Sales Roundtable

Firsthand insights from the front lines of sales: engaging closely with customers to Remain Our Customers' Banking Group of Choice

The Nanto Bank Group is adopting a sales model that expands its points of contact with local communities and customers with the goal of remaining our customers' banking group of choice. We are transitioning toward sales activities that envision the region as a unified whole and seek to understand every customer holistically, without distinguishing between corporate and individual clients.
This new initiative does not change the essence of sales—which continue to involve face-to-face communication with customers—but, rather, represents a new stage in the evolution of the way we engage with them.
In Osaka, meanwhile, which we consider our "second home", we are working to enhance our Group's presence and strengthen our business relationships.
In this roundtable discussion, a group of sales representatives from different areas in the Nara and Osaka regions join the Manager of the Sales Support Department to discuss their perspectives on the shift in our sales activities, the progress and challenges they experience in their daily work, and the ideal roles they aspire to play as human capital supporting the vision to remain our customers' banking group of choice.



Kashiba Branch
Yuki Date

Amagasaki Branch
Natsumi Takayama

Takada Branch
Suzuna Matsumoto

Osaka-Higashi Branch
Hikaru Takeshita

Executive Officer Sales Support Department Manager
Yasuyuki Yamanaka

Participants' views of the shift in sales activities

Yamanaka: Our Group is currently implementing a shift in our sales activities in all its markets. In Nara, we are focusing on "area-based sales activities" aimed at deepening ties with the local community, while in Osaka, we are working to strengthen our business relationships by positioning the metropolis as our "second home." I'd like to begin today by asking how you all feel about these changes.

Matsumoto: I've come to realize that our previous approach treating corporate and personal matters as separate issues was, in itself, somewhat at odds with our customers' actual life experience. For business owners, a company's cash flow and business succession issues are interconnected with their family's future and personal assets. Since we've assigned a single point of contact to each customer, we've heard them say such things as, "It's easy to talk with you about anything." This reconfirms my belief that seeking to understand our clients holistically—without drawing a line between company and personal matters—is the first step toward establishing a relationship of trust.

Takeshita: When doing business in Osaka, I often feel that Nanto Bank is still "just one of many available financial institutions." That's why I consider it so significant that the Bank has now clearly made improving our customer relationships here an official policy—rather than leaving it to individual efforts. We view our relationships with customers—from deposits, loans, and payments to transactions with company executives and their families—as a single, integrated whole. Now that this mindset is shared throughout the branch, I feel we are finally all moving in the same direction.

Date: As we transition to a market with interest rates, the importance of deposits is rising. At the same time, the circumstances concerning deposits are becoming increasingly challenging due to factors such as the need to manage capital outflows associated with inheritances and intensifying competition from other financial institutions, including online banks. With customers

selecting among a wider range of options, it's more important than ever to maintain regular contact with them—rather than simply reaching out only when necessary—so that we can quickly identify changes in their circumstances and needs. In this environment, sales activities that deepen our ties with the local community are essential. We view this shift in sales activity as a crucial step toward deepening our relationships with customers and enhancing the Bank's presence in the community.

Takayama: I see this shift in sales activities as an opportunity to rethink our relationships with customers. The Amagasaki Branch is located some distance from our home base in Nara, and our Bank does not have a strong presence in the area. Compared to the situation in Nara, we have fewer customers who use us as their main bank, and if we limit our interactions to superficial communication, we won't be able to convince customers to choose us in this highly competitive market. We must take further steps to acquire a true understanding of our customers' future visions and the challenges they're facing today. It's only by walking beside them that we can earn their trust. If I am to achieve this myself, I feel a greater need to achieve more personal growth than ever before.

Challenges revealed by the shift in sales activities

Yamanaka: While increasing the number of interactions with customers is important, simply visiting them more frequently will not make us their preferred choice. The key is to maintain a high volume of activity while improving the quality of our proposals. In this connection, what challenges do you face in your day-to-day sales activities?

Matsumoto: The more opportunities I have to meet with clients, the wider the range of issues they bring to me. While I'm grateful for this, addressing their concerns and challenges requires an increasingly wider range of knowledge and judgment. As the number of issues grows, internal administrative tasks and verifications take up more and more time, making it difficult for me to maintain the same number of client visits. Rather than reducing my workload, however, I am seeking creative ways to manage it so that I can maintain a consistent level of connection with my customers.

Takeshita: In Osaka, we often find that another bank is already handling customers' key transactions, such as payment processing, so it takes time and patience to make significant progress in our business relationships. We focus on understanding our clients' businesses and cash flows, identifying places where we can truly be of service, and gradually deepening our relationships.



Date: I joined Nanto Bank after leaving another financial institution, and I've found Nanto Bank to be an institution where a culture of sincerely engaging with customers and striving to acquire a deep understanding of their challenges and concerns is deeply ingrained. I consider the system of visualizing our relationships with customers and deepening trust through ongoing dialogue to be truly excellent. At the same time, however, there are occasions on which I feel that this approach isn't being fully conveyed to our customers. No matter how much we care about our them, our feelings won't lead to trust if they don't come across. With this shift in sales activities, I believe our challenge for the future will be to increase our points of contact with customers even further to make sure they truly experience our Bank's approach firsthand.

Takayama: To me, the greatest challenge is identifying potential customer issues. To understand not only the specific concerns my customers bring to me, but also their underlying anxieties about the future and needs they haven't yet articulated, requires me to do much more than simply accumulate knowledge of financial products and services. I also need to understand industry trends, local conditions, and broader societal trends. There are times when I can't answer a customer's question on the spot, but I never leave it unresolved—I consult with senior colleagues or my supervisor and make sure I provide an answer during my next visit. I hope my ongoing efforts will gradually help me to improve the quality of my dialogue with customers.

A shift in sales strategies encouraging human capital growth

Yamanaka: The shift in sales activities will also contribute to the personal growth of every individual sales representative. So what changes or growth do you personally notice in your daily activities?

Date: My interactions with a wide variety of clients have led me to realize that the challenges every company faces are unique. Since there are limits to what I can address with my own rather limited knowledge alone, I've had more opportunities to collaborate with Headquarters and our Group companies than I would have otherwise. My own knowledge has grown through this process, and I feel I've gradually developed an ability to determine which specialized departments I can connect customers with to solve their various problems, as well as ways of structuring my own proposals better.



Matsumoto: I think I've learned to adopt a broader perspective on our customers' challenges. In my past work as a corporate account manager, my primary focus was on the challenges facing client companies, but I now consider a wider range of issues, including the personal wealth management, estate planning, and business succession of the business owners themselves. There have even been instances in which a discussion concerning a change in company leadership has expanded to cover real estate transfers, gifts, and insurance as well. It's undeniable that expanding my perspective to include the company owners' private affairs in addition to their companies' business concerns has broadened the scope of my proposals.

Sales Activities Aimed at Remaining Our Customers' Banking Group of Choice



Takeshita: Working in a market with rising interest rates, I've come to realize that simply proposing a loan solution to customer needs is no longer sufficient. We have to consider the owner's personal cash flows, their investment portfolio, and even their savings balance to construct the best possible proposal. I've found that delving deeper into companies' sustainability and the mindset of their executives has broadened my perspective as a sales representative.

Takayama: I've become much more proactive in thinking for myself and taking the initiative in my work. In the past, I usually followed my seniors' colleagues' instructions to the letter, but I now make it a point to analyze the client's situation on my own, formulate hypotheses, and then visit them. I test my hypotheses through actual conversation and use the insights that emerge to develop my next proposal. I believe I'm gradually honing not only my knowledge but also my active listening and communication skills through this iterative process.

How to become a banker who continues to be chosen

Yamanaka: Finally, I'd like to ask you what kind of sales representatives or bank employees you envision yourselves becoming in the future. In other words, what kind of professional do you hope to become to ensure that our Group remain our customers' banking group of choice?

Matsumoto: I aspire to be a sales representative customers trust to manage their important relationships—whether with business partners, friends, or others. While it's not easy to obtain new customer referrals, I consider it a testament to the trust they place in me. In an era in which it's difficult to differentiate ourselves solely through products and services, a representative's responsiveness and the trust they build with customers are more important than ever. In the future, I intend to become a familiar face in the community—Someone people naturally turn to when they have questions or need advice about this particular isssue.



Date: A former supervisor once told me, "The fastest way to achieve your goals is to become the best bank employee in your assigned area," and I continue to keep these words in front of mind. At a time in which we are competing not only with other banks in the community, but also with companies in different industries and even AI, I believe we will ultimately be set apart by the degree to which we engage with our customers and our ability to understand them. I want to provide value that exceeds customers' expectations as the bank employee who understands them best.

Takeshita: My vision is to become the bank representative who comes to mind first as the best person to solve even customers' smallest concerns. I believe I can realize relationships like this only by going beyond a company's finances and business operations to include an understanding of the CEO's personal character and values. I want to play a part in raising Nanto Bank's profile in Osaka as a banker who identifies challenges and opportunities that clients may not even realize exist, and who fully understands their companies and supports their growth.

Takayama: I also aspire to be the bank employee customers in my community turn to first when they encounter difficulties. This will require an ability to propose solutions for a wide range of issues extending beyond just loans and deposits to include business succession and wealth management as well. I realize that becoming such a banker requires me to deepen my knowledge, respond promptly, and treat every customer with thoughtfulness and sincerity. I believe that the daily effort I put into engaging with all my customers and striving to deepen my understanding of their needs will not only enhance my own capabilities, but will also help build relationships of mutual trust.

Yamanaka: While listening to all your stories, I couldn't help feeling that the shift in our sales activities has begun to produce a steady change in the mindset and behavior of our front-line staff.

In Nara, we are pursuing "broad-based" sales activities designed to further deepen our ties with our local communities, while in Osaka, we are focusing on sales strategies to ensure we will be chosen by customers in a competitive environment. Although the environment and our own roles differ in these two region, they reflect a common desire to "understand our customers better" and "serve them well." Meeting with customers, engaging in repeated dialogue, and deepening our understanding—it is through these cumulative efforts that customers' responses are changed and our sales representatives themselves experience personal growth. Challenges remain to be addressed, from balancing the level of our activities with the quality of our proposals to cultivating our ability to identify latent needs and enhancing our collaboration with Headquarters and our Group companies. Nevertheless, I believe the fact that every member of our frontline staff is thinking and acting more independently, moving for-ward while experiencing this change firsthand, is proof that the Group's sales transformation is making steady progress.

Going forward, I expect every sales representative to earn our customers' trust and become the first person they turn to when they face difficulties, thereby supporting our vision to remain our customers' banking group of choice."



Implementing a sales approach that views the community as a unified area rather than as individual points
On the front lines of customer engagement—viewpoints of two regional branch managers—

The Oji Branch has embraced a spirit of "activities that bring joy to as many customers as possible" to strengthen its deposit-gathering efforts by leveraging its connections with local customers, even in the current high interest-rate environment. Rather than relying on the benefits of long-standing business relationships, we encourage our sales staff to "listen more closely to both individual and corporate customers we already know." Guided by this principle, we formulate hypotheses based on information about customers' businesses, families, and assets. Engaging in frequent dialogue with corporate customers focused on cash flows and payments, thereby building connections with their employees, as well as in dialogue with individual customers focused on inheritances, asset management, and next-generation banking has enabled us to increase our deposits in both customer categories. This shift in our sales approach aligns with initiatives our branch has long valued: viewing the community as a unified area, acquiring a deeper understanding of customers' circumstances, and building lasting relationships with customers. Although challenges and difficulties remain, we will continue our efforts to ensure that our Group remains the go-to financial advisor in our community.



Branch Manager, Oji Branch
Taichi Hirai

At the Shin-Osaka Branch, we have long regarded strengthening our deposit-gathering base as a key priority. With this in mind, we have been working to acquire a deeper understanding of our corporate clients' cash flows and business challenges. We have consistently encouraged our staff not to focus on deposit growth alone, but to broaden their dialogue to cover payment-processing, cash flow management, payroll transfers, employee benefits, and even future investment plans. We have instilled in them a mindset of delving deeply into challenges and needs identified through these conversations with customers, and of using the insights they glean to develop their next set of proposals. These cumulative efforts have convinced our customers to recognize us as trusted business advisors, a recognition that is reflected in the growth of our corporate deposits. The transformation of our sales practices and initiatives to enhance our presence and market share in Osaka, as demonstrated in this context, aligns with the direction our branch had already been pursuing: expanding our points of contact with customers while instilling an understanding of our Group's value. Going forward, the staff of the Shin-Osaka branch will work as one to ensure that we continue to lead efforts to enhance our Group's presence in Osaka.



Branch Manager, Shin-Osaka Branch
Takuya Onaka

Deposit base reflecting customer's continued preference

Besides offering a variety of deposit products, we are expanding our points of contact with customers through digital services, home loans, business succession planning, and support for wealth-building. By creating long-term relationships of trust, we will establish a deposit base that ensures our continued presence as customers' banking group of choice.

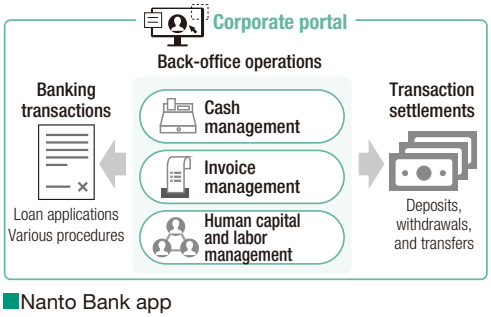
Deploying digital technologies to strengthen our deposit base

We have identified "strengthening our funding base" as a key strategy for maximizing profitability. The core of this strategy comprises creation of a system that generates stable deposits, not by actively "attracting" them, but by serving as the foundation for daily transactions.

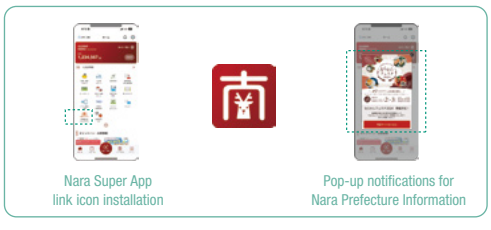
We are strengthening our deposit base for corporate customers, to begin with, by engaging deeply with their business processes, starting with such daily financial transactions as payments and cash management. By providing internet banking and various payment services, in particular, we consolidate cash flows within our Group in a manner that contributes to sustained retention of deposits. With digital services for corporate customers scheduled to launch around fall 2027, moreover, we plan to provide financial services that are integrated into corporate activities by offering one-stop solutions applicable to everything from accounting to cash management and financial transactions.

For individual customers, meanwhile, we are developing non-face-to-face channels centered on the Nanto Bank app. By using the app to integrate account management activities, payments, and various other procedures into customers' daily lives, we are ensuring ongoing customer engagement. Through this approach, we aim to expand our deposit base by providing safe, secure banking services to younger customers and dual-income households—groups with whom it has traditionally been difficult to establish relationships.

■Digital services for businesses
(scheduled to launch around autumn 2027)



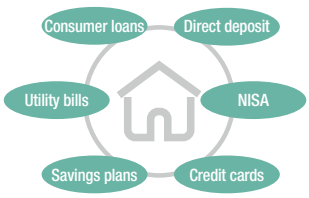
■Nanto Bank app



Expanding the transaction base beginning with home loans

Our Bank views home loans as a key strategic product for building long-term relationships with customers. By offering preferential interest rates to customers who use our core services—such as direct salary deposits—we seek to attract them to employ us as their main bank and to open settlement accounts with us, thereby expanding our customer base to drive future growth in deposits and asset management transactions.

■Preferential interest rate programs



■Comprehensive transaction bonus rates

	FY2025
Direct deposit	45.2%
Credit cards	22.2%
Consumer loans	21.2%
NISA	11.5%
Nanto Bank app	74.6%