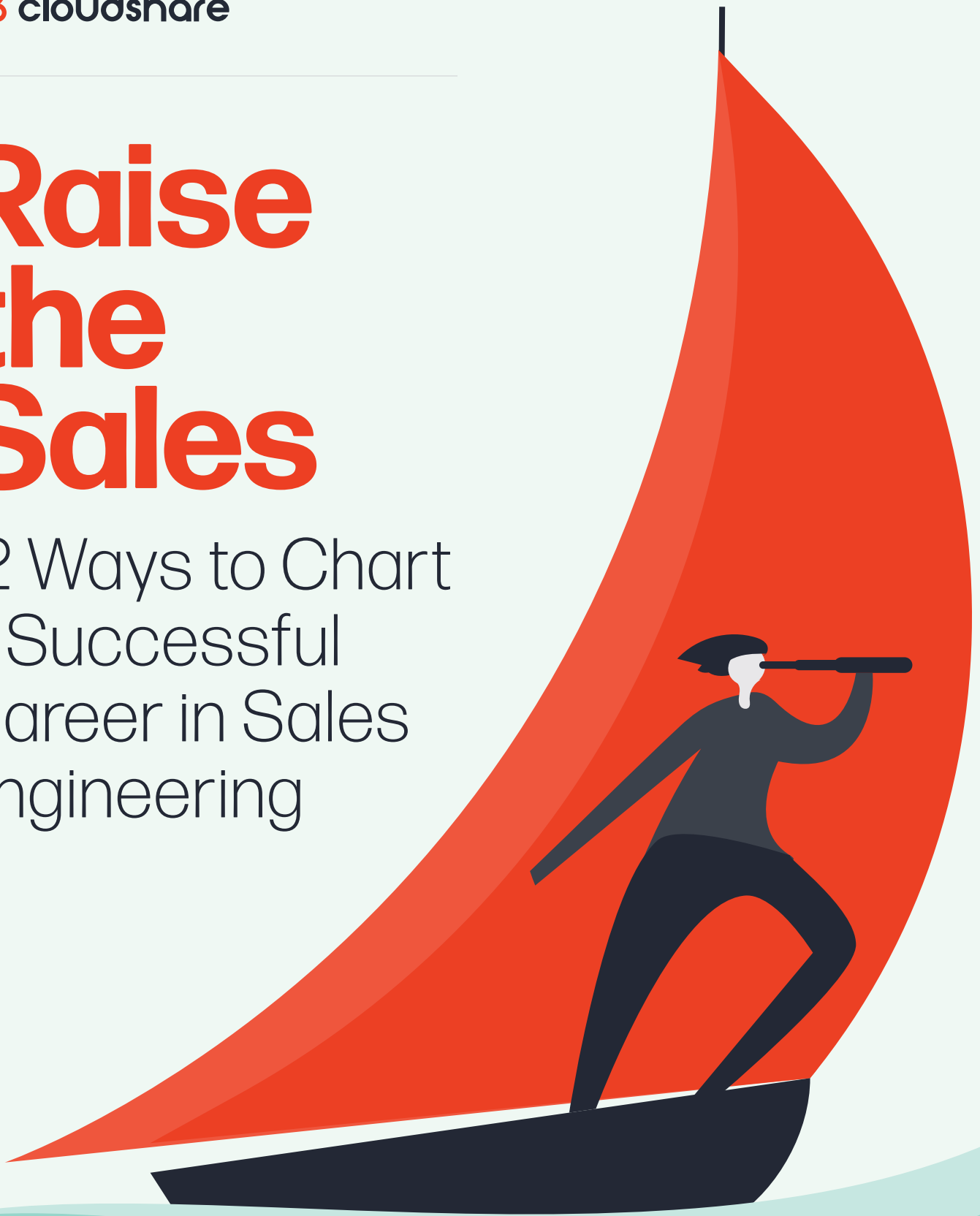


# Raise the Sales

12 Ways to Chart  
a Successful  
Career in Sales  
Engineering



# All Hands on Deck

Researchers at IDC have projected the global technology industry will reach \$5 trillion in 2019. CompTIA, the world's leading tech association, anticipates that if purchasing for core products and services continues at its current pace - and emerging tech accelerates a bit - we'll see growth in excess of 6%.

With advancements in areas from artificial intelligence (AI) to the Internet of Things (IoT), that's a strong possibility. Never mind that segments such as cybersecurity have particularly pressing needs; analysts at Gartner found worldwide spending grew by 12.4% to reach over \$114 billion last year alone.

There's clearly market demand, but how is the supply of people to make this all happen?

The Cybersecurity Jobs Report estimates there will be 3.5 million openings in that industry alone by 2021. CompTIA noted in the U.S. nearly four in 10 tech firms are actively recruiting for technical posts. Over half of employers say that's due to expansion, a similar number say it's because skills are needed in newer tech realms. Further, more than a third of those tech companies need business positions filled.

**In that sweet spot - where the human and technical converge - is the sales engineer (SE). And you're in demand.**



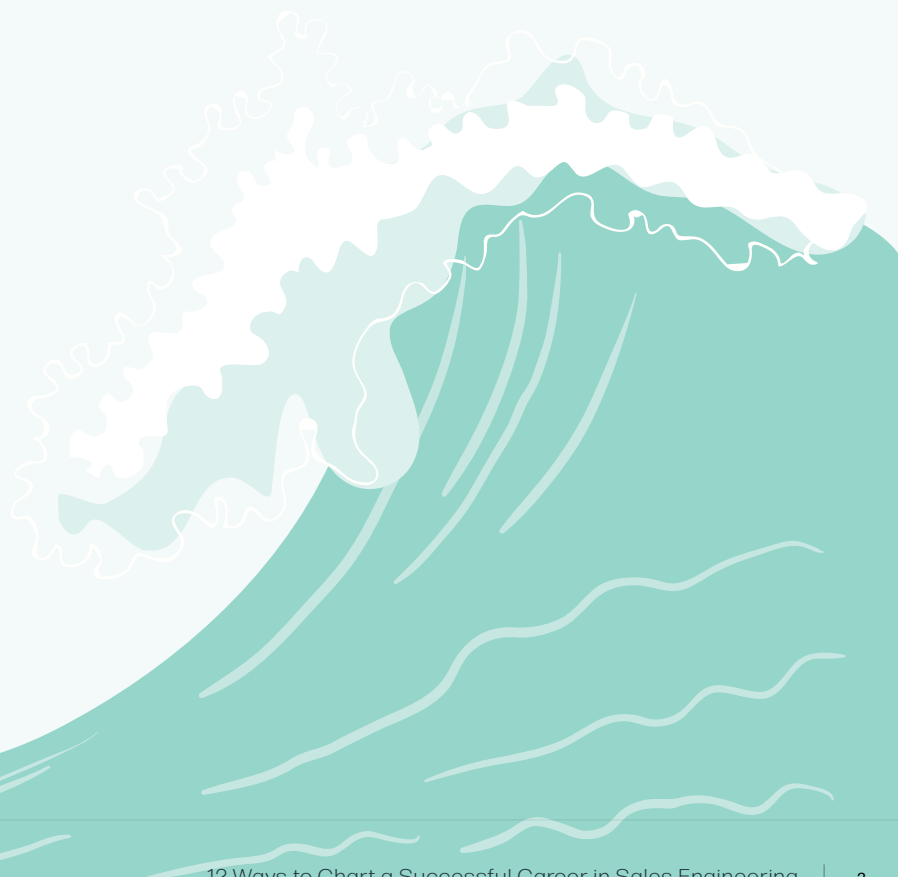
# A Rising Tide

SEs, technical consultants, pre-sale engineers; whatever name they call you, they call you - and often. From sophisticated software to the latest software as a service (SaaS) offering, businesses need to sell solutions. An SE knows the technology and can ensure its value is communicated. You make the complex understandable and resolve issues. You understand customer behavior.

You're the salesperson's anchor, the product manager's confidante. When you do your job right, everyone's game is raised, and the entire company is lifted.

Still, SE duties are focused on sales enablement. The priority is to support sales teams by helping engage prospects and close deals. Therefore, you're heavily involved in giving technical demos, creating trial proofs-of-concept (PoC), and perhaps even installation and solution training.

It can be a lot. However, specialized cloud solutions for sales enablement, sandboxing and training can make you more efficient and enhance your performance. And such tools can enable you to chart a course for even greater business and career success.



# Learn the Ropes

Advice from a seasoned veteran goes a long way. When it comes to understanding the SE role, no one is as highly regarded as John Care, author of two books on the topic, including “Mastering Technical Sales: The Sales Engineer’s Handbook,” the #1 bestseller for presales engineers and solutions consultants.

Care is founder of [Mastering Technical Sales](#), a company dedicated to improving SE capabilities. He also built world-class SE organizations at companies such as Oracle, Sybase and HP. He’ll soon be releasing an eBook designed for SE leadership. [CloudShare](#) spoke with Care and used his insight for the following five tips to help sales pros better understand and advance their careers.

## 1 / Develop & Leverage Trust

As companies mature, SEs can see their roles evolve. They do more than demos and troubleshooting and begin to work strategically with sales to build relationships. Often the goal is to land and expand. With tech and interpersonal skills, SEs can become trusted advisors to client leaders. As Care noted: “The CIO, CSO and CTO often find greater value in the SE than the salesperson - they build trust faster.”

Decision-makers feel more secure dealing with a proven source, one they already rely upon. You’re in an influential position and can help them. Cultivate trust and use it to expand existing business.

## 2 / Resolve to Succeed

Care believes what drives SEs is a desire to be more than techies - they’re motivated to solve problems and be engineering partners. “Good SEs are inherently pleasers,” said Care, “When something isn’t done to customer satisfaction, they take on problems no one else will.”

You’re where the buck stops and starts, vital to both retaining and selling customers. Welcome challenges and resolve them. It shows customers they’ve got a long-term partner and increases your value.

### 3

## Reduce Friction

A main SE responsibility is the product demo, but it wasn't always that way. Product marketing used to rush to produce these, send out discs to peers and partners worldwide, who in turn would make their own changes. This would undermine messaging consistency and drive those same marketing folks crazy.

SEs now control both demos and PoCs. With the cloud, and the right sales enablement technology, messaging is tightly controlled, demos easily conducted online, PoCs quickly distributed. "It takes friction out of the sale process," noted Care. "And leadership is glad to see the productivity gains."

Make it easier, make it fast, and you'll make a name for yourself.

### 4

## See & Say

Some solutions for sales enablement include analytics that provide insight into a prospect's use of a PoC. For Care, this visibility is invaluable. From identifying issues to ensuring key features aren't overlooked, it allows SEs to "see what's happening, solve roadblocks and accelerate sales."

Avoid a "black box" scenario in which you provide a PoC to a prospect company with no way of knowing who took it for a test drive, how it was used or if it was even tried at all. Analytics can help you identify users, understand what they liked most, make sure highlights aren't missed and offer guidance. Explore technology that facilitates sales and make recommendations.

### 5

## Show Them the Money

Care feels cloud-based sales enablement tools produce impactful results, and we couldn't agree more. Automating functions increases efficiency. Customer acquisition costs are greatly reduced. He added, "If an organization has 50 SEs, and each becomes 5-10% more cost-efficient, that's a huge payback when you're selling solutions that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Bottom line is the bottom line. Show leadership the money for a richer career as an SE.



# Know the Waters

Market and social influences are creating anxiety. Prospects have fears, salespeople face obstacles, all worry about a perfect storm in business. Knowing where the rough waters are and your place as an SE can help bring everyone to their desired destination. Here are three tips to help you sail through.

## 6 / Appreciate Market Uncertainty

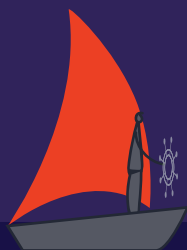
A recent survey of sales pros by Richardson, a global sales training company, showed there's market uncertainty. Customers are sensitive to risk and there are some reports of shrinking business cycles, reduced income levels and budget cuts. Prospects may be reluctant to buy, and before they do, they'll be looking for reassurance that results will follow.

Don't try to diminish or dismiss their perceptions. Rather, address them and normalize the situation. Make sure decision-makers see you've calculated the risks, then show them the greater benefits of your solution and how you arrived at that conclusion. In particular, draw upon your experience with other customers as proof points, illustrating how you were able to turn their reservations into success as well.

## 7 / Build the Case for Change

When Richardson's surveyed sales pros on what challenges buyers face with purchasing decisions, 22% said "building a case for change," the most popular response. Today, businesses are often focused on maintaining performance; leaders see change as possibly disturbing hard earned progress. Throw in the complexities that can come with change and their trepidation is understandable.

Make a case. Analyze the elements for potential improvement within their business, identify which support the need for change and those that don't. Position these in ways to further the sale, compare options, and link your solution to how it will help them meet business objectives and goals.

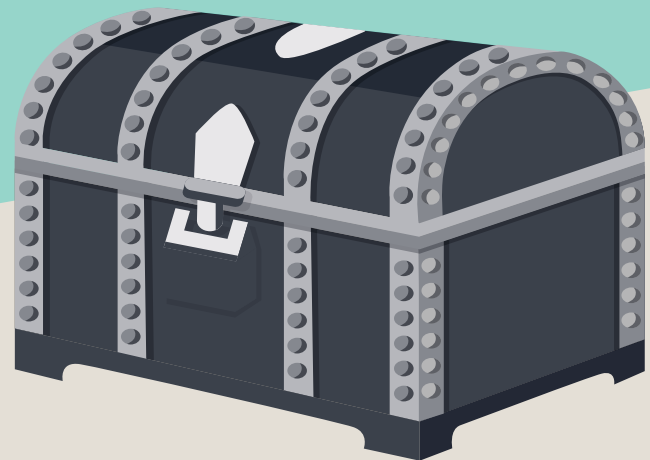


# 8 /

## Make the Connection

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the SE position earned a median annual wage of \$101,420 in May of 2018, the highest 10% making \$165,350. Jobs are expected to rise 7% through 2026, on par with most other professions. There's particular opportunity in computer systems design and related services, anticipated to grow 20%.

Compensation is healthy and prospects are good - but that's not all that's promising about the career's future. SEs find themselves not only drilling down on business and technology, they often end up assisting in areas from customer experience to marketing. This enables them to make solid connections built on trust with other people and companies. As a result, SEs are well-positioned to move into management or pursue other interests from research to product development to marketing.



# Become the Navigator

Succeeding as an SE is no accident. You need to create compelling, value-focused demos that cut through competitive clutter. With online reviews and product information, it's no wonder research shows typical prospects are already 57% through the buying process before they even speak to a sales rep. SEs need to navigate deftly and in no area is that more critical than the demo.

The following four tips are designed to help you on your journey. They're based on insight from two true pros: Peter Cohan, founder of [The Second Derivative](#), a company that helps software organizations improve sales and marketing demos, and [Scott Petri](#), a top SE with CloudShare.

## 9 / It's Not About Your Product

You could know a product like the back of your hand and present it flawlessly. Still, your demo won't work if it's all about your product. Focus on how you'll solve a prospect's problem.

Sales demos fail because they don't keep the audience personally engaged and fail to let them experience benefits firsthand. That said, consider letting them drive the demo; nothing creates an impression like a hands-on experience.

## 10 / Diagnose the Pain

You can't provide the right prescription if you don't understand the pain first. If you'd like proof on how important it is to evaluate a situation pre-demo, consider this from The Second Derivative: A six month survey showed a 10:1 success ratio in favor of doing discovery as opposed to insufficient or no research.

To increase the probability of success, conduct due diligence and create a profile that includes:

- **The job function of the prospect you're addressing**
- **Their top-level challenge or goal that is at risk**
- **The problems and impact of the current solution they are using**
- **What the prospect needs from your solution to solve their problems**
- **The value they want to realize from making a change**
- **The date when a solution needs to be in place**
- **The projected point in time when they can expect tangible value back**





11

## Do the Last Thing First

Familiar with the expression, “I’ve saved the best for last?” SEs should forget it as soon as possible. It suggests that everything up to that point was not of interest, and by the time you get around to the grand finale, the top decision-makers are likely to have left.

Get to the point. If you’ve done your discovery, you know what they’re looking for. Demo a real-world situation right up front so the prospect can see what’s in it for them. They’ll wonder how you did it and ask questions. Then, the rest of the presentation becomes an exercise of revealing the layers of complexity you’ve overcome in accordance with their level of interest.

12

## Less Is More

Is there any work task you’d like to take longer than necessary? The answer, of course, is no. So when it comes to a demo, the fewer number of clicks the better. Prospects don’t want fanfare; they want speed and simplicity. Also, don’t hit them with a firehose of features. Instead, make your presentation a two-way conversation, one where they’re not only engaged but feel they’re actually driving the presentation.



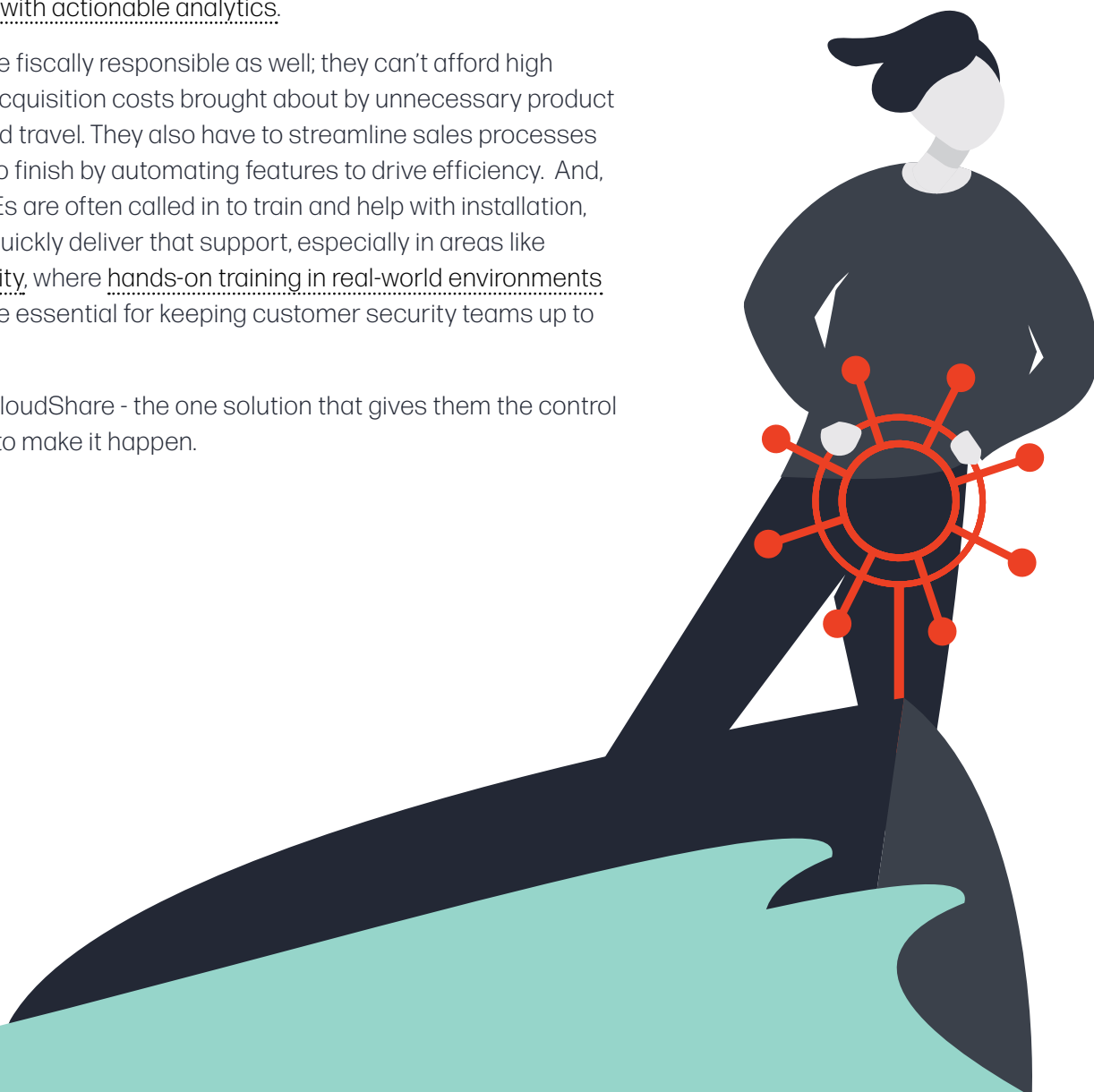
# Take the Helm

To get ahead, today's SE must act fast to maintain control and seize new opportunities. That requires access to tools that will quickly take them where they want to go.

SEs need to distribute and spin up reliable demos in minutes - anytime, anywhere - with no support from IT. They have to captivate prospects and partners with fully-featured test drives of software, regardless of complexity or where a target is located. They must manage sales efforts effectively, closely monitoring PoC progress and results with actionable analytics.

SEs must be fiscally responsible as well; they can't afford high customer acquisition costs brought about by unnecessary product shipping and travel. They also have to streamline sales processes from start to finish by automating features to drive efficiency. And, because SEs are often called in to train and help with installation, they must quickly deliver that support, especially in areas like cybersecurity, where hands-on training in real-world environments has become essential for keeping customer security teams up to speed.

SEs need CloudShare - the one solution that gives them the control and power to make it happen.



# About CloudShare

As the leading supplier of virtual IT environments in the cloud, CloudShare provides its clients with specialized solutions designed to meet a wide variety of business needs – including lab environments for virtual training, development and testing, and sales demos and PoCs. All CloudShare environments are completely customizable and offer on-demand access to infrastructure resources such as servers, storage, networks and software.

To learn more about how CloudShare’s advanced lab solutions can benefit your business, visit us at [www.cloudshare.com](http://www.cloudshare.com).

