SURVEY RESULTS

Marketing Relationship Survey

Switching intent hit 55%

More clientswere consideringchangingtheir primary agency, and value and delivery were the leading reasons they gave for leaving.

2023

Research by Setup®

Client expectations sharpened

Morethanhalf of clientrespondentssaidtheywerelikelytochangetheirprimary agencywithin six months.

55%
Clients likelyto switch primary agency within six months

53%
Clients cited dissatisfaction with value

76%
Clients usedwordofmouth tofind agencies

Value came into focus

Clients selecteddissatisfactionwith value more often than any other reason for ending an agency relationship. Delivery ranked second for clients and ninth in agency respondents' explanations.

Chemistry and communication stood out

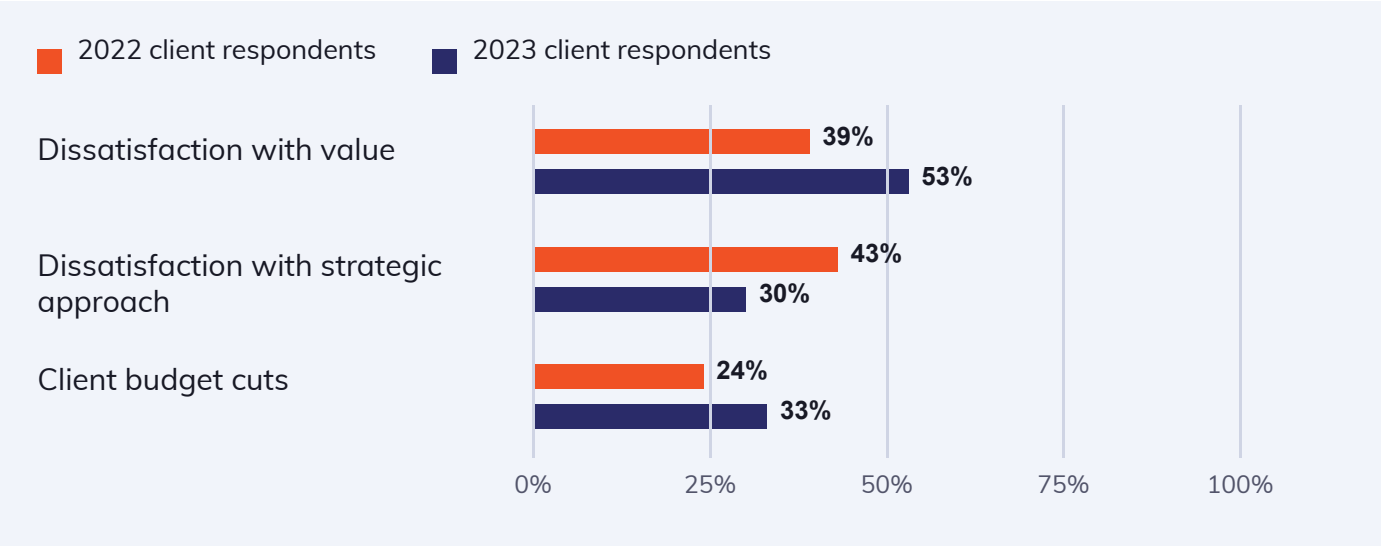
Chemistrywas the most importantagencyselection factor clients ranked. Effective communication was the most frequent suggestion for how agencies could become better partners.

Content demand strengthened

The share of client respondentswhousedagencies for content creation and video grew from 43% in 2022 to 58% in 2023.

The reasons clients gave changed

Three reasonsforendingarelationshipthat Setupreportedinboththe 2022 and 2023 editions.

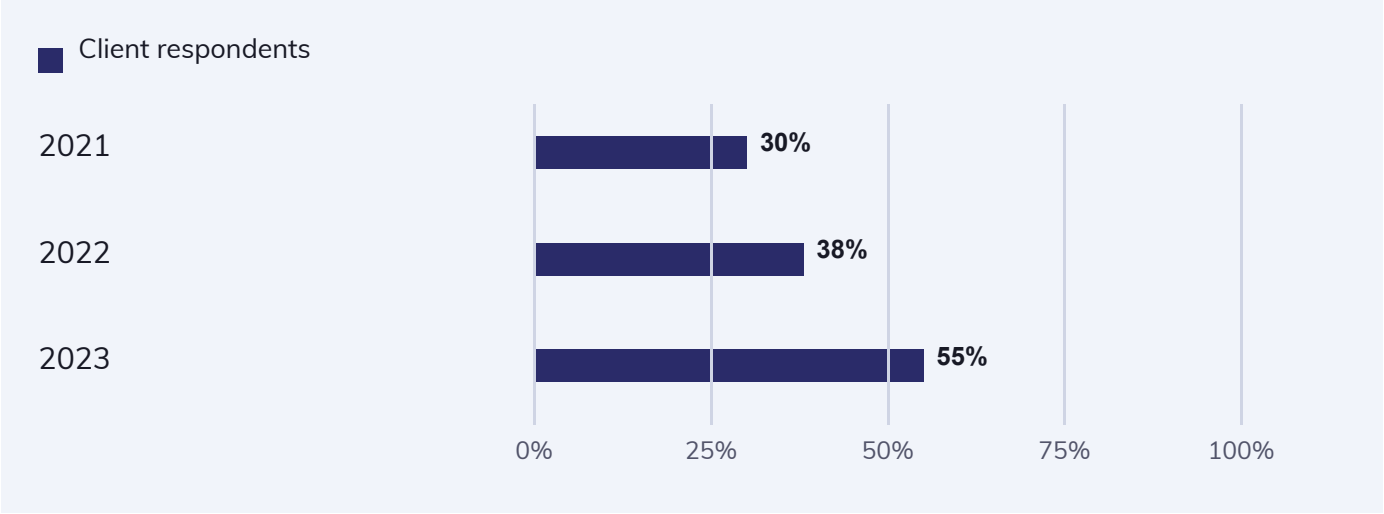


Source: Setup's 2023 published results. The chart shows selected reasons. Percentages are proportions of each year's client respondents who answered the question.

Dissatisfaction with value rose 14 percentage points and moved to first place. Dissatisfaction with strategy fell 13 points and moved to fifth.

Switching intent continued to rise

Client respondents likely to switch their primary agency in the next six months.

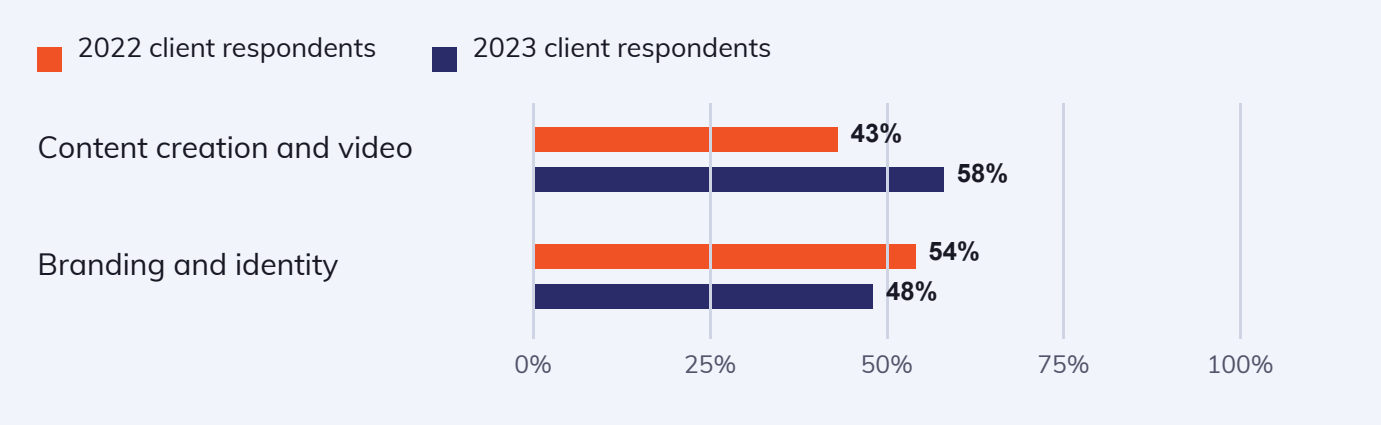


Source: Setup's published 2023 comparison. Each year has its own sample.

The share was up 17 percentage points from 2022. Eighty-four percent of clients involved in agency selection also found the process time-consuming.

Clients used more help with content and video

TwooftheservicesforwhichSetuppublishedcomparablefiguresin2022and 2023.



Source: Setup's 2023 published results. Figures reflect services selected by client respondents.

Content and video rose 15 points. Branding and identity fell 6 points. The mix illustrates how different capabilities can gain or lose demand within one survey cycle.

Chemistry opened the door. Delivery kept it open.

Clientsandagencies linkedastrongworkingrelationshiptothequalityof communicationand execution.

Finding the partner

Clientsranked chemistry first in agency selection, ahead of professionalism and creativity. Understanding the client's business and industry ranked fourth.

Word of mouth rose from 55% in 2022 to 76% in 2023 among client respondents.

Doing the work

Agency respondents' leading operational challenges included scaling for projects, hiring, delivering consistent work and scoping projects.

Clients asked for effective communication, a deeper understanding of their goals and clearer access to the data behind decisions.

A question for your next review

Wheredoestheclientseeagapbetweenthe value promised and the value delivered?

About the 2023 survey

Setup surveyedmarketersatbrandsandagenciesinitsfifthedition.

300+

Survey respondents

83%

Client respondents were Director level or above

47%

Agencyrespondents at firms with 100 to 5,000 employees

Client profile	Forty-four percent of client respondents worked in both B2B and B2C, 34% in B2B only and 22% in B2C only.
Agency profile	Forty-two percent of agency respondents worked for integrated full-service agencies. Thirty-two percent worked for digital-only agencies.
How to read	The report shows findings for the named respondent group. Comparisons use the figures as published by Setup, expressed in percentage points.

Read Setup's published 2023 findings ›