SURVEY RESULTS

Marketing Relationship Survey

Clients asked for stronger strategy

Staff turnover, pressure to consolidate,andagap inhow clients and agencies explained the end of a partnership shaped this edition.

2022

Research by Setup®

Strategy topped client reasons for leaving

Brands and agencies described different causes for ending an agency relationship.

43%

Clientscited dissatisfaction withstrategic approach

39%

Clients cited dissatisfaction with value

38%

Clients likelyto switch primary agency within six months

Client budget cuts ranked eighth for clients

Agenciesrankedclient budgetcutsfirst in theirexplanations. Client respondents emphasized strategic approach, value and staffing changes.

Brands wanted simpler rosters

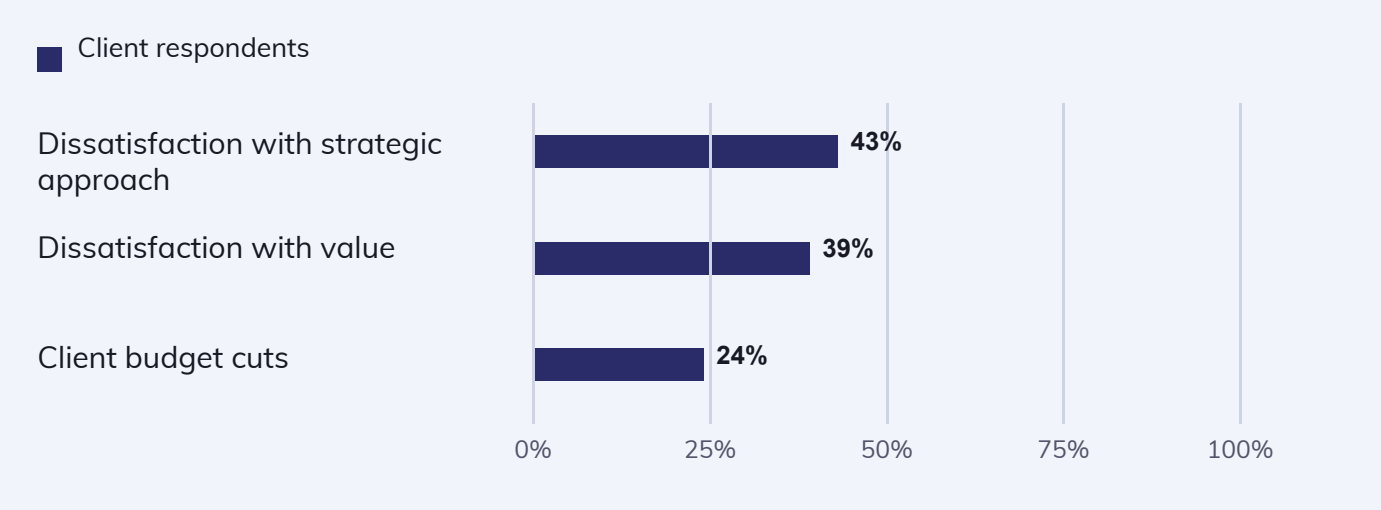
Client respondents showedinterestinfewer agency relationships and broader capabilities from the partners they retained.

Talent was the top agency challenge

Talentacquisition ledthelist of challenges for agencies. Clients, meanwhile, called out changes in agency leadership or account staff as a reason to end partnerships.

Strategy and value stood out to clients

Selected answers clients gave for ending an agency relationship.

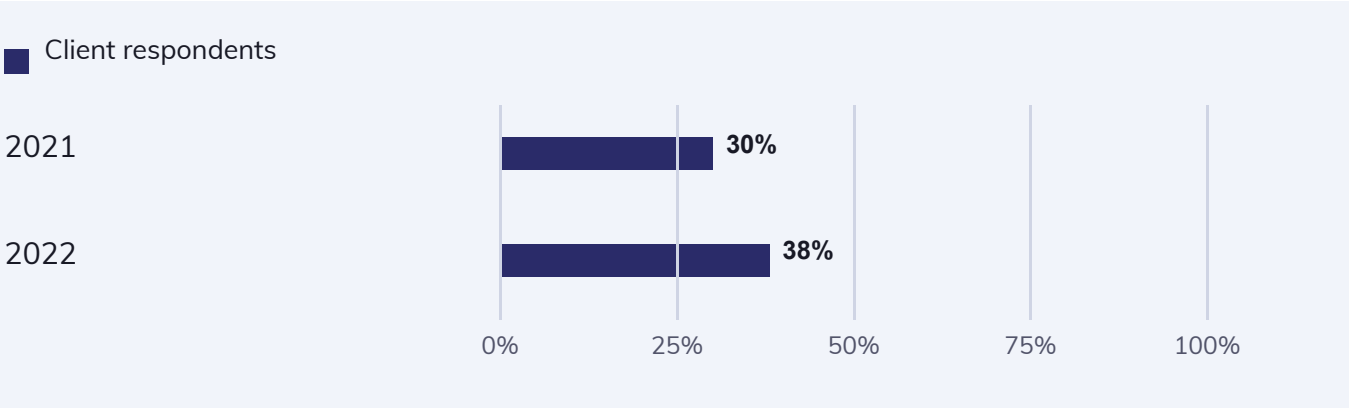


Sources: Setup's 2022 results and the 2022 figures in its published 2023 comparison. The chart shows selected reasons.

Budget cuts ranked first in agency respondents' explanations and eighth in the client rankings. The gap points to a useful conversation about the actual reasons for ending the partnership.

More clients considered switching

Shareofclientrespondentslikelytoswitchtheirprimaryagencyinthe next six months.



Source: Setup's retrospective comparison in its 2023 results. Each edition reflects its own survey sample.

Switching intent rose 8 percentage points. The 2022 findings also pointed to a preference for fewer partners and broader service coverage.

Clients wanted partners who could span more work

Clientsasked for strongerstrategy,professionalism,transparencyandadeeper understanding of theirbusiness.

Services in demand

Frequently used services included branding and identity, media planning and buying, PR, web and mobile design and development, and content and video.

Content and video still ranked among the leading services, even after a drop from 2021. The report noted increased use of multicultural services.

How clients found agencies

Referrals fromtrusted colleaguesand friends remained the most common way for client-side marketers to find new agencies.

Client feedback stressed how agencies collaborate and communicate once the engagement begins.

What to test in a search

Aska prospective partner toshow how it would coordinate multiple capabilities and make the results visible to the business.

Turnover put continuity under pressure

Agency respondents ranked finding talent as their most pressing challenge in 2022.

What clients experienced

Changes in agency personnel were more frequently cited as a reason for ending the relationship. New team members can bring a handoff, training and ramp-up period.

What partners can plan

Writedowndecisions, success measures and account context. Introduce backup staff before a transition, and agree on how to communicate staffing changes.

A conversation to have early

What informationmustsomeonenewto the account know to make a good decision in week one?

About the 2022 survey

Setup'sfourtheditionincludedmarketersonbothsidesofthe brand-agency relationship.

300+

Survey participants

63%

Client respondents at companies with 500+ employees

60%

Agencyrespondents on executive teams

Client profile	About two-thirds of client respondents held Director-level roles or above.
Agency profile	Seventy-seven percent of agency respondents worked at a full-service agency, either digital-focused or digital and traditional.
How to read	The switching and selected breakup figures also appear in Setup's published 2023 comparison. This report uses the named respondent group for each finding.

Read Setup's published 2022 findings ›

See the comparative figures in Setup's 2023 results ›