management in the music industry to display similarities and/or differences.

Furthermore, new possibilities for HR managers will be displayed which have evolved due to technological changes, i.e. online Human Resource Management platforms. Advantages as well as disadvantages concerning these new platforms will be examined and outlined.

This thesis also aims to identify whether Human Resource practices differ in the music industry or whether the practices are the same between different genres.

The research questions identified are:

1. What is the role of HRM in the music industry?
2. How are HR departments structured in the music industry?
3. How does the HR department in the music industry differ from HR departments in non-music businesses?
4. Do HR managers in the music industry need a musical background?
5. Has music management changed in the last years and if yes, how?
6. Does music management differ in music genres?

The aim of these questions is to identify the tasks of HR managers in the music industry as well as comparing their structure to departments with a not musical background. Furthermore, the goal is to investigate risks and opportunities of online HRM platforms such as “SynchronStage” and whether these platforms provide all important HRM requirements. “SynchronStage” is an online HRM platform for classical musicians which was founded by Christian Buchmann. The platform will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 5. Lastly, the researcher examines if the platform “SynchronStage” can meet perceived services by musicians and if not, what needs to be done to meet them.

Based on these research questions, the resulting hypothesis is:

Online platforms such as “SynchronStage” can compete with traditional HRM practices to meet and satisfy the employee-employer relationship and be even more efficient.

The researcher is aware that this approach to gather and compare information can present possible limitations. Due to lack of time, only eight musicians have been interviewed. Therefore, musicians from different musical genres have been chosen to ensure a broad variety. The platform “SynchronStage” is unique in its creation which makes it difficult to find other HR experts with similar platforms to compare, which displays another limitation. In order to compensate this, the literature review will provide a clear insight to cover potential missing parts. Furthermore, the researcher is a musician himself, which might lead to a biased view.

For this reason, managers as well as musicians were involved in the study to create a clear and unbiased thesis.

Other limitations are the missing academic sources of Human Resource Management in the music industry, as well as the low rate of females involved in the thesis. Even though there might be different opinions as well as HR techniques in other countries, the researcher decided to limit this study to Austria.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1: The first chapter covers the researcher's personal interest in the chosen topic as well as the aim of the thesis, its research questions, the resulting hypothesis and its limitations.

Chapter 2: This chapter offers an in-depth literature review into the central terms of management. More specifically, a definition of management and managers followed by information about the skills, characteristics and traits that managers need to have as well as challenges that they face, is presented.

Chapter 3: Human Resource Management: Readers will be provided with a definition of Human Resources and Human Resource Management in general. Following this, the duties of HR managers and the goals and history of Human Resource practices will be discussed. Lastly, an insight will be presented on how technology changes modern Human Resource Management.

Chapter 4: This chapter focuses on music management and will start with a definition of the term, followed by the duties and tasks of music managers. Furthermore, the evolution of HR departments in the music industry will be discussed.

Chapter 5: The fifth chapter in this thesis is the methodology and describes the process used to collect data and information.

Chapter 6: In this chapter the interview participants as well as the platform of investigation ("SynchronStage") will be introduced. Furthermore, the answers given by the manager and the musicians will be interpreted.

Chapter 7: The last chapter gives the reader an overview of the major findings of the research and provides the conclusion of the thesis by comparing the results from the interviews to the data gathered in the literature review.

Chapter 2: Management

According to Dunmade (2015) management is a key essential of every business and contributes to a company's success or failure. Developing effective management strategies helps an organisation to increase the skills of their workforce as well as to direct the company towards the right decisions.

2.1 Definition of Management

Although the term management is widely spread in today's work environment it is a term which is hard to clearly define.

Specialists from different fields of expertise interpret the term from their own perspective: while

1. **Economists:** consider management to be a resource,
2. **Sociologists:** perceive managers to be some sort of elite class in the society (Prasad and Gulshan, 2011).

Dalton E. McFarland (1974, cited in Prasad and Gulshan, 2011) describes management as a process where managers channel the workforce of a company towards planned organisational objectives. Koontz and Wehrich (2010) define management as a process of creating a work environment where employees work either alone or in teams towards some organisational goal. Stanley Vance (1959, p.3) stated that "management is simply the **process of decision-making** and **control over the action of human beings** for the express purpose of attaining predetermined goals". These organisational goals include motivating current employees, providing satisfying services to customers as well as increasing the profit of the company (Balle, n.d.).

"The manager is the dynamic, life-giving element in every business" (Drucker, 2006, p.3).

Managers are specialised individuals who are responsible for certain departments within an organisation and cooperate with subordinates to meet and satisfy company purposes (Reh, 2016). There are certain types of managers who are not in charge of an entire department but of certain projects or products.

- **Project managers** are responsible for guiding participants of a specific project to achieve desired objectives within an agreed time frame. (Association for project management, n.d.).
- **Product managers** on the other hand are accountable for the performance of products or services (Reh, 2016).

What is more, Donald J. Clough (1963, cited in Prasad and Gulshan, 2011) argued that management combines decision making as well as leadership. Glen (n.d.) defines leadership as the capability of a person to persuasively guide others towards a certain concept. According to Arruda (2016) being a manager does not necessarily involve being a leader. The concept of being a leader involves creating a clear vision and recruiting people to work for fulfilling this idea. Arruda (2016) adds, that the duties of a manager include setting clear objectives as well as measuring and achieving organisational aims.

To conclude, it can be mentioned that although the concept of management and managers is widely spread, people from diverse fields of expertise follow a different approach when defining the term.

2.1.1 Duties and Tasks of Managers

According to Prasad and Gulshan (2011) the duties of managers include six main components:

Planning: The prime part of the planning process focusses on clearly setting and defining organisational goals. To meet these goals a detailed plan and schedule will be developed to support employees in working towards the perceived goal. Monthly reports help the manager to get an overview about the current state of the project (McQuerrey, n.d.).

Organising: The organising process involves identifying and combining activities as well as dividing tasks and responsibilities among employees. A main approach is to build teams by grouping employees who perform similar tasks (Kalpana, n.d.). To maintain an effective workflow, a supervisor is assigned to each group and relationships are built among members to remove barriers (Management Study Guide, n.d.).

Staffing: The staffing process starts with Human Resource planning. HR planning means evaluating the quantity as well as the types of workers who are needed in the future. If there is a need for more workers, then the recruitment as well as the selection process starts (Samiksha, n.d.-a).

Directing: Directing describes the process of instructing, coordinating as well as supervising employees. The goal is to enhance employee performance as well as motivation by advising subordinates on how to perform their tasks (Chand, n.d.). One of the main tools for managers to lead employees towards a desired direction is communication. Managers need to have a good way of communication to be able to transmit instructions to employees in a decisive but professional manner (Samiksha, n.d.-b).

Controlling: Controlling is the process of overseeing the current state of work in view of the long term organisational objectives. Managers set milestones to create shorter periods for employees to aim at. The controlling process is closely related to the planning phase: effective controlling can only be guaranteed if the objectives were clearly defined during planning (Fourcade et al., 2011).

Coordinating: Although planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling contribute to receive a good coordination, coordinating is sometimes seen as a separate managerial function. Coordination is present in all functions mentioned before: In the organising phase for instance, the primary aim is to guarantee coordination between people. Furthermore, cost control can only be accurate if all participants contribute and deliver data to make estimations (Prasad and Gulshan, 2011).

2.1.2 Characteristics of Managers

Managers need to have specific characteristics to fulfil their job in the best possible way. Therefore, good managers are often considered to be rare resources (Hogan, 2016).

- Jan Gordon (n.d.) argued that an essential part of being a manager is to have a **profound knowledge** base to perform the required tasks effectively.
- Gordon (n.d.) furthermore outlined that **creativity** is a key factor to catch the attention of employees.
- One of the most effective management tools is **communication**. It includes not only all types of communication such as sending formal letters, emails, telephone calls, text messages or personal conversations but also listening and paying attention to what people want to express (Goyal, 2012).
- What is more, a **positive attitude** is a high asset for managers and can enhance the motivation of co-workers as well as improve the performance of the entire team (Hogan, 2016).
- Another quality of managers is **delegation**. Distributing important responsibilities and tasks among employees can lead to a higher productivity and improve the work performance (Sawalha, n.d.).

To sum up, being a manager does not only require job based knowledge but also knowledge of human nature to provide a professional work environment where all employees work towards desired goals as well as to be able to communicate either positive or negative feedback (Sawalha, n.d.).

2.1.3 Managing Challenges

As stated by McCarthy (2016) managers need to make use of their qualities when it comes to solving problems. One of the most common situations is to provide feedback to employees.

If a manager recognizes a poor performance by employees, the most important thing is to take immediate action. The sooner the affected employee is informed about the weak performance the faster responding actions can be made.

Ashkenas (2013) adds, when there is still no improvement in the employee's performance it is the manager's tasks to dismiss the employee. Often Human Resource specialists are asked to join important appointments with employees. These HR specialists are particularly trained for those situations and will support managers.

According to Ryan (n.d.) one of the main challenges is to **manage the diverse workforce**. Globalisation entails that people with different cultures, religions and ethics work together in a company. Although different people who work together provide better results than homogenous groups it is still a challenge for managers to provide an environment where all employees are treated in a fair and equal manner.

As stated by Rutaihwa Aristides (2016) another trend that is similar to globalisation is **work-force diversity**. Nowadays, the role of women and men has changed vastly. It is not widely spread anymore that women stay at home to nurture the kids but in these days working men are often looking for a family-friendly company where they have flexible working hours and employee benefits such as child care. Having a good family-life-work balance plays an important role in order to motivate and satisfy workers.

Lastly, Ray (2012) stated that based on the economic situation as well as the high competition **work related stress** is present in nearly all businesses. Highly stressed workers can lead to higher costs for the employer due to absenteeism and employee turnover as well as to a poorer performance.

To sum up, due to the changing work environment as well as new trends that gain popularity among employees, there is a need for managers to cooperate with Human Resource managers to be able to solve particular situations in a professional but also human manner.

Chapter 3: Human Resource Management

As mentioned by Burma (2014) employees are the most valuable component of an organisation. Therefore, Human Resource departments evolved to become a major element to achieve organisational goals. In today's work environment, competition is one of the most fundamental elements. To be able to compete with other companies on a global scale, organisations need to utilise their human resources in the most effective manner.

3.1.1 Definition

Human Resources: According to Birger Wernerfelt (1984) resources in general refer to assets that a company owns. He classifies these resources into: **Human, Technological and Capital Resources**. In this thesis the focus will lie on Human Resources only. As stated by Fenner (n.d.) there are two different approaches to define Human Resources:

- On the one hand, HR is a term which is used to **describe the workforce of a company**. People who are currently employed at a company are referred to be Human Resources. On the other hand, it describes a **department of a company** which is in charge of managing worker related duties (Fenner, n.d.).
- DeNisi and Griffin (2008) define HR as humans who are employed at an organisation to perform certain tasks and duties in exchange for salaries, rewards or benefits. Furthermore, they argue that every individual who works in a company is a highly valuable part to the company and contributes to meet organisational goals and enhance organisational effectiveness.

Human Resource Management: John Storey (1995, p.5) defined Human Resource Management as “distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce, using an array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques”. On the other hand, Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) mentioned that Human Resource Management includes the need for managers to set organisational guidelines to support the overall policy of the company. Based on the different approaches of HRM two terms evolved:

Soft & Hard HRM:

- **Soft Human Resource Management** focuses on training and developing current workforce to enhance their quality and dedication, whereas in
- **hard HRM practices**, people are seen as any other resource in an organisation that contribute to meeting organisational goals. Hard HRM is furthermore often combined with strategies to reduce costs: low wages for employees with a high degree of supervision

(Beardwell and Claydon, 2007).

3.1.2 Evolution of the Human Resource Management Function

As mentioned by DeNisi and Griffin (2008) the practice of managing humans in businesses was firstly introduced in the **industrial revolution**. In this period the focus led on expansion and as companies grew the role of managers started to evolve. Big businesses like General Motors and Boeing began to expand and hence there was a need for more employees. To meet the demand, special departments were created who were in charge of hiring new employees as well as mentoring current employees. Therefore, personnel departments began to evolve in the 1990s.

Kumar and Sharma (2000) furthermore stated that **Robert Owen** is considered to be the main reason for the introduction of Personnel Management. He treated workers in a friendly and professional manner and was engaged to improve the working conditions in his factory as well as to abolish child labour.

DeNisi and Griffin (2008) added that, the **human relations era** and the Hawthorne studies between 1927 and 1932 made the idea popular that managers do not see employees as standardized machines but as individuals who differ based on their skills. The Hawthorne studies contributed an essential part to the evolution of the Human Resource function. The idea behind the human relation era was to satisfy and motivate workers in the best possible way to enhance their productivity. The awareness of this concept made companies much more successful since there was a lower turnover rate and firms were operating more effectively.

What is more, Merencilla (2013) argued that, in the **social issues era (1963-1980)** the term Human Resource Management was introduced for the first time. The prohibition of discrimination as well as the introduction of employee protection laws increased manager's awareness of the HR function. Merencilla (2013) adds, that **technological advances** provided new possibilities for managers to store employee related data. Due to the overall prospering economy, trade unions started to contribute in gaining better conditions at the workplace.

Further technological advances have brought new opportunities for HR managers. Computers, hardware and databases have not only facilitated the procession of huge amounts of data but have changed the concept of Human Resource Management (Kumar and Kumar, 2013).

Although new opportunities have evolved based on technology there are also some disadvantages which will be both discussed in chapter 3.1.4.

3.1.3 Duties of an HR manager

According to Gary Dessler (2009) the Human Resource manager's job is not only associated with rewarding employees fairly but the duties also include training current staff, finding and hiring new talents and providing a work environment where humans from all ethical backgrounds are treated in an equal and fair manner.

To get a clear insight into the tasks of HR managers, the duties will be explained in greater detail below.

1. Recruitment Process:

As mentioned by Heathfield (2017) one of the first things that needs to be done in the recruitment and selection process, is conducting a job analysis. Analysing a job means to gather data about the requirements, duties and tasks to perform a certain job effectively. This can be done for example by interviewing current employees. After the job analysis the data is used to create job descriptions.

According to Mader – Clark (2013) a job description is a list, which entails detailed information about what performing a particular job includes. A job specification on the other hand, focuses on the necessary skills and qualifications future employees need to have (Dessler, 2009).

The first step in the recruitment process is **Human Resource planning**. HR planning is a process, which displays whether there is a need for more employees in an organisation or not. If there is a need for more, then there are a few different opportunities to increase the number of workers, according to Gusdorf (2008):

- Employers can either promote a current employee (internal environment), which helps to motivate employees as well as to increase employee retention or
- hire a highly skilled worker from the external environment.

2. Selection Process:

Portolese Dias (n.d.) stated that after a certain number of applicants has been reached in the recruitment phase, the selection process starts where employers select the most adequate candidates. Due to the fact that hiring as well as selecting employees is a very time- and cost-intensive procedure it is important to evaluate the best candidates at an early stage as well as to provide a fair approach to select aspirants.

According to Portolese Dias (n.d.) there are several **steps in the selection process:**

- The first step is to review CV's and other required application forms. If these documents meet the requirements applicants are invited to personal interviews. There are sometimes small tests included in the interviews where the candidate's common knowledge or logical reasoning is tested.
- The last part of the selection process is to review all the parts mentioned above and to choose the applicant who fits best into the company and to make him/her an offer.

3. Compensation and Benefits: Compensation refers to paying money to employees in exchange for performing various functions in an organisation (Nazir, 2010). David J. Hoare (2013) and Doyle (2017) argued that there are four ways to compensate employees:

Compensation	Definition	Source
Salary	Salary is a regular payment to employees (for example on monthly basis) which is agreed on contract.	David J. Hoare (2013)
Hourly	Describes the payment to workers based on the time spent in the company. For example: 8 € / hour.	David J. Hoare (2013)
Commission	Commission based salary is a form of compensation where employees are rewarded with salaries after they have fulfilled required tasks (i.e. disposing a minimum quantity of goods or services). There are two types of commission compensation: Employees either receive a base salary and can earn additional money when selling more products or services or employees work entirely on commission.	(Doyle, 2017)
Bonuses	A sum of money given to employees additionally to their base salary. Bonuses are rewarded to increase motivation as well as retention of employees.	David J. Hoare (2013)

Table 1: Types of compensation

As can be seen above there are three different ways how employees can be compensated in an organisation: Workers can either receive a fixed salary, an hourly-based compensation, or commissions. Employees can be additionally rewarded with bonuses, which are paid on top of the fixed salary.

4. Training and Development: According to Qureshi (2016) training and development describes the process of instructing employees who work either alone or in teams by increasing their knowledge and improving their skills.

There are several methods how to train workers. Most common ways include: **lectures, example cases, role plays or computer-based trainings.**

Qureshi (2016) adds that training and developing employees can increase their contentedness as well as their independence, which means that they need less guidance. Furthermore, strengths and weaknesses can be detected by appraising performance, to either be promoted or advanced.

5. Ethics and Fair Treatment: Managers of HR departments are furthermore responsible for maintaining the overall job satisfaction of employees as well as providing a work environment where people with different cultural backgrounds, ethics and religions are treated in an equal manner (Mayhew, n.d.).

According to Dessler (2009, p.277) there are “three pillars” concerning the behaviour of employees:

Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3
The first pillar refers to rules that need to be observed by employees. For example: prohibition of alcohol in the workplace, stealing, or intentional damage.	The second pillar applies to penalties. In case of an employee breaking one of the rules mentioned before, there are several punishments towards employees. These can include either written or oral cautions or can, in severe cases, even lead to the suspension of an employee.	The last pillar is: “appeals process” (Dessler, 2009, p.277). The appeals process provides the opportunity for employees to find out whether disciplines from supervisors were distributed equitably.

Table 2: Three pillars concerning behaviour of employees

Source: Dessler (2009, p.277)

To sum up, the three pillars described by Dessler (2009, p.277) refer to the behaviour of employees in an organisation. Pillar 1 relates to rules in an organisation, pillar 2 represents penalties, in case any of the rules are violated and pillar 3 helps employees to ascertain whether their punishment was fair.

3.1.4 How Technology affects HRM

Advances in the information technology (IT) led to a shift from traditional to more modern HR practices. While technology changes HRM practices, HR manager's demands on computer based technologies ascends as well. Although this shift brought up opportunities, there are also new challenges that HR managers need to face (Kumar and Kumar, 2013).

According to Lewis (n.d.) there are some advantages for managers who work in the HR department based on technological advances:

1. **Recruitment process:** The recruitment process was improved vastly due to the large number of potential employees that can be reached by a single post on a particular website.
2. **Reduction of paperwork:** Online platforms reduced a lot of the paperwork that HR managers were confronted with in the past and developed the possibility to look for required documents in a data base.
3. **Access to information:** With the possibility to access information online, trainings can be provided in virtual classrooms where a larger number of employees can be trained at the same time without requiring supervision from a HR manager.

Lewis (n.d.)

Stephen Bruce (2014) adds that online platforms provide a clear data structure which can be easily accessed by employees and employers. This provides the possibility for employees to change data (for example their address or marital status) on their own without having to contact the HR department.

Disadvantages:

1. **Security:** According to Bruce (2014) security is a major problem of online platforms.
2. **Usage of personal data:** As mentioned by Bodi (n.d.) potential employees are additionally restricted in their personal lives since 92% of all people in charge of recruiting and finding new talents use social media platforms to examine new job applicants.
3% of employers even dig deeper than on Facebook or LinkedIn and investigate new applicants on Snapchat to see them in their everyday life.
3. **Downsizing:** Kumar and Kumar (2013) mentioned that downsizing is another problem. According to Heibutzki (n.d.) downsizing describes reducing the number of employees in a company. Since a lot of tasks where employees were needed in the past can now be completed on a computer, companies reduce their workforce to save costs.

Types of new HRM platforms:

Name	Definition	Source
E-HRM	Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM) describes a method to assist workers in HRM practices by using information technology. E-HRM is focused on managers and employees (in contrast to HRIS which mainly concerns managers) and entails every aspect of HRM that is compatible with IT.	Stefan Strohmeier (2007); (Bondarouk and Ruël, 2008)
HR Information System	Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is either an online or offline platform where employee related data is stored and saved. HRIS provides the possibilities for businesses to manage HR duties electronically.	(Chugh, 2014)

Web-based HR	Web- based HR means using online services to provide information for employees easily and immediately available via web sites.	(Rietsema, 2015)
Virtual HRM	Virtual Human Resource Management describes the possibility for employees to access a network where a number of self- service HR functions are available i.e. payroll, or administrative matters.	(HRZone, n.d.)

Table 3: Types of new HRM platforms

As can be seen above, there are different ways how HR managers can use technology nowadays. Depending on the proposed objectives, companies are able to choose between different (online) platforms to either improve managerial duties or to store employee related data or both. In case of an online platform, HR managers have two opportunities to provide access to employees: There can be either an internal network (intranet) or access for employees via web sites.

To conclude, effective managing skills as well as sophisticated Human Resource Management practices helps companies not only to increase their organisational effectiveness but evolved to become an essential part of every organisation. Nowadays, due to changing priorities and ambitions (i.e. work-life balances) of employees as well as due to the diverse workforce, HR departments became a key component for the success of every company.

Chapter 4: Music Management

The music industry has undergone significant changes within the last years. As the importance of large music labels decreased significantly, the duties of music managers began to increase (Allen, 2015). Musicians are artists who work either individually or in a group of people to make a living from creating and selling art (Grant, 2011). In view of the fact that musicians are in charge of the creative process, music managers need to handle business related duties (McDonald, 2016a).

4.1.1 Definition

The term music management is mostly used as a hypernym to describe all kinds of managerial related responsibilities in the music industry. According to Allen (2015) there are three main types of music managers:

1. Personal Manager (also referred to as Artist Manager)

As mentioned by Donald S. Passman (2015) a personal manager (also called artist manager) is an individual who works together with a musician or band towards the highest possible results. Good personal managers have the possibility to promote an artist's career to the peak level. Their duties range from finding adequate producers for a new CD to coordinating organisational duties such as planning concerts, tours and recording sessions. Personal managers are typically rewarded with 15-20 % of the artists' earnings.

McDonald (2016a) furthermore argued that the duties of artist managers depend on the current grade of popularity of the band. If a band has a record deal, then the tasks include managing financial matters with the record label. In case of a band having no record deal, it is the manager's duty to promote the band and direct the band towards greater popularity by sending out demos to media and radio stations, as well as to help creating a network.

2. Business Manager

Business managers are in charge of all payment related duties. Therefore, musicians or bands need to find highly trained professionals who keep the financial records constantly in sight. These managers are rewarded also either with a percentage (typically 5%), or they work on an hourly basis (Passman, 2015).

3. Booking Managers (Booking Agents)

Lastly, booking managers (mostly called booking agents) are working as an interface between musicians and fans. These kind of managers are mostly confronted with contacting venues to book concerts for the particular artist as well as negotiating the fee for the band/musician. Booking agents earn more money the more shows they book as well as the higher the fee is (Roos, n.d.).

As Weisman (2014) stated, booking agents do not only organise concerts but also recording sessions for artists. Booking a recording session for clients means to interfere musicians to studio jobs. For example: A band wants to record a new CD but the drummer is not capable of playing a particular beat. Then booking agents hire a professional musician (in this case a drummer) to record the drum tracks for the band. The musician's job is done as soon as the drum tracks are recorded.

4.1.2 Compensation of Artists

According to McDonald (2016b) there are five ways how musicians can earn money:

1. Playing Live

When playing live musicians can either earn money via pre agreed fees, or via door-deals (i.e. 70% for the artist, 30% for the location → the more people are coming to the concert, the higher the revenue).

2. Recording Sessions

As explained above, musicians can earn money through recording sessions for other artists. This might help to build a network as well as improving skills by playing different kinds of musical genres. Musicians are either paid a fixed charge per day or receive royalties on the number of copies sold.

3. Selling Music (Digital Copies)

Bands/artists can either earn money through selling physical copies at concerts and local shops or through digital distribution (Amazon, iTunes, ...).

4. Selling Merchandise

Furthermore, artists can earn money by selling t-shirts, hoodies, lighters, stickers, patches and other merchandise products. This can both increase the band/artist's budget as well as their popularity since people are wearing products with a certain logo and name on it.

5. Producing other Artists

According to Ian Shepherd (2009) a music producer is a musician with a certain knowledge of record engineering who supports artists or bands from writing songs to producing, recording, mixing and mastering them. Producers have a unique sound which they have created over years of experience and artists contact certain producers because they want to capture a particular sound on their record.

To sum up, there are two different approaches how musicians can earn money: Either by playing live, and selling merchandise after concerts or by playing in the studio, as a producer or as a session musician.

4.1.3 Record Deals (Major vs Independent Labels)

A record deal (also referred to as a recording contract) is a legal agreement signed between artists/bands and a record label. Depending on the agreement in the contract, the artist records one or more CDs and the record label is in charge of selling and promoting the CD. In return for the amount spent, the record company receives royalties for every copy sold (Salmon, 2007).

Nowadays, musicians can either have a record deal with an independent or major label:

Independent Label	Major Label
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent labels are not connected with any major label and use independent partners to offer client’s products at the market (Knab, 2010). • According to Dave Cool (2015) an advantage when signing a contract with an independent label is that the team is rather small and hence there is a personal relationship to label managers. • On the other hand, Cool (2015) adds that the biggest problem is to provide financing. • Independent labels do not support artists/ bands financially, therefore artists have to pay for their product with their own budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, there are three major labels in the music industry: Sony Music, Warner Music and Universal Music. Approximately 2/3 of all music sold nowadays is caused by the “big three” (Resnikoff, 2016). • As Cool (2015) mentioned, the advantages of being a part of a major label include financing, promotion and reputation. Bands/artists do not have to gather their own budget for the production of a CD but the major label bears the full costs. • Therefore, they charge usually 30% of a copy sold whereas artists earn approximately 7% per copy sold. (The rest is divided among: distributors, songwriters, producers, ...). Furthermore, major labels are responsible for promoting new artists and positioning them at the music market.

Table 4: Types of labels

In summary, it can be stated that independent labels are rather small companies, which provide no financial support for bands. Consequently, musicians or bands have to pay the production of songs themselves. Major labels on the other hand, take over the costs for the CD- production and promotion, but charge therefore 30% per copy sold.

4.1.4 A&R and HRM in the Music Industry

Starting in the 1990s the first HR departments in the music industry began to develop, as A&R managers and HR managers more and more merged their responsibilities (De Magalhaes, 2015).

As stated by Mellor (2006), Artist & Repertoire managers are a relevant part of every record label. Depending on the size of the label there might be only one A&R manager or an entire A&R department (which is often included in the HR department). These managers are constantly looking for new talents and bands who they can sign. Therefore, they need to have a clear understanding of the kind of the music that is popular nowadays. Mellor (2006) adds that Artist & Repertoire departments also manage current bands and artists. They work closely together with musicians and work as an interface between the record label and musicians.

What is more, De Magalhaes (2015) argues that nowadays every large major label such as Sony, Universal, and Warner Music has an HR department. Due to the fact that musicians and bands are employees too, the duties of an HR department within a music label are similar to the ones in other companies: hiring and firing employees, fair payment and many more.

4.1.5 Music Management in Different Genres

According to Passman (2015) there are huge differences between managing a pop artist and a classical musician.

Classical Music

- Classical musicians do mostly not write their own songs, but play existing compositions. Hence, the songwriting process as it is known in pop music does not take place.
- The market for classical music furthermore differentiates from the pop market because record sales are much smaller.
- As stated by Passman (2015) typical album sales range from 5.000 to 10.000 copies sold worldwide. 50.000 copies in the classical branch are considered to be a big seller. In addition to the low number of copies being sold, the recording process ranges from 150.000 to 400.000 dollars when using a full orchestra.

Pop Music

- As a comparison, McIntyre (2017) stated that Adele's album "25" was sold 1,731,000 times in the US only.
- Passman furthermore mentioned, that the royalties are much lower in the classical music than in the pop industry:
 - Typically, it ranges from 7,5 to 10%. (Passman, 2015),
 - whereas in the pop music royalties range from 13 to 20 % (Passman, 2015).

Therefore, it can be mentioned that managers in the music industry need to be experts in the genres that they are working in, in order to be able to fully support clients.

To sum up, music managers play a key role for the success of bands and artists. There are different types of managers in the music industry who either help musicians to advance their careers or help them to increase the number of bookings. Due to the fact that musicians who are under contract at labels are also employees, HR departments in the music industry needed to adapt to musician's concerns. Although the practices of HR managers in the music industry are similar to those in regular businesses, Human Resource managers who work in the music business need to have an understanding of the desires and needs that artists and bands have.

Chapter 5: Methodology

To gain a better insight into the chosen online HRM platform “SynchronStage” a qualitative interview was conducted with the founder Christian Buchmann. A comparative research has been chosen to display the differences and/or similarities to traditional Human Resource practices. For the musicians’ perspective eight qualitative interviews were conducted with professional musicians from different musical genres. These interviews were analysed and compared to the answers given from Mr. Buchmann to detect whether this new platform involves all important aspects in order to satisfy the employee-employer relationship.

5.1.1 Aim

The primary aim of this thesis is to examine the practices and methods of HR departments in the music industry. Secondly, the researcher aims to display advantages and/or disadvantages of online HRM platforms and strives to find out whether these platforms can satisfy expectations and desires of musicians or not.

5.1.2 Research Design

According to Hair et al. the three most common research designs are: “exploratory, descriptive and causal” (2013, p.76). Each of the three methods can be used for different situations the researcher wants to investigate. Exploratory research is used to identify and understand occurred problems by using a small sample of data and participants. Descriptive Research is a method to collect a large amount of data to identify trends, characteristics and frequencies. Lastly, causal research is used to test the consequences of changing certain variables such as the price for a product or service (Hair et al., 2013).

Whereas exploratory research requires a qualitative approach to collect data, descriptive and causal research involves a quantitative information collection.

According to (Hair et al., 2013) **qualitative research** methods include:

- Small samples to understand the thoughts and feelings of participants as well as to understand behavior.
- Answers, which cannot be generalized.
- Either: open-ended, semi-structured or unstructured interview questions.
- A short time frame.

The researcher investigates interviewees and interprets the given answers afterwards.

Quantitative Research on the other hand avail:

- Large samples to discover relationships to make predictions and validate facts.
- Answers, which can be generalized and applied to a broad audience.
- Structured questions: mostly used in connection with surveys.
- A long time frame.

Data used by conducting quantitative research is used to create statistical analysis and interpret the data (i.e. numbers).

As stated by John W. Creswell (2014) there are different methods to gather information for either qualitative or quantitative methods. Qualitative researchers can either use: observations; interviews (face-to-face, telephone, focus group, e-mail), documents (private journals, or diaries) or lastly, audio-visual materials (videos, photos, sounds or films). Qualitative interviews are mostly recorded and transcribed by the researcher afterwards.

As mentioned above interviews can either include: structured interviews, semi-structured or unstructured questions:

Structured Interviews: According to Doyle (2004, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011) structured interviews refer to asking pre-established questions to participants. The interviewer asks questions from a script and digresses as little as possible to get brief answers. All participants are asked the identical questions in the same chronology. The

advantage of using structured interviews is to reduce any bias by the researcher by the highly standardized process of asking questions.

Unstructured Interviews: Unstructured interviews follow a more informal and un-standardized approach, where the focus lies on open-ended questions (Hannabuss, 1996, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011). The purpose of unstructured is to gain a detailed insight into the interviewee's perception (Greene, 1998, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011).

Therefore, it is widely spread to add additional questions that arise during interviews to scrutinize answers given (Fontana and Frey, 1998, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011).

Semi-Structured Interviews: As mentioned by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011) semi-structured interview questions combine a mixture of the two approaches mentioned above and are the most common ways to conduct qualitative interviews. These kind of interviews include pre-established and systematic interview questions where the researcher directs interviewees towards a desired direction. Interview questions can vary from a rather systematic to a relatively loose approach and allow investigators to exploit covert aspects of participants.

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, cited in Qu and Dumay, 2011), semi-structured interview questions provide the possibility to create questions in a way to discover detailed and personal perceptions about topics.

Face-to-Face Interviews: As stated by EMANS (1986, cited in Opdenakker, 2006), face-to-face interviews provide the possibility for researchers to gain an additional perspective of interviewees, since body language, voice changes, etc. can be furthermore investigated. An advantage of this type of interviews is the small time horizon between the question asked and the answer given by participants. Therefore, investigators collect more spontaneous rather than pre-established answers. Based on this small time frame, researchers need to pay clear attention how to formulate the questions in order to receive the appropriate answers.

According to Wengraf (2001, cited in Opdenakker, 2006) face-to-face interviews are mostly recorded by using audio recording devices. Interviewers should additionally

take notes to check whether all prepared questions were asked. Disadvantages of recording interviews are technical failures that can occur during the recording process. Furthermore, after the interview was recorded the researcher needs to transcribe the entire interview, which requires a lot of time.

Concerning **quantitative researches** the most widely spread form of collecting data is via surveys. Elaborating on John W. Creswell (2014) surveys help the researchers to gain a numeric representation of trends by studying samples of a particular population. This numeric insight helps the researcher to conduct a generalization of that particular population.

For this thesis a qualitative approach was chosen to investigate Human Resource Management practices in the music industry. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with one music manager and eight professional musicians.

The interview questions were created based on relevant literature used in the literature review part. The reason why two parties were chosen for this thesis was to cover two perspectives. Musicians have different opinions than managers and therefore, for the completeness of the thesis, both aspects were taken into consideration.

Interviews seemed to be the right choice because not the quantity of answers was important for the thesis but to get a detailed information of each participant about their opinion on Human Resource Management in the music industry as well as about investigating chances and risks of online HRM platforms. After conducting the interviews, the researcher compared the answers given by the manager to the answers given by the musicians to display similarities and/or differences.

Five interviews were audio recorded, one interview was conducted via telephone and two interviews were face-to-face, where the researcher took notes due to a bad recording quality. The entire interviews were transcribed and can be found in the appendix. All participants agreed to be mentioned namely in this thesis.

5.1.3 Unit of Analysis

The selected unit of analysis consists of the interviewees that participated in this thesis as well as relevant literature gathered in the literature review.

“When conducting interviews, each interview serves as the unit of analysis” (Schreier, 2012, p.130).

According to Cole (2017) using individuals of a particular social field or entity as a unit of analysis can help the researcher to identify patterns or problems which are widely spread in the field that they are operating in.

A possible limitation concerning this approach to gather and compare information is the small time frame. Only eight musicians and one music manager were interviewed. To compensate that limitation, a broad range of musicians were chosen, who have completely different musical background to get a wide range of answers and opinions. Secondly, another limitation is resource.

What is more, online HRM platforms are new and therefore it is hard to find other HR experts of similar platforms such as “SynchronStage” to make comparisons. To compensate that, the literature review provides a clear insight to cover potential missing parts. Furthermore, the researcher is a musician himself. This might lead to a biased view. Therefore, there are both managers as well as musicians involved in the study to create a clear and unbiased thesis. Additionally, academic sources of Human Resource Management in the music industry are limited. Another limitation is gender. There are eight men and one women involved in this thesis. Women might have different opinions about certain aspects. Lastly, the study is limited to Austria. There might be different HR techniques or practices in other countries.

5.1.4 Participants

As mentioned before, the researcher conducted nine interviews in total. Eight interviews were held with professional musicians, whereas one interview was conducted with a Viennese music manager. The music manager was asked different questions than the musicians, so the researcher created two types of questionnaires.

Due to the fact that there is only one music manager involved in this thesis, the interview with him was approximately 1,5 hours to get an in-depth insight into his aspects of HRM in the music industry, as well as to gather detailed information about the platform “SynchronStage”.

The interviews with the musicians were each approximately 20-30 minutes long. All interviews were conducted with Austrian citizens who live and work in Austria.

5.1.5 Reflections concerning the Interview Questions

To cover the managerial perspective there were nine interview questions asked to the Viennese HR manager.

Interview Questions	Purpose of the Question
<p>1) Please give an introduction about yourself.</p>	<p>→ The first question was asked to verify respondents’ personnel data.</p>
<p>2) Please give information about the platform “SynchronStage”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How did the idea evolve? - How is the company structured? - How many people are working behind the scenes? What are their duties? - How many musicians are a part of the platform? What kind of musicians? - What is the purpose of this platform? <p>3) Who are the customers that are using “SynchronStage”? Are the customers only from Austria or are there international clients as well?</p>	<p>→ Questions 2 & 3 were asked to gather relevant information about the platform of investigation “SynchronStage”.</p>

<p>4) What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of having an online platform?</p>	<p>→ Question 4 was asked to identify general advantages and/or disadvantages of using online HRM platforms.</p>
<p>5) How can people become a part of the platform? How does the recruitment/selection process take place?</p> <p>6) How are musicians compensated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you guarantee fair rewarding? - What if a recording session is cancelled? - What if musicians get ill? 	<p>→ Questions 5 & 6 focused investigating HR practices of “Synchron-Stage” to be able to compare to answers to the gathered literature.</p>
<p>7) Do you think that HRM in the music industry does differ from HRM in “normal” businesses?</p>	<p>→ Question 7 focused on the research question: “How does the HR department in the music industry differ from HR departments in non-music businesses?”</p>
<p>8) Does music management differ in music genres?</p>	<p>→ Question 8 was created to find a possible solution to the research question “Does HRM differ in music genres?”</p>
<p>9) Do you think that HR managers in the music industry need to have a musical background?</p>	<p>→ Lastly, Question 9 of the interview with Buchmann focused on identifying whether managers in the music industry need to have a musical background.</p>

Table 5: Data Collection Questions and Purpose (Manager)

For the musician interviews, different interview questions were created by the researcher but followed the same semi-structured, face-to-face approach.

Interview Questions	Purpose of the Question
Name: Work (Instrument & genre) Freelance or employed: Age: Years of experience: Gender:	→ Firstly, the researcher wanted to collect general information about each participant.
1) What do you understand under Human Resource Management?	→ The intention of the first interview question was to investigate the general awareness of musicians of HRM.
2) What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?	→ The second question intended to examine the expectancies of HR manager in the music industry.
3) Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO If yes: why? If not: why not?	→ Thirdly, the researcher wanted to identify the interviewee's perception about HRM's role in the music industry
4) What do you think of online HRM platforms? 5) Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians? 6) Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?	→ <u>Question 4, 5 & 6</u> focused on online HRM platforms and the perceived advantages as well as disadvantages by each participant.

<p>7) Have you already heard about the online platform “SynchronStage”? Yes/No</p>	<p>→ If the participant already heard about the platform “SynchronStage” there were <u>three additional questions</u>, which could be directly opposed to answers given by Buchmann. (If not the interviewee ended at question 7.)</p>
<p>If yes: Do you think that the platform can meet all perceived services by musicians? (Fair compensation/ Fair recruitment process)</p>	
<p>Does “SynchronStage” bring advantages for musicians? If yes, which.</p>	
<p>Would you have ideas to improve “SynchronStage”?</p>	

Table 6: Data Collection Questions and Purpose (Musician)

Chapter 6: Evaluation of the Interviews

6.1.1 Interview Partners

NAME	INSTRUMENT	GENRE	WORK
Marco Blascetta	Vocals, Electric Guitar, Double Bass, Accordion;	Rock, Folk Music, Rap, Classical Music, Acting	Freelancer
Christian Buchmann	(Violin)	(Classical Music)	Music Manager; Founder of “SynchronStage”.
Anna Budnowski	Vocals	Pop, Jazz	Freelancer
Martin Edelmann	Viola	Classical Music	Freelancer and employed (RSO)
Ruben Gludovacz	Vocals, Guitar	Pop/Rock	Freelancer
Raphael Handschuh	Viola	Classical Music, Art Music	Freelancer and employed (RSO)

Paul Rabeck	Viola	Classical Music	Freelancer and employed (RSO)
Matthias Reissner	Viola	Classical Music, Orchestra	Freelancer
Nikola Zeichmann	Electric Bass; Double Bass; Violin	Jazz, Pop/Rock	Freelancer

Table 7: Interview Participants

6.1.2 SynchronStage

The platform to investigate online Human Resource Management is “SynchronStage”, which was founded by Christian Buchmann. Buchmann is a Viennese music manager with 30 years of experience. After facing the usual obstacles while booking musicians he evolved the idea to create a platform to remove barriers when booking musicians. Practically, the platform can be used to manage all kinds of freelancers but is mainly used to book musicians for international film recording sessions. The studio where the recordings take place is based in Vienna. The customers who are using SynchronStage are international film music companies such as Fox, Warner, Paramount as well as well-known directors such as Hans Zimmer and Conrad Pope. Currently, there are 370 musicians part of the platform.

6.1.3 Interpretation (Musicians)

Question 1: What do you understand under Human Resource Management?

Blascetta	HRM is the ability to use human capabilities to produce certain outcomes.
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	Human Capital refers to the value of HR skills which can be applied to an economic market.
Budnowski	HRM deals with organising people to achieve a high work quality. HRM also contributes to achieve a high employee satisfaction, work-life balance as well as a fair work environment.
Edelmann	Human Resource Management should be a control system to provide a fair environment for employees and the company and to control the fairness of work-related processes. HR managers should be some sort of mediators between employers, employees and the company to ensure fair and equal processes within the company.
Gludovacz	Human Resource Management is a necessary function in every business to improve the economic stability of that company. Managers in this department have to deal with hiring, firing and retaining employees to provide an economically efficient company.
Handschuh	Human Resource Management deals with the coordination of employees.
Rabeck	Human Resource Management is about managing people and employees.
Reissner	Human Resource Management deals with managing and supplying workforce.
Zeichmann	Human Resource Management deals with managing workforce and how to effectively treat employees.

Table 8: Question 1: Musician Interviews

The researcher identified that there is a general awareness of Human Resource Management among the interviewed musicians, even though the participants play different instruments, genres as well as have a different length of experience. The participants mentioned employee satisfaction, fair work environment and managing/ coordinating employees as the key components of HRM. Two musicians focused additionally on the economic perspective of a company.

Question 2: What do you expect ideally from HR manager in the music industry?

Blascetta	I would like that HR managers support musicians who want to present a certain message and have a particular musicality without having the financial and economic perspective as a top priority.
Budnowski	The most important thing is to have fair contracts. HR managers need to have a basic knowledge of the musician's life to get a better insight into the industry. Only an interest in listening to music is not enough for me, but people who work in the music industry need to have an understanding of the life as a musician and the struggles that come with that.
Edelmann	Providing fair and equal processes. To be honest, I have no idea whether HRM exists for orchestras. Maybe in labels you have HR departments but not in orchestras. We try to be the HR managers in the orchestra , especially in the year of probation where the musicians decide about individuals whether they fit in or not.
Gludovacz	I expect from HR managers that they raise their interest in music and go to concerts themselves rather than waiting for applicants to contact them to get a contract. I have never seen any HR scouts on concerts and I think that's the only way it should be: seeing bands live and having a passion in music. Besides the in-

	terest in music managers should have, they need to have a certain degree of economic background, because they constantly have to be up-to-date about what is currently asked for on the market.
Handschuh	I expect a degree of organisation, where all necessary information about jobs as well as tasks, schedules, locations are provided by the organiser.
Rabeck	I expect fairness. It is hard in these cultural fields, such as art and music. A lot of work to provide fairness is being done but there are still some gaps to fill. Especially when taking the few jobs available into consideration. People practice months to play a certain audition and have to prove their entire expertise within 5 minutes. Auditions can be crucial for the entire career of a musician, and therefore fairness needs to be ensured.
Reissner	Managing the supply and demand of musicians, creating platforms, providing information about projects (concerts, sessions, jobs) ...
Zeichmann	General interest and knowledge in music and an unbiased view of bands and musical genres. Concerning discovering new artists, I expect from HR managers that they do not try to reproduce already existing bands/ musicians but that they are brave enough to try something new.

Table 9: Question 2: Musician Interviews

Four musicians pointed out that HR managers in the music industry need to have a general interest or a particular musicality. The researcher furthermore identified that fairness, fair and equal processes and fair contracts play an important role for the interviewed musicians. Gludovacz stated that HR managers should go to concerts themselves, rather than waiting for applicants to contact them. On the other hand, if

people apply for a “regular” job, they also have to invest some time and effort into their application. Therefore, musicians need to pay more attention to music as a business, rather than seeing only the creative part of it.

Question 3: Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry?

If yes: why? If not: why not?

Five of eight participants answered the question with: **YES**.

Two interview participants answered the question with: **NO**.

One of the interview participants answered the question with **YES and NO**.

Blascetta	YES; nowadays the presence of musicians, especially on the internet, is a key factor which requires a lot of time. It is easier for musicians to focus on the creative process, when there is a HR manager in charge of handling the managerial duties.
Budnowski	YES; I think that it plays an important role, because big music labels can only survive with HRM. In these times, where small labels and independent productions are getting more and more important, big labels have to increase their awareness of HRM and need to treat their artists as a human with needs and feeling, maybe even as a friend.
Edelmann	No, but it should play an important role. Orchestras consists of sizes like 89- 170 people. In big groups like these it would be good to have an HR manager. The important thing is included in the term Human Resources. You should take care of the <u>resources</u> : the musicians. That would be the main goal.

Gludovacz	Yes, of course. People who are working in HR departments are necessary to find and hire new bands to avoid the digitalisation of the entire music industry.
Handschuh	Yes, definitely. I think that good HRM can distribute to achieve a high quality as well as to find the most suitable musicians for particular jobs.
Rabeck	Yes. Of course. To provide the best quality for the right situation. The right musicians for the particular job need to be found. Especially when needing musicians who play extraordinary instruments or genres, who are not available in large numbers.
Reissner	In my personal experience, no, because I myself get my bookings directly and not via third parties.
Zeichmann	Yes, and no. It's quite a paradox example because many artists try to go their own way without a large agency in their background. That "do it yourself" principle is quite common at the moment. But once a band has achieved a certain level, they need to cooperate with music managers and HR managers to be successful and spread their music to a broad audience.

Table 10: Question 3: Musician Interviews

Five of eight participants answered the question whether HRM plays an important role in the music industry with **yes**. It can be indicated that the opinion among the classical musicians vary. Whereas Handschuh and Rabeck argued that HRM is necessary to provide a high quality, Edelmann indicated that HRM does not play an important role in the music industry but should.

He argued that it would be good to have an HR manager in big orchestras to take care of musicians. Reissner, who is also a classical musician, answered the question with "no" because he gets his bookings directly and not via third parties.

Concerning the musicians who are playing pop music (Populärmusik) an importance of HRM can be seen in the answers given.

Question 4: What do you think of online HRM platforms?

Blascetta	To be honest, I do not have any experience in working with online platforms but I have some perceptions. Generally, I think that having online platforms assists managers in many duties, for example: administration. I am sure that, people, who are a part of certain online platforms have a lot of advantages.
Budnowski	It sounds really convenient for managers, but a person to contact is missing. If there is a rather insecure artist who is not really sure about steps in the music industry, he or she needs to have a contact person. Maybe online platforms should introduce live chats, to be able to directly get in touch with managers in case of questions. The trend is surely going towards working with apps, working across distances and working independently.
Edelmann	There are a lot of good and bad things. It is very easy to apply, it is just one click. The other good thing is, because it is all over Europe, you find new markets. A Norwegian guy reading about a viola position in Vienna, can simply apply for that. The problem is very often that if you have an audition where 800 people read about the audition, 200-300 people apply but will not actually come. We call that "Auditioning-tourism". But there are tools to prevent these problems. It is getting better and better.
Gludovacz	I think, that online platforms have an impersonal flavour and I think that it is hard to manage musicians via online platforms because this makes musicians feel like they are just a number and one of many.
Handschuh	It is a good possibility to increase the tempo of organising projects. I think that the trend will go towards working via digital

	platforms, especially in modern fields, where time and money play an important role.
Rabeck	I am very sceptical. Technical skills can be made available online but the human part is missing. Therefore, years of probation are made. To see whether people fit in, to see whether they are punctual, how they work and so on. There is a huge difference when you know the people you are working with. This can never be guaranteed with online platforms.
Reissner	It is surely a good idea that will gain popularity in the future. Due to the globalisation and due to the reason that concerts take place at different locations. Today, the world is entirely connected technologically.
Zeichmann	To be honest, I do not have any experience with online platforms. But I personally think, that online platforms, especially social media platforms, will play a huge role in the future.

Table 11: Question 4: Musician Interviews

It can be stated that there is a general scepticism concerning online HRM platforms. The interviewed pop musicians have no experience in working with online platforms. Furthermore, the researcher detected that musicians criticize that online platforms have an impersonal touch and see that as a disadvantage or risk. It can be mentioned that the interviewees see more advantages for the managers who create and run online platforms, rather than for musicians. Having an online platform helps to increase the speed of organising projects, reduces administrative paperwork and requires less employees.

Most of the musicians involved in this thesis have no experience in working with online platforms and therefore, there is no evidence that online platforms are impersonal.

Question 5: Do you think that online platforms bring advantages for musicians?

Blascetta	I am sure that using online platforms assists those who run the platform because you can reach many people without a lot of effort. I think this displays a huge advantage for musicians because they do not have to look for bookings on their own, but are a part of a large community.
Budnowski	Independence according to time and location. It makes organising things easier. You get jobs that you would not normally hear of. More opportunities. To work with people you would not even know.
Edelmann	Yes. They do. You can reach different markets very easily and quickly. Online platforms in general are a very useful tool to get quick information about available spots worldwide.
Gludovacz	Yes, of course. Because this can connect musicians and lead to new opportunities. Furthermore, the accessibility for musicians will be improved. In the digital age we are living now, it is good to receive background information about a certain concert in advance.
Handschuh	Yes and No. Yes, because if you are connected in a good way, you can participate in a lot of sessions, projects. No, if you are not available 24/7, certain projects cannot be attained.
Rabeck	An advantage is to increase the size of the market. Hidden talents can be found. But there is still room for improvement...
Reissner	I do not have any experience in working with online platforms because I personally am generally contacted directly.

Zeichmann	I guess, yes. I think that flexibility is an advantage for musicians, because information can be accessed on the road.
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Table 12: Question 5: Musician Interviews

The answers given display more advantages for the managers who run online HRM platforms. Some advantages for musicians can be identified as well: flexibility, easy and mobile access to information, reaching new markets as well as new connections. The possibility to access information while being on the go provides a huge advantage for musicians. Due to the fact that there are 370 professional musicians administrated by the "SynchronStage" system, no musician is disadvantaged because the platform can be accessed from every electronic device, from everywhere in the world.

Question 6: Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

Blascetta	If bookings are entirely distributed via online platforms, then people who are not a part of a certain platform fall by the way-side. I think that is a risk. But, I honestly do not think that booking musicians will solely work online within the next 10 years, because managing musicians differs in musical genres and their specific settings.
Budnowski	A disadvantage that comes to my mind when thinking about online platforms is the extreme digitalisation. The trends is going towards managing everything online, and therefore personality and emotion is getting lost.
Edelmann	Yeah. It is a reduced information tool. Nowadays everyone has a standardized application form. In the past there were application letters, which were handwritten. The application had a much more personal touch.
Gludovacz	I think that these platforms are a bit impersonal. And a possible risk is to be one of many names in a catalogue.

Handschuh	A possible risk is that people are seen more as numbers. If you are not even talking or texting with others, the human character will not be in the foreground anymore.
Rabeck	A risk is that the personal component is getting lost. It is hard to find the right people and to constantly provide a high quality of musicians. Therefore, it would be good to have years of probation for a job for more than one musician. But this can not be done, since it is very expensive.
Reissner	A possible risk is that people can spread wrong information about their skills. And therefore, there is a risk to hire musicians with less skills than they claim to have.
Zeichmann	I can imagine that cheaper musicians will be chosen over more expensive ones and It is difficult to measure quality only based on recordings and CVs. I am used to a more old- school approach: People call me or text me that they want to book me. I guess it is quite difficult to filter quality online profiles

Table 13: Question 6: Musician Interviews

It can be mentioned that the interview participants again criticised the missing personal component. Furthermore, when all the information is available online, every musician has a CV, which follows the same layout and therefore, it is hard to differentiate whether someone has invested a lot of time in his or her application or not. One interviewee argued that people who are using online HRM platforms can spread wrong information about their skills. This argument can be disproved because as soon as musicians plays an audition, their real level of musical ability can be noticed by the manager.

Question 7: Have you already heard about the online platform “SynchronStage”?

Yes/No

Five out of eight participants answered the question with: No, they have not heard about the online platform “SynchronStage”.

The three participants who answered the question with: **Yes** (Martin Edelmann, Paul Rabeck, Raphael Handschuh) were asked three additional questions regarding “SynchronStage”.

Question 8: Do you think that the platform can meet all perceived services by musicians?

(Fair compensation/ Fair recruitment process)

Edelmann	<p>It does in a lot of ways. It is a really fair and transparent platform. The payment is fair, on time, and no one has to wait for the compensation. They payment is not changing project wise, which is very good.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is a constant process to improve the platform. If you have an idea you can tell Christian Buchmann your improvement idea.</p>
Handschuh	<p>Fair compensation, Yes.</p> <p>Fair recruitment process, Yes.</p>
Rabeck	<p>SynchronStage: is a good planning tool, but it is hard to provide a high quality constantly. The audition helps to create a minimum requirement level, but guaranteeing quality only based on one tool is not sufficient. Here, the year of probation is missing again. SynchronStage can be a good opportunity but also stressful since people need to constantly prove their skills. If a musician fails at a certain recording session, he will not be longer a part of the platform.</p>

	<p>For me fair compensation means compensating musicians on time. And that is the case concerning SynchronStage, there is nothing to complain about. Musicians are paid hourly, completely fair, well thought out, plausible and logical. Three hours of recording, 30 Euros per hour, musicians have to pay taxes themselves. Payment is not extremely high, but fair. If a recording session is cancelled based on the organiser, there is no compensation for musicians.</p> <p>Inputs given by musicians are always welcomed and SynchronStage constantly tries to improve services, based on feedback by participants.</p>
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Table 14: Question 8: Musician Interviews

The three participants who have already heard about the platform describe “SynchronStage” as a fair and transparent platform with a functioning and on time compensation system. The payment is fixed and does not change project wise. Rabeck stated that the payment is not extremely high, but fair. He added that musicians get 30 euros per hour.

According to Edelmann, overtimes are charged 15-minutes-wise. If there is a one-minute delay, Buchmann (manager) pays for the entire 15-minute delay. Both, Edelmann and Rabeck positively emphasized that there is a constant process to improve the platform and Buchmann (manager) is open for feedback.

According to the answers given the recruitment process seems fair. It needs to be mentioned that it can be unfair for musicians to be taken onto the platform “SynchronStage” only based on recommendations, whereas others have to play an audition.

Question 9: Does “SynchronStage” bring advantages for musicians? If yes, which.

Edelmann	Yeah. It does. You do not have to negotiate about payment. For information about special projects, you can always access the platform. Schedule, sheets, time. You get reminders. Flexibility is a huge advantage for musicians since starting and ending times are fixed. Overtimes are charged 15 minutes- wise. If there is a one- minute delay, Buchmann pays for the entire 15- minute overtime. “SynchronStage” provides catering and a highly professional setting.
Handschuh	For me personally, as I do not have very much time, it is very good to be able to design my schedule as I want to and decide how many days, hours I want to work. For Vienna as a cultural location, many musicians can profit because SynchronStage provides a new way to earn additional money and experience.
Rabeck	It is a good planning tool. Flexibility is also an advantage. People can check their calendars whether they have time for a particular session or not. No e-mails, no phone calls. Easy, clear, and well structured. A disadvantage is that recording session can be easily cancelled and deleted form the platform. If a recording session is cancelled it would be good to send out an email about the cancellation of the session. This could be improved.

Table 15: Question 9: Musician Interviews

Concerning the advantages of “SynchronStage” for musicians all three participants (Edelmann, Handschuh, Rabeck) mentioned flexibility, which is based on the exact schedule.

Edelmann furthermore underlined the highly professional setting and the information availability on the platform including exact times and sheets. Rabeck described the reduction of phone calls and e-mails as an advantage.

Question 10: Would you have ideas to improve “SynchronStage”?

Edelmann	I never thought about that. Concerning the auditioning process: I got into SynchronStage by word-of mouth, I did not audition. Maybe it is difficult for freelancers to get into the platform. If you are employed at an orchestra, then you already have a good reputation. But for freelancers, it might be difficult.
Handschuh	To be honest, I do not have any ideas to improve the platform. In the field that they are working in, they have created an ideal approach to organise, and hire musicians.
Rabeck	The tool is great, but for me personally there are too many features and information available. The user interface could be made more simple. Another idea would be to give updates about sessions. A Notification if a session gets cancelled a would be great. Furthermore, reminders would be great of fixed sessions via text messages and via e-mail 24 hours before a session starts.

Table 16: Question 10: Musician Interviews

Edelmann indicated that it might be difficult for freelancers to become a part of the platform. Rabeck stated a few ideas to improve “SynchronStage”: Recording session can be easily cancelled by the organiser. If a recording is cancelled it would be good to send out e-mails about the cancellation.

Secondly, Rabeck mentioned that there are too many features on the platform, which makes it confusing. According to him, the user interface could be made simpler. Lastly, he suggested to send out reminders 24 hours before a recording session starts.

6.1.4 Interpretation (Manager)

The interview with Christian Buchmann was conducted at his office on the 8th of March, 2017.

Question 1: Please give an introduction about yourself.

Christian Buchmann stated that he is 50 years old and has been working in the music business for the last 30 years. He is the director of the Vienna Chamber Orchestra and now works in a family- based agency, which works for the major Austrian orchestras to export culture to other countries.

Question 2: Please give information about the platform “SynchronStage”.

Buchmann indicated that the idea to create the platform arose due to the usual obstacles in the daily office work: calling musicians, running after them, not being able to reach them, they do not call back, they cancel and so on. Eight years ago he sat together for the first time with a big programming company and talked to them about the issues that he faces while managing. After starting to work with the “SynchronStage” as a partner, and signing the contract for the exclusive partnership, they developed the software further.

Buchmann mentioned that the software is very universally applicable and could be also used to manage a cleaning team or even a security company, because the platform was created to manage human resources. He emphasized that the platform can handle thousands of individuals in one turn, with the push of one button effect, but is **still a very personal thing.**

The platform can be accessed from any device: mobile phone, smartphone, tablet, PC, Mac and so on. As the musician accesses the platform all necessary information is provided and the musician can simply draw switches to confirm his or her availability.

As can be investigated above, online platforms bring huge advantages for managers in view of speed. During the interview Buchmann (manager) stated that they managed to book 350 musicians in six hours. Although Buchmann emphasized that the musicians were hand selected and players of excellent quality, it still can be mentioned that from a musician's perspective this creates an impersonal feeling.

Question 3: Who are the customers that are using "SynchronStage"? Are the customers only from Austria or are there international clients as well?

Buchmann stated the customers that are using "SynchronStage" are international film music companies. He mentioned a few examples: Fox, Warner, Paramount, Ralf Wengenmayr, Japanese productions, Chinese video game producers and Austrian pop artists. Buchmann furthermore added Conrad Pope and Hans Zimmer to their list of customers. Buchmann described that Vienna is always compared with big international studios such as the Abbey Roads Studio in London or other studios in Los Angeles. He argued that the reason for the success may rely on the studio and the hall, which was especially built for film music recording.

The researcher identified that the customers who are using "SynchronStage" are well-known international partners. Therefore, having an online platform brings the advantage of having a greater number and variety of musicians in order to be able to supply every instrument and musician the client asks for. This provides the opportunity for managers to have a more broad- ranging workforce.

Question 4: What are the advantages and/ or disadvantages of having an online platform?

According to Buchmann, online platforms give huge advantages in view of speed. Buchmann mentioned that "SynchronStage" managed to book 350 musicians in six hours. Buchmann emphasized that the **human side must never vanish**. This is why the platform is very personal, as he stated. Some players do not even realize that they are not even contacted by an actual person, because the software is very personalized. Buchmann indicated that he can still add information to standardized emails.

Buchmann added that he cannot see any disadvantages at the moment. He can still call and meet every single player if he wants to. Furthermore, he stated that as an orchestra manager, director, administrator you meet the people anyway once or several times a week. From the founder's perspective Buchmann described the high cost to create online platforms as a disadvantage.

Again, it can be stated that speed is the biggest advantage for managers.

Question 5: How can people become a part of the platform? How does the recruitment/selection process take place?

Buchmann indicated that there are constantly auditions to become a part of the platform. After passing the audition the platform is made available to those people and they become part of the orchestra. Currently, there are 370 members who are administered by the system. He added that sometimes it is headhunting, sometimes based on recommendations and reputation of players, but usually musicians have to audition to become a part of the "SynchronStage" orchestra.

It can be mentioned, that the recruitment process might be unfair in some cases. It seems unjust if one musician has to play an audition, whereas another musician is recruited via headhunting.

Question 6: How are musicians compensated?

The payment for musicians is by the service. There are extremely professional freelancers involved in recording sessions and therefore, **good payment is expected** by the musicians. If a recording session is cancelled there are different rules that apply. 50% for so and so many days, 100% for so and so many days, as Buchmann indicated. If musicians get ill or something happens, Buchmann needs to replace the impeded musician.

The payment scheme seems to be fair. Due to the fact that musicians are paid by the service, they know exactly how much money they will earn for a particular recording session.

Question 7: Do you think that HRM in the music industry does differ from HRM in “normal” businesses?

Buchmann stated that HRM of an orchestra and of musicians is something particular, because people who play in orchestras are very special human beings. They constantly have to practice notes and phrases, which produces certain structures in the brain. The important thing is how you handle and treat the Human Resources: more freedom, more respect, more flexibility. If a group works well together, the company is like an organism. If something is changed, this has to be done very carefully.

Although musicians require particular management techniques, it needs to be stated that every employee is something special and needs to be treated in a fair and equal manner in order to provide the best output in any organisation.

Question 8: Does music management differ in music genres?

Buchmann mentioned that various musical genres require different needs and different aspects and therefore, there are huge differences between managing for example classical musicians, pop/rock musicians and choirs.

The researcher identified that different kinds of musicians have different needs and wants. Therefore, it is crucial for the success of the manager to be an expert in the particular field.

Question 9: Do you think that HR managers in the music industry need to have a musical background?

Buchmann argued that in the key position people are in, they have to be experts. Buchmann used to play the violin, but then office became too important for him. But people who work in the music industry need to understand the basics and the challenges of what you are doing. He emphasized that people who work in the music business, should have a musical background, in order to be able to discuss, argue, and decide properly.

The researcher investigated that many tour managers who work in the music business are musicians themselves. This supports the answer given by Buchmann (manager), as musicians know about the wants and needs while being on tour. Buchmann used to play the violin and now manages classical musicians. Due to the fact, that Buchmann knows the musician's perspective too, he definitely has advantages over other managers in the field of classical music.

Chapter 7: Conclusion & Recommendations

The primary aim of this thesis is to investigate Human Resource Management and the corresponding practices, techniques and methods in the music industry. Thus, the researcher reviewed literature on management, Human Resource Management as well as music management. Based on the information gathered during that process, the interview questions for the manager and founder of “SynchronStage” as well the interview questions for the musicians were created.

Human Resource Management in the music industry is a relatively new concept, which started to evolve in the 1990s (De Magalhaes, 2015). Due to this small time frame and the complex field, there are almost no academic studies about the role of HRM in the music industry. Furthermore, the researcher did not find any information about the structure of HR departments in big music labels such as Sony or Universal. For “SynchronStage” as an example, Buchmann (manager) mentioned that the company consists only of him as a founder and the programmers of the software. Due to the fact that there are no HR managers in big orchestras, the musicians try to fulfil the duties of HR managers.

Generally, it can be mentioned that fairness (in terms of fair contracts, fair recruitment process, fair compensation, fair treatment) was mentioned remarkably often by interview participants and does play an important role for employees. Based on the answers given, musicians expect the same HR techniques and methods as in any other company. What is more, the researcher identified that four musicians pointed out during the interview that HR managers who work in the music businesses need to have a particular musicality and knowledge about the music industry. Buchmann (manager) stated that he was a musician himself and added that people who work in the music industry need to understand the basics and the challenges of that industry. Therefore, it can be mentioned that depending on the field managers are operating in, there needs to be a certain level of expertise to be able to understand and manage humans effectively.

A difference of HRM practices in the music industry compared to “normal” businesses can be seen concerning the training of employees. Qureshi (2016) described typical trainings for employees in “normal” companies include lectures, case studies, role plays or computer-based trainings. This is not the case for musicians because they need to motivate themselves in order to improve their skills. Another difference can be displayed concerning the hiring process in the music business, which is based on playing an audition, whereas in other companies the process to become employed can take much longer. In “normal” businesses there are several steps in the recruitment process ranging from applying, written or oral tests, to personal interviews.

Allen (2015) mentioned that the music industry changed a lot in the last few years. A possible solution why the music industry changes can be attributed to the digitalisation and technological developments. Although this digitalisation leads to advantages on the managerial side where a lot of time and resources can be saved, musicians are sceptical. Buchmann (manager) initially decided to create “SynchronStage” to delete the obstacles that come along with working with musicians: running after them, calling them, and so on. The platform is unique in its creation, which makes it difficult to compare the platform to other online HRM platforms. Furthermore, “SynchronStage” only works with classical musicians, there might be differences in other genres. Additionally, it can be mentioned that there are also some advantages for musicians when using online platforms: flexibility and independence on time and place to access information.

What is more, many musicians criticised that online platforms have an impersonal flavour and that the personal component is missing. Buchmann (manager) on the other hand, emphasized during the interview that the human side on his platform “SynchronStage” must never disappear. He pointed out that the online HRM platform is very personal because he can call and meet musicians every time he wants and furthermore sees musicians who are part of his platform anyway once or more times a week during recording sessions. Although Buchmann emphasized several times that the human side must never vanish, online platforms are simply made to save managerial costs while maintaining a high productivity and therefore, the missing personal component cannot be denied.

Maybe the scepticism of musicians can be explained by the low rate of experience in working with online platforms. Only three of the interviewed musicians have experience in working via online platforms. If these online platforms will gain more popularity in the future, there need to be improvements made to reduce these worries.

Another danger concerning online platforms which was mentioned, refers to the possibility of giving wrong information. Reissner argued, that people can claim to have better skills than they actually have. Buchmann (manager) stated that there are constantly auditions to hire new musicians. Due to the fact that the recruitment process works either via recommendation or playing an audition, unskilled musicians have no chance to become a part of the platform. Generally, the recruitment process of “SynchronStage” seems to be fair, although it needs to be mentioned that freelancers who become a part of the platform without playing an audition might be privileged.

A term, which was used significantly often by classical musicians is the “year of probation”. This refers to inviting musicians for a year to rehearse together in order to see if a colleague fits into an orchestra. This personal component can never be guaranteed via online platforms. On the other hand, it can be stated that the year of probation for such a large number of musicians is simply impossible based on the unbearable costs for the manager. Additionally, every recording session varies in view of required musicians and equipment, and therefore the “year of probation” is not compatible with “SynchronStage”.

Furthermore, Edelmann introduced the term “auditioning tourism”, which is also a disadvantage that comes along with online platforms. Many musicians see job postings on online platforms, apply, but do not show up to the audition. This might lead to a disadvantage for musicians who actually want to apply for a job.

Concerning “SynchronStage” all interviewees mentioned that the compensation is fair and on time. Buchmann (manager) stated that the musicians are paid by the service and the payment is fixed. Edelmann furthermore added, that there is no gender pay gap in orchestras. Everyone is compensated with the same amount of money. Buchmann (manager) indicated that if a musician cancels a session based on illness he or she will not be automatically fired, but if a musician cancels for fun, he or she will no longer be asked to participate in recording sessions.

Lastly, it can be clearly stated that there are differences in managing musicians between musical genres. Passman (2015) mentioned that the market is much smaller for classical music compared to pop music. Musicians need managers with an understanding in the particular musical genre. Therefore, there are huge differences in managing a pop artist and a classical musician. Buchmann (manager) argued that you have to be an expert in the field you are working in. Therefore, the researcher concludes that managers in the music industry are not applicable to all kinds of genres, but need to specialise and focus on their field of interest.

After conducting this study, the researcher has a number of recommendations to improve the platform "SynchronStage". Reminders for either upcoming or cancelled recording sessions could be introduced. Furthermore, a live chat can be suggested to provide the possibility for musicians to ask questions directly to the managers. Lastly, the structure of the user interface of "SynchronStage" could be made more simple and clearer to provide an easier access for a broad variety of musicians.

To conclude, the hypothesis in this thesis *"Online platforms such as "SynchronStage" can compete with traditional HRM practices to meet and satisfy the employee-employer relationship and be even more efficient"* can be answered with **yes**. Working with online platforms includes advantages for the manager as well as advantages for musicians. Due to the fact that this style of working with musicians is rather new, it has to be mentioned that there is still some room for improvement. Nevertheless, due to technological developments the trend will go towards working online because a lot of time and money can be saved from the managerial perspective and from the musician's perspective new markets can be found and entered.

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Appendix

The appendix shows the interviews conducted by the researcher as a whole.

Interview: Marco Blascetta; March 22nd, 2017.

[Interviewer/](#) Interviewee;

Name: Marco Blascetta

Work: (Instrument & genre) Vocals, Electric Guitar, Double Bass, Accordion; Rock,
Folk Music, Rap, Classical Music, Acting

Freelance or employed: Freelance

Age: 27

Years of experience: 21

Gender: Male

[What do you understand under Human Resource Management?](#)

In my opinion, Human Resources refers to skills and knowledge of human beings. Human Resource Management on the other hand, describes the ability to use human capabilities to produce certain outcomes. Human Capital is connected to HR and represents only (knocks on table) the value which can be (ahm) applied to an economic market.

[What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?](#)

I think, that at the moment the most important thing of a musician is his human capital. This is a big problem, because, music, lyric poetry and art in general is getting less important. I would like that HR managers support musicians who want to present a certain message and have a particular musicality without having the financial and economic perspective as a top priority. For me, it is the wrong approach to focus creativity and music entirely on earning money.

Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO

If yes: why? If not: why not?

Yes, because nowadays the presence of musicians, especially on the internet, is a key factor which requires a lot of time. It's easier for musicians to focus on the creative process, when there is a HR manager in charge of handling the managerial duties.

The HR manager assists musicians in formalities and promotion.

The problem many musicians have especially at young ages is that they cannot focus entirely on the creation of music but have to deal with things such as: promotion, management, booking... (shortly pauses) at the same time.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

(Hm) To be honest, I don't have any experience in working with online platforms but I have some perceptions. Generally, I think that having online platforms assists managers in many duties, for example: administration. I'm sure that, people, who are a part of certain online platforms have a lot of advantages.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

I'm sure that using online platforms assists those who run the platform because you can reach many people without a lot of effort. I think this displays a huge advantage for musicians because they don't have to look for bookings on their own, but are a part of a large community.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

If bookings are entirely distributed via online platforms, then people who are not a part of a certain platform fall by the wayside. I think that is a risk. But, I honestly don't think that booking musicians will solely work online within the

next 10 years, because managing musicians differs in musical genres and their specific settings.

Have you already heard about the online platform “SynchronStage”? Yes/No

I just know basics about the platform.

Interview: Christian Buchmann; March 8th, 2017

Interviewer/ Interviewee;

So thank you for taking your time

Ah, the whole thing is in English?

Yes

Ok, no problem

The first question is a rather straight forward one: Please give an introduction about yourself.

Alright. My name is Christian Buchmann (ah). I have been working in the music business for the last 30 years. (ah) like (ah) I was a director of the Vienna chamber orchestra, the youngest ever, which I became in (ah) 1995, right and I am now 50 and (ah) so the other thing is we are running an agency as a family business (ah) working for the major Austrian orchestras and exporting culture to other countries and thirdly and (ah) just recently the “SynchronStage” was founded in Vienna (ah) this is a new spot of (ah) Hollywood film music recording and (ah) I was (ah) one of the initiatives, no like I was the, the initial partners of the “SynchronStage” and so we had to set up an orchestra from scratch and this had to be a big orchestra and this was (ah) quite a challenge for them and they saw it as a huge risk (ah) because (ah) the orchestra and I am already coming to certain core issues (ah) the orchestra is like the engine of a car. Without the engine you won’t be running. So, they entrusted me and there was a selection of like the twist between 4 or 5 different parties here and so I got the job because they knew my biography, they knew my experience and I told them I was (ah) easily able to provide the service.

Mhm.

That’s the point yes.

[So that was practically also the idea why you decided to create the platform?](#)

No, no. The platform reaches further back. So in the daily office work we found the usual obstacles that any other orchestra office would find (ah) calling musicians, running after them, calling them again, you can't reach them, they won't call you back, they cancel, they make mistakes, there is (ah) miscommunication like (ah) every now and then. (Ah) that's quite tiring so we thought and I thought we had to like kind of break down all the obstacles and all the difficulties that were like our every, every-day, an- anyways in the office, right. So, due to my, my experience, I used to be a programmer when I was about 18 to 26 at the age of, I, I wrote data base programs for different companies, just completely different things like point of sale, nothing in connection with music but databases. So, I stayed always on top of (ah) the information wave of (ah) of IT and still I am (am) of the leading (ah) experts (ah) concerning all the people I know, that I know. Everybody comes and asks me about their computer issues, problems and I usually and luckily can, can usually resolve them and give them good advice. So, we took a team of (ah) like (ah) programming company, in fact. They know employ 200 people. It's a big company so we didn't want to rely on a small (ahm) you know one shot thing that might disappear t, two years later. We knew there was a big (ahm) development just in, in head of us, right. So, we started exactly in that room now at that table where we're now sitting (points at the table).

Some of my orchestra people and (ah) the, the company who still is entrusted with a, with the daily and weekly development of our software/ platform. We sat here (points at the table again) and I told them about our issues and I though we want to do something about that. This was like almost eight years ago now. (Ah) When we had the first (ah) scratch, like the first no, the first (ah)draft and the first (ah) ideas of how that could be turned in a pro-program or a platform we found more and more opportunities that we could manage with the software/ platform. I always say platform because it's like a server, it's a cloud based thing and (ah) it's just a server installation that you can (ahm) approach from any kind of device from anywhere in the world. But you have your own installation as an orchestra for example, I say (ah) an office that runs music bookings and Human Resource bookings.

So the software of course had to be a very universal thing applicable for (for) musicians but (ah) but (ah) not necessarily only. So, theoretically you can run a cleaning team with it or even like a security company could run on the software because it's about (ah) managing human resource. This is particularly about freelancer specialists of any field because I don't think it does make a difference if (ah) for the software, if (ah) somebody comes with his violin or with (ah) something else. Doesn't matter with a bicycle or with a... whatever, back to a cleaner doesn't make a big difference – for the software, for the idea, for the theory. So we put the practical situation and the daily situation into theory. This is what programmers usually do, they theorize the (ah) everyday situations and finally t-t-t (stammers), the biggest challenge was to put it in the system which users find, find (ah) wanting to use and find sympathetic and, the and (ah) which does not really produce a distance between the orchestra office or the organising office and the individual who works for the group that you manage. So we had a research group of about 250 musicians over two years, which we, the group that we used to receive feedback and we really encouraged them to (to) give us as much as possible (ahm) of their (ah) emotions they had of their impressions they had, the experience they got from using the software. So, we ran on the (ah) alternative system that we had so far which is the same I think as everybody has got like Excel, Outlook, Word, all these things, spreadsheets, different forms, (ahm) depending on your daily (ah) constitution that (ah) might vary from then to when, usually it's not standardized we find it in the (the) examples that we know look at. Other orchestras (ah) that we inspect now and we introduce our software to them, we find that they're still where we have been eight years ago.

Mhm

So, know (ah) then came SynchronStage, that's why I told them: "YES, I CAN", I am sorry I don't want quote anybody from the past (ahm) American (ahm) government.

(Laughs)

Anyway, but (ah) so I could in fact (ah), (ah) offer my services, knowing that we have to be prepared for a lot of bookings – a huge amount of bookings (raises voice).

So the platform is prepared to even handle thousands of (ah) individuals in one turn, in one, with the push of one button effect. But still it's a very personal thing that we have now (pauses) on our screens.

Mhm (222)

So now, the (the) fact that I started to work for, with probably with SynchronStage as a partner, am I, I, insisted on having the exclusive partnership or exclusive position of the contractor because (ah) as soon as more people work on the same thing, there's confusion, there will be mistakes and there will be (ah) discouraged (ah) musicians and (ah) everything you don't want. (phone rings) Excuse me we have to pause shortly. That's the SynchronStage, sorry.

(1 minute later he Buchmann continues) Okay, because, because I knew I had the system in my background that nobody else had, I told them that I know fulfil my services. But still, when I had the (ah) contract signed by them and we had taken out a very precise contract about who's gonna do what. Once I signed the contract I, I went away from the meeting, I was quite nervous, honestly speaking because I saw it was a lot, that really (ah) came like a big wave and (ah) with the productions that arrived, one after the other, (ah) we developed the software further yeah. Like we put down other obstacles, resolved situations. We have (ah) introduced (ah) some mechanisms that really enable us to do elegant and very comfortable work and finally we can manage, we just had (ah), a setup of like 350 bookings that we used three hours for, to put them in a system and to roll them out and (ah) six hours later we had the 350 positions filled with freelance players of excellent quality, hand selected, everybody in the right position and (ah) I could in this time have dinner with family in fact I was, honestly speaking I was in the airplane, by my colleague sent it out now, six hours later, but I could have done everything else but take care of booking and (ah) running after musicians that would usually take longer than we have until the production starts. (285)

Mhm.

We have a notice time, probably of (ah) sometimes two days, sometimes a week and a week already feels comfortable. So, imagine the pressure that usually is (ah) on your shoulders when you have to fulfil the requests of a Hollywood producer who expects that Vienna as a film location, recording location does work exactly as other locations that have been up and running for decades already, do run of course and do work. So, we were thrown into the cold water and (ah) we immediately started swimming at the highest energy possible and we made it. We didn't only make it in comparison to other industrial recording spots like Los Angeles and London. We reportedly and according to the (ah) opinion of the producers explain and express to us, we're doing even better than other spots.

I actually wanted to ask a different question now, but since you mentioned it shortly before I wanted ask how people can become a part of the platform?

Alright, (ah) this depends. The platform is simply by log in that the organiser provides for you. So, we're putting your first name, your last name and your email address and the rest is being handled by system. So, you get an email automatically, you get a password sent and you have to alter the password by yourself, obviously. (Ahm), otherwise the system won't let you in twice or three times with the same password because it should be generated by yourself.

So, the fact is (ahm), since the software was produced from scratch we can basically do everything with it. We're just in negotiations with huge, in fact huge, institutions of the music scenery of Vienna and Austria and they have got their own, of course log in system we can use that. (Ah) we can go as far as users are a part of another system and we couple ourselves with their system. We, we do (ahm) produce (ahm), (ahm) interfaces and data exchange channels (ah) like providing the names and the instruments that a user has or plays. (Ah), so we can make (ah) the system like except (ahm) an implication from the user. So, that the organiser or the organising institution doesn't even have to interfere with that process. Of course that has to be some sort certification or some kind of (ahm) identification that you are entitled to use the software because otherwise (ah) it wouldn't be usable. (381) For my case,

it's an orchestra that we reflect in the system and we (ah) manage with the system, which means we had (ah) stem group and defined musicians who are members of the orchestra. So we did (ah) of course, we do of course constantly hold auditions because we need more musicians even now we have roughly 500 in the Synchron-Stage orchestra but we're still looking for certain instruments. So, we audition musicians and when they pass the audition and when they have the level that we really have to have at least, because it's a very high level. So, we make them (ah) we make them member of the orchestra and we make the system available to them. So it's a hand selection, maybe sometimes it's headhunting, sometimes it's recommendation which is almost the same of course, sometimes it's (ah) just (ah) from the reputation of players – so you wanna have these, you know them, which is again headhunting, that you're lucky when the player (ah) is a member of your band, and, and usually it's an auditioning thing. (419)

[How is the company structured? How many people are working behind the scenes?](#)

(laughs) Hm, it's like this. (Ah) first of all it was a huge expense, to go step by step. There was a financial burden that we had to manage to invest. But we wanted more and more and more, so the expenses grew and grew. (Ah) in fact, it's me only and (ah) and (ah) the programmers. Once the company saw the real life effect of the software is huge, so you can really use it in everyday life and once we saw, and we told them that we can't work without the software anymore, they offered to be partners. So, the software is now going to be sold, worldwide. We have got the first installations now because we're now in the state that we thought that is good to go to the market. And we have already negotiations with other companies of other products. Combinations of things like music travellers that offers rehearsal space all over the globe and our software which can provide that you (speaks unclearly) collect information and export it to the music traveller's system, which they are now already setting up. So, we're helping each other out. An the effects of combinations are immense.

(481) So, (ahm) the structure of the company: it's just me as a company owner here of the agency who invested a lot of money and the programmers. That's it.

[Is the software for classical and orchestral music or does it have a broader range of musical genres?](#)

The software could be described as organising individual specialists who have totally different life plans and totally different everyday lives who probably don't even live at the same place. But they kind of meet at certain points of time and they do the same thing coordinated which is the project that we are managing, right.

So can be from everywhere can be from like anything, whatever, if we need him or her (ah) and he's in the software he will know where he or she has got to be and what she or he has got to do. And (ah) so that's what the software does and then later they are released. We don't have to know where they are, what they do, when they are available, we don't have to know that – because that's what the software resources. We research the people's availability. First of all, we set the periods when we need the people for rehearsal and then the appropriate members of the software or the project participants are informed by an e-mail. The email is just as assistant of the system because they don't wanna look into the platform like every five minutes. But sometimes we have to be faster, we send an email automatically out. So it just says, you got a new project, please look it up online. So they go online on the mobile phone, smartphone, tablet, PC, mac, whatever, doesn't matter. Any platform, any operating system, any device works. So they look it up, find all the details from the first moment: like who else participates and so on and they just push a button or draw small switches (which we know from the Iphone), like yes or no, green and red, and that's it. And then they are waiting for the confirmation. To finally answer the question of course the system was designed at the example of an orchestra, which is a brilliant example.

[You mentioned before that you try to broaden the range of instruments, that you are looking for more exotic instruments?](#)

First of all, I am running the Vienna Chamber Orchestra with that and very successfully, people like it, and the guys became more reliable I know that was not the question but it's a fact.

On the other side, for producing film music you need all kinds of instruments. Anything that is called an instrument and produces a certain sound, we have to in fact, theoretically be able to provide. (602)

Before the interview I just told you that we have also have a tuctuc player, which is a wonderful ethnic instrument. Once you heard it, it might be your favourite instrument, for a while... (laughs). That's something we provide or any kind of instrument, right. But usually the classic instruments are what we, what we need. But we need loads of players. Usually up to 100 per production.

[How many people are currently part of the platform?](#)

There are 370 members that we administrate with the system. And usually, everybody gets information (about new recording sessions). We're just having an audition for another 35 players of different instruments. Because we wanna be open. That's the next thing. You have to stay open, give people the chance to introduce themselves and to be present, to participate, right.

[So, basically, let's say you get a request for a certain job...](#)

Yes.

[You send out information about the job via the platform...](#)

Yes. Right.

[And everyone who is a part of the platform gets a notification about the new job...](#)

Right.

And the members can tick whether they are available on the particular date of the job or not?

Exactly.

And the groups that we contact, of course, they are (ah) exactly what we need, usually, I mean exactly the instruments that we need but since it has got to be very fast, it might be that we need only five violins for a ... whatever, and (ah) we ask 50 players. Because let's say we need the information one hour later and we wanna have good players. So we have a huge group and the people know, the faster – the better, for everybody. Because Vienna as a location that offers film music now, depends on the efficiency of the system behind it. So, they don't know of course they know how we organise the orchestra but still they don't know how we really make this work and they are always amazed when we confirm a production with 70 players over 5 days, which is a lot of bookings.

Might be 1500 individual bookings in five days. (Ahm) oh no sorry, it's more, anyway, doesn't matter. A lot. It might be 1500 bookings in five days, easy and we confirm these in two days.

But huge productions like these are usually announced earlier like two weeks, three weeks in advance. Which is for the classical business almost ridiculous. If you tell a classical orchestra organiser: "you gotta set up an orchestra two weeks later with 70 musicians", they will just start laughing and think it's a joke. We don't even think it's a joke if they call us at 11 in the morning and want to have a group at 6pm. We might be able to manage that.

So would that be an advantage of online platforms?

(Online) platforms give a huge advantage when it has to be fast but you need trained players for that. Not about the musical performance that they give but about the organisational behaviour that they adopt during the time when they are members of the system. There's one thing about the platform the human side, the human element must never disappear. Must never vanish, must never get somewhere... far remote. That's why the system is very personal. Some players don't even realize

they're not being contacted by an actual person who writes one email to each player because the software is very, very personalized and you can switch off if you don't wanna have information, email and things like that, anyway. We can still add information to standardized emails to make it feel like it is written to the situation that we have and we do that. And people told me that they like it because they feel they can always access the platform, have always new notifications and are always up to date. We all look at the same data. But we look at the same data from different sides. Of course, the administration (data) is much more and musicians sees only his (ah) tailor made (speaks unclearly) ... only the dates that he participates, she participates in. Only things that are interesting for her or him, that's what the players see.

[What are disadvantages of online platforms? I know it's always hard to say that about one's own platform...](#)

(overlaps) No, no... I see my platform very objective because I am probably the hardest critic of (ah) my own platform. Because we always look for getting better and better and better. The disadvantage is if we sell it too many people, which we do (will do), we will lose the unique selling point of my own position. We are in a really mighty position because we can do what we do only because of the platform. But we can still switch the service off if we don't want other people to use it (laughs).

I can't see any disadvantages at the moment and I am very critical I told you, because I can still call every single player if I want to, I can still meet everybody. So, nobody prevents me or nothing prevents me from doing that. So, anyway, as an orchestra manager, or like a director and administrator or contractor you anyway meet the people once, twice, three times a week, whatever, many times at any production. I think we have (ah), kind of (ah), kind of (ah) destroyed all the obstacles which is a huge advantage. The disadvantage is the cost. And the disadvantage is that the development is extremely expensive. So, it's almost 400.000 Euros that we have now invested, because programmers cost a lot of money and that's thousands and thousands of Euros that ran into the software already.

And (ahm), no in fact, once we started actually using the software, we had no idea what is was going to be. We had no idea whether it is going to work or not. We had

no idea how people would accept it. We had no idea if the software had a personality that was very disturbing, you don't know how much care you have to invest into systems so that it is running properly. Because there were bad examples of other software on the market. Which is all together a certain burden, to use. Because once they bought, I don't wanna mention any kind of product, of course not, but people bought it and now we heard "It's so difficult to use, complicating" and (ah) in fact you don't wanna use it. Everbody talks bad about the products that are on the market, except one or two big products (ah) but they're not for the field that we are working on. We don't work for professional orchestras which means monthly payment thing and insurance that's not our business. (836)

We're looking in the freelance market and ethically we can do something against unemployment. This is a big theme. Once people are in my system they will get jobs offered. We cannot forget any of our members because they all appear at the same time, every time. If we set up a production we see every player actively, on the screen so we cannot forget somebody. People like the system, because we now managed, with the system to fulfil 100% of the requests. We had 4000 bookings in the last year (single individual bookings). No player was too late, no player was there when he or she shouldn't be there. No player was missing and these guys are from all social shifts, areas, backgrounds, life plans, lazy not lazy, early comers, late comers, we have got them all. Of course musicians, you know.

(Laughs)

But no one ever failed, like over one year and two months, since the orchestra was founded, there was no incident what so ever. And we blame, in a good way, the system for it because the advantage is you conclude a contract. You just say yes but not like in an email or a phone call, but you say yes in the system and something happens, right. That is the advantage: that people can always look it up.

Disadvantage I don't know. Things that we haven't yet developed but we're going to.

(Laughs)

[How are musicians compensated?](#)

This is the payment scheme?

[Yes, exactly.](#)

Ok first of all, the use of the software is of course free of charge. That's for sure. Concerning the payment for the service, it's just (ah) as it used to be: by the service. It depends on how people wanna pay their musicians. It's up to them. So, we have a payment by the service. That's a freelance typical thing. You get a job chance offered, job opportunity offered and it also says how much you will get for that. So usually if you're available and you wanna have some money you will do it once you're good enough to participate in an excellent group of specialists.

That's what we are usually handling. Particularly, the SynchronStage orchestra – these players, my god, they have to be trained specialists. You can't believe how well they have to be trained. 6-9 hours every day with a click track in the ear, on the spot, playing just from sight reading, you're not even allowed to breath almost, because the microphones are so sensitive and things like that, you know. These have to be very trained people. So, we're handling specialists, so they expect good payment.

And they are being paid by the service.

[What if a recording session is cancelled? \(957\)](#)

There are rules. Like so and so many days. 50% so and so many days, 100% so and so many days. But, we're trying not to have that.

[What if musicians get ill?](#)

They don't have an employment contract. They have a service contract, which means we have to replace them. If a musician becomes ill or something happens: accident, too late, train stuck, subway stuck, whatever, it's my duty as a contractor to provide the orchestra in full cast at 9 sharp, 10 sharp whenever the (ah) session

starts. Nobody is interested why something doesn't work. (Ahm) so far nothing happened. I have to knock on wood but (ah) if let's say something happens there are always people involved. So, I can see the producer and I can tell the player that an accident, something happened, he lost his key in the flat, whatever, something. It's all humans after all, right.

[But let's say a musician gets ill: Would you contact another musician via the platform?](#)

In that case, if I have got enough time, like a day something, right. Sometimes you have...

The platform gives enough alternatives. So we know already who is available or who was available at a certain time and we hope the information is still up to date. Once musicians are booked, they cannot get out of the system. If people disappear that no basis for anything. So once we book the people and they confirm the production they have to call me if they have a real, like, something that prevents them from coming, right. There are things we are always understanding. But, usually we see the reserves, we see the backup players so we call them. Usually in that case if it's really close, you call these guys and they jump into the taxi and they just come in and play.

(1022) It happened with the SynchronStage orchestra, but we always managed.

Luckily, the players who participate in SynchronStage become more and more reliable because they know what's about and they know how serious the thing is, right.

[If let's say a musician cancels like a few sessions, he or she won't be longer a part of the platform, right?](#)

Well, it always depends on why the cancellation took place (raises voice). If it's an illness – no problem. If he just cancels for fun he will not have to cancel anymore because he won't be asked anymore of course. That's a logical (ah) consequence of human behaviours and just human relationships that are never overruled by any kind of software platform. What we do is we bundle communication with many people into one communication. We bundle the exchange of information in (ah) in- into one

platform and (ah) so I think if you've got 1000 people who you've got to register the address of, right, if you outsource the process of typing in the living (ah) space, address, whatever, (ahm) to 1000 individual people, it will take maybe 5 minutes to do that. If everybody works at the same time. If you, on your own, do that, it will take you a week. Not a week, but it feels like a week. Because it's boring. And you might be making a lot of mistakes and maybe you misspell it. Musicians know their address, they put it in the system, so that's the kind of thought and idea behind (ah) the system. We ask people to provide information, we don't call them. They don't have to call us. We don't have to explain to everybody it's then, it's there, it's that, it's what, we don't have to explain. We put it in the system once everybody. Everybody can provide the available (ah) information whether he or she is available, we see it and we can book them, right. That's it.

So it's easy.

[Additional Question: How do musicians prepare for the recording session? Do you upload the sheets or do they come to the studio and get the materials at the location?](#)

That's the next thing. We have to (ahm) we have to provide the music via the system online because (ah) usually music comes between 12 and 8 hours before the session starts. (Ah) in 50% of the cases the music is just there – on music stands. So that's the next thing. That's why we have specialists, that's why we have auditions that's why we ask the players at the audition to just (ah) sight read something very complicating and (ah) the auditions are so hard, that every single musician definitely fails, the musician's fail.

But we just look at the point of time when they fail, how far they make it. But what we do at the audition, we put up actual music that was recorded. And (ah) so, a single player at the audition has got no help from others, that's the point to make. There's no help, there's no rhythm that others provide for you as a group because that's also something to mention because if you're in a group you have like a net that catches you. At the audition you're alone. So, but still at the end every player has to be to play from like just, spreadsheets even if they are complicated. This is

why it is so hard to run an orchestra, like a recording orchestra is probably the Mount Everest of orchestras. Because the players can be very good players but if he's not able to sight read- we got no use for him or her, right. (Ah), so these players have to be really, really well trained, yes. So, they get a second chance. If you fail an audition because of not being able to sight read, we tell them, go practice sight reading, and you can do that, go practice with a metronome, you can do that- come in a year. And then audition again, and then we will take you probably because it's, it's a thing that one can learn.

[The next question is: Who are the customers that are using SynchronStage?](#)

International film music companies. Fox, Warner, Paramount, (1192), Ralf Wengenmayr, Japanese productions, (ahm) film music from japan, from china, Chinese video game producers, Japanese video game producers, (ah) Austrian pop artists, sometimes, but they are rarely because it is such a high profile studio that it's, it's on the same level the very, very, very international, (ah) and most important stages like (ahm) Abbey Roads Studio in London. It's always compared with these kinds of very famous studios and all these studios in Los Angeles. So there's a huge pressure internationally seen on the technical equipment a studio has to have. Vienna is one of the leading, world-wide, leading studios of all because (ah) it's a hall, maybe it's the only hall that we know of, which was particularly built for film music recording, for nothing else but that. It's a triple shell building which means one huge outer wall, a middle wall and then the hall is again in another you know kind of shell like walls right. And there's no right angle in the big recording hall on purpose because the music sounds more natural and it's all wooden inside and it was refurbished beautifully, elegantly and (ah) with the most up to date equipment that you could imagine.

[Do you think that this platform became that popular by word of mouth or by providing constantly a high- quality? \(1237\)](#)

Both is true, but you need (ahm) you need (ahm) people who dare and invest the risk of one production into a new house. Pioneers. And we had a pioneer, which is

Conrad Pope, if you like up Conrad Pope you'll know who he is. He is involved in the StarWars production and so on. We have got Hans Zimmer. Who is a huge fan of the Vienna SynchronStage. (Ah) so they all love the (ah) atmosphere, the people, the musicians, the instruments. Hans Zimmer particularly, he always says one of the biggest assets of a recording studio is the good quality of instruments that they have got. And Vienna is a place where you can find very good instruments in the people's, musician's hands. So usually they own excellent equipment. I am a musician myself I would never say equipment for an instrument but in that case the word is probably right to use. And also the technical equipment is unbelievable.

What is the purpose of "SynchronStage"? (1288)

It's a standardized platform that we produced, online, which is (ah) accessible by any technical online equipment/ device that bundles different individual specialists with different life plans and different day plans (ah) to deploy coordinated performance like a rehearsal or a concert or anything else that they have to do and everybody's got to know where and when they have to be and what they have got to do. And that's what we do. That's it. With a minimum effort in fact. It's a lot of effort still, but the minimum effort possible.

There was probably a high effort required in the past to get to the point.

Right. Yes, Yes.

Do you think that HRM in the music industry does differ from HRM in a "normal" business?

First of all, what is a normal business?

A business which is not based in the music industry. Can be any kind of company with a non-music background. Let's say you have a company which is based in the music industry...

(overlaps) Whatever, an orchestra?

And you compare it to...

(interrupts) Taxi drivers company?

(laughs) For example, yeah.

Many people can drive a car. To be a taxi driver you need probably kind of ability to sit a long time in the car, whatever. But usually there is no huge process of selection for a taxi company or some whatever, food-can producer, whatever. But I think many businesses think they are very particular and they have their own rules and I am sure that applies to any kind of business: rules, special requests and special (ah) qualities that are required more or less. Some businesses more, some less. (Ah) for example like if you take teachers. So I am trying to compare (ahm) the music business like the orchestra musician, organisation to other organisation's human resources to kind of put it in a relative position to each other. Which means (ahm) musicians usually think of being something very special and unique. And then you look at other companies and they probably think as well that they are very unique. But I find it more and more, that (ahm) because I am travelling the whole globe and experiences different structures, companies and offices and whatever. But again somehow for the orchestral musicians and orchestras it's true. They have to be very special because the repetitive practicing of, of, of notes and phrases produces a certain structure of the brain. That's true. For sure, that makes people special. Musician's usually listen very well because the business is to (ahm) listen and reproduce. So they are usually very good at languages and they are also very good listeners usually (1384). So musicians have to be a type of person who is very sensitive and very open-minded. Anyway, but musicians are very particular that's true, I find it more and more and we don't wanna believe it sometimes. But it's true (ah) musicians are very particular as a society. So it is a very special thing and this is something that reflects in the Human Resource. How you treat the Human Resource. More respect, more freedom, more flexibility, but then you need some results anyways and that applies to everybody. At a certain point of time you have to have results. And I found

it very interesting to work with musician my whole life because it's a very, very human approach.

Usually, everybody thinks they are not replaceable in their positions and it's usually true. It's like a family (ah) like in an office, like my office, we love each other, we have a good collegueship, we have a good cooperation and we like each other a lot but sometimes you lose an employee. That won't change most probably the structure or the, the quality a business delivers. If he's not the boss. So that might change the quality even to the better (laughs), sometimes. So if the group works well together and speaking of Human Resource, it's like an organism that you have to manage and the organism is always alive. If you change something, it has to be done carefully. It's like the structure of a family. You know. So if you take out a family member there will be a negative impact usually or a positive sometimes, you know. But it changes a lot in fact. So Human Resource Management of an orchestra and of musicians in that kind is something particular. It's particularly nervous, it can be. Everything you change produces a lot of noise, so to speak and finally you hear on the music whether a group is harmonious or not. If the general state of mind and (ah) the mind set of an orchestra is peaceful and relaxed, that's what we are usually trying to produce/achieve then the result that they produce is good. And it is better than it is when there is a fight going on. You can hear that simply.

[Do you think from a managerial perspective, that music managers need to have a musical background or a musical understanding?](#)

Yes. Definitely. In the key positions that you're in, you have to be an expert. Let's say, I, myself, I used to play the violin. And then the office just was too important for my life, I saw that, I didn't wanna work on stage because first of all my nerves wouldn't allow that. I was a good violinist but (ah) I didn't wanna do that as a business because we have a family business going on and I knew I was going to work in the company. So it was no sense. But you have to simply understand the basics and the middle range (ahm), (ah) kind of challenges and the expert side of what you're doing. And the best thing is from both sides. You can of course have no idea of music, and you can learn about the symphonies and you can watch what people do, you

can take examples of other people's opinions for example, that's what critiques usually like to do. And you can kind of pretend to know everything but, in, let's say, if it comes down to the core and you're not settled in what you do, there's not a real, kind of, believe in your person, you will lose position, your credibility will just, will just (ahm), (ah) become less and less. Or you are an inhuman like leader who doesn't care about (ah) the people's opinions then you can for sure run any kind of business but the question is how long. There are many people in the field (ah) who don't know a lot about music and still are good business men but it's about music it's not about money, right. Same with the software that we produced, the platform that we're speaking of. We did it for the purpose of resolving our own problems, we didn't do this in order to earn money. If everything runs nicely and properly and the way we want it now, we will not be able to avoid earning money with it but that's not the objective. The objective was to resolve situations, right. Also if you run, if you work in the music business, I think you should really have a musical background in any case, in order to be able to argue, to discuss, to decide properly, right. The other thing is, if you're a good business person, you can take a consultant who knows a lot about music, next to your desk, fine as well, but still you as a person will lose credibility.

Right.

[Do you think that music management differs in music genres?](#)

Oh, sure, of course. Of course it does. It does. Opera is something I don't wanna do. Working for singers is something that I don't wanna do because I don't have any idea of singers: of their behaviours, of their problems and I honestly speaking I always hear it's hard. So I am not an opera type. I don't wanna work for a symphony orchestra as a director because it's rather impersonal and (ah) the impacts that might hit you from society which is anger, are so strong that I don't wanna confront myself with this kind of problems, probably and, and additionally there's a lot of organisation and structures and labour union things and questions and all that kind of stuff, which is not really in the interest of what you do of music in fact, right. So I am running a chamber orchestra and the other is like a project thing (ah) the Synchron-Stage is something different it is also freelance and that's good and they come play

and go you know but a lot of people anyway. But the chamber orchestra is an organization which is steady which has been founded 70 years ago. I sympathise a lot with the size of chamber orchestras because it's something you can move a lot, reach a lot. Then there is the next business and still staying in the so called "Ernste Musik", which is not a good distinction anyway for classification, doesn't matter: Choirs. Choirs is something different because people usually have jobs, different jobs, like being taxi drivers whatever, no, I hope not but might be. They come together and sing by the way that's the typical (ah) example where our platform is, is super well fit-in and we're now addressing a lot of choirs with this, because they are having a hard time getting hold of the people. Because they work, they're not at home, they travel, whatever...

And then of course there's the other side of let's say (ah) big stars: soloist management. Which we do in the office, but we're just the managers, right. (Ah) like a management company who organises tours. We also tour big orchestras but we're not running them. (Ah) the other thing is, for example festival, music festivals, typical Austrian open air festivals. I am also running one of these. And (ah) like there's also Mörbisch and that kind of business, but that's very money oriented. A lot. These guys, I don't think, they have got a lot of knowledge about music. Some have, some don't. But there you can survive without knowing anything about music. You got the stage designer, orchestra whatever, manager, you got these and that, you get somebody for everything. You don't have to know how to paint a theatre face and you can still be a theatre director, right. But you have to know what you do. That's a business thing. And then of course there's rock music and, and pop music and the whole field of international artists, who are played at MTV and co, right. I don't know about that music at all. I think this is just something PR and I experiences once the backside of this kind of apres- ski hit production. I was there. This is kind of awful for me. That's not music. These guys haven't written the music. They sometimes know how to sing but not very well. They're changed technically by some kinds programmes, which levels the voices. But there's no connection to music business in my understanding as it should be, right. So there are different aspects, even smaller fields of music that you might imagine. Because from the outside it's either "Ernste Musik" or entertainment or whatever, a show or whatever. It's unbelievable how

many different aspects and how many different needs these particular fields of music require.

[That's it. Thank you very much.](#)

Interview: Anna Budnowski; March 23rd, 2017.

Interviewer/ Interviewee;

Name: Anna Budnowski

Work: (Instrument & genre) Vocals; Pop, Jazz

Freelance or employed: Freelance

Age: 26

Years of experience: 9

Gender: Female

What do you understand under Human Resource Management?

I personally think that Human Resource Management refers to organising people to achieve a high work quality with regards to working with humans to obtain a high employee satisfaction, work- life balance and an overall fair work atmosphere.

What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?

For me, the most important thing is to have fair contracts. HR managers need to have a basic knowledge of the musician's life to get a better insight into the industry. Only an interest in listening to music is for me not enough, but people who work in the music industry need to have an understanding of life as a musician and the struggles that come with that. Managers in the music industry need to know how to guide musicians towards the right direction.

Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO

If yes: why? If not: why not?

I think that it plays an important role, because big music labels can only survive with HRM. In these times, where small labels and independent productions are getting more and more important, big labels have to increase their awareness of HRM and need to treat their artists as a human with needs and feeling, maybe even as a friend.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

It sounds really convenient for managers, but a person to contact is missing. If there is a rather insecure artist who is not really sure about steps in the music industry, he or she needs to have a contact person. Maybe online platforms should introduce live chats, for musicians to directly get in touch with managers in case of questions. The trend is surely going towards working with apps, working across distances and working independently.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

Independence according to time and location. It makes organising things easier. You get jobs that you wouldn't normally hear of. More opportunities. To work with people you wouldn't even know.

Managers can save time and costs because less employees are needed, you don't need to run after musicians anymore. Time and money can be saved.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

A disadvantage that comes to my mind when thinking about online platforms is the extreme digitalisation. The trends is going towards managing everything online, and therefore personality and emotion is getting lost.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"? Yes/**No**

Interview: Martin Edelmann; April 6th, 2017.

[Interviewer/](#) Interviewee;

Name: Martin Edelmann

Work: (Instrument & genre) Viola, Classical Music, Orchestra

Freelance or employed: Employed

Age: 47

Years of experience: 25

Gender: Male

[What do you understand under Human Resource Management?](#)

Human Resource Management should be a control system to provide a fair environment for employees and the company and to control the fairness of work-related processes. HR managers should be some sort of mediators, which is a really hard part because putting two parties in balance is absolutely difficult. Every decision is different and needs to be handled accordingly. You have all the stuff like gender, payment. In orchestras the gender pay gap doesn't exist. HRM should provide a chance for companies to transmit how to deal with each other. Hr managers should be able to mediate between employees, employees and the company and to make sure all these processes are fair and on an equal level. In best case they are able to create tools for everybody in the company to prevent conflicts and problems. For me personally, it would be the best thing to train employees in a way to avoid conflicts beforehand.

[What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?](#)

To be honest, I have no idea whether HRM exists for orchestras. The ORF has a HR department, but that is not really in the music business. The main part is just really to have a group of people making sure that everything is in a fair and equal manner. To check whether the year of probation is fair. But there is no HRM taking a look at this. Maybe in labels you have HR departments but not in orchestras.

We try to be the HR managers in the orchestra. Especially in the orchestra and in the year of probation where the musicians decide about individuals whether they fit in

or not. With a new employee you have to play together maybe 35 years. If there are personal problems, it can be hard to play together and it can destroy the group. This is really special in orchestras. But HRM doesn't exist in orchestras. We don't have HR manager for orchestras. We have a works committee (Betriebsrat) to check that no one is mobbed or something, but no HR manager. I don't know what HR managers would do with an orchestra. No, a HR manager could do something: He could check certain processes. Transmit ideas from the orchestra to the management. He could check the organisational structures and whether they are at the best point, that they are optimal. Often it is a problem of a communication structure. A clear structure of communication and behaviour would be important. And to make changes in particular gaps, to improve the entire communication structure. This would be a part of OB, but a good HR manager should be able to do that as well.

[Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO](#)

[If yes: why? If not: why not?](#)

No, but it should play an important role. Orchestras consists of sizes like 89- 170 people. In big groups like these it would be good to have an HR manager for orchestras. If you take the opera house, I don't know whether they have an HR department, they should have it. But I'm not sure whether it exists. The important thing is included in the term Human Resources. You should take care of the resources: the musicians. That would be the main goal. This answer fits also into the definition HRM. To save and take care of the resources. Because you have no concert, orchestra without musicians.

[What do you think of online HRM platforms?](#)

There are different ones. There is "Muv", which is an online platform for orchestra auditions. You can simply create a profile, and then you are part of the platform and get information about auditions. Approximately 200-300 orchestras use that platform. There are a lot of good and bad things. It's very easy to apply, it's just one click. The other good thing is, because it's all over Europe, you find new markets. A Norwegian guy reading about a viola position in Vienna, can simply apply for that. The problem is very often that if you have an audition where 800 people read about

the audition, 200-300 people apply but won't actually come. We call that "Auditioning-tourism". But there are tools to prevent these problems. It's getting better and better. The Vienna Symphonic Orchestra for example demands a short video (about 5 minutes) to avoid this problem. "Vio-world" is another recruitment platform. This platform is just to get information, whereas "Muv" is completely automated.

[Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?](#)

Yes. They do. You can reach different markets very easily and quickly. It's necessary to open up the markets. If there is a platform like SynchronStage it would be much more difficult for musicians to apply, because the platform is based in Vienna. To be honest, it would be impossible I think. But online platforms in general are a very useful tool to get quick information about available spots worldwide. In special newspapers where available spots are provided, the information might be no longer available as the newspaper gets printed, or the new available positions are not in the current edition of the newspaper.

[Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?](#)

Yeah. It's a reduced information tool. Nowadays everyone has a standardized application form. In the past there were application letters, which were handwritten. The application had a much more personal touch. How the application form looked like was a statement about yourself, how it was written, how it was designed and so on. Maybe it's old-fashioned but I liked that way, to see the effort someone has put into the application form. This part is missing now completely. There is no personal way to create applications anymore. At the end of the day everyone has to play anyway, and nowadays the audition is the process to decide whether a musician is skilled enough or not. But this makes it more difficult to select between the applicants because every application is made in the same style. So it's hard to differentiate whether someone has invested a lot of time in his application form for a particular position or not.

Have you already heard about the online platform “SynchronStage”?

Yes/No

If yes: Do you think that the platform can meet all perceived services by musicians?

(Fair compensation/ Fair recruitment process)

It does in a lot of ways. It’s a really fair and transparent platform. If you join the SSO orchestra you already know all the information about payment, and so on. It’s always the same payment.

It’s not changing project wise, which is very good. There is a constant process to improve the platform. If you have an idea you can tell Christian Buchmann your improvement idea. They had a test run with a new tool, where they gave a call an hour before the session starts. I don’t know whether this is a fixed process now, but they have tried that out. The payment is fair, on time, and no one has to wait for the compensation.

Does “SynchronStage” bring advantages for musicians? If yes, which.

Yeah. It does. You don’t have to negotiate about payment. It’s fixed. Payment is exactly on time, you never have to wait for something. For information about special projects, you can always access the platform. Schedule, sheets, time. You get reminders. When you’re in the pool of the SSO, you can tick your availability for sessions. If Christian checks the platform and sees how many musicians are available, then he’s able to communicate the progress to the client. That’s a good and easy way to set up an entire orchestra. Christian told me, that he was able to manage organising a 125 people orchestra within a few days. This wouldn’t be possible via telephone. The exact schedule is included on the platform. When the session starts, when there is a break, when the second half starts. If a musician has only time for one session a day, Christian sees on the platform who has time to play the second session that day. If I have a rehearsal with the RSO, I can check my calendar whether I have time to play a recording session in the afternoon or evening with the SSO. Overtimes are charged 15 minutes- wise. If there is a one- minute delay, Buchmann

pays for the entire 15- minute overtime. The SSO provides catering and highly professional setting, with the possibility to create separate in-ear mixes for every musician.

Would you have ideas to improve “SynchronStage”?

I never thought about that. Concerning the auditioning process: I got into SynchronStage by word-of mouth, I didn't audition. Maybe it's difficult for freelancers to get into the platform. If you are employed at an orchestra, then you already have a good reputation. But for freelancers, it might be difficult.

Interview: Ruben Gludovacz; March 22nd, 2017.

[Interviewer/](#) Interviewee;

Name: Ruben Gludovacz

Work: (Instrument & genre) Vocals, Guitar; Pop/Rock

Freelance or employed: Freelance

Age: 31

Years of experience: 20

Gender: Male

[What do you understand under Human Resource Management?](#)

In my opinion, Human Resource Management is a necessary function in every business to improve the economic stability of that company. I think (ahm) that managers in this department have to deal with hiring, firing and retaining employees to provide an economically efficient company.

I personally think, that it is an ungrateful job because you have to decide about other people's future.

[What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?](#)

I expect from HR managers that they raise their interest in music and go to concerts themselves rather than waiting for applicants to contact them to get a contract. I have never seen any HR scouts on concerts and I think that's the only way it should be: seeing bands live and having a passion in music. Besides the interest in music managers should have, they need to have a certain degree of economic background, because they constantly have to be up-to-date about what is currently asked for on the market.

Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO

If yes: why? If not: why not?

Yes, of course. The people working in an HR department are necessary to find and hire new bands to avoid the digitalisation of the entire music industry. Nevertheless, music is a speaking organ for human souls that need to be absorbed by other souls.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

(Hm) I think, that online platforms have an impersonal flavour and I think that it is hard to manage musicians via online platforms because this makes musicians feel like they are just a number and one of many.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

Yes, of course. Because this can connect musicians and lead to new opportunities. Furthermore, the accessibility for musicians will be improved. In the digital age we're living now, it is good to receive background information about a certain concert in advance.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

As mentioned above, I think that these platforms are a bit impersonal. And a possible risk is to be one of many names in a catalogue.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"?

Yes/No

Interview: Raphael Handschuh; April 3rd, 2017.

[Interviewer/ Interviewee;](#)

Name: Raphael Handschuh

Work: (Instrument & genre) Viola, Classical Music, E- Musik (art music)

Freelance or employed: Both

Age: 33

Years of experience: 8

Gender: Male

[What do you understand under Human Resource Management?](#)

In my opinion, Human Resource Management deals with the coordination of employees.

[What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?](#)

I expect a degree of organisation, where all necessary information about jobs as well as tasks, schedules, locations are provided by the organiser.

[Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO](#)

[If yes: why? If not: why not?](#)

Yes, definitely. I think that good HRM can distribute to achieve a high quality as well as to find the most suitable musicians for particular jobs.

[What do you think of online HRM platforms?](#)

It is a good possibility to increase the tempo of organising projects. I think that the trend will work towards working via digital platforms, especially in modern fields, where time and money play an important role.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

Yes and No.

Yes, because if you're connected in a good way, you can participate in a lot of sessions, projects.

No, if you're not available 24/7 certain projects cannot be attained.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

A possible risk is that people are seen more as numbers. If you're not even talking or texting with others, the human character will not be in the foreground anymore.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"? **Yes/No**

If yes:

Do you think that the platform can meet all perceived services by musicians?

(Fair compensation/ Fair recruitment process)

Fair compensation, Yes.

Fair recruitment process, Yes.

Does "SynchronStage" bring advantages for musicians? If yes, which.

For me personally, as I don't have very much time, it is very good to be able to design my schedule as I want to and decide how many days, hours I want to work. For Vienna as a cultural location, many musicians can profit because SynchronStage provides a new way to earn additional money and experience.

Would you have ideas to improve “SynchronStage”?

To be honest, I don't have any ideas to improve the platform. In the field that they are working in, they have created an ideal approach to organise, and hire musicians.

Telephone Interview: Paul Rabeck; March 31st, 2017.

[Interviewer/](#) Interviewee;

Name: Paul Rabeck

Work: (Instrument & genre): Viola, Classical Music

Freelance or employed: Both

Age: 33

Years of experience: 15

Gender: Male

[What do you understand under Human Resource Management?](#)

To be honest I am not that familiar with the term Human Resource Management.

But I think it is about managing people and employees.

In the music business there is a big difference between freelancers and employees. The freelance field is more about recommendations, word of mouth and auditioning. Playing auditions as a freelancer is a relatively new concept, whereas auditioning for a stable employment has always existed and is widely spread.

[What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?](#)

I expect fairness. It is hard in these cultural fields, such as art and music. A lot of work to provide fairness is being done but there are still some gaps to fill. Especially when taking the few jobs available into consideration. People practice months to play a certain audition and have to prove their entire expertise within 5 minutes. Auditions can be crucial for the entire career of a musician, and therefore fairness needs to be ensured.

[Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry?](#) YES/NO

[If yes: why? If not: why not?](#)

Yes. Of course. To provide the best quality for the right situation. The right musicians for the particular job need to be found. Especially when needing musicians who play extraordinary instruments or genres, who are not available in large numbers.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

I am very sceptical. Technical skills can be made available online but the human part is missing.

Therefore, years of probation are made. To see whether people fit in, to see whether they are punctual, how they work and so on. There is a huge difference when you know the people you are working with. Knowing the people personally creates a completely different work environment. You have to work tens of years together, you make music together, you breathe together, to get to a certain personal level. This can never be guaranteed with online platforms.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

An advantage is to increase the size of the market. Hidden talents can be found. But there is still room for improvement...

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

A risk is that the personal component is getting lost. It is hard to find the right people and to constantly provide a high quality of musicians. Therefore, it would be good to have years of probation for a job for more than one musician. But this can't be done, since it is very expensive.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"? Yes/No

If yes:

Do you think that the platform can meet all perceived services by musicians?

(Fair compensation/ Fair recruitment process)

The platform is really advanced in view of planning and implementing certain projects, a multi-tool, but still in progress. Guaranteeing quality only based on one tool is not sufficient. Here, the year of probation is missing again, playing one audition is not enough. SynchronStage is a good planning tool, but it is hard to provide a high quality constantly. The audition helps to create a minimum requirement level. Whether musicians are successful or not depends on their performance in each session. Vienna has good preconditions for musicians, there is a good scene with a lot of good musicians. If people manage to get into SynchronStage it can be a good opportunity but also stressful since people need to constantly prove their skills. If a musician fails at a certain recording session, he won't be longer a part of the platform. For me fair compensation means compensating musicians on time. And that's the case concerning SynchronStage, there is nothing to complain about. Musicians are paid hourly, completely fair, well thought out, plausible and logical. I think that SynchronStage has the advantage that they only manage recording sessions. This is relatively easy to calculate. Three hours of recording, 30 Euros per hour, musicians have to pay taxes themselves. Payment is not extremely high, but fair. If a recording session is cancelled based on the organiser, there is no compensation for musicians.

Concerning big projects like these people shall excuse small mistakes, because many people believe in a project and if every musician complains about the smallest things, the project cannot survive. Inputs given by musicians are always welcomed and SynchronStage constantly tries to improve services, based on feedback by participants. For example, in the past there were only two possibilities for musicians: they either have time for a recording session or not. Now they introduced a "temporary available", where musicians can constantly change their status until a project is fixed. It's a really open-minded project, which follows an American approach of doing things. Maybe, because of the collaboration with Americans.

Does “SynchronStage” bring advantages for musicians? If yes, which.

It’s a good planning tool. Flexibility is also an advantage. People can check their calendars whether they have time for a particular session or not. No e-mails, no phone calls. Easy, clear, and well structured.

A disadvantage is that recording session can be easily cancelled and deleted from the platform. If a recording session is cancelled it would be good to send out an email about the cancellation of the session. This could be improved.

Would you have ideas to improve “SynchronStage”?

The tool is great, but for me personally there are too many features and information available. There are a lot of things which are not relevant for individuals such as the list of instruments for certain sessions. The user interface could be made simpler, it is partly almost too complex. General information about certain sessions should be provided at the beginning such as from when to when sessions take place. You have to scroll down till the end to see how long the session is.

Another idea would be to give updates about sessions. A Notification if a session gets cancelled would be great. Furthermore, reminders would be great of fixed sessions via text messages and via e-mail 24 hours before a session starts.

Interview: Matthias Reissner; March 24th, 2017.

Interviewer/ Interviewee;

Name: Matthias Reissner

Work: (Instrument & genre) Viola, Classical Music, Orchestra

Freelance or employed: Freelance

Age: 54

Years of experience: 36

Gender: Male

What do you understand under Human Resource Management?

Human Resource Management deals with managing and supplying workforce.

What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?

Managing the supply and demand of musicians, creating platforms, providing information about projects (concerts, sessions, jobs) ...

Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO

If yes: why? If not: why not?

In my personal experience, no, because I myself get my bookings directly and not via third parties.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

It is surely a good idea that will gain popularity in the future. Due to the globalisation and due to the reason that concerts take place at different locations. Today, the world is entirely connected technologically.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

I don't have any experience in working with online platforms because I personally am generally contacted directly. The internet plays a very important role in today's life and therefore, these online platforms will become more and more important in the future.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

A possible risk is that people can spread wrong information about their skills. And therefore, there is a risk to hire musicians with less skills than they claim to have.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"? Yes/No

Interview: Nikola Zeichmann; March 20th, 2017.

Interviewer/ Interviewee;

Name: Nikola Zeichmann

Work: (Instrument & genre) Electric Bass; Double Bass; Violin; Jazz, Pop/Rock

Freelance or employed: Freelance

Age: 27

Years of experience: 14

Gender: Male

What do you understand under Human Resource Management?

In my opinion, Human Resource Management deals with managing workforce and how to effectively treat employees.

What do you expect ideally from HR managers in the music industry?

General interest and knowledge in music and an unbiased view of bands and musical genres. Concerning discovering new artists, I expect from HR managers that they don't try to reproduce already existing bands/ musicians but that they are brave enough to try something new. Example: The Austrian music industry constantly tries to orient oneself on the German market. We could be more innovative and confident (laughs).

Do you think that HRM plays an important role in the music industry? YES/NO

If yes: why? If not: why not?

Yes, and No. It's quite a paradox example because many artists try to go their own way without a large agency in their background. That "Do it yourself" principle is quite common at the moment. But once a band has achieved a certain level, they need to cooperate with music managers and HR managers to be successful and spread their music to a broad audience.

What do you think of online HRM platforms?

To be honest, I don't have any experience with online platforms. But I personally think, that online platforms, especially social media platforms, will play a huge role in the future.

Do you think that online HRM platforms bring advantages for musicians?

I guess, yes. I think that flexibility is an advantage for musicians, because information can be accessed on the road.

Are there any disadvantages or risks that come to your mind when thinking about online HRM platforms?

I can imagine that cheaper musicians will be chosen over more expensive ones and it's difficult to measure quality only based on recordings and CV'S. I'm used to a more old- school approach: People call me or text me that they want to book me. I guess it's quite difficult to filter quality online profiles.

Have you already heard about the online platform "SynchronStage"?

Yes/No