







# The 2025 Buyer's Guide to Navigating Demo Tech

Find out which demo tech is best for live demos, product tours, and beyond

			
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# Introduction

There are more options for live demo technology than ever before. Interactive demo software is predicted to hit mainstream adoption in the next 2-5 years. And it's no longer just about product tours built by marketing teams. Use cases for streamlining the creation and delivery of product experiences via live demos and sales leave-behinds have been driving significant growth, expansion and maturation in the category.

Likewise, sales and presales personas are fast becoming top users of interactive demo software – but this adds pressure for vendors in the space to offer different capabilities. For instance, the ability to inject synthetic datasets into demos, clone application environments, etc. are top requirements from sales and presales users.

What started as product tour- and video-based demo solutions has evolved significantly to address the expanding market use cases and capabilities needed. Many solutions are still concentrated on the product tour and video side of the market, but new entrants on the interactive demo software scene offer screenshot demos, HTML demos, live app overlays, application cloning, and demo data injection capabilities, just to name a few. And many organizations with strategic demo programs get the most value running [live demos](#) and [alternatives to POCs](#) using demo software.

Navigating a maze of features and functionality isn't always easy. Depending on your product and the technical strengths (or resources) of your team, there are dozens of factors for why you'd choose one technology over another.

That's why we've created this buying guide to help you navigate through the demo technology options on the market, their pros and cons, and which use cases they're best for.

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# Demo Videos

Video-based demo creation technologies work by capturing videos and screenshots of your product. From there, some demo tech allows you to edit the video itself. For example, you can add branching questions so your sales team or buyer can navigate to the portion of the video that makes most sense for their use case. You may even be able to edit logos or make surface-level changes to your video's appearance.

A pro of demo videos is that they remain online even if your live production environment goes down. This is useful because it removes some of the risks of demoing a live product — which range from slow load times, outages, and connectivity issues to surprise changes and the potential to expose customer data. If any one of these things go wrong, you can easily lose a deal.

One of the most significant challenges is that a video is a video...and not your product. For some teams, videos may serve as an additional barrier between your product and your buyer. In some cases, with top-of-funnel prospects who are in the exploration stage, this can be a good thing. However, for live demos, prospects tend to be further down in the funnel and want to make a decision sooner rather than later.

**Even with the ability to jump around and navigate to different parts of the video, the demo is not interactive. Many prospects will want to experience your product and explore it for themselves — which isn't possible with a video. We'll cover this in more detail when**

**we discuss alternate approaches, but an interactive demo should give you the ability to showcase your product exactly how your prospect might see it as a user. That means you can click through on product features and show how they work.**

And, even though some video demo technology lets you make surface-level edits to the look and feel of your demo, most video technology isn't truly editable. If you are able to make changes to one part of your demo video, these changes don't apply everywhere else in the demo — so editing can be time-consuming and cumbersome. In addition, your product won't update in real time, as it would with a live production environment.

**Overall, we would recommend demo videos for top-of-funnel prospects.**

# Screenshot Capture Tools

Many demo creation technologies work by capturing screenshots of your product. While these screenshot capture tools can be effective for things like product tours on your website and leave-behinds, prospects often want to experience how your product actually works during a live demo. With that said, many screenshot tools don't require coding expertise, which makes them a good choice for product marketing teams and sales reps who need to pull together a product tour or quick demo without SE involvement.

Screenshot capture tools work by stitching together screenshots of your product into a tour or specific narrative. Some tools in this category use HTML capture to show prospects your application's frontend. While you can't edit screenshots, some HTML capture tools do allow you to make surface-level edits to the way your product looks and feels. For example, you may be able to change text and logos. Since these tools are primarily used for product tours and sales leave-behinds, most feature some level of analytics to view user engagement.

A pro of screenshot capture tools is that they remain online even if your live production environment goes down. This is beneficial as it eliminates some risks associated with live product demos, such as slow loading, outages, connectivity problems, unexpected changes, or exposing customer data. Any of these issues could cause a deal to fall through.

The cons of using screenshots for a live demo start with the fact that screenshots don't look and feel like your actual product. Your sales reps have to stay within the predefined flow of a product tour, so the demo is not truly interactive. If a prospect asks you to click on a feature and show how it works, the rep only has a visual of the frontend. We'll explore this further when we discuss alternative approaches, but an interactive demo lets you present your product just as your prospect would experience it. This means you can click through features and demonstrate how they work.

And, even though some screenshot capture technology lets you make surface-level edits to your product's UI, most screenshot technology isn't fully editable. If you are able to make changes to one part of your product tour, these changes usually don't apply everywhere else in the demo — which means editing can be tedious and take a lot of time. In addition, your product won't update in real time, as it would with a live production environment.

**Overall, we would recommend screenshot capture demos for simple, guided demos for marketing teams.**

# HTML Capture Tools

Demos built with HTML capture show more functionality than a simple screenshot. Your product maintains some interactivity — think hovers and dropdowns. This makes for a higher fidelity experience that gives users a better taste for your product. It's most commonly used for product tours, but some companies try to extend its usage to live demos.

There are, of course, pros and cons to this approach. Plus, not all HTML capture technology is built equal. Some capture methods let you make deeper edits to your product's underlying code. This can make for even more realistic product experiences.

HTML capture technologies work by capturing your application's frontend. With most HTML capture technologies, you can make surface-level edits to the UI, including logos, images, and text edits. These tools create an imitation of the product without the underlying functionality or interactivity. By linking screens together, you can make your demo clickable like a real application.

For some, that's enough for the HTML capture to be useful as a live sales demo. Indeed, there are good reasons to pursue this approach.

## Pros of HTML Capture for live sales demos

- **HTML demos stay online even if your live app goes down.** This eliminates some risks associated with live product demos, such as slow loading, outages, connectivity problems, unexpected changes, or exposing customer data.
- **HTML capture tools are relatively easy to use.** Captures are typically done through a Chrome extension with just one click per screen. Editing HTML demos is also usually straightforward, with little-to-no coding experience required.
- **HTML demos are good if you want guardrails.** HTML captures offer a curated view of your product. These can be useful for demos of complex products where you need to show prospects a limited amount of features and keep the conversation narrowly focused.

Some HTML capture technologies also allow you to make code edits, which lets you customize the look and feel of your demos. The [best tools in this category](#) give you the flexibility to edit HTML, CSS, and Javascript. That way you can inject additional interactivity back into your demo, and you can edit everything so it looks and feels exactly like you want it to. That's why if you use an HTML capture tool for live sales demos, we recommend one that allows you to edit the underlying code.

However, with all HTML capture tools, there are significant cons to be aware of.

## Cons of HTML Capture for live sales demos

- **You can't navigate freely:** Where some might see a benefit in keeping guardrails up, most would prefer to give their sellers the option to deviate from a predefined flow. You can't predict how a demo will go. Sales reps should have an environment that gives them the freedom to navigate to the parts of the product that will best resonate with the prospect.
- **You're limited in what you can edit:** Most HTML capture tools are very limiting in what's editable. For instance, you might be able to change text, swap an image, or even blur part of the product. But many demo builders need more control over what's shown so they can customize demos for a variety of different use cases. Look for HTML capture tools that allow code editing to alleviate this concern.
- **It will never be as interactive as your actual app:** Even with custom Javascript, an HTML capture won't reflect the interactivity of your real product. This risks prospects having an incomplete picture of your product and what it's capable of. The product may come off as rigid, when in fact it can handle complex workflows and is highly customizable. To capture the full functionality of a product, some demo software is built to capture both frontend and backend web requests.
- **Your product will always be out of date:** By capturing your product at a moment in time, your demos will always lag behind your actual product. New features and functionality won't get incorporated into the demo until you recapture everything.

**Overall, we would recommend HTML demos for product tours and leave-behinds, but would exercise caution when considering them for live sales demos. Depending on your priorities, there are circumstances where an HTML capture tool can get you a demo that works for live calls.**

But you should be clear-eyed about its limitations, especially compared to approaches that are more purpose-built for that use case.

# Live App with Data Injection

The main reason companies choose to showcase their live production app is to deliver the best, most accurate experience for their prospects. If you use a live production environment, the product will always be up to date, and prospects will see how your actual product behaves in real time. For many companies, it's a compelling way to deliver a live demo.

However, there are important nuances to consider when demoing out of a live production environment. Solutions engineers (SEs) typically are the ones making sure the demo is full of data, and that the data is relevant to the prospect's industry, pain point, or use case. That means they have to spend a lot of time building and maintaining demo data.

This process often requires a specialized skill set that a typical SE might not have. As a result, SEs have to tap engineering for resources, which takes away from valuable product development time. Or, SEs spend time learning how to build scripts to generate data. Even then, it's a continual, highly manual process. Every time the product changes, they have to update the way data is being generated. Simply put, SEs have more valuable ways they should be spending their time.

Still, the value of demoing on a live app is very real. Every organization has to decide for themselves if it's worth the effort given the significant time commitment and resources required.

## Live Production Environment

When not to use	When to use
If you want to show the most relevant data for your prospect, but are constrained by resources to update and maintain	If you want to always show up-to-date product (latest features, UI, etc.)
If you care about potentially slow load times, product outages, bugs, internet connectivity, or unexpected app changes	If you want your demo to show your product's full functionality and interactivity
No enterprise-grade security	SOC 2® Type 1 and Type 2 certified, we help you protect your sensitive data from unauthorized access or disclosure. GDPR compliant
If you worry about concurrent demo users messing each other up or resetting your demo to its original state every time	If you want to be able to click anywhere



## When is it worth the risk?

Beyond the time element, there are many other factors to consider when demoing in a live production environment.

A live production app is often unpredictable. It might be slow to load — or down altogether — which reflects poorly on your product's actual capabilities. These issues can happen for a variety of reasons. Too many people may be using your production environment concurrently. Or, you may be facing internet connectivity issues (for example, on a busy tradeshow floor), which require offline demo capabilities.

Live apps are also constantly changing. While this can be a positive, it also means sales reps will be surprised when the UI shifts, or data isn't configured the way they expect it to be. Alternatively, every change a sales rep makes affects everyone else. If they change a table, delete a dashboard, or forget to reset something, every other rep is in for a surprise when it's time for the next demo.

### Other potential factors that may impact production environment demo stability include:



Service outages



Product errors or bugs



Disruptions



Concurrent demo users (they can impact each other or require separate instances, which can be expensive)



Bandwidth issues

A final risk is accidentally exposing sensitive customer data in your live production environment. A rep could be logged into the wrong account, or you might forget to scrub customer data when building the demo. While this is never the intent, exposing private data can be a major data privacy violation, which can be both costly and damaging to your business' reputation.

It's important to remember that live production environments can still work. Maybe your app doesn't change much and is relatively stable. Or perhaps you always want to showcase the latest-and-greatest, and you're willing to accept a certain level of risk. Regardless, it's equally important to be clear-eyed in this decision.

## Combining data injection with a live production environment

For many teams, combining data injection with a live production environment provides a way to customize demos to fit specific industries or use cases. Certain demo platforms let you load custom datasets directly into your live app, making it easy to tailor each presentation to your audience.

Data injection streamlines demo creation, letting solutions engineers (SEs) or sales reps quickly add relevant data to live demos. Without data injection, preparing and maintaining demo data can be technical and time-consuming, often taking SEs hours. To contrast, data injection enables the rapid creation of customized demos at scale, speeding up the sales cycle and improving the efficiency of presales and engineering teams.

# Full App Clone with Data Injection

Creating a full app clone involves cloning your application and creating a self-contained demo environment by replicating the web requests and responses that power your product. An app clone provides full functionality and interactivity but with greater reliability, making it ideal for teams who want to avoid issues like outages, bugs, or unexpected UI changes during live demos. Although an app clone won't reflect the very latest updates to your product, its reliability may make this a worthwhile trade-off.

An app clone lets you navigate your product's workflows, maintain interactivity, and showcase key features. This approach is also more scalable, with some demo platforms able to support hundreds of users concurrently — an essential capability for many enterprise applications.

One potential limitation is that many cloning platforms don't support custom data injection, making it difficult to tailor demos for individual prospects. To overcome this, some teams create multiple demo versions with preloaded data customized to different audiences. Without this kind of customization, it can be harder for prospects to see how your product meets their specific needs.

## Using a full app clone with data injection

As discussed above, injecting custom data into your demo makes it more relevant for your prospect. Reprise's demo creation platform is the only one that allows data injection in both live and self-contained demo environments. Adding synthetic data — whether it's user or AI-generated — into a demo environment can automatically update charts, tables, and other elements, ensuring that your demo content is tailored to your audience. You can insert realistic data in an empty environment or refresh it with relevant data in just a few clicks.

This approach is highly efficient: you can replace datasets instantly to resonate with each audience, while connected data recalculates automatically, saving even more time. Instead of spending hours maintaining a production environment, your presales team can reset Reprise's self-contained demo environment back to its original state with one click.

For many teams, this setup combines the flexibility of a live production environment with data injection and the stability of a full app clone. It mitigates the risks of live demos while offering a level of customization that might not otherwise be available. The main drawback is that an app clone doesn't update in real time, so you'd need to refresh the demo to showcase new features or updates.

# Critical Demo Tech Capabilities Chart

Comparing multiple demo technologies? Use the chart below to figure out which capabilities matter most to you.

Method	Video	Screenshot	HTML Capture
<b>Definition</b>	Video walkthrough of product	Product screenshots with no functionality or interactivity	Imitation of the product with little-to-no real functionality or interactivity
<b>Does it look and feel like the real product?</b>	No	No	Somewhat
<b>Can you navigate anywhere?</b>	No	No	No
<b>Does it stay online even if production goes down?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Can it show a workflow (i.e. something changing)?</b>	No	No	No
<b>Does it update automatically?</b>	No	No	No
<b>Is it editable so it looks how you want it to look, and shows the data you want it to show?</b>	No	No	Partially (surface-level only)
<b>Recommended for live sales demo?</b>	No	No	No (best for product tours)

# Key customization capabilities to look for in a demo platform

Customization makes a powerful difference between losing six-figure prospects and building a demo program that wins deals. Whether you're looking to use live demos or interactive, guided demos, here are some of the key features you should look for in a demo platform.

**Ideally, a comprehensive demo creation platform should let you:**

- 1 Create both customized live sales demos and interactive, guided demos in a single platform**
- 2 Inject custom data into either a live production environment or self-contained demo environment**
- 3 Build demo programs made up of templates that can be tailored to meet each prospect's needs**

With these three success factors in mind, your sales and marketing team will gain the velocity to cater to shape-shifting prospects, discerning technical buyers, and extended buying committees with ease. Here's some more information on customization capabilities for each use case.

# Live Demos

## Good For:



Any live meeting with a prospect



Sandbox/PoC alternatives



Technical or deep dive demos



Product webinars or analyst briefings

## Customization capabilities to look for in a demo platform?



Data injection, or the ability to replace entire datasets with a single click



Global find-and-replace rules



The ability to inject data into both a live production environment and self-contained demo environments



Editing web requests



Adding custom Javascript



Overlay edits for quick updates of images, dates, text, and more



Replacing and removing links



Reusable variables for fast personalization

# Interactive, Guided Demos

## Good For:



Websites



Leave-behinds for committee decisions



Marketing assets



Enablement and onboarding



First call sales demos



Events or tradeshows

## Customization capabilities to look for in a demo platform?



Guide themes and customization (including content, color, calls-to-action, embedded videos, gifs, and more)



Hiding, deleting, or blurring elements



Editing and changing dates, text, and images



Direct editing of HTML and CSS to show whatever you want, even if it's different from your actual product or an unreleased feature



Global find-and-replace rules



Ability to add custom Javascript for more interactivity

# So, which demo technology is best for you?

Depending on your product, ideal customer profiles, team resources, technical capabilities, and demo use cases, here are some scenarios to help you decide which demo technology is best for you. Or as Gartner VP Distinguished Analyst [David Yockelson recommends](#), choose a demo technology that aligns with your tactical needs today, but also think strategically about how you can scale to support multiple use cases over time.

- If you want a **quick product overview** video: Video demos
- If you need a **no-code tool for product tours and don't need interactivity**: Screen capture
- If you want **click-through product tours and leave-behinds with minimal interactivity**: HTML capture
- If you want **full editing control over your product tour or leave-behind with even more interactivity**: HTML capture with code edits
- If you need a **live demo that sticks closely to a script and is narrowly focused**: HTML capture with code edits
- If you need to **demo your product live with up-to-the-minute accuracy and personalized datasets**: Live app with data injection
- If you need a **live demo with the stability of a self-contained demo environment, plus the interactivity of your live product and one-click personalization**: Full app clone with data injection

Want even more guidance on navigating the complex demo software market?

Check out the **2024 Market Guide for Interactive Demonstration Applications** [>](#)