

Is Your Presales Team Falling Behind?

Explore four of the biggest time wasters for SEs (and how your team can operate like a well-oiled machine)



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Introduction

Presales teams are in high demand and short supply. Often, they're supporting multiple teams and juggling priorities. As a result, many solutions engineers (SEs) struggle to keep up with requests for demos, RFP responses, supporting existing customers, and more. For presales leaders, balancing efficiency and effectiveness is the name of the game to not only keep up, but to be strategic about how SEs spend their time.

Let's dive into some of these top time wasters, and how the right balance of people, processes, and technology can get your team operating at peak efficiency.

What are some of the top time-wasters for SEs?

According to the [2024 Presales Landscape Report](#), SEs indicated the following top frustrations:

- Spending time on unqualified prospects
- Cleaning/maintaining their demo environment
- Scrambling to prepare for calls without adequate notice
- Misalignment with sales on discovery process

Time Waster: Unqualified Prospects

If your SEs are spending too much time in unqualified demos, ask yourself a few important questions:

- How can we help our prospects self-qualify?
- How can our sales reps handle the first call, and confidently show product experiences that both AEs and SEs can trust?

Helping Prospects Self-Qualify

With complex enterprise products, it can be difficult to convey value in a free trial or freemium model. Many free trials require the prospect to do a lot of the work themselves. For example, the prospect might not be able to get value out of your free trial experience if they have to load their own data into the product. Or, if you have an unguided free trial experience, a prospect may not fully understand what to do to make your product work for them.

To solve these problems, offering a guided, interactive product tour can help show off your product's most compelling features. This takes the onus off of the prospect to load their own data or discover these features independently. An interactive product tour can give prospects just enough information to understand how a product will work for their specific use case or meet their pain points.

How Pendo Made Product Tours the Top-Performing CTA

From Fortune 500 enterprises to B2B tech startups to educational institutions and healthcare systems, organizations around the world use Pendo to achieve a common goal—to accelerate and deepen software product adoption.

To help customers fully comprehend the value of Pendo's product experience platform, the marketing team used Reprise to create a complete product tour library for all of its offerings. This library serves as an alternative to a free trial, and creates better go-to-market (GTM) efficiency for the Pendo team.

Today, product tours are the highest-performing CTA on the Pendo website, and the team is scaling to more than 200,000 product tours per month.

Click through a library of [Pendo's product tours here](#).

40%

of SEs surveyed said a quarter of their weekly demos are unqualified

23%

of SEs say more than half of their weekly demos are unqualified

Empowering AEs to Confidently Demo Solo

Instead of a start-from-scratch struggle, building first-call demos can be a simple, repeatable process. Using a demo creation platform, SEs can create a demo library made up of specific use cases, industry sectors, common prospect pain points, and more. SEs can build these assets in advance, and organize them so they're both accessible and ready for AEs to customize based on the prospect's individual needs. A library of demo templates makes demos accessible to the entire GTM team — on demand, when they need them.

From there, AEs are empowered to tailor their own demos, based on discovery and other insights they know about the prospect. This streamlined process enables AEs to spend adequate time qualifying and learning more about the prospect without SE involvement, bringing SEs into the process later to address technical qualifying questions.

Time Waster: Cleaning and Maintaining the Demo Environment

Homegrown demo environments require a lot of maintenance; not to mention, they are prone to failure. These failures can be costly, risky, and embarrassing if they're exposed to the customer during a live demo.

Common maintenance issues include:

- Scrubbing personally identifiable information and swapping out dummy data
- Resolving errors, bugs or other stability issues in the production environment
- Fixing problems caused by other users in the demo environment.

Instead of operating from a live, production environment, teams should consider cloning their application's functionality into a new environment. This ensures that anything happening in the production environment (e.g. shipping a new feature) won't interfere with a live demo.

Instead of starting from square one with each demo, a demo creation platform enables your team to find and replace PII, anonymize demos, and ensure that no sensitive information falls into the wrong hands.

Enterprise demo creation platforms should have extra security protections, such as role-based access control (RBAC). RBAC gives SEs control over which folders of demos in a library (or which specific demos) AEs have access to, reducing the margin for error and making it easy for AEs to access only the demo templates they need.

79%

of SEs spend more than an hour per week cleaning/maintaining their demo environment

16%

of SEs spend more than an hour per week cleaning/maintaining their demo environment

On the high end...

that's a whopping 21 days per year wasted for these high-value employees!

Time Waster: Scrambling to Prepare for Calls

Most SEs spend 1-3 hours preparing for each demo, although some highly customized live demos can take 40+ hours.

One of the top three frustrations SEs have with sales reps is not being given adequate notice to prepare for a call with a prospect.

If your team is scrambling to prepare for calls, take a step back and evaluate your processes. How soon are AEs sharing discovery information with your SEs? Are SEs empowered to push back when they don't get adequate notice from sales? Although this issue is common, adjusting your processes and empowering your people to collaborate more effectively might be the answer.

In many cases, technology can help cut down on the prep time required for demos, even those customized live demos for high-value prospects. As mentioned above, demo creation platforms can provide repeatability, with templates AEs can customize for each live demo scenario. Updating these can take a few minutes, instead of hours (or days!)

How Hireology Accelerated Sales Cycles by 50%

Hireology helps companies build and retain the best teams. Their software, which is purpose-built for organizations spread across multiple locations, helps decentralized teams stay in sync as they increase applicant quality, decrease time to hire and onboard, and nurture employee engagement.

The company uses Reprise-powered demos and product tours to engage prospects at every stage of the GTM lifecycle:

- At the top of the funnel, Hireology uses the product tours on their website to engage prospects with self-service marketing content, allowing them to self-qualify in or out of a sales process early on – without consuming the sales team’s cycles.
- Mid-funnel, in addition to presenting live demos, sales teams share guided product tours as leave-behinds to highlight specific features for different audiences and their unique needs. They extend Hireology’s reach to a broader circle outside of the core buying committee in order to create wider consensus without needing every stakeholder to participate in every live call or demo. And they’re easy to build – Hireology’s eight feature-specific leave-behinds were created within a single month.
- Across the funnel, every demo makes a bigger impact with consistent delivery and tight messaging.

As a result, Hireology has seen opportunities involving product tours close 50% faster than those where product tours were not used. In one case, an AE had an opportunity requiring sign-off from the prospect’s VP of Human Resources. After trying to connect with her via calls, emails, and LinkedIn messages to no avail, he sent her two product tours built on Reprise. She viewed both product tours, within three minutes booked time on his calendar, and the deal closed a few weeks later.

Time Waster: Misalignment With Sales On the Discovery Process

If misalignment is a problem within your organization, it might be time to rethink your discovery process. First, work with AEs and SEs to collaborate on discovery questions that get the desired information from the prospect. Empower the AE to run an effective discovery call by helping them understand the information that's needed for the best first-call demo.

Second, discovery should help teams set expectations for the demo itself. Is the demo going to deliver value based on what's been identified in discovery? It's critical to ensure that there's a strong balance between discovery and product experiences that show value early in the sales process — so a prospect can identify exactly how your product will work to meet their needs or solve their pain points.

39% of SEs say not sharing information from discovery soon enough is their top frustration with sales.

7 Discovery Questions Designed To Expose Pain Points

1. How is your team structured?
2. What current technologies and/or processes are you using to solve your problem?
3. What do you love about your current solution?
4. Tell me more about your solution; what would you change?
5. What's the root cause of your current challenge / pain point? How are these challenges affecting you/your team?
6. What do you lose by not doing [new, proposed solution]?
7. What would your world look like if your problem was not a problem anymore?

Balancing Efficiency and Effectiveness in Presales

Presales leader and coach [Chris White](#) predicted that companies who are not using demo automation technology will fall behind in the next five years. Simply put, demo automation can help SEs spend their time more efficiently and effectively. As shown above, when SEs develop a well-organized product demo library (based on use case, vertical, pain point, or something else that's relevant to your ideal customer profile) — AEs can choose and customize demos based on what's most relevant to their prospect. Struggling to create each demo from scratch becomes a thing of the past.

Key benefits of demo automation via a demo creation platform

Lead generation and conversion. Customers using Reprise at the top of the funnel experienced a 60% uplift in average website interactions converted to leads, and a 50% increase in average conversion from lead to pipeline. Plus, using Reprise earlier in the buying cycle enabled sales reps to tailor demos to prospects' specific needs, which increased the likelihood of converting them to pipeline.

Increased sales capacity and win rates. Instead of giving a high volume of standardized demos to unqualified prospects, customers who use Reprise experience a 20% decrease in unqualified demo requests. Prospects can self-qualify using product tours on the company's website. In addition, teams experienced a 10x increase in SE capacity, since SEs can empower their AEs to customize their own demos based on a demo library.

Decreased seller ramp time. Reprise improves product education within internal teams. New hires had one week faster ramp times when provided access to a library of product tours and demos built with Reprise.

Accelerated sales cycles. Self-service buyers who've viewed a Reprise product tour come to the live sales demo with a better understanding of the product, without consuming the sales team's resources. Best of all, they're purchase-ready by the time they speak to sales, leading to a 50% decrease in average sales cycle.

Ability to demo at scale. Traditional sandbox environments can be costly to maintain, in addition to the resources required to update and verticalize data for every demo. Reprise enables organizations to build demo environments that faithfully render their products, leading to a 50% decrease in cloud computing costs and 75% lower total acquisition costs due to fewer demo environments running. With Reprise, teams can demo simultaneously and at scale, such as at conferences and events, leading to a 400% increase in demo capacity without additional SE resources in place to maintain the environment.

Source: [Economic Impact of Reprise](#)

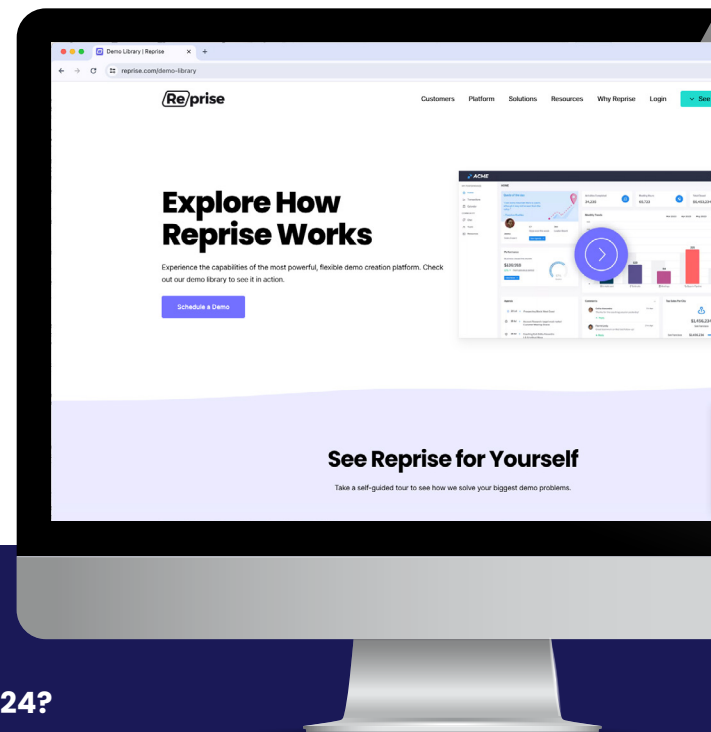
7 Questions

To Ask Yourself When Evaluating Demo Creation Software

1. Can you clone your application down to the code level?
2. Can you create a breadth of demo assets (e.g. product tours, live demos, sandbox environments, interactive demo leave-behinds?)
3. Can various stakeholders in the organization use the same demo platform with ease? (E.g. Is it easy for SEs to create a demo library, and AEs to customize those assets?)
4. What security and privacy/anonymization features are offered?
5. How can demo analytics be used to improve the demo experience or accelerate the sales cycle?
6. How can demos be customized, and what features are available for creating custom demos?
7. Can the platform integrate with your existing software stack?

A solution like Reprise is both versatile and easy to use for a variety of stakeholders. Reprise is a fully-integrated demo creation platform, known for its ability to create powerful interactive product demonstrations and live demos for all types of demo creators — such as presales, sales, and marketing teams.

It offers extensive customization options, allowing enterprises to tailor their demos to specific audiences. Reprise supports various types of demos throughout the GTM lifecycle, including product walkthroughs, live demo overlays, and application clones. Integration with tools like Google Analytics, Marketo, Hubspot, and Salesforce CRM, as well as API connectivity and a robust plugin library, enhances its functionality.



Want to stay ahead of your demo demands in 2024?

Get a demo of Reprise [>](#)

