



CRM of the Future: Navigating the transition

to a future-ready platform for
personalized consumer engagement

Within the next four years, every biopharma organization will need to undertake a game-changing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) transformation.

In late 2022, Veeva and Salesforce announced the expiration of their partnership in 2025, with a full shutdown of the joint Veeva CRM system slated for 2030.¹ With the partnership ending, both companies are developing their own offerings to support new and existing life sciences partners.

Veeva will continue to offer its core suite of life sciences products and, in the coming years, will add new omnichannel capabilities to its Vault product as part of the transition.² Veeva is embedding advanced, industry-specific AI capabilities directly within its Vault platform to streamline pharmaceutical workflows - enabling intelligent automation, actionable insights, and enhanced compliance across clinical, regulatory, quality, and commercial functions.

Meanwhile, Salesforce will launch a new range of life sciences products hosted on its Life Sciences Cloud solution (LS Cloud) to deliver an AI-enabled CRM, leveraging IQVIA's Orchestrated Customer Engagement (OCE) platform,³ to pharma and medtech organizations.⁴

Many companies will be choosing between these two options. No matter what decision they make, the

change will likely have major impacts on how biopharma organizations manage their customer data across the entire lifecycle, from developing future-ready infrastructure to designing innovative engagement programs to measuring the impact of their investments.

In this deadline-driven scenario, it will be critical for biopharma leaders to make a timely, informed choice that prepares their organizations for long-term success. The process starts by assessing the goals of the enterprise, understanding how either Veeva or Salesforce can help meet those goals, and taking actionable steps to prepare the organization for proactive, holistic change - including establishing partnerships with digital transformation experts who can assist with successfully navigating the change from start to finish.

With a strategic roadmap in hand, biopharma companies can feel confident in launching the next chapter of their CRM journey within the next 12 months to support more efficient, effective, and engaging experiences for their target audiences.

Top considerations for choosing a CRM

Big technology decisions are never easy, especially when they have such significant ripple effects across the entire organization. To maximize the odds of success right off the bat, biopharma leaders will need to embrace a visionary mindset: this is an opportunity to adopt next-generation digital CRM platforms that are increasingly well-tailored to the organization's needs.

Developing a clear idea of what those needs are – and what they are likely to be in the future – will

further improve the organization's ability to select the most appropriate path forward.

The strategic choice will come down to the company's capacity and needs for standardization, flexibility, and specificity when architecting the CRM environment.

To gauge where they fall on the spectrum, leaders should consider asking themselves the following business questions:



Where is our portfolio headed?



What business constraints may impact our ability to grow and compete?



What are our customer engagement needs for the next three to five or even ten years?



How much personalization will we need?



Is an open ecosystem important to achieving our needs?



How much will the migration impact us?



Could these answers be different by market or major business unit?

Moving into mid-2025, Deloitte has found that most biopharma companies are actively working through these questions to prepare for upcoming strategic decision-making, although many are still in the early stages of consideration.

It is important to remember that the separation of Veeva and Salesforce isn't going to wait for the market to make up its mind. With a fixed end date in sight, companies must progress rapidly through

the phases of decision making to help ensure they are prepared to move forward with their choice in a timely manner that minimizes operational disruption.

As the technical and organizational change management components of the transition are anticipated to take some amount of time, the next 12 months will be crucial for finalizing the initial decision and positioning companies appropriately for success by 2030, which isn't as far away as it may seem.

AI agents and the new paradigm of the consumer experience

Concurrently with the Veeva-Salesforce transformation, the biopharma industry is undergoing a profound digital revolution centered upon the explosion of new artificial intelligence (AI) technologies available across the industry. The advent of autonomous AI Agents are already having a particularly pronounced effect on how companies envision the future of the consumer experience and are fueling net-new engagement capabilities to deliver insights and achieve ambitious consumer-focused goals.

For instance, AI agents (also known as agentic AI) can work independently to make decisions, take action, and continuously adapt and optimize their actions based on learnings from previous results. As technology matures, AI agents will be able to take on human-like personas that complement and expand the capacity of the existing workforce.

With their ability to complete routine customer relationship tasks such as tailoring content or messaging, assisting with territory management, or proactively reacting to market events and changing their behavior accordingly, AI agents are poised to become an indispensable feature of the new CRM environment.

The timeline for agentic AI maturity is predicted to line up quite closely with the end of the Veeva-Salesforce partnership. Over the next one to two years, AI agents will start to take on independent roles in predicting customer behavior, triggering personalized customer service interactions, creating and sharing on-demand, personalized content and patient education, and supporting enhanced territory design and coverage.

In three to five years, AI agents will play key roles in even more areas, including interaction scheduling, pricing and contracting decisions, and personalizing market campaigns.

While managing both the CRM transition and the rise of AI agents at the same time may appear overwhelming for some companies, it doesn't have to be. Again, it's a promising opportunity to ensure that companies are adopting new CRM tools that are AI native and take full advantage of what AI agents have to offer.

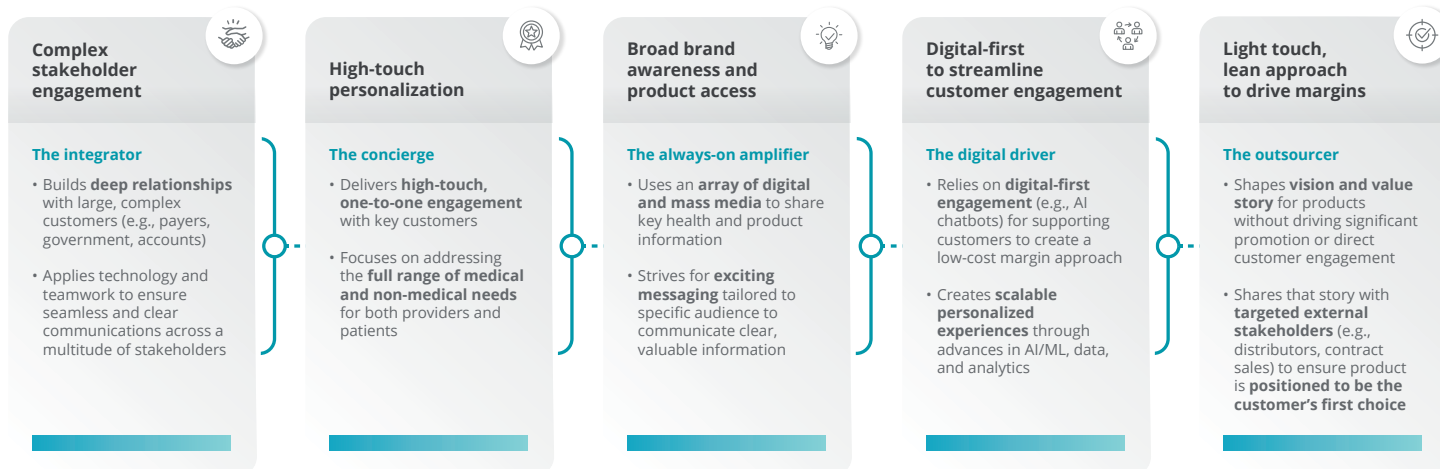
As leaders explore their options from Salesforce and Veeva, they should consider the potential for integrating AI agents into their operations and ensure that their platform of choice will include the specific AI-driven toolkits that will best support their individualized goals.

4 steps to prepare for CRM implementation

The CRM transition will impact more than just a company's technology portfolio. With AI agents and other tools bringing net-new capabilities around personalization and proactive planning, the transition will fundamentally change how humans interact with machines – and with other humans. To unlock tangible business value from new platforms, organizations should thoroughly prepare for both the nuts and bolts of the technical transition and the broader experiential impacts of the shift.

Succeeding with generating buy-in and sustained adoption will require biopharma companies to define their priorities, assess their current and future capabilities, appropriately evaluate their vendor options, and launch initiatives to ensure a harmonious approach to new content needs and new business processes.

- 1 **Shaping the vision with a clear sense of company identity:** To choose the right digital pathway, organizations will need to be able to articulate their business priorities and define their ideal customer engagement style. For example, some companies may be focused on building deep relationships with large, complex customers, such as government agencies or payers, while others might benefit from tools that can deliver high-touch, one-to-one engagement with key accounts. By better understanding what the company hopes to achieve, leaders can ask more detailed and relevant questions of prospective technology providers to determine the best options for their needs.
- 2 **Assessing current capabilities and future goals:** Knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses is critical for informed, strategic decision-making. Organizations should conduct a robust capability assessment that identifies opportunities for improvement as they build their ideal field user journeys and customer engagement touchpoints. A future state impact assessment can also provide clarity and actionable insights around the impact of adopting specific CRM functionalities, adding or removing elements of the workforce, and optimizing workflow processes to make sure that the vision is rooted in operational feasibility.
- 3 **Considering the future state of engagement:** Deciding on Salesforce or Veeva will involve extensive investigation into the technical offerings, relationship styles, and key attributes of both vendors. To fully understand what a commitment will entail, companies may wish to engage in "day in the life of..." exercises with each vendor to fully break down how their platforms will revolutionize the experiences of specific personas within the organization in addition to customers. This can help companies better understand the scope and scale of transformation that can be achieved across functions and priority areas.
- 4 **Preparing for holistic people and process transformation:** Articulating the company vision and establishing goals requires active participation from leaders across the enterprise. Putting those plans into action will likely require even more support from champions strategically positioned in high impact roles. Organizations will need to leverage these champions to jumpstart the operationalization of the CRM strategy by optimizing critical interaction points, educating fellow team members, and demonstrating consistent engagement with new technologies and processes throughout the transition period.

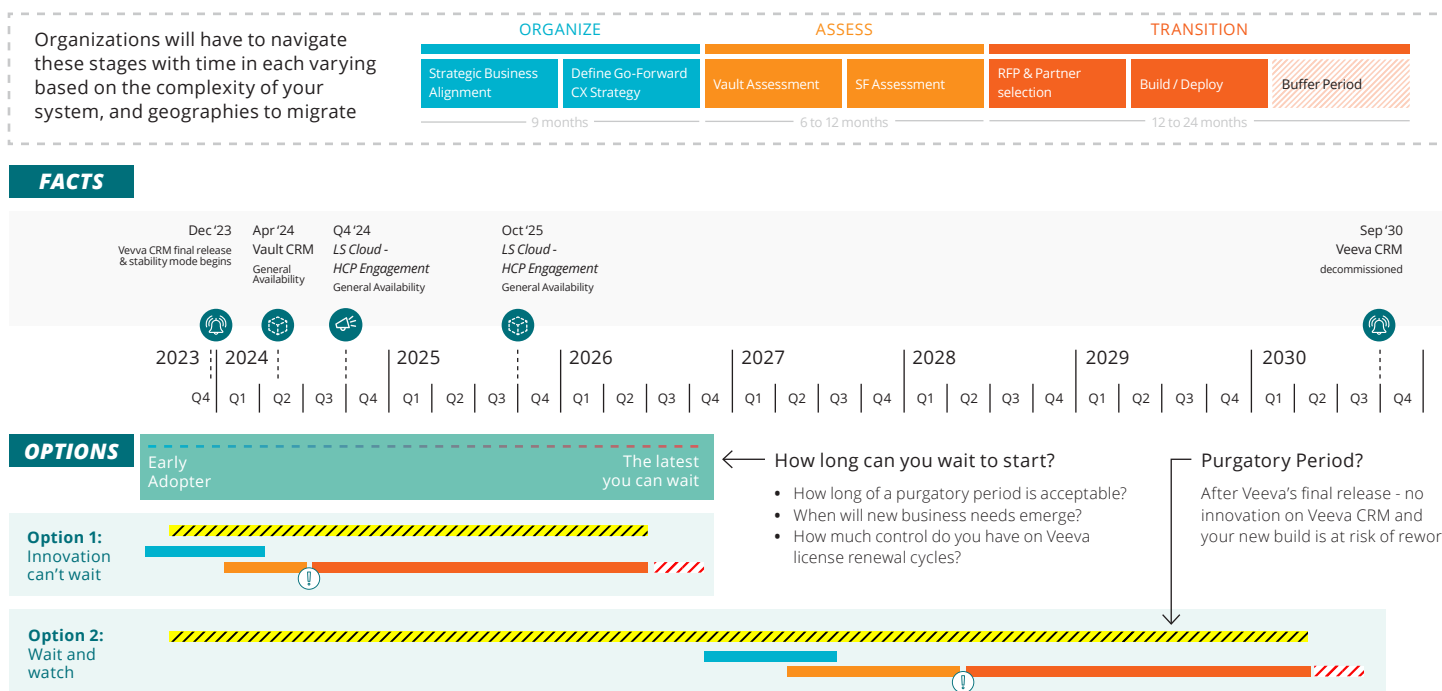


Completing these steps will be essential for laying the groundwork for success as companies establish their transition timelines and move forward with making the right decision for their needs.

The next 12 months: Immediate action steps for biopharma companies

To stay on track with the transition, pharma companies will need to make all required decisions by the end of 2026. This will give them enough time to start what is likely to be a lengthy implementation process and ensure they are prepared to go live with their chosen solution by the deadline in 2030.

TO BE FIRST TO MARKET YOU NEED TO START NOW... WAITING IS AN OPTION BUT STIFLES PROGRESS



Securing the right support and experience to assist with a successful CRM transition

Companies may not have a choice about undertaking a CRM migration in the first place, but they do have the power to choose how to complete the transition in a manner that leaves them in a better position to achieve their objectives than ever before.

By taking a proactive and comprehensive look at their unique needs before carefully assessing the existing and upcoming offerings of both Salesforce and Veeva, biopharma leaders can ensure that they are making the right decision to support long-term growth and a strongly competitive position in the market.

However, this is a large-scale, highly challenging task with major implications for the success of the business, which can be daunting for organizations that may not have the internal resources or experience to navigate the complexities on their own.

Enlisting the support of an experienced collaborator with deep knowledge of the CRM environment can streamline and simplify the process. Deloitte Digital is already working with clients across the biopharma community to assess their needs, conduct tailored impact assessments, prepare for integrating AI agents into the workflow, and design next-generation customer engagement journeys that take advantage of everything the evolving CRM environment has to offer.

With a tried and tested toolkit of services and structured roadmaps to help companies adhere to the transition's tight timelines, Deloitte Digital's highly knowledgeable specialists can provide the customized guidance and support to accelerate achieving the desired results.

2030 is quickly approaching, and the time is now to start making decisions about what the future holds. Organizations that invest now in preparing for the shift by augmenting their internal readiness activities with the right collaboration are better positioned to be able to meet their deadlines and take the lead in being able to deliver exceptional services and experiences to their customers.



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