

## BRIEFING NOTE · AGENTIC AI STRATEGY

# The Agentic Enterprise Shift

*Why the Transition from Reactive Tools to Autonomous Systems Will Define Competitive Advantage Through 2030*

*By year-end 2026, 40% of enterprise applications will integrate task-specific AI agents — up from less than 5% in 2025. This analysis examines the architecture of the transition and what CEOs must do now.*

By Angel Armendariz · February 2026

**40%**

of enterprise apps will integrate AI agents by end of 2026

**8×**

adoption acceleration, fastest in enterprise software history

**77%**

more revenue per representative from AI-leveraging teams

## SECTION 01 · From Reactive to Proactive

The enterprise AI landscape is undergoing a category shift. Gartner projects that by year-end 2026, 40% of enterprise applications will feature built-in task-specific AI agents — the fastest adoption curve in enterprise software history.

This is not an incremental improvement to existing tools. It represents an architectural shift from reactive systems — software that responds to human commands — to proactive systems that anticipate needs, plan multi-step workflows, and execute decisions with minimal human intervention. Salesforce describes the transformation directly: the shift from traditional software to AI agents is as fundamental as the shift from on-premise to cloud. Organizations that treated cloud migration as a technology decision rather than a strategic one spent the following decade catching up. The same pattern is forming now.

*For CEOs, this is not a technology decision. It is a strategic positioning decision that will determine competitive advantage through the end of the decade.*

The companies that moved early on cloud infrastructure — Amazon, Salesforce, Netflix — did not simply reduce costs. They created entirely new business models that were structurally impossible under the previous architecture. Agentic AI presents the same category of opportunity: not better tools, but fundamentally different operational capabilities.

## SECTION 02 · Five Stages of Agentic Maturity

Gartner's research outlines a five-stage evolution of agentic AI capabilities that provides a strategic roadmap for enterprise planning.

**01**

### **Assistants**

2025

AI supports human decisions with analysis, recommendations, and draft outputs. Humans retain full control of execution.

**02**

### **Task-Specific Agents**

2026

AI agents handle defined workflows end-to-end within bounded domains. 40% of enterprise applications integrate these capabilities by year-end.

**03**

### **Collaborative Agents**

2027

Multiple AI agents coordinate across functions, sharing context and negotiating task handoffs without human intermediation.

**04**

### **Cross-Application Ecosystems**

2028

AI agents operate across organizational boundaries. 15% of day-to-day work decisions are made autonomously by agentic AI.

**05**

### **The New Normal**

2029+

Agentic systems become the default operating layer. 80% of customer service interactions are resolved by autonomous AI agents by 2030.

The timeline is aggressive but grounded. Organizations that wait until Stage 3 or 4 to begin planning will find themselves multiple years behind competitors that began building agentic infrastructure at

Stage 1. The window for strategic positioning is now — not when the technology matures, but while the organizational capabilities to leverage it are still being formed.

### SECTION 03 · From Analysis to Execution

The transition from reactive tools to agentic systems has immediate implications for revenue operations. Bain estimates AI could double active selling time by eliminating administrative overhead.

Current conversation intelligence tools — platforms like Gong and Chorus — analyze sales interactions after the fact. They surface insights about what happened in a meeting: which topics correlated with closed deals, which objections derailed conversations, which competitors were mentioned. This is valuable, but it is fundamentally reactive. The seller must still interpret the analysis, decide on a response, and execute.

Agentic systems collapse these steps. Instead of telling a rep that a competitor was mentioned in a call, an agentic system prepares the competitive response, drafts the follow-up email, updates the CRM opportunity record, and schedules the next touchpoint — all before the rep finishes their post-call notes.

The data supports the economic case. Gong's State of Revenue AI report found that teams leveraging AI capabilities generated 77% more revenue per representative and achieved 65% higher win rates compared to teams that did not. These are not marginal improvements. They represent a structural advantage that compounds over sales cycles.

*This is the core architectural shift: from AI that informs decisions to AI that executes decisions. The difference is not incremental — it is categorical.*

### SECTION 04 · When AI Systems Negotiate with Each Other

The most consequential near-term development involves agent-to-agent commerce. Salesforce is building inter-agent communication protocols that enable AI agents to understand intent, verify trust, and negotiate terms.

This is not theoretical. Salesforce's AgentForce platform is already enabling organizations to deploy AI agents that interact with other organizations' AI agents in structured commercial transactions. The

implications extend beyond efficiency into market structure itself.

Gartner projects that by 2028, 90% of B2B buying decisions will be intermediated by AI agents. The buying process — from need identification through vendor evaluation to contract negotiation — will increasingly involve AI systems interacting with other AI systems, with humans providing oversight and strategic direction rather than executing each step.

The economic scale is significant. Industry analysts project that AI exchanges — marketplaces where AI agents transact on behalf of their organizations — will facilitate over \$15 trillion in commerce by the early 2030s. Organizations whose products, services, and procurement processes are not designed for machine-readable interaction will be structurally disadvantaged in these markets.

This creates a new strategic imperative: designing your organization's commercial interfaces — pricing, terms, product specifications, service levels — to be consumable by AI agents, not just human buyers. The companies that treat this as a future consideration rather than a present design requirement will find their market access narrowing as agent-to-agent commerce scales.

#### SECTION 05 · Why 40% of Agentic Projects Will Fail

The power of agentic systems creates corresponding governance requirements. Gartner predicts over 40% of agentic AI projects will be canceled by end of 2027.

The failure mode is predictable: organizations deploy agents that can act autonomously without building the governance frameworks to ensure those actions remain aligned with business objectives. When a reactive AI tool provides a bad recommendation, a human catches it before execution. When an agentic system executes a bad decision autonomously, the damage is done before oversight occurs.

This is not a reason to delay deployment — it is a reason to invest in governance infrastructure concurrently with agent development. The data supports this approach. A survey of IT leaders found that 93% plan to deploy autonomous AI agents within two years. The organizations that succeed will be those that treat governance as a design requirement, not an afterthought.

Databricks reports that organizations with mature governance frameworks deploy AI to production 12 times more frequently than those without — not because governance slows down bad deployments, but because it accelerates good ones. When teams trust the guardrails, they ship faster.

*Companies that invest upfront in defining clear controls and guardrails will unlock transformative productivity gains. Those that rush to deploy without proper oversight will face public failures that set their programs back by years.*

The transition to agentic AI presents CEOs with three immediate strategic choices that will shape competitive positioning through the end of the decade.

### 1. Scope of ambition.

Focus on 2–3 workflows where agentic AI can deliver step-change improvement — not incremental efficiency, but categorical capability expansion. Revenue operations, customer service, and procurement are the three domains where agentic capabilities are most mature and the ROI case is most immediate.

### 2. Architecture orientation.

Redesign workflows from first principles rather than layering agents onto existing processes. The organizations achieving 77% revenue improvements are not automating their current sales process — they are building new processes that are only possible with agentic capabilities.

### 3. Governance investment.

Establish governance frameworks, train teams on human-agent collaboration, and build the infrastructure for agent oversight before scaling deployment. The 40% project cancellation rate is not a technology failure — it is a governance failure that is entirely preventable.

The transition from AI tools that report what happened to AI systems that drive what happens next is not a technology upgrade. It is a category shift that will separate competitive leaders from laggards through the end of the decade.

~\$450B+

Gartner's best-case projection estimates agentic AI could drive approximately 30% of enterprise application software revenue by 2035 — surpassing \$450 billion.

*The question is not whether agentic AI will transform enterprise revenue operations. The question is whether your organization will shape this future or simply react to it.*

## SOURCES

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