



MARKETING AND SALES

Imagine This... AI Agents and the “Everywhere All at Once” Sales Team

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This summary article showcases ideas from a recent episode of BCG’s Imagine This... podcast. Alongside BCG managing director and senior partner Phillip Andersen, we explore how agentic AI is transforming the way businesses sell—from prioritizing leads to negotiating deals.

BCG’s AI agent StoryBuilder generated this summary—with oversight and editing provided by humans.

Imagine this: It's 2035 and sales reps are no longer bottlenecked by bandwidth. Every potential customer, from global enterprise to niche startup, is within reach. AI agents handle the grunt work, scale support, and even build trust. Human sellers orchestrate it all, not alone—but with a team of digital workers by their side.

This isn't sales fiction. It's the future of revenue, powered by agentic AI. And it could start sooner than you think.

Rethinking Sales Capacity

Sales strategies today are typically constrained by limited resources, not limited ambition. Even the biggest companies can only afford to put full sales muscle behind their top clients. Mid-market and small-business customers? Often overlooked—not because they lack value but because humans alone can't scale that far.

AI agents break this trade-off.

They reason, learn, and operate autonomously across platforms. They can qualify leads, schedule calls, offer tailored recommendations—and even negotiate deals.

Done right, they become force multipliers for your sales team.

What Today's Sales Teams Are Already Doing

- Most sales orgs are experimenting with AI—but still treating it as a sidekick.
- Today, AI supports workflows: suggesting next-best offers, surfacing coaching points from call transcripts, and helping with deal prep and follow-up.
- These are helpful, but incremental, wins. What's coming next is bigger.

What We Learned from Customer Service

- AI agents are already reshaping customer service. The lessons?
- Autonomy scales: AI agents can resolve routine queries faster than humans.
- Assistance improves outcomes: AI-supported reps close faster and reduce handling time.
- Oversight is critical: data quality, hallucinations, and trust gaps still matter.

Sellers as Orchestrators, Not Artists

- Today's best sellers wear many hats: deal designers, negotiators, data wranglers.
- In 2035? They'll lead digital teams. A single account manager could oversee a group of AI agents—each focused on pricing, product support, scheduling, or customer success. Instead of being overwhelmed, sellers could focus on strategy and relationship building.
- They won't do it all. They'll direct it all.

Serving the Entire Pyramid

- Right now, only top-tier clients get the red-carpet treatment. Imagine extending that service model to everyone.
- AI agents will enable consistent, high-touch support for mid-market accounts with growth potential, longtail customers historically out of reach, and clients in regions or languages previously underserved.
- This isn't theoretical. Some companies are testing it today.

Trust, Deepfakes, and Human Guardrails

- What happens when buyers don't trust what's real?
- Even the most advanced AI agents must be managed, not unleashed. Human sellers will still coach and monitor their AI teammates, own the customer experience, and intervene when trust is at stake.
- And yes, even if an AI buyer negotiates with your AI seller—someone must lead the team.

A New Model for Junior Talent

- If AI handles the entry-level work, where do junior sellers grow?
- In this future, entry-level reps will manage agents, not just do manual tasks; AI will provide coaching, role-play, and instant feedback; and new reps may learn faster, with more meaningful customer contact from day one.
- It's less "trial by fire." More "trial by algorithm."

New Skills for Human Sellers

- The skill set will shift.
- Future sellers will need to manage digital teammates and navigate agent-powered negotiations.

What CEOs Should Do Now

To prepare for an AI-augmented sales force, leaders should:

- **Start small. Start now.** Pilot agent-based sales workflows—especially in underserved segments.
- **Train sellers to lead, not just sell.** Teaching AI management is the new sales training.
- **Clean the data.** No agent works well on bad inputs.
- **Rethink the customer experience.** What could you do if resources weren't a constraint?

Phillip Andersen is a managing director and senior partner at BCG. He helps companies design AI-enabled sales strategies that scale relationships and revenue.

You can find Imagine This... wherever you get your podcasts.

Meet Phillip



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