

a **Boot Club** special report
offering
a blue chip experience to grow your business



**How to
Create
More Value
From
Existing
Clients**





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and others like it
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The Boot Club.
a Size 10½ Boots members only club

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The Boot Club

small differences collectively change outcomes



Dear Reader

Which of the following 10¹/₂ situations apply to you?

- Your approach to client care isn't linked to your strategy and goals
- You operate in a firm where marketing is seen as a necessary evil
- You have a small in-house team to implement your plan
- You want to improve your return on marketing investment
- You want to show how investment can translate to new business
- You don't measure the effectiveness of your campaigns
- You don't research the effectiveness of different marketing tactics
- You want to identify a new revenue stream to drive growth
- You want to create more value from your existing client base
- You don't know what works and what doesn't
And (this is the ¹/₂ situation)
- You keep doing what you have always done, it's easier that way!

How many of these scenarios apply to you? 2, 3, more?

If you can relate to 3 or more then **this report will benefit you** in a number of ways. In the pages that follow you will discover:

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Time to go Postmodern

Postmodern, not the opener you'd expect from a marketing report but read on and you'll see why it works!

Money makes the world go round so keeping hold of clients is an important task and increasing their value to you a further boost. Remember that whilst new business is good existing clients are far more valuable than we give them credit for.

BUT, and it's a big but...

The clients know it.

It used to be the case that if your TV went 'on the blink' you knew exactly which electrical retailer you would go to for a replacement. Or, to go even further back in time when a TV cost more than a month's wages, where you'd take it to get it fixed. You trusted them, knew the price would be competitive and the service you received would be top notch. Today the market is a much more elaborate labyrinth of choice and the discerning shopper no longer feels loyal to one brand or retailer.

You may remember Marks and Spencer suffered a few years ago by relying on their reputation as a solid brand where you could buy your basics; if knickers and a black sweater were top of your shopping list you knew Marks' would deliver the goods. But then the competitors perked their ideas up and M&S found they were lagging behind. The customer had evolved whilst they had been dozing.

Customers, clients, whatever you want to label them, have the power in trading relationships and they are wise to the selling tricks of these trade.

Here's the postmodern bit

It's in a nutshell so don't blink or you'll miss it.

All experiences are unique. The outcome of each is fallible and relative not certain and universal.

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Here ends the very basic lecture!

So, clients won't necessarily come back to you but if you acknowledge that each client is an individual and should be treated as such, your postmodern methodology will take you far! What one client wants and needs won't be the same for another and so forth. It's time to think like your client and discover why they buy and not how you sell.

Your clients know you are in business to make money, just as they are so don't just sell to them. You need to develop a working relationship in order to build a trust and get to know how their firm works, 'what makes them tick'. The more you know the more you can advise and develop strategies with them to move their business forward. In this way you make them feel their business is important to you; it's a relationship of equals and mutual discussions.

Trust

Not the first time it's been mentioned in a marketing report and I'm certain it won't be the last. Value your clients and they will value you. Trust is crucial to the prolonged lifetime value of a client and is easily gained if you build a relationship with them. Very positive selling points develop that will create revenue year on year simply because your client knows:

- You will deliver what you promised
- You will give value for money
- You will be on time
- They don't have to 'keep looking'. With trust in place it makes the decision to use you again much easier. Knowing they don't have to 'keep the receipt' pays dividends.

And while this is going on in the foreground they can be assured you will be keeping an eye on developments in the background. They can rely on you to bring future benefits to their door without them having to worry that they are keeping one step ahead of the Jones'.

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size 10½ boots

PS

It costs around 8 times more to gain a new client than it does to keep a client. Now that's got to be worth going that extra mile.

And with new clients being costly the next chapter continues the theme of getting more value from your existing clients.

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Mind Your Manners

A common theme amongst members of society who have passed their thirtieth year seems to be the lament for a life where people believed the sentiment of William of Wykeham that "manners maketh man". I am guilty of this and grumble excessively at the inadequate level of basic courtesy. Ironically please and thank you are often the first words we learn in a foreign language yet they are lacking in our own. Furthermore I know I'm not alone in my disappointment with modern manners so since the band wagon is a full one why is it still a dismal state of affairs?

I don't know the answer to this but I do know that it's a marketing opportunity not to be overlooked. Looking after your clients is an area where you can differentiate yourself from other firms by simply being better at it. Brush up on your client care and get yourself noticed with some old school protocol. Here are some pointers:

Don't be late... for anything.

Whether it's a meeting, delivering research of a project or sending a quote, don't be late. Your client will not be a returning customer for long if they ever have to chase you for anything.

You should be there for them when you say you will and out of the way when you aren't offering them advice, solutions or services.

Even better, really stand out and be early!

Say Sorry

If your client has the misfortunate need to complain make sure you deal with the complaint efficiently and quickly. Say 'sorry' admit your mistake and rectify it.

I once had a colleague who made a pig's ear of an order. On speaking to his client he apologised immediately and knowing she had a penchant for chocolate cake followed it up with the delivery of a rather fantastic chocolate gateaux straight to her desk. Not only did she re-order

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she increased her order! Obviously this won't work in every instance but it's not the cake that's important. The key is that he knew his client well enough to know what would show he valued her custom and what would make her smile. It was a genuine gesture of goodwill for having made a mistake.

Secondly, don't pass complaints around your company. There's nothing worse than having to explain why you are complaining to three different people before you reach the person who can actually do something about it. I'm sure you've been in this situation; even more irritating than those companies who ring your mobile at a certain time everyday and there is no one there if you pick it up.

Be respectful

Respect comes in all shapes and sizes and can often simply be in the form of having paid attention. Take note of your client and their whereabouts. For instance if they are in America don't phone and leave a voicemail on Labour Day or email them – they won't be there! If you know they are on holiday don't contact them; it will only annoy them to get back to a voicemail that halfway through interrupts itself with "Oh I've just remembered you're on holiday."

Listen

There's no point having meetings with your clients if you don't listen to what they are saying. It's not only discourteous but you could lose revenue if you miss an invitation for more business.

Don't boast if you can't deliver

Never over estimate what you can do for your client because if you don't deliver you won't be impressing anyone! Trust is crucial if you want your clients to use you again and again. Don't give your clients any need to doubt your ability to fulfil their needs.

There we go, nothing to it. Get yourself some positive exposure, it's free!

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Face up to Your Clients

As technology evolves it is becoming more and more common that you, the communicator, is hidden from sight. Emails, texts and blogs all impose a certain amount of anonymity on our relationships. Yet we continually read that 'people do business with people' so is this just a weird, out-dated notion in our world of virtual (My) spaces and (Face) books? Are prospective and current clients feeling elated by this bombardment of faceless information or are they and craving a bit of eye to eye contact?

For Size 10¹/₂ Boots the case is clear. Having seen the success of the 'traditional methods' we firmly believe that face-to-face is still the winner when it comes to 'doing business'. Convinced of the benefits we boldly goes forth where few other businesses dare to venture! Not only do we face up to our clients we face up to their clients too offering Client Service Reviews (CSRs).

Your face or mine?

Through CSRs we meet directly with your clients to get to the 'nitty gritty'. We find out exactly what they think of the service they receive, what they think is missing and give them a welcomed opportunity to generally 'have their say'.

From our perspective CSRs hold most value in their ability to make your clients feel valued; the benefits of this are twofold.

- o The client is impressed in being asked for their feedback in a formal manner. The feeling is that they will be listened to rather than filling in a form or replying to an email in an impersonal way. Consequently they are more inclined to return to the firm who has initiated the CSR as they know they are being listened to and their input has been encouraged.
- o On the flipside, the firm who invests time in CSRs benefits in knowing exactly what their clients think about them and indepth knowledge of your clients is an invaluable asset to your business. If you want to grow your brand it cannot be ignored.

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Putting it into Practice

A recent example of this is CODA Studios. They were keen to know if they were realistic in thinking their clients were happy. They admitted a slight feeling of dread should the reality be different... it wasn't!

So what did CODA think of the Client Service Review?

As architects and designers they are totally at ease with changing landscapes both virtually and in reality. Situated within 'Hope Works', Sheffield progress is all around them and they utilise all the technological gadgetry available to deliver their designs. However they don't believe it is the technology to display a 3D structure on a 2D screen that wins clients. David Cross, one of CODA's directors, believes communication on a face-to-face level has and will continue to be the basis of CODA's burgeoning success. He believes that by focusing upon their clients wholly and without distraction they will continue to deliver the winning bid.

Says David,

"Only by getting to really understand what our clients want from their design can we truly deliver everything our client desires. And the only way to do this is to build rapport with our client through person-to-person meetings. As a consequence of this we add value to our service by undertaking Client Service Reviews (CSRs) whereby external consultant, Bernard Savage, speaks directly to our clients establishing how happy they are with the service they have received and if there is anything they would add to a 'wish list'. In this way we gain an understanding of what our clients are saying about us and what we could add to the service offered. This is invaluable to CODA as we strive to improve our client relationships at every level."

The Next Level

So impressed were CODA with the feedback that they decided to carry out internal reviews with employees in order to further assure themselves that they were not

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operating within “a bubble” believing everything to be fine whilst in reality it was a different story. He comments, “Again we were reassured and are now clearer than ever in our belief that a focused understanding of Coda’s commercial reputation mixed with a happy and skilled workforce will continue to sustain our growth.”

Out with the new and in with the old!

So, new technology has its place and yes, marketing campaigns have altered immensely since the advent of email. But as we are currently in an era of retro revival let’s remember how conversations can be such a good way to communicate. And don’t just take our word for it. More examples of those who have experienced the benefits of the Client Service Review are on the website.

We’re not discrediting the new generation of bloggers, after all it’s a challenge to create a relationship with people you can’t see! But isn’t it interesting how ultimately most virtual forums end up having a face-to-face meeting further down the line.

Visit our website www.clientservicereview.co.uk and download the free report “How to really understand your clients” or phone Bernard Savage on 0115 924 7108 for tips on gaining more value from your clients.

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Referrals & Testimonials

Now take a deep breath as you might not like the sound of what's coming next. You're going to ask your clients... for referrals. Don't be shocked, it's a logical step and will add value to each and every one of your current clients.

The Proof of the Pudding...

(altogether now) ...is in the eating. You know it and I know it. Once your clients have tried you out and realised they are getting exactly what it said on the tin plus a little bit more for good measure, you are well on your way to a healthy revenue stream.

And if your clients like what they've eaten they won't be shy about spreading the word. You know yourself that if you've had a positive experience you're more than willing to share it. So if your clients are happy with the service they have received it stands to reason they won't mind offering a few names in your direction and as with most business relationships you wouldn't bat an eye at doing the same for them.

It's all so un-British

I can hear the cries now... "but it's not what we do!". Correct! It is terribly un-British, but why? We are after all quite a sensible lot, we even queue at bus stops. So why not be sensible and use one of our most valuable assets to aid our success?

I think I have the answer.

Being British, in a very general sense, means having a bit of a problem when it comes to admitting you'd like to be successful and initiating any sort of conversation about money. We can't even barter on a weekend in Morocco when it's fully legitimate let alone 'ask' someone to let someone else know that we are really good at what we do. Logic, however, is something that we are good at so get over the barrier and take the leap. But I warn you now, that stiff upper lip might crack!

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There are a few things you need to get your head around to really make the most of your chances at being referred and here is how to do it:

Understanding

People must know what you do, not have a vague idea of what you do. They must understand the service you provide in its entirety. People don't talk about things they don't understand and those who do soon fall foul of their lack of knowledge and you don't want to invite this type of referral!

Referrals need to come from people who know you inside out, preferably a loyal customer who understands what you do for them whilst also being aware of the areas they don't use but in which you also excel.

Now, get ready, we are verging on completely foreign territory!

Boast

Show how pleased, happy, enthusiastic, positive and downright optimistic you are about the service you offer and the service you will be offering in the future. Yes – growth! We're all happy to discuss the future growth of bonds and unit trusts but not quite so open when it is a case of spilling the beans about where you see yourself in 12 months time.

Take yourself out of a business environment for a moment and think about talking with someone who is totally obsessed with their passion, whether it be rock climbing or even metal detecting. (Did you know there are people who enthuse about metal detecting? I didn't until I chanced upon a metal detecting rally whilst trying to find somewhere to have a picnic with my family. It was heaving. Who'd have thought it could draw such a crowd!) And think about how many books you have read purely because somebody has enthused over it so much. Enthusiasm is infectious.

Business is no different and you're already onto a winner as you will no doubt be associating with like-minded business people who share your ambition to be

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successful. It might just be that they haven't revealed it yet!

And now an easy task but don't forget it or your reputation will be shot – no one likes a scrooge.

Reward

Regardless of whether the referral makes it to the booking form and eventual invoice you must always thank the person who gave you the referral. Whether it be a gift or an extra resource you just need to offer something that shows your recognition of their time and understanding; a small reward to show your gratitude. After all they didn't need to put themselves out for you and if the referral turns into a sale you stand to gain a lot more than they do for their thoughtfulness.

Manners maketh man remember so don't let yourself down.

Testimonials

Okay, we've got referrals off the ground, there's just one more thing. When you complete a sale or business transaction, ask your client for a testimonial. It's not a lot to ask; think of them as a halfway house to a referral and as I've written this back to front you must be feeling very confident about this tiny step! Just a few words to say how pleased they were with your company, the service, the products and a pleasure to do business with someone they can come back to.

Testimonials work. People like to see that somebody else has used you and is happy, their experience was positive. It all adds to their own experience in deciding whom to choose and with flattering testimonials it may well turn out to be you.

And for the last time I'm going right down the unBritish route and inviting you to read the testimonials for Size 10¹/₂ Boots yourself. They are on the website glowing with pride! See, hear and read them at www.tenandahalf.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=47&Itemid=69

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Why Size 10½ Boots?

The ideas presented here are based on 17 years commercial experience. These include 12 years blue-chip inhouse at Procter & Gamble and Shell; 2 years leading the marketing team at Eversheds, a top 10 UK law firm; and 3 years as a consultant to professional service firms delivering growth objectives.

Here are just a few happy Size 10½ Boots clients:

"These guys open doors we couldn't open.

Bernard's key qualities are his self motivation, energy, enthusiasm and a very commercial focus."

Richard Oakes, Business Development Director, Addleshaw Goddard

"The [sales training] session went down really well and hit the right notes.

I think what came across most of all was your credibility and believability. People want to know what works and then they will do it and I think you gave us some really good ideas.

I shall certainly be taking them forward to take the service I provide to my customers to a higher level."

Jordan Marshall, Commercial Finance Planning Manager, HSBC

"The advice was commercial and demonstrated a genuine understanding of professional services and the real issues that face us in the current market place. Bernard was easy to talk to and 'jargon free'. He added value over and beyond the brief."

Richard Field, Managing Partner, Rollits

You can see and hear more happy clients by going to www.tenandahalf.co.uk and visiting the testimonials page.

I hope this report gives you some new ideas. I will be delighted to answer any queries or share more ideas on achieving your goals. Please do call me direct on 0115 924 7108 and arrange a FREE boot-fitting to discuss your personal challenges.

Warm regards
Bernard

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size 10^½ boots

PS.

Remember, "small differences collectively change outcomes". Have a look at how the difference of a 10^½ boot won the day for our inspiration behind the business name. Go to the home page, www.tenandahalf.co.uk, and view the video clip.

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