



GUIDE

# Nine Ways to Create Value with Feedback

[www.clientsavvy.com](http://www.clientsavvy.com)



FROM POLE POSITION TO SOLE POSITION

# A Value Creation Journey

## Welcome, everyone!


So great to have you all here. Let's dive into a conversation about going from pole position, which if you know racing, means starting at the front of the pack, to sole position—where you're the only car on the track. It's all about creating value that makes you the clear and only choice for your clients.

As a competitive racer myself, I've learned that the secret to going fast is all about looking ahead. Not just one turn, but two or three turns down the track. That's how you stay prepared, how you keep control, and ultimately, how you stay ahead of the competition. The same principle applies in business: looking ahead for your clients, understanding their needs before they even articulate them, and being the partner that drives their success. That's the difference between being the best and being the only choice.

## Value is About Being Indispensable

So, what does value really mean? At its simplest, value is "I'm better off with you than without you." But how do we take that to the next level? How do we make sure our clients see us as indispensable? That's where value creation comes in—finding ways to give your clients more of what they want and doing so in a way that creates memorable, meaningful experiences.

Think of it like racing—the only way to win is to anticipate the turns and obstacles before they happen. When you're on the track, you need to see the road ahead, adjust your line, and execute smoothly. In business, if you're looking down the road that your clients are on, you'll know what's coming up for them before they do. You'll be the partner who anticipates their challenges, and by doing so, you'll create loyalty beyond just being a service provider.



CONTINUED ... A Value Creation Journey

### Moving from Pole Position to Sole Position

The goal isn't just to win, it's to be the only one they call. We all want to go from being in pole position—competing and winning contracts—to sole position, where we become the go-to partner for our clients. Imagine a world where you're getting all the work from your clients—no more proposals to write, no more competitive bidding. If you could achieve that, what could you do with the extra time? You could spend more time creating real value, deepening relationships, and working on the fun, impactful parts of marketing that often get put on hold.

Take a lesson from my racing experience with my daughter, Leah. She kept me honest and focused as we worked on rebuilding our race car. "Dad, are you sure it goes in that way?" In business, we need that kind of collaboration and vigilance—someone who sees when we have something backward and helps us correct it before we spin out. Leah helped me stay on track just like proactive engagement with our clients can keep our relationships moving forward smoothly.

### The Keys to Value Creation: Partner, Focus, Communicate

Through over three million client surveys in the AEC industry, I've learned that what clients truly value isn't just expertise or technical skill—it's partnership, a focus on outcomes, and proactive communication. These are the cornerstones of creating meaningful value:

- 1. Partner with Clients:** Understand their business goals. Know what they are trying to accomplish and help them get there. If you ask your clients what they're trying to achieve and genuinely align your work to support those goals, you're already setting yourself apart.
- 2. Focus on Outcomes:** Clients don't just care about your deliverables—they care about how those deliverables help them meet their own goals. Make sure you know how your work impacts your client's bottom line, their project success, or their own satisfaction metrics. When you understand their measures of success, you become a true partner.
- 3. Proactive Communication:** It's not enough to respond to issues; you need to anticipate them. If you see a curve ahead that your client might not be prepared for, tell them. Help them install that "roll bar" or offer that "helmet" before they hit a bump in the road. Proactive communication shows that you're looking out for their best interests, and it builds immense trust.

CONTINUED ... A Value Creation Journey

## Real-Life Racing Lessons in Business

My son Benjamin recently started racing, and there's a valuable lesson from his first spin-out. The moment his eyes went down—instead of looking at the road ahead—he lost control. He did all the things I predicted: spun out, accidentally hit the wipers, and took a cone along for the ride. But he learned that to stay in control, you need to look where you're going, not where you are.

The same holds true in business: When we lose focus on our client's future and get caught up in the immediate challenges, we lose control of our trajectory. Keeping your eyes up, always looking ahead for your clients, is how you maintain and grow that partnership.

Client feedback is like having extra eyes to see ahead. It gives you visibility into what's coming down the track for your clients—their needs, concerns, and priorities. By actively seeking and using client feedback, you gain the insights needed to anticipate their next moves and keep your partnership on course. This feedback acts as your early warning system, helping you adapt and respond before challenges become problems.

## Becoming the Sole Solution

The transition from pole position to sole position requires constant, visible value creation. Your clients should not only see you as a capable partner but as someone who helps them see their own challenges and opportunities more clearly. When they recognize that with you, they're more prepared, more successful, and more confident—that's when you've created a value loop that keeps them coming back.

Let me share a story about an architecture firm that really embodied this principle. They were competing for a project to design a prototype store for an auto parts retailer. Instead of focusing solely on their architectural expertise, they zeroed in on what the client truly cared about: maximizing gross sales per square foot. By demonstrating how their design would increase the client's retail performance, they not only won the project but also expanded their scope and fees. Their proposal focused on analyzing existing stores, researching the most successful layouts, and incorporating those insights into the new prototype. They were three times more expensive than the competition, but they spoke directly to the client's business needs—and that made all the difference.



Value creation is about being a trusted navigator - the one who sees every curve, knows every straightaway, and guides them safely to their finish line. When you do that, you're not just winning—you're in sole position, the only one they'll call.

**Here are nine specific ways to deploy client feedback in the value creation process.**

# 01 Leveraging Client Feedback

*Creating value in the sales process is not just about selling a product or service. It's about understanding your client's needs, identifying their problems, and demonstrating how your solutions can provide tangible benefits. One of the most powerful tools for achieving this is client feedback. Here's how you can use client feedback to create value in the sales process.*

## Identifying Client Problems

The first step in creating value is to identify the problems your clients are facing. This requires a deep understanding of their business, industry, and specific pain points. Client feedback is invaluable in this regard. By asking the right questions and actively listening to their responses, you can uncover insights that might not be immediately apparent.

For instance, during sales meetings or follow-up calls, ask clients about their biggest challenges and what keeps them up at night. Use surveys and feedback forms to gather more structured data on their pain points. This information allows you to tailor your sales pitch to address their specific needs, making your solution more relevant and compelling.

## Demonstrating Value Through Math and Numbers

Once you've identified the client's problems, the next step is to demonstrate how your product or service can solve these issues. This is where numbers and tangible metrics come into play. Using client feedback, you can create a clear, data-driven narrative that shows the potential ROI (Return on Investment) of your solution.

For example, if a client indicates that they struggle with efficiency in their operations, use feedback from past clients who have successfully used your service to improve their efficiency. Present case studies and statistics that highlight measurable improvements. If you can show that your solution led to a 20% increase in productivity or a 15% reduction in costs, you provide concrete evidence of value.

## Using Success Stories

Success stories are one of the most effective ways to create value in the sales process. These stories humanize your product or service and show potential clients how others in similar situations have benefited from what you offer. Client feedback is the foundation of these success stories.

Collect testimonials and detailed feedback from your satisfied clients. Ask them to describe their initial challenges, how your solution helped them, and the results they achieved. Use these narratives in your sales presentations, marketing materials, and on your website. Success stories not only build credibility but also help prospects envision themselves achieving similar results. This social evidence has become the norm for buyer enablement. The same buyers choosing you over a competitor is shopping on Amazon and filtering by 4-stars and up. Present your past performance in a clear and compelling way to enable the buyer to buy with the same peace of mind.

## Conclusion

Incorporating client feedback into your sales process is a powerful strategy for creating value. By identifying client problems, demonstrating value through tangible metrics, and leveraging success stories, you can build stronger relationships with your clients and increase your chances of closing deals. Remember, the key is to listen actively, ask the right questions, and use the insights gained to tailor your approach to each client's unique needs. This personalized, data-driven approach not only sets you apart from the competition but also ensures that your clients see real, measurable benefits from your solutions.

# 02 Treating Clients as Partners

*In the realm of post-sale activities, value creation continues to play a crucial role. It's not enough to just sell a product or service; it's essential to ensure that the client feels like a partner in the journey. This mindset fosters long-term relationships and drives ongoing business success. Here's how you can create value post-sale by treating clients as partners and focusing on their outcomes.*

## Treating Clients as Partners

Once a sale is complete, the relationship with the client should not end. In fact, it's just the beginning. Treating clients as partners means involving them in the process and making them feel valued. Regular check-ins, personalized follow-ups, and genuine interest in their success are key.

Client feedback is instrumental in maintaining this partnership. Regularly solicit feedback through surveys, interviews, and informal conversations. Ask them about their experience with your service, any challenges they are facing, and suggestions for improvement. Show them that their opinions matter and that you are committed to continuous improvement based on their input. Be sure to close every feedback loop! Our data shows closing feedback loops reduces future client complaints by 83%!

## Focusing on Client Outcomes

To create value post-sale, it's crucial to focus on the outcomes that matter to your clients. What are they trying to achieve? What metrics do they use to measure success? Understanding these aspects helps you align your efforts with their goals.

For instance, if a client is focused on increasing operational efficiency, your follow-up activities should emphasize how your service can help achieve this. Use client feedback to tailor your support and services to meet their specific objectives. Provide training, resources, and tips that align with their desired outcomes. By doing so, you demonstrate a commitment to their success, which strengthens the partnership.

## Understanding Client Metrics

Understanding the metrics that your clients use to measure success is crucial. These metrics could include revenue, billings, effective multiplier, or other industry-specific indicators. Client feedback can provide insights into which metrics are most important to them and how your solution impacts these metrics.

For example, during feedback sessions, ask clients how they measure the success of their operations. Use this information to provide targeted support and demonstrate how your solution contributes to their key performance indicators (KPIs). If you can show that your service helps them achieve their goals more effectively, you reinforce the value of your partnership.

## Conclusion

Creating value post-sale involves treating clients as partners and focusing on their outcomes. By leveraging client feedback, you can maintain strong relationships, align your efforts with their goals, and demonstrate the ongoing value of your product or service. This approach not only ensures client satisfaction but also fosters loyalty and long-term business success. Remember, a satisfied client is not just a one-time customer; they are a potential advocate who can bring in more business through referrals and repeat purchases. You want to move beyond loyalty and into their preferred partner status.

# 03 Personalizing Client Attention

*Client feedback is not just a tool for understanding customer satisfaction; it's a powerful resource for continuously improving your processes. Personalizing client attention and addressing specific needs can significantly enhance the client experience. Here's how you can use client feedback to improve your processes and create more value.*

## **Personalized Client Attention**

One of the most significant advantages of client feedback is the ability to personalize attention. Each client has unique needs and preferences, and understanding these can set you apart from the competition. Use feedback to tailor your interactions and offerings to each client.

For instance, if a client mentions they prefer a particular method of communication, make a note of it and ensure your team follows through. If they express a need for more frequent updates, adjust your communication strategy accordingly. Personalized attention shows clients that you value their business and are willing to go the extra mile to align with their needs.

## **Continuous Follow-Up on Feedback**

Creating value through client feedback requires more than just collecting data; it involves taking action. Regularly follow up on the feedback you receive and implement changes where necessary. This shows clients that you are committed to improving their experience and value their input.

For example, if multiple clients mention issues with a particular aspect of your service, prioritize addressing this problem. Inform clients of the changes you've made based on their feedback. This not only resolves the immediate issue but also builds trust and shows that you are a responsive and client-focused business.

## **Conclusion**

Client feedback is a goldmine of information that can be used to personalize client attention, improve proposal delivery, and drive continuous improvement. By actively listening to your clients and making necessary adjustments, you can enhance the client experience and create lasting value. Remember, the key to successful feedback utilization is not just in gathering data but in acting on it. Implementing changes based on client feedback demonstrates your commitment to excellence and helps build stronger, more loyal client relationships.

# 04

## Enhancing Net Promoter Score (NPS)

*Understanding and improving key business metrics is crucial for sustained success. One such metric is the Net Promoter Score (NPS), which measures client loyalty and satisfaction. By leveraging client feedback, you can enhance your NPS and gain valuable insights into your client base. Here's how to use client feedback to improve your NPS.*

### Understanding Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a metric that assesses the likelihood of clients recommending your product or service to others. It is calculated based on responses to a simple question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend our company to a friend or colleague?" Respondents are then categorized into three groups:

- **Promoters (9-10):** Loyal enthusiasts who will keep buying and refer others, fueling growth.
- **Passives (7-8):** Satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are vulnerable to competitive offerings.
- **Detractors (0-6):** Unhappy customers who can damage your brand through negative word-of-mouth and are 92% more likely to "churn" than your promoters.

### Gathering and Analyzing Feedback

To improve your NPS, start by gathering detailed feedback from your clients. Use surveys and follow-up interviews to understand the reasons behind their scores. For promoters, identify what they love about your product or service and ensure you continue to deliver these benefits. For detractors, dig deep into their complaints and frustrations to identify areas for improvement.

### Addressing Issues and Enhancing Experience

Use the insights gained from detractor feedback to make necessary changes in your operations. Whether it's product features, customer service, or overall client experience, addressing these issues promptly can turn detractors into promoters. Keep in mind that passives can also be swayed to become promoters with slight improvements in their experience.

### Continuous Improvement and Communication

Improving NPS is an ongoing process. Regularly check in with your clients to gather fresh feedback and ensure that any changes you've made are having the desired effect. Communicate the improvements and show clients that their feedback is valued and acted upon. This not only enhances their experience but also builds trust and loyalty.

### Conclusion

Improving your Net Promoter Score (NPS) through client feedback involves understanding client sentiments, addressing issues, and continuously enhancing their experience. By actively listening and making necessary adjustments, you can convert detractors into promoters, boosting client loyalty and driving business growth. Remember, the key to a high NPS is not just in gathering feedback but in taking meaningful action based on that feedback.



# 05 Enhancing Proposal Quality

*Client feedback plays a crucial role in enhancing proposal quality and, consequently, increasing win rates. Understanding how clients perceive your proposals and making necessary improvements can significantly boost your success rate. Here's how to use client feedback to improve your proposals and win more business.*

## **Gathering Feedback After Proposal Delivery (but before selection!)**

The sales process doesn't end with the proposal; in many ways, it begins there. Gathering feedback on proposal delivery can provide valuable insights into how you can improve your approach. Ask clients for their thoughts on the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of your proposals.

Did they find the proposal easy to understand? Did it address all their concerns and questions? Use this feedback to refine your proposal process. Clear, compelling proposals that directly address client needs are more likely to convert into sales. Continuous improvement based on client feedback ensures that your proposals are always hitting the mark.

By soliciting feedback BEFORE selection is finalized, the psychological act of providing you positive, affirming feedback creates a series of "yes" responses from them. Every positive score or comment they provide in a survey is one more "yes" in your favor. When decision time comes and they're deciding between two very close proposals, they will be subconsciously biased towards you – just one more "yes." It's like magic – some firms report proposal win rates increasing as much as 50% with this one client feedback touchpoint! And, in the rare instances a client provides challenging feedback you have the opportunity to respond, make adjustments, and demonstrate how responsive and flexible you are! A national general contractor recently shared that one single survey saved them from losing an \$800 million dollar project. Feedback is such a quick, simple way to drive real ROI with revenue.

## **Improving Proposal Quality Through Feedback**

Use the feedback to refine and enhance your proposals. If clients mention that certain sections were unclear or lacked detail, focus on improving those areas. Ensure that your proposals are comprehensive, well-organized, and directly address the client's needs and concerns. Incorporate visual aids, such as charts and graphs, to make complex information easier to understand.

## **Identifying Market Needs Through Feedback**

Client feedback also helps you identify broader market needs and trends. By analyzing feedback from multiple clients, you can spot common themes and pain points. This information allows you to tailor your proposals to address these prevalent issues, making them more relevant and appealing to potential clients.

## **Conclusion**

Client feedback is a powerful tool for enhancing proposal quality and increasing win rates. By gathering feedback, making necessary improvements, and addressing market needs, you can create compelling proposals that resonate with clients and stand out from the competition. Remember, the key to successful proposal improvement is continuous learning and adaptation based on client insights.

# 06

## Reducing Burnout and Attracting Talent

*Client feedback is not only valuable for improving client satisfaction but also for enhancing employee relations. Using feedback to reduce employee burnout and attract top talent can lead to a more motivated and productive workforce. Here's how you can leverage client feedback to improve employee relations.*

### Using Client Feedback to Reduce Employee Burnout

Employee burnout is a significant issue that can negatively impact productivity and morale. Client feedback can help identify workload issues and areas where employees might be struggling. For example, if clients frequently mention delays or quality issues, it could indicate that your team is overworked or lacks the necessary resources. One national firm had a hiring freeze in place, but saw “responsiveness” scores slipping for one office. The client data provided the insight to confirm the office manager’s reports they were overworked and desperately needed help! Leadership used this insight to create an exception and add staff in this location, resulting in prompt improvement in client sentiment (and reduced burnout for the staff).

Client feedback also helps identify when teams are going too far “above and beyond.” While we all strive to exceed expectations, substantial over-delivery is unnecessary to satisfy clients while also eroding margins. The average professional services firm spends 6% of their direct labor hours on “waste” – intended value adders that can be removed while still satisfying the client and aligning with their expectations. Helping staff see when and where they’re overdelivering provides a relief valve reduces burnout and improves morale.

Address these issues by redistributing workloads, providing additional support, or implementing process improvements. Regularly check in with employees to gather their feedback and ensure they have the tools and support they need to succeed. By proactively addressing burnout, you create a healthier work environment and improve overall productivity.

### Matching Employees with Suitable Clients

Client feedback can also help match employees with clients who are the best fit for their skills and working style. If a particular employee receives positive feedback from certain types of clients, consider assigning them to similar clients in the future. This not only enhances client satisfaction but also ensures that employees feel confident and fulfilled in their roles.

### Attracting and Retaining Top Talent

Positive client feedback can be a powerful tool for attracting and retaining top talent. Use client testimonials and success stories to showcase the impact your team has on clients. Highlight these stories in recruitment materials, job postings, and during interviews to demonstrate the value and satisfaction that comes from working with your company.

Using client feedback to attract and retain the best clients also creates a magnet for attracting and retaining talent. We all prefer to work for happy, appreciative clients. And, we all want to work on the best projects that are the most technically and professionally satisfying. Employee retention starts by bringing in a deep portfolio of amazing clients and projects.

Additionally, share positive feedback with your team to boost morale and recognize their hard work. Employees who feel valued and appreciated are more likely to stay with your company and contribute to its success.

### Conclusion

Leveraging client feedback to improve employee relations can lead to a more motivated and productive workforce. By addressing burnout, matching employees with suitable clients, and using positive feedback to attract and retain talent, you create a supportive and fulfilling work environment. Remember, the key to successful employee relations is to listen actively, take action based on feedback, and continuously strive to improve the employee experience.

# 07

## Using Feedback for Cash Flow Forecasting

*Client feedback is an invaluable resource for accurate forecasting and financial planning. By understanding client behaviors, preferences, and potential issues, you can make more informed predictions about future cash flows and financial performance. Here's how to use client feedback to enhance your forecasting and financial planning processes.*

### Using Feedback to Forecast Cash Flow

Accurate cash flow forecasting is crucial for maintaining financial stability and planning for future growth. Client feedback can provide insights into payment behaviors, potential disputes, and expected future business. For example, if clients indicate satisfaction with your services and express intent to continue working with you, you can confidently predict steady revenue streams.

Conversely, if clients raise concerns about billing issues or service quality, it might indicate potential delays in payments or loss of future business. Use this feedback to adjust your cash flow forecasts and take proactive measures to address any issues.

### Segmentation of Clients Based on Feedback

Segmenting clients based on their feedback can also enhance your forecasting accuracy. Identify clients who consistently provide positive feedback and have a history

of timely payments. These clients can be considered reliable sources of revenue. On the other hand, clients who frequently raise issues or delay payments should be closely monitored and might require different payment terms or additional follow-up.

By segmenting clients in this way, you can create more accurate and realistic cash flow projections, ensuring that your financial planning is based on reliable data.

This same segmentation also helps improve sales forecast accuracy. One firm found clients that had provided challenging feedback scores had a 31% lower revenue capture rate compared to clients that were universally delighted. This additional data source enabled them to prioritize pursuits while also improving forecast accuracy. As a large organization, the improved sales forecast proved crucial in enabling the recruiting team to proactively staff to appropriate levels, assuring utilization rates remained healthy for improved overall margins. The firm was no longer over- or under-hiring based on poor forecasts.

### Conclusion

Client feedback is a powerful tool for improving forecasting and financial planning. By using feedback to understand client behaviors and segment clients based on their reliability, you can make more accurate cash flow predictions and plan for future financial stability. Remember, the key to successful forecasting is to continuously gather and analyze client feedback, making adjustments as needed to ensure your financial plans are based on the most current and accurate information.

# 08

## Identifying Unmet Market Needs

*Client feedback is a critical resource for service development. It provides direct insights into unmet market needs and helps you develop offerings that address these gaps. Here's how you can use client feedback to drive innovation and create products and services that truly resonate with your market.*

### Identifying Unmet Market Needs Through Feedback

One of the most valuable aspects of client feedback is its ability to highlight unmet needs and pain points. Regularly gather feedback through surveys, interviews, and customer interactions to understand what clients are looking for and where current solutions fall short.

Look for patterns and common themes in the feedback. For example, if multiple clients mention a specific feature or functionality that is missing from your service, it indicates a significant unmet need. Use this information to guide your service innovation efforts and prioritize capabilities that will have the most impact.

### Developing New Offerings Based on Client Insights

Once you've identified unmet needs, the next step is to develop new services that address these gaps. Use client feedback to inform every stage of the development process, from initial concept to final launch.

Involve clients in the development process by seeking their input on prototypes and trial services. This not only ensures that the final product meets their needs but also builds anticipation and loyalty among your client base. By creating offerings that are directly aligned with client feedback, you increase the chances of success and market adoption.

### Conclusion

Client feedback is a powerful driver of product and service development. By identifying unmet market needs and involving clients in the development process, you can create offerings that truly resonate with your market and drive business growth. Remember, the key to successful service innovation is to listen to your clients, understand their needs, and continuously iterate based on their feedback.

# 09

## Shaping Marketing Messages Based on Client Feedback

*Client feedback is essential for shaping your marketing and sales strategy. By understanding client perceptions, preferences, and pain points, you can craft messages that resonate with your target audience and drive engagement. Here's how to use client feedback to enhance your marketing and sales efforts.*

### Shaping Marketing Messages Based on Client Feedback

Marketing messages that directly address client needs and concerns are more likely to capture attention and drive action. Use client feedback to understand what matters most to your audience. What are their biggest challenges? What benefits do they value the most?

Incorporate these insights into your marketing messages. Highlight the specific features and benefits that clients have mentioned in their feedback. Use their language and terminology to create a more relatable and compelling message. By aligning your marketing with client feedback, you increase the relevance and effectiveness of your campaigns.

Leading firms are reviewing a large sample of recent client feedback to identify what their clients consider to be strengths. By performing a theme analysis against their

website and other marketing collateral, marketers are able to add new, relevant content to highlight strengths missing from current content. One large firm was beloved most by clients for their ability to handle difficult challenges to project schedules during construction. Nowhere did their website even address the inevitability of schedule challenges. By incorporating narrative on their schedule management best practices along with relevant case studies and client testimonials they were able to create differentiation and trust where their competitors don't. "What if our competitors learn our secret sauce?" one executive asked? "Well, what if your prospects never learn how different and better you are?" If you have a strength, you have to tell the market otherwise aligned buyers can't use that in their decision-making process. Don't waste a win by hiding your excellence!

### Targeting Ideal Clients Identified Through Feedback

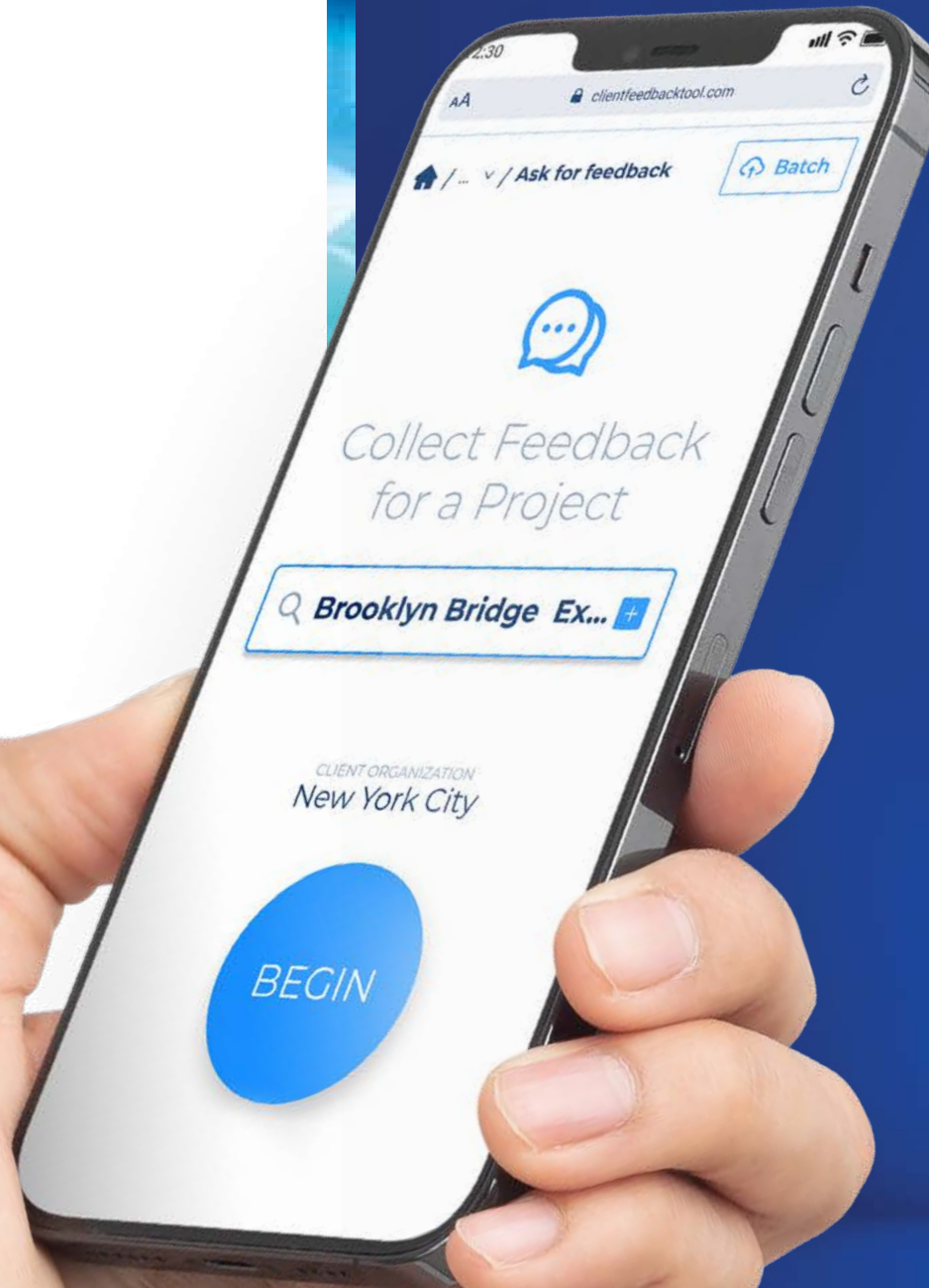
Client feedback can also help you identify and target your ideal clients. Analyze feedback to understand which types of clients are the most satisfied and generate the most value for your business. Look for common characteristics, such as industry, company size, or specific needs.

Use this information to refine your targeting and focus your marketing and sales efforts on attracting similar clients. Create detailed buyer personas based on your most successful clients and tailor your messages and strategies to appeal to these ideal prospects.



## ARE YOU LISTENING TO YOUR CLIENTS' VOICE?

Client feedback is a powerful tool for shaping your marketing and sales strategy. By using feedback to craft relevant messages and target ideal clients, you can increase engagement, drive conversions, and build stronger relationships with your audience. Remember, the key to successful marketing and sales is to listen to your clients, understand their needs, and tailor your approach based on their feedback.



**TURN CLIENT  
FEEDBACK  
INTO PROFITS  
& REVENUE**

**500 Westover Dr, #19970  
Sanford, NC 27330**

866.433.7322  
answers@clientsavvy.com  
www.clientsavvy.com