

An abstract graphic on the left side of the slide, featuring a complex network of glowing orange lines and dots, resembling a digital or neural network, set against a dark background.

INSIDE THE NEW NSM

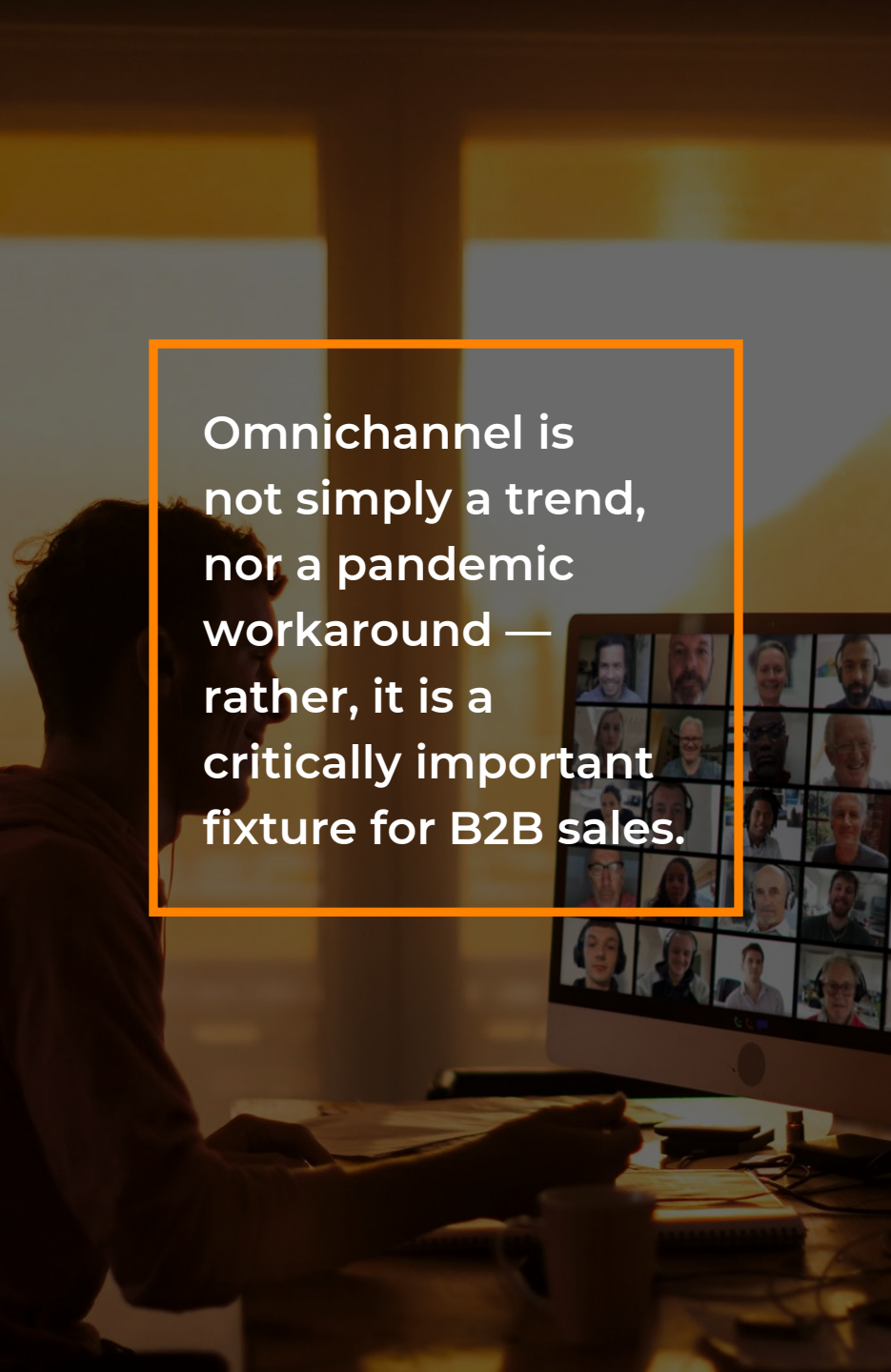
*A strategic approach to creating
next-generation National Sales
Meetings that drive results in an
always-on, omnichannel world*

RETOOLING THE NATIONAL SALES MEETING FOR AN OMNICHANNEL WORLD

Today's B2B customer journey isn't a funnel.

It's a winding, always-on, distraction-littered, off-ramp-filled road trip across multiple touchpoints, most of which are now online.

And that is having a profound impact on sales.



Omnichannel is not simply a trend, nor a pandemic workaround — rather, it is a critically important fixture for B2B sales.

According to a [McKinsey research study](#) on B2B decision makers:

“Omnichannel is not simply a trend, nor a pandemic workaround—rather, it is a critically important fixture for B2B sales globally.... B2B sales organizations that lean into this shift and enable integrated interactions across the buying journey could turn the learning curve of the last 12 months into a new trajectory for growth.”

Leaning into this omnichannel shift means shifting sales models.

Hybrid, being as comfortable and effective working with customers virtually as in-person, is now the standard, not a stopgap. However, the [Harvard Business Review](#) notes that as “digital channels play a larger role... the challenge becomes ensuring that the channels are ready with what customers and salespeople need, when they need it.”

At the same time, B2B customers want more personalization. Their consumer experiences, from Netflix to Amazon, have raised the bar on hyper-relevant content. So, sales and marketing need to be hyper-aligned, ready to update and produce content quickly. This takes a greater understanding of client needs... the kind of insight that comes from deep listening. That has been argued by many as the #1 activity necessary for sales reps to close deals. In other words, **soft skills are the new hard skills.**

But product information isn't the only thing customers are looking for. A new report, "The B2B Purpose Paradox," revealed that "B2B companies admire and do business with other companies that are purpose-centric: The majority of B2B purchasing decision-makers choose companies with purpose and are willing to pay more for their products and services." This requires an additional layer of understanding for the sales team to **represent not only the company's products and services, but its values as well.**

WHERE DOES THE NATIONAL SALES MEETING FIT INTO THIS TRANSFORMATION?

Together these dynamics are transforming the way companies go to market. The National Sales Meeting can serve as the launchpad for a continuing engagement that the company will have with customers all year. That influences the agenda, content, and event experience. With strategic retooling, the NSM can set your reps up for success as they look to extend value and drive results.

THREE PILLARS OF NSM RETOOLING

1

CAMPAIGN MINDSHIFT

Think of the NSM as a catalyst, not just an event, in an extended communications campaign.

2

RADICAL CURATION

Take on the status quo and evaluate the when, where, why, and how of sharing content.

3

CONTENT AGILITY

Build content assets with multiple purposes in mind to help the team be nimble in the field.



1

CAMPAIGN MINDSHIFT

So much effort goes into the National Sales Meeting – the theme, keynotes, awards, training. Too often, however, all that planning and all those assets are never fully leveraged as part of an ongoing engagement. This can be blamed in part on seeing the NSM as a moment in time with a start and stop date. **The NSM is not just an event. It is a catalyst.** All the training, insights, and assets that the team needs throughout the year should start with the NSM and a plan to continue, integrate, and grow.

ONE IS NOT DONE

The NSM should really kick off a year-long communications campaign. When you think of it as a series of touchpoints, it changes the way you approach the agenda, content development, partnerships, and timing.

The first step is to map out all the touchpoints and channels already in play for the sales team such as regional meet-ups, training sessions, 1:1 coaching, sales portal, newsletters, etc.

Adding a mid-year meeting is a critical innovation that fits the real-world pace your salesforce works in.

Include any communication channels from internal partners such as Marketing and Human Resources. Assess the best use of each channel and touchpoint so you can optimize the resources already available. Then consider adding a mid-year meeting to the mix that serves as a check-in and possible pivot point. Six months is a good amount of time to provide a look-back and make adjustments as needed.



2

RADICAL CURATION

It's easy to fall into the "if it's not broken, don't fix it" rut. This happens with NSMs all the time. The players may change but the format stays the same. General Session featuring executives followed by training. Lots and lots of training. But the world has changed.

First, all that learning? [Gartner](#) research finds that B2B sales reps forget 70% of the information they learn within a week of training, and 87% will forget it within a month. Clearly, it's time to reevaluate how training is done. Is there a better use of face-to-face time? Can some material be shared more effectively independently and online?

Look at your agenda and be ready to do some radical curation. The goal is to **concentrate on the stories, people, and experiences that will have the most impact in this unique NSM setting**. Anything that can be spread out, repackaged, or otherwise used in another channel should be on the table. This includes

Let's face it. Most award ceremonies are only fun for the people who win.

awards – possibly the most iconic segment of any National Sales Meeting. Making awards interesting is the bane of every NSM.

Presentations take up a lot of time, organizers often don't know the winners until the last minute, and it's fun mostly for the people who win. What if we took awards out of the NSM and give them their own platform? It would open interesting options for formats and context. It would also provide another critical touchpoint to reinforce the NSM messages.



3

CONTENT AGILITY

According to a recent [McKinsey](#) survey, with omnichannel established as the new buying norm, 64 percent of B2Bs intend to increase the number of hybrid sellers over the next six months, making this model—representatives who interact with customers via video, phone, apps, and occasional in-person visits—the lead sales role.

[Gartner](#) elaborated on this trend, noting that the sales team needs to be “armed with messaging and content that can be used on various digital channels.” At the same time, the need to personalize is more critical than ever. So, what does that mean for the NSM?

The NSM can be turned into a content engine if the content is built for agility. For example, we can create a content atomization matrix that identifies key elements from larger assets (such as a video that can be edited into social media posts). This enables targeting specific audiences with hyper-relevant content.

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This approach is ideal for fueling a nurture campaign, as well as a modular library for sales presentations.

The same principle applies to optimizing existing materials to share online. For example, longer marketing assets broken into “bite-size” pieces are easier to digest. They also give the rep an excuse to extend the engagement over multiple touchpoints.

CREATING YOUR NEXT-GEN NSM

We are in disruptive times. So, it can feel good to lean on the familiar. The traditions and rhythms of a National Sales Meeting are ingrained in many corporate cultures. But this is the perfect time to retool the NSM. Sales teams need new skill sets, new content, and increased support. Let's start looking at the NSM as a **catalyst**, a **content engine**, and a **cornerstone** to ongoing engagement with the sales team. And when we look back, we'll be amazed at what we used to try to accomplish in a handful of days.



Ready to Level Up? Cramer is here to help.

We are re-inventing the NSM, taking the best of virtual and in-person experiences to create a versatile and effective new model. Instead of focusing on “getting back” to the way things were, we can focus on what makes sense for your business goals and your team now. Cramer's team can't wait to help you explore the possibilities.

We have full creative, strategy, and production teams dedicated to every element of your next great event... and we are ready to put them to work for you.

Have a project in mind? [Let's chat.](#)

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