

A call for Point-Counterpoint papers: Navigating the Tensions in Digital Work

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The rapid evolution of digital work has sparked intense debates among scholars, policymakers, and industry leaders (Cong et al., 2024; Eaton et al., 2015; Kellogg, 2022). While digitalization offers unprecedented opportunities for flexibility, efficiency, innovation, and global connectivity (Karunakaran, 2022), it simultaneously raises profound questions regarding worker well-being, job security, organizational control, corporate strategy, inter-organizational collaboration, and public policy (Barclay et al., 2022; Lu et al., 2024; Shoss and Vancouver, 2024). Companies face strategic dilemmas in integrating digital technologies, balancing short-term productivity gains with long-term sustainability and employee engagement (Ambos and Tatarinov, 2022; Doorn et al., 2023). At the same time, collaboration between firms becomes increasingly complex (Cepa and Schildt, 2023), as digital transformation reshapes traditional competitive dynamics and creates new interdependencies (Firk et al., 2021; Rahmati et al., 2021; Townsend et al., 2024).

The motivation for this Point-Counterpoint series arises from the need to engage directly with these ongoing tensions and debates surrounding digital work (Seethamraju and Hecimovic, 2023). The purpose of this series is to foster rigorous academic dialogue that explicitly contrasts competing perspectives to deepen our collective understanding of how digitalization reshapes managerial practices, workplace dynamics, corporate strategies, and governance frameworks. This structured debate format is intended to illuminate areas of uncertainty and contradiction, stimulate critical reflection, and generate actionable insights for theory, practice, and policy (Doh, 2022).

Moreover, policymakers grapple with regulating digital work environments, striving to balance innovation with protection for workers' rights, diversity, and ethical considerations (Kim et al., 2025). The intricate nature of digitalization necessitates comprehensive analyses that extend

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beyond traditional managerial frameworks (Nauhaus et al., 2021). As businesses and societies continue adapting to digital-driven paradigms (Ambos and Tatarinov, 2022), rigorous, phenomenon-driven research is essential to unravel the complexities, contradictions, and opportunities embedded within these rapidly evolving contexts (Collins, 2025).

Aligned with the *Australian Journal of Management*'s (AJM) commitment to advancing broad-based managerial knowledge, this Point-Counterpoint series on Digital Work engages leading scholars and practitioners in structured debates on key tensions shaping the future of work in digital environments. By adopting this phenomenon-driven approach (Schembera et al., 2023), the series seeks to not only present contrasting viewpoints but also deepen our understanding of the interconnected impacts of digital technologies on managerial practices, corporate strategy, business collaboration, and governance policies.

Potential topics for submissions include, but are not limited to, the following critical questions central to management scholarship:

1. Does digital work empower employees by enhancing flexibility, or does it intensify managerial control and surveillance?
2. How does the rise of algorithmic management influence workplace autonomy and managerial decision-making?
3. Do digital labor platforms foster innovation and inclusivity, or do they exacerbate precarious working conditions?
4. What roles can organizations and policymakers play in steering digital work toward sustainable and equitable outcomes?
5. How do corporate strategies evolve in response to digital work transformations, and what implications does this have for inter-organizational collaboration and competition?
6. In what ways can governmental policies effectively regulate and guide digital work to ensure balanced economic and social benefits?
7. Can digital work replace traditional managerial intuition in strategic decision-making?
8. Is digitalization an asset or a threat to workforce diversity and inclusion?
9. Does digital transformation promote or undermine ethical business practices?
10. Is digital work in crisis management an advantage or vulnerability?
11. Should digital workplace technologies be fully transparent and explainable?
12. Is digital transformation the key driver of innovation, or is it overstated?
13. Can digital technologies replace human creativity in marketing and product development?
14. Does digital work enhance or hinder employee engagement?
15. Can digitalization effectively address management's productivity paradox?

By juxtaposing opposing arguments and evidence-based insights (Collins, 2025), this series critically examines and challenges conventional wisdom, encouraging rigorous scholarly debate on the multifaceted impacts of digitalization (Cepa, 2021; Doorn et al., 2023). The objective is not to reach consensus but to illuminate the complexities inherent in contemporary management phenomena, providing actionable insights for managers, policymakers, and scholars alike.

1. Submission process for Point-Counterpoint articles

The AJM welcomes submissions for its Point-Counterpoint series through two distinct yet complementary pathways:

2. Proposal-based submission

Scholars are invited to submit structured proposals that clearly delineate critical debates concerning digital work. Proposals should explicitly define the specific issue of interest, present contrasting scholarly positions to be examined, and underscore both the theoretical contributions and practical implications of the intended debate. This submission route aims to foster rigorous interdisciplinary discourse, promoting novel theoretical insights and methodological advancements in the context of digital work.

3. Targeted scholarly invitation

Alternatively, the editorial team may directly invite submissions from recognized experts or emerging scholars known for their authoritative contributions to specific research domains. Invited scholars will be asked to provide contrasting perspectives on topics identified by the editorial team as particularly significant or contentious in the realm of digital work. This targeted approach ensures contributions of high scholarly rigor, reinforcing the series' commitment to meaningful and impactful academic discussions.

It is important to note that while editorial encouragement or invitation signals alignment with the journal's aims, it does not influence the rigor or outcome of the peer-review process. However, engagement at the proposal stage can help clarify and refine the scope and focus of submissions, thereby potentially reducing the likelihood of rejection.

The peer-review process for each Point-Counterpoint article will be rigorous and thorough, comprising:

- One reviewer specializing in artificial intelligence and digital work research;
- An Associate Editor from AJM or a suitably qualified member of the Editorial Board familiar with the phenomena under discussion; and
- The Deputy Editor responsible for overseeing the Point-Counterpoint paper series.

We expect a maximum timeline of 6 months from proposal submission to online publication.

Interested authors should submit proposals not exceeding 500 words to ajm@unsw.edu.au, with "Point-Counterpoint" clearly indicated in the subject line. AJM intends to publish a minimum of two Point-Counterpoint articles annually.

4. Submission format guidelines

- Proposal Length: Maximum of 500 words
- Final Paper Length: Between 4000 and 6000 words
- Required Submission Elements: Title page, abstract, and keywords.

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