The SE Leader's Field Guide to AI Transformation in Sales

A No-BS Manual for SE Leaders Ready to Step Up, Take Charge, and Lead Their Organization into the AI Era (Before It Runs You Over)

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The Inflection Point

Every five to seven years, sales gets rocked by a tectonic shift.

Not nudged. Not iterated. **Rewritten**.

Meanwhile, **Vivun offers a simpler, more immediate path.**

- Inside sales reshaped the 90s.
- SaaS rewired everything in the mid-2000s.
- Product-led growth changed how buyers behave in the 2010s.

And now?

AI is the next rewrite.

Except this time — and let's be very clear — **Sales Engineers are at the center of the blast radius**.

This is the first tectonic shift where YOU get to choose whether you become:

- the hero who drives the transformation

or

- the bystander who remembers when things used to be simpler

SPOILER ALERT:
You don't strike me as the bystander type.

The Perfect Storm

Three forces are colliding so hard that pretending not to notice is no longer an option:

1. Products Are Getting Ridiculously Complex

AI everywhere. Multi-tenant everything.

Platform architectures that look like NASA mission diagrams.

68% of sellers say their solution got more complex in the last 12 months alone.

2. Buyers Show Up Hot

Armed with AI research assistants.

On-demand product tours.

Community answers.

They don't want the overview — they want the truth. Right now.

3. Products Are Getting Ridiculously Complex

Ratios stuck at 4:1–8:1.

Deal complexity exploding.

And sellers waiting. And waiting.

64% of sellers lost or delayed deals because they were waiting on technical resources.

You already know this. You feel it. Every. Single. Week.

Please Read Carefully

This is the part where most assets tiptoe around the obvious. Not this one.

This is NOT a guide about replacing Sales Engineers with AI.

That would be idiotic. And technically impossible.

What makes SEs great — the trust, the nuance, the ability to read the room and architect reality — AI couldn't dream of touching.

This asset has one job:

To equip **you**, the Sales Engineering leader, to drive the AI transformation your sales organization needs **right now**.

If you think, "Eh, not my moment"?

Stop reading. Seriously. Close the tab.

But…

If you *want* to lead this transformation…

If you know your business cannot keep selling the way it currently sells…

Then lean in.

Because there is no one better suited for this moment than you.

Your team sits at the crossroads of:

- Product truth
- Buyer expectaitions
- Sales execution

That's the trifecta.

And guess what? The trifecta gets to drive the change.

Yes, there will be incremental wins — automating tedious work, reclaiming SE hours, making life not suck. But the **real** takeaway, is that your sales organization, and by proxy, your business will be changed forever - and will have you to thank for it.

What Your Sales Team Just Told Us

Let's talk about the people who rely on you most: **Account Executives**.

We surveyed 201 B2B sellers across industries and motions. They gave us the kind of feedback SE leaders secretly know... but rarely see in writing.

Finding #1: SEs Are More Valuable Than Ever:

- **87%** say SEs are critical to closing deals
- **76%** rely on SEs more than they did last year

This isn't news to you - you know how amazing Sales Engineers are, but it's helpful context for your conversations with your business partners, especially in Product & Engineering. They know that the complexity of what they are building is ballooning and buyers want **real technical answers**, fast.

Finding #2: AEs Want You Higher in the Stack

They want:
- Competitive intelligence
- Strategic partnership
- Tailored solutions for big deals
- Real-time support in critical moments

Not another environment setup.

Not another generic walkthrough.

Not another "let me track that doc down."

Finding #3: Demos Aren't the Star of the Show Anymore

When sellers described what SEs do, demos came in fifth.

The value is in:
- Technical Discovery
- Solution Architecture
- Reducing the Risk of Purchase
- Handling Technical Objections
- Product Demos

Demos are table stakes. If your SE KPIs still revolve solely around the number of demos conducted, stop reading this and evaluate Demo Automation solutions from the guys at Consensus, DemoBoost, Storylane, Navattic or Reprise - and tell them their friends at Vivun sent you.

If you know that Sales Engineers do more than demo - keep reading.

Finding #4: Capacity Is the Crisis

64% of AEs have lost or delayed deals waiting on SEs.

Not because you're bad at your job — because the **job** has become impossible under old models.

From Doer to Strategic Force Multiplier

If SEs are more valuable than ever and more constrained than ever, the math is simple:

Change the job, not the headcount.

Here's the new reality:

What Stays Sacred (aka: the stuff AI will never take from you):

- Strategic discovery
- Custom architectures
- Executive conversations
- Trial / POC strategy
- Competitive Analysis

This is where you earn your stripes. This is where the magic happens.

What AI Should Swallow Whole

- Environment setup
- Repetitive walkthroughs
- Research
- Knowledge retrieval
- Follow-up summaries

This is the sludge that's killing your team's capacity.

It's not "special."

It's not "heroic."

It's not "protectable."

It's just work.

The Modern SE: 4 Mandates

Conscious of what stays sacred and what can be AI'd, Sales Engineers now have the capacity to forge a new remit. The modern SE mandate has roles like this:

1. Strategic Technical Advisor on Complex Deals
2. AE Enablement Engine
3. Product and Competitive Intelligence Hub
4. Strategic Relationship Builder - The Bridge from PreSales to Post Sales

These are the things have improve sales execution and increase sales capacity.

Everything else?
Automate it, augment it, or delete it.

Jennifers Example

Jennifer Jones, VP of Solution Experience at Dayforce, didn't look at Ava as "AI for SEs." She saw it for what it actually is: **a bridge** — one that connects scattered deal context to clarity, manual prep to automation, and overextended experts to a sales org that finally runs the way it should. She understood her real role: not just technical authority, but **facilitator of sales outcomes** and partner to every rep carrying a quota.

While other teams were stuck in committee cycles and tool evaluations, Jennifer did what leaders do — she moved first. She piloted Ava with intention, trained it using real field expertise, and embedded it directly into the workflows that shape deal outcomes. The impact was immediate: reps walked into meetings more prepared, advisors spent less time stitching data together, and SEs gained the strategic space they'd been missing for years.

Jennifer showed the blueprint for this era of Sales Engineering.

She didn't wait for perfect conditions.

She built the bridge, crossed it, and brought the organization with her.

Read the Full Case Study Here

The New Charge for Sales Engineering Leaders

Let's talk about you — the leader.

If you own SE, your job is transforming more than anyone's.

And not because AI replaces you. It's because AI finally lets you become the leader you've always been equipped to be.

First, a Reframe: You Are Sales

Not adjacent. Not auxiliary. Not "the demo team." Your job is to:

• Lift win rates
• Accelerate deals
• Increase expansion
• Reduce churn
• Make sales unstoppable

Everything else is supporting detail. In 2025, it's likely that were unofficially asked to be:

• Builder of random AI hacks
• Vet of endless "AI for sales" tools
• Chief wrangler of duct-taped workflows

You know the story: You built something cool. It worked once. It broke. You inherited it forever.

That era is now dead.

Your job is not to build AI. Your job is not to compare 47 vendors.

Your job is not to duct-tape good intentions together.

In 2026, there's a new role you can embrace:

Train the AI Sales Teammate. Govern it. Scale it. Deploy it. You:

• Define the product truth
• Set guardrails and tone
• Correct outputs
• Guide behavior
• Decide where AI shows up in the sales process

Now, the AI Sales Teammate:

• Never sleeps
• Never forgets
• Never gets buried in tasks
• Scales your expertise to every seller

Once you train it, it scales infinitely.

You're no longer the bottleneck. You're the architect of leverage.

Christian's Example

Christian Eberle, Head of AI Strategy and Solutions at Gladly, found himself in the middle of a massive GTM shift — new AI product, new segments, new velocity, and no way to scale SE support linearly. Instead of forcing his sellers to slow down or stretch his SE team past the breaking point, Christian saw something others missed: Ava wasn't "AI for SEs." She was the bridge the entire revenue org needed.

Christian and his team spent a single afternoon doing what he calls a "brain dump" — product context, competitive nuance, brand voice, the real stuff that makes or breaks deals. Eight hours later, Ava was answering RFPs and supporting sellers with SE-level expertise without requiring an SE on every call.

The results were instant. SMB sellers became more independent. SEs finally had room to breathe. Sales handoffs generated themselves. Leadership could prep deals in minutes, not hours. And Christian proved the point: when you give Ava the right context, she becomes a force multiplier, not another tool to manage.

Christian didn't wait for perfect clarity or a 400-page AI strategy.

He saw the bridge.

He crossed it.

And he brought his sales team with him — faster, more confident, and finally operating at the pace the market demands.

Read the Full Case Study Here

Making the Case for Change

By now, the picture should be sharp:

• Every SE gets their time back for big deals, architecture, competitive strategy, and enablement.

• Every seller gets an AI Sales Teammate — handling research, prep, documentation, boilerplate answers.

• You own the bridge between today's tool chaos and a future where AI is the operating system of sales.

This is where you become the hero — not the fire-fighter, not the bottleneck, not the under-resourced technical team begging for headcount.

The hero.

The SE leader who:

• Increases capacity

• Reduces cost

• Improves execution

• Avoids future headcount you don't need

• And scales your team's expertise infinitely

Win. Win. Win. Win. Win.

So... How Do You Actually Get Here?

You're a Sales Engineer. You get the buyer journey.You get the sales process.
You get how decisions are really made. So let's not pretend this takes a 47-step nurture flow. It's simple:

Step 1: See Ava in Action

If you haven't seen Ava — the AI Sales Teammate — stop reading and go watch the 5-minute demo. Right now. If you feel nothing? Close the PDF and go do literally anything else. But if it hits? Continue.

Step 2: Take the Product Tour

The hands-on experience is where it clicks, courtesy of our friends at DemoBoost. Once you see how Ava handles discovery, prep, research, and follow-through... you'll get why this changes everything.

Step 3: Request a Free Trial

This is where theory becomes real. Hop on the horn with one of our (objectively excellent) Account Executives, who can answer any questions you may have about Ava. If you want to move forward with a full-access trial, they can hook you up. There you can run real workflows. With real reps. On real deals. To see what breaks. To see what surprises you.

Step 4: Start Making Your Case

As you run the trial and want to position yourself to make the business case for change, we built some online tools to do the heavy lifting. Use these early and often - and you'll be ready to answer the ROI question before anyone asks it.

Step 5: Take the Final Step

If you're serious about hiring Ava, we can extend your trial while we work through the paper process. We'll do everything we can to make it easy for you to get Ava to as many sellers as you need to, so you can drive impact - quickly.

Bruh....It's 2025.
Shouldn't This All Be Easier?

At this point, you might be thinking something like:

"Hey... it's practically the middle of the decade.

Why am I following five steps?

Shouldn't there just be a digital sales room with everything I need?"

Yes.

Correct.

Gold star.

And that's exactly why we built one.

Because if you're the kind of Sales Engineering leader who made it this far into this guide, you deserve a shortcut — a fast lane — a "don't make me talk to someone yet" button.

So here it is:

Click here to access your private Digital Sales Room.

Password: xxxx

Inside, you'll find **exclusive, no-form, no-gate, no-BS access to:**

- The four calculators
- The trial guide
- The business case templates
- The product tour
- The Ava demo
- Additional resources we don't even list publicly

When you're here, we won't ask you for any more details.

Just you, the truth, and the tools you need to make an intelligent decision.

You're welcome.

Conclusion

You've seen the inflection point.

You've heard the voice of your sales team.

You've walked the evolution from doer to multiplier.

You've learned your new mandate as the leader:

Train and govern the AI teammate that will transform your sales org.

Now it's your move.

- Make the case
- Get the demo
- Start the trial
- Build the future
- Become the hero of this story

The Sales Engineer of the not-too-distant future already exists.

They're not hypothetical.

They're not "coming soon."

They're the ones who refuse to wait.

You don't need to boil the ocean.

You just need to start.

Let's build this future together.

About Vivun

Vivun is the leader in AI for Sales, pioneering a new category of AI Sales Teammates that help revenue teams sell smarter, faster, and better.

Powered by the proprietary Sales Reasoning Model, Ava provides real-time intelligence and assistance before, during, and after customer interactions—via text, voice, or avatar. She integrates with the systems you already use, requires no consultants to deploy, and begins delivering measurable impact within days.

Vivun serves leading B2B organizations that want to scale expertise, accelerate deal velocity, and improve execution quality without adding headcount or complexity. Customers report:

- 6–8 hours saved per rep, per week
- 15% higher win rates
- 25% faster sales cycles

Where platform-based AI agents require configuration and consulting, Ava delivers value out of the box—intelligently, autonomously, and at scale.

Next Steps

Experience what a true AI Sales Teammate can do.

Watch a 5-minute demo - See Ava in action before, during, and after a sales call

Take a product tour - Explore Accelerators, Ava Assist, and the Sales Reasoning Model

Book a meeting - Speak with our team to calculate ROI for your organization

Visit www.vivun.com/demo to get started.

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