

A Vision for Solutions Architecture

Turning Glean's Knowledge Graph Into Agents Enterprises Actually Run

A twelve-month plan to compress enterprise time-to-value, make agent rollout a repeatable motion rather than a bespoke project, and turn deployment speed into the reason Glean wins the seat instead of the bundled incumbent.

Marcus Reed · 20 years in solutions architecture and technical pre-sales · \$85M influenced pipeline · 40+ enterprise deployments

A category leader with a widening deployment surface

Glean has won the hard part — the retrieval layer and the trust model. The next constraint is not the product. It is the distance between a signed contract and an agent running in production.

COMPETITIVE STRENGTHS

Permissions-aware knowledge graph

Vendor-neutral connectors across 100+ enterprise apps, with ACLs enforced at query time on every retrieval — not at index time. This is the moat.

Compounding revenue, not a spike

Crossed \$100M ARR in FY ending Jan 31 2025, \$200M by Dec 2025, ~\$300M by May 2026 — roughly +89% year over year.¹

Land-and-expand is already working

Fortune 500 customers nearly doubled year over year, and 85%+ of customers run Glean across five or more departments.²

Governance shipped ahead of the market

SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27001, HIPAA and GDPR; single-tenant VPC; audit logs; prompt-injection defenses. Agent moderators and action-level controls went GA in December 2025.³

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Time-to-value is still measured in weeks

Typical deployments run two to four weeks of crawling, indexing and tuning before agents perform reliably; connector ingestion alone runs roughly two weeks.⁴

Integration load sits with the customer

Integration testing and access-control alignment fall on customer teams. Where that alignment is not established first, rollout stalls — and stalled rollouts are where competitive displacement happens.⁴

Agents raise the cost of a bad rollout

A wrong search result is friction. An agent that acts on one is an incident. The bar for pre-production validation moves as autonomous agents leave beta.

Fast rollouts already prove the thesis

Organizations completing rollout in two to three days report eight to ten hours saved per person per week and 14% velocity gains inside month one.⁴ The outcome is known. Making it repeatable is the work.

Three forces converging on the deployment layer

Each one alone is manageable. Together they make solutions architecture the function that decides how fast the revenue compounds.

Agents Move From Pilot to Production

- Glean Agents launched with an LLM-agnostic reasoning engine and orchestrated actions
- Autonomous agents in beta; agent moderators and action-level controls GA December 2025
- Glean has published an Enterprise Agent Development Lifecycle — the customer-side motion that lifecycle implies still needs an owner
- Every agent in production is a permissions decision that has to hold

The Bundle Is Coming For the Seat

- Microsoft 365 Copilot ships inside Word, Excel, Teams and Outlook — no procurement event required
- Google is pushing Gemini Enterprise into Workspace on the same logic
- Against a bundle, "already included" beats "better" unless value lands fast
- Time-to-first-value is the competitive weapon, not feature parity

Enterprise Budgets Are Tightening

- ARR nearly doubled year over year — expansion is now the growth engine
- 85%+ of customers already span five or more departments; the next dollar is expansion, not logo
- Expansion is earned in the first ninety days of a deployment, not in the renewal conversation
- A slow first rollout caps the account permanently

Deployment & Time-to-Value

Turn the fastest rollouts into the standard rollout. Nothing here is a new product — it is productizing what the best deployments already do.

A Reference Deployment Architecture, per vertical

Codify the connector set, access-control model and index-tuning profile for the five verticals that drive the most ARR, so a new customer starts from a validated pattern instead of a discovery call. The published two-to-four week crawl-index-tune window is the target to compress.

Benchmark: Microsoft 365 Copilot needs no deployment at all — it is already installed

Access-Control Alignment as a Pre-Sales Deliverable

Published guidance is explicit that rollouts stall when access-control alignment is not settled before go-live. Move that work in front of the contract: a permissions readiness assessment run during evaluation, owned by solutions architecture, delivered as an artifact the customer's security team signs off.

Turns the moat — query-time ACL enforcement — into a visible pre-sale asset

Instrument Time-to-First-Value and Make It a Company Metric

Define, measure and report days-to-first-value and days-to-first-agent alongside ARR. The reported outcome for fast rollouts — eight to ten hours saved per person weekly and 14% velocity in month one — only becomes a sales weapon once it is measured on every account, not the reference ones.

A number the CFO of a prospect can underwrite

Agent Readiness & Customer Trust

Glean has shipped the governance controls. The gap is the customer-side motion that gets an enterprise from "agents are enabled" to "agents are trusted."

An Agent Readiness Review, run before first deployment

A structured pre-production review covering permission blast radius, action scope, escalation paths and rollback — the customer-side counterpart to Glean's published Enterprise Agent Development Lifecycle. Owned by solutions architecture, delivered as a signed artifact, reusable per agent.

Benchmark: no competitor currently ships a customer-facing equivalent

A Certified Agent Pattern Library

Ten to fifteen validated agent patterns per vertical — support triage, onboarding, sales research, policy lookup — each with its permission model, evaluation set and success metric pre-defined. Customers deploy a pattern, not a blank canvas. Patterns are how solutions work compounds instead of repeating.

Converts every good deployment into an asset the next one inherits

Deployment Telemetry Back Into Product

A standing loop from field deployments into product: which connectors cost the most time, where permission models break, which agent patterns fail evaluation. Published guidance already flags edge-case connectors as a gap versus incumbents — the field sees which ones, first, and that signal should be structured, not anecdotal.

Makes solutions architecture a product input, not a cost center

Building the Function That Scales It

A solutions organization that only staffs deals grows linearly with headcount. One that builds reusable assets grows with the install base.

Split the function: Deploy vs. Enable

Two tracks under one org. Deployment architects own first production value on new accounts. Enablement architects own the pattern library, the partner curriculum and the customer-team upskilling that lets accounts self-serve their second, fifth and twentieth agent. Without the second track, every expansion consumes a specialist.

Expansion is the growth engine — 85%+ of customers already span 5+ departments

Push repeatable deployments to partners

Once the reference architectures and pattern library exist, mid-market and standard-vertical rollouts can be certified out to systems integrators, with Glean solutions architects reserved for net-new patterns and strategic accounts. This is the only path to covering a doubling Fortune 500 base without doubling the org.

Benchmark: the SI channel is how the incumbents cover enterprise breadth

A structured technical evaluation framework

Replace bespoke proof-of-concept scoping with a defined evaluation framework: fixed success criteria agreed up front, a standard data set, a decision date. I built exactly this at Cascade Cloud Systems and moved a 90-day enterprise technical evaluation to 45 days without lowering the win rate.

Against a pre-installed bundle, evaluation speed is the whole game

The Deployment Blueprint — solutions work as a revenue asset

One thing to build in year one: a productized, measured, partner-deliverable rollout motion. Four components, each already half-built inside the best existing deployments.

Reference Architectures

Validated connector, permission and tuning patterns per vertical. New accounts start from a known-good baseline.

Readiness Reviews

Permissions and agent-scope validation as a signed pre-production artifact, run before go-live rather than after an incident.

Certified Patterns

A vertical library of pre-validated agents with evaluation sets and success metrics attached. Customers deploy, not design.

Value Telemetry

Days-to-first-value and days-to-first-agent measured on every account and reported next to ARR.

WHY THIS IS A REVENUE ARGUMENT, NOT AN OPERATIONS ONE

It beats the bundle

Against software the customer already owns, the winning argument is not better retrieval — it is measurable value inside the first month, proven the same way on every account.

It compounds expansion

The next dollar comes from departments six through twelve. Those land when a customer can deploy their own agents without a specialist on the call.

It makes the moat visible

Query-time permission enforcement is the differentiator, and today it is a technical claim. A readiness review turns it into something a security team signs.

Glean leads on retrieval and trust. The gap is distribution friction.

Where each platform actually wins the enterprise seat — based on publicly available information as of August 19, 2026.

CAPABILITY	GLEAN	MICROSOFT 365 COPILOT	GOOGLE GEMINI ENTERPRISE	BUILD IN-HOUSE
Cross-tool coverage	Vendor-neutral, 100+ connectors	Deepest inside the Microsoft stack	Strongest inside Workspace	Whatever you build
Permission enforcement	ACLs at query time, every retrieval	Native to M365 tenancy	Native to Workspace	You own the risk
Agent governance	Moderators + action controls GA Dec 2025	Tenant-level admin controls	Workspace admin controls	Build it yourself
Deployment effort	Weeks: crawl, index, tune	Effectively zero — already installed	Low inside Workspace	Months to quarters
Procurement friction	New line item, new vendor review	Often inside an existing agreement	Often inside an existing agreement	Internal headcount
Certified deployment patterns	Opportunity	Partner-led	Partner-led	—

An immediate, zero-engineering win: publish days-to-first-value as a stated deployment commitment, per tier, on the pricing page — the way uptime SLAs are published. The fastest customers already hit two to three days. Naming the number costs nothing, is defensible from existing data, and forces the one comparison a bundled incumbent cannot win on: not who is cheaper, but who is working by Friday.

I have built this function three times

Compressing Enterprise Evaluations

- ✓ Cut a 90-day enterprise technical evaluation to **45 days** at Cascade Cloud Systems, with no drop in win rate
- ✓ Built the structured proof-of-concept framework behind it — adopted org-wide as the pre-sales standard
- ✓ Exactly the motion Theme One and Theme Three describe

Deployment at Enterprise Scale

- ✓ **40+ enterprise deployments** led end to end, technical evaluation through production rollout
- ✓ \$22M single largest deal closed at Beacon Analytics on technical architecture
- ✓ Fluent on both sides of the table — deep enough for the customer's engineers, plain enough for the sponsor who signs

Building the Organization

- ✓ Scaled solutions engineering at Ironview Software from a **3-person function to 12**
- ✓ Hired, ramped and retained the specialist profile this role has to recruit against
- ✓ The Deploy / Enable split in Theme Three is how I structured it

Carrying the Number

- ✓ **\$85M** influenced pipeline in enterprise technical pre-sales
- ✓ **140%** average quota attainment across six years in senior pre-sales leadership
- ✓ I have run solutions as a revenue function, measured on revenue — not as a support cost

Glean's permissions-aware knowledge graph is the moat — but a moat only pays once agents run on it, and agents only run once the customer trusts the rollout. That gap is a solutions architecture problem, and it is the one I would come here to close. I would welcome the chance to walk through this in detail.