# Re/prise
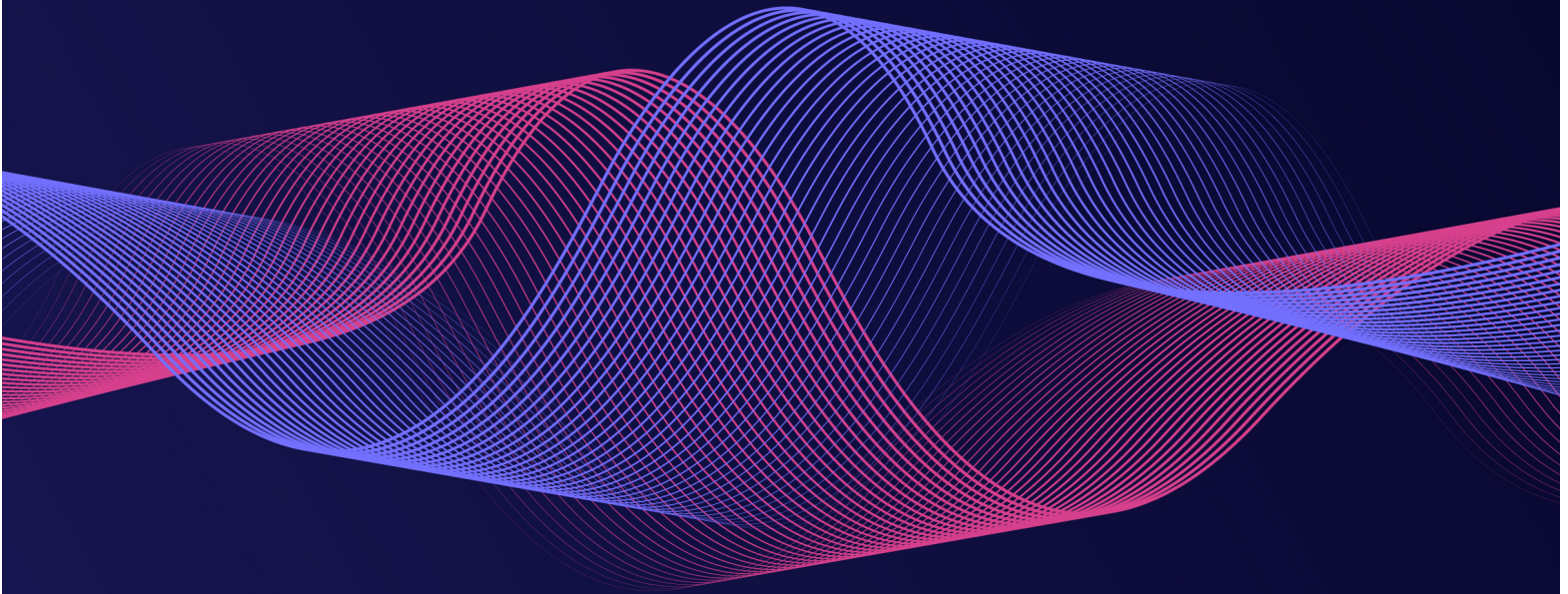
# Mastering Enterprise Software Demos

The secret to creating scalable demos that win deals — for even the most complex products

# Table of Contents

# Enterprise software demos are different

Proving ROI for enterprise software isn't easy. Unlike an SMB or midmarket SaaS product, most enterprise software doesn't lend itself to a free trial or freemium product experience. The path to value realization isn't as straightforward. Why? Different features or products within a platform may solve a variety of pain points for a variety of stakeholders. And, more often than not, enterprise software products need to showcase robust, custom datasets to effectively communicate their value.

According to Gartner's **2025 Software Buying Trends Report**, 54% of companies consider a product demo a top factor in their final purchase. This is where a sophisticated demo environment can pay dividends.

## A great demo environment:

- Makes it easy to create and inject realistic data into your product demo, so your prospects can understand exactly how it will work for them

- Showcases the right features or products in your portfolio to the right stakeholders

- Supports a long and complex enterprise sales cycle made up of both live sales meetings and asynchronous self-discovery.

Even if your product has been traditionally difficult to show off (we'll cover some factors that may make it difficult in the next section) it's possible to nail every demo — securely and with less engineering or presales effort than you think.

**We'll show you an approach to enterprise demos that will help you scale to reach more buyers and shorten your sales cycle. Let's dig in.**

# Unpacking enterprise software demo complexity

With more use cases and product functionality in enterprise software, it can be harder to tell a clear ROI story for buyers' short attention spans. Maybe you've acquired products into your portfolio that focus on different stakeholders. Or, your software architecture might be valuable because of its ability to play nicely with complementary third-party software.

## Here are some of the top factors that have made enterprise software demos traditionally more complex to implement and manage.

**Data-dependence:** Many products need a high volume of data and/or access to internal systems to show their impact. For example, an HR platform might need to load data from thousands of global employee records (in different languages) to prove it works for a Fortune 500 company hiring in 10 countries. Most enterprise teams have a hard time delivering accurate and relevant datasets that effectively describe their prospects' unique environments, pain points, or challenges.

**Stakeholder variety:** Enterprise buying cycles are long and far from linear. **Gartner estimates** the average B2B buying committee is made up of 4-6 people. Different roles in this buying process require different demos.

**Compliance and risk management:** In highly regulated environments (e.g. finance or healthcare), demonstrating a live application can be irresponsible or even illegal. Accidentally disclosing customer data is a major compliance risk. For example, a cybersecurity company may be monitoring thousands of companies' IT environments for threats. Demoing a live production application with real customer data is both a security and compliance violation. Showing an empty environment, on the other hand, is hardly an effective sales strategy.

**Integration-driven applications and APIs.** It's difficult to showcase API functionality in a demo, as often API- and microservices-based applications don't have a frontend user interface (UI). Demonstrating integrations without disrupting live environments is another major challenge — along with overcoming configuration and synchronization issues.

**If any of these issues sound familiar, let's explore some solutions that make it simple, scalable, and secure to show all kinds of enterprise software.**

# Do's and don'ts for enterprise demo success

Here are some do's and don'ts to ensure you're ready for demo success in 2025 and beyond.

### Don't be tempted make a copy of your entire application

Design custom demo flows based on the features and functionality your prospect needs to see most. Maybe that means creating a series of demos to show off different functionality vs. trying to cover everything in one demo. That way, the prospect sees details that are most relevant to their needs.

### Do create repeatable demos for specific stakeholder types or personas

It's hard to manage diverse stakeholder expectations in a buying committee. A demo program enables you to create a variety of assets in advance, and anticipate the needs of multiple stakeholders throughout the buyer journey without the last-minute demo scramble.

### Don't demo without relevant data

Injecting custom datasets can fill your demos with realistic data, without having to worry about data privacy issues. Tools like generative AI can help you create synthetic data even faster. Having realistic demo data improves your demo's relevancy for each prospect.

### Do use RBAC to maintain consistency and control

Regardless of the rep who's giving the demo, RBAC can ensure that your presales team can create a governance system. Effective governance not only maintains security and control over the demos you're presenting, but also creates a consistent message for larger enterprise sales teams.

### Don't create demos from scratch every time

Instead, choose a demo platform that enables you to create templates and customize for each prospect. Your demo environments should reset in a single click, and reps shouldn't be able to impact each other's live demos.

### Do measure and improve your demos

Map your demos to specific KPIs and sales/marketing outcomes to measure their success. For example, you might measure which demos convert the most on your website or in sales meetings. Remember to regularly update your demos based on prospect feedback, as well as new product features.

# Your enterprise demo challenges: Solved

## Live demos: Solving the demo data problem

Most companies either use a live production environment or a self-contained demo environment for their live demos. Some teams choose to use a live production environment because it showcases the most up-to-date version of their application. With that said, demoing in a live production environment does come with risks and resource challenges. Chief among them is the fact that for each demo, the production environment needs to be prepped with relevant data.

The solution engineer (SE) is often the person responsible for loading data that's relevant to the prospect's pain point, industry, or use case. Sourcing, building and maintaining that demo data sometimes falls outside of the SE's typical skillset or simply takes too much time — so they may need to call in additional engineering resources. Both engineers and SEs are in short supply and high demand, so prepping data diverts valuable resources away from building actual products or closing technical deals.

In fact, **79% of SEs** spend more than an hour a week cleaning and maintaining their demo environment, while 16% spend between 3-10 hours. On the high end, that's a massive 21 days per year wasted for these valuable employees!

Data injection simplifies and automates the task of building and maintaining demo data, so SEs or sales reps can add relevant datasets to their live demos in just a few clicks. This allows teams to create highly customized demos quickly and at scale, accelerating the sales cycle while maximizing presales and engineering efficiency.

### Accelerating demo data creation with generative AI

AI-powered synthetic data creation uses generative AI to create realistic datasets. With the right technology to go alongside it, you can then inject that AI-generated data into your demo environment. These datasets can be tailored to your prospect's industry, pain points, language, region, or use case.

Generative AI speeds up the data creation process, helping you build and change datasets in seconds, rather than hours, days, or even weeks. You can create datasets in advance for a variety of use cases or prospect personas, and have them ready to load into a custom demo environment with a single click. In addition, by using synthetic data instead of a customer account or your own data, you remove any risks of accidentally exposing sensitive data.

Not all data injection capabilities are created equal. Some demo solutions only allow you to inject data into a live production environment.

Why does that matter? Some companies' apps are stable and rarely change. However, for many SaaS companies, demoing out of a live production environment is unpredictable. That's because live apps constantly change. If you're shipping a new feature the same day as a live demo, the product may load slowly, look and feel different, or have a slew of new bugs. Or, demo data that looked one way a few hours ago may change completely.

If you share a live production environment, you may also find that every change a sales team member makes impacts everyone else. If the environment isn't reset for the next demo, other reps may find tables missing or dashboards deleted. There are plenty of other reasons why a live production environment may be inconsistent — ranging from too many concurrent users to a lack of internet connectivity and more.

That's why it's best to have the option to inject data into either a live production environment or a self-contained demo environment. A self-contained demo environment allows you to create a full-featured, interactive copy of your application that's completely separate from your production environment. The application looks and feels exactly like your live app, but without the instability risks of a production environment.

# What data injection should look like for a live demo

Creating and adding realistic demo data into your live demo is easier than you think — whether it's injected into an empty production environment or self-contained demo environment. Choose a technology that allows you to create relevant datasets for your prospects in advance, save them as templates, and load them into your live demo in just a few clicks. That way, you can tailor your demo data to specific industries, regions, or prospect needs — giving your sales team plenty of options when it comes time to demo to a new prospect.
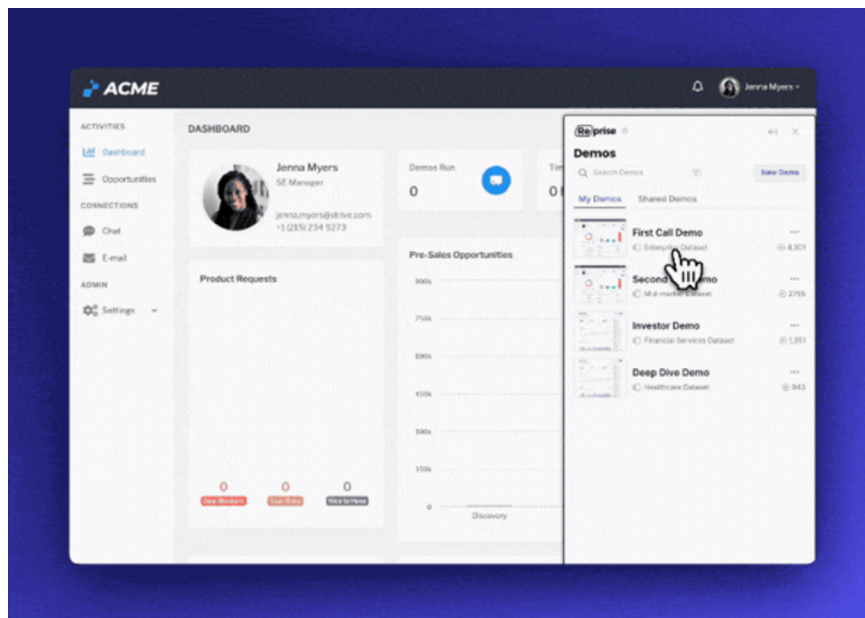


**Show your product in the best possible light by adding realistic data to an empty demo environment.**

You can customize synthetic data yourself, or use generative AI to create it for you. By using synthetic data instead of a customer account or your own data, you remove any risks of accidentally exposing sensitive data. Ideally, you should be able to edit the underlying data once, and it will recalculate all of your charts and graphs throughout the demo instantly. The demo simply resets to its original state when you're finished.

## Supporting the enterprise sales cycle with different demos

You might have products in your portfolio that target different stakeholders, departments, or industries. Or, maybe you need to create resources for different stages in the enterprise sales cycle. Either way, demo creation technology can help you build a scalable demo program made up of a variety of reusable assets.

A **demo program** is a way for presales teams to build, centralize, share, and analyze demos across the entire organization. SEs can create a library of options for the sales and marketing team to use in both their live demos and interactive product tours. Depending on your product and industry, you could build dozens of versions of demo datasets or full demo templates — tailored to the prospects' industry, pain point, sales plays, and more.

For example, consider a situation where a sales rep has a meeting with a pharmaceutical prospect in the morning and a manufacturing prospect in the afternoon. With a demo program, the SE has already prepared industry-specific demos. The sales rep can simply select the industry they want and inject relevant data into the self-contained demo environment.

When they're done, the demo environment resets to its original state, so they can select a different dataset for the next one.

## It's not hard to see why a programmatic demo approach has resulted in a 20% decrease in demos that require an SE.

These team members can spend more time one-on-one with technical stakeholders later in the deal cycle. Plus, centralizing and organizing demo templates and datasets in a demo library makes it easy for AEs and marketing team members to customize demos without SE involvement.

## Cloudera highlights its hybrid data platform for modern architectures

Cloudera's demo program is made up of scalable and repeatable demos with consistent messaging. This allows prospects to experience its products on a wider scale than ever before.

**Use cases:** Product tours

**Outcomes:**

- Prospects experience Cloudera products on a wider scale than ever before with custom, guided demos

- Fewer isolated demo environments need to be maintained, reducing costs

- Collaboration on product tours between Engineering, Product, and Marketing is streamlined
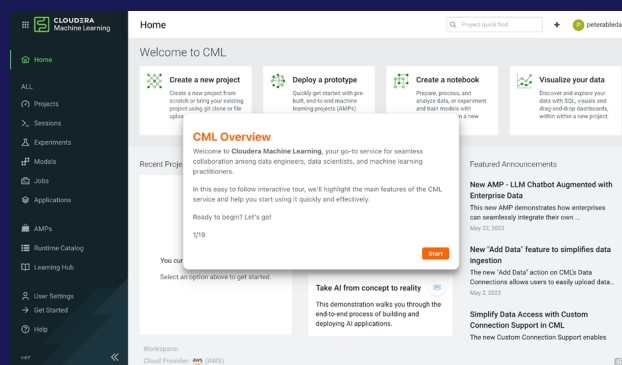


See a Cloudera demo here

# Maintaining enterprise security and scalability

Any successful enterprise demo program should prioritize security and enterprise scale. The right demo platform can help you manage risk and ensure compliance, while supporting high-volume enterprise sales teams.

Here's what to look for to meet enterprise-grade security and compliance requirements:

**RBAC:** Role-based access control gives presales and engineering teams fine-grained control into who has access to which demos, who can create and edit demos, and who can share them. Defining authorized users and their actions ensures consistency and version control.

**Transparency on vendor security standards:** SOC 2 Type 2 and ISO 27001:2022 certifications help ensure that your data is protected, since your vendor is following best practices for data security.

In addition, your demo technology should be able to support hundreds or thousands of simultaneous users. This is critical for high-volume enterprise sales teams, as well as specialized use-cases like demoing during events. Choose a demo environment that resets with each new demo, so you can load the custom dataset, logos, and other elements you need to make it specific to your prospect.

## The Databricks demo center highlights diverse use cases

Databricks offers live demos and sales leave-behinds as an alternative to lengthy, bespoke POCs. Their demo center features bite-size overviews, interactive product tours, and hands-on tutorials to help their prospects navigate exactly how to use their product.
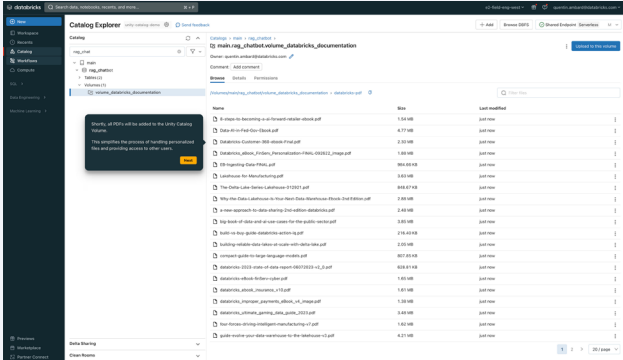


**Tour the Databricks demo center here**

## Enterprise demoing doesn't have to be complicated

Hopefully by now, we've shown you that demoing complex products doesn't have to be complicated. Here are three key takeaways that will help you win more deals:

**Show, Don't Tell:** Use AI to create and inject synthetic data into demos. Make live demos hyper-relevant for your prospects.

**Don't be tempted to make a copy of your entire application:** Design custom demo flows based on the features and functionality your prospect needs to see most.

**Scale with Smarter Systems:** Take advantage of RBAC to maintain security and control, while choosing an enterprise-ready demo platform that can scale to support hundreds of concurrent users.

**This year, when it comes to your demos, it's time to work smarter — not harder.**

## Tips for demoing integrations and APIs

### Integrations

- Tip: Capture your application's frontend and the application you're integrating with. Then, stitch together these screen captures without having to rely on the integration under the hood.

- Why? When demoing integrations in a live app, you can get into issues of using real data, or the impact that disconnecting and reconnecting integrations can have on your live product.

### API connectivity

- Tip: Instead of demoing API calls and responses alone, create a mock frontend design to show off what your API can do.

- Why? Showing an API with a visual alongside it makes the demo more memorable and resonates more with the prospect.

Want to learn more about easing your enterprise demo creation?

# Get a demo of Reprise ⊙

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