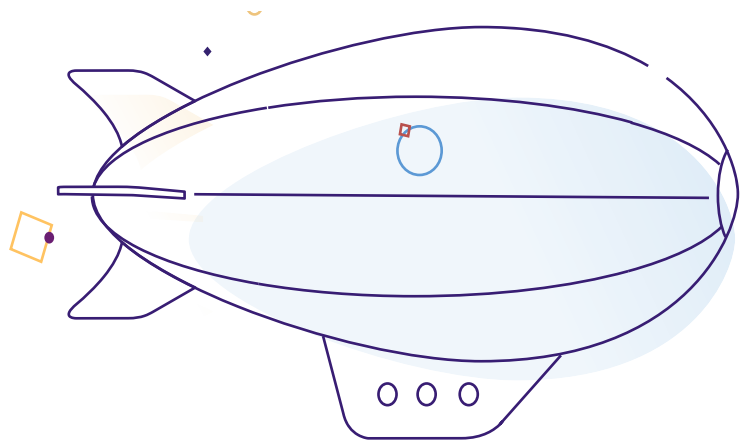




Growth360°

Elevate Your Client Experience

Use this guide for strategies to help reach new clients and engage with existing clients through providing a world-class client experience.



Providing the best client experience at all phases of the buyer journey is essential for sustaining growth in your business. It both helps retain existing clients and attracts new prospects. In this guide, you'll learn why it's essential to provide a positive client experience and how doing so can help your clients become advocates for your firm.

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How the Client Experience Can Help You

Managing your firm's client experience at all phases of the buyer journey is important to the sustained growth of your business. It helps retain clients and leads to existing clients spreading the word about what an exemplary job you've done. With a strong focus on your client experience you hold yourselves accountable to providing the best service possible, based on your understanding of your clients' needs.

To better understand, put yourself in a client's role, and figure out what you would want from a particular product or service you currently offer. If any part of the product or service is subpar, it may be eroding your client's experience. It means they might not be referring you, they may be susceptible to other firms recruiting them or worse they may be telling others of a bad experience. On the other hand, if you feel it is a great client experience, that means you'll be creating advocates that will recommend your company to their friends and family and that is the key to growth.

In addition to creating a potentially poor client experience as an investment advisor, the SEC requires that you act in the best interest of your clients and not place your own interests ahead of your client's interests. Regulation Best Interest provides similar requirements for broker/dealers.

In this guide, we will focus on a few ways to help you see your client's experience and ways to improve and create advocates. Let's start with the journey of a client.

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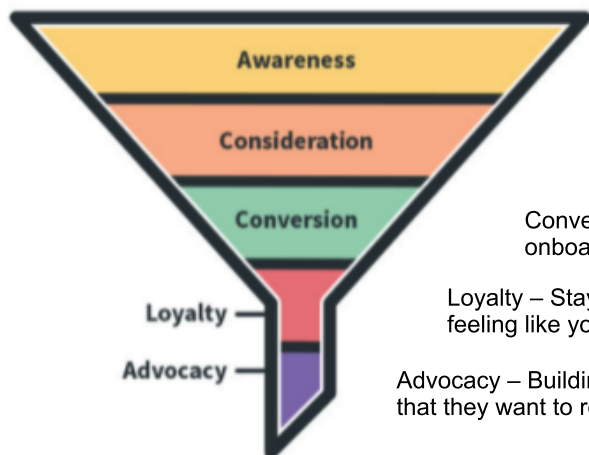
of customers trust recommendations from family and friends over those from companies.¹

Happy customers will share their positive experiences with and refer about 11 people.²

Understanding the Buyer Journey

Every client starts at the first interaction and that is where the client's experience begins. Below is a funnel that shows the typical journey of a prospect to client and on to advocacy. By keeping the client's experience in mind throughout the journey you can build strong relationships with every interaction.

In this guide, we will focus mainly on the loyalty and advocacy areas but review each section below:



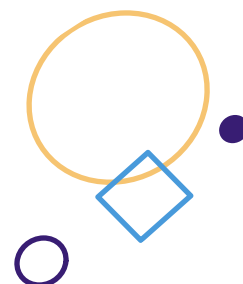
Awareness – Create good experiences for new people who are currently unaware of your brand.

Consideration – Here they have engaged you and a good impression is key to closing the deal.

Conversion – Now they begin as clients and onboarding them is a key to building loyalty.

Loyalty – Staying top-of-mind and keeping your client feeling like you are thinking of them every day.

Advocacy – Building enough trust with your clients that they want to recommend you to others.



¹<https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-loyalty-statistics>

²<https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-loyalty-statistics>

Client Experience: What Is It?

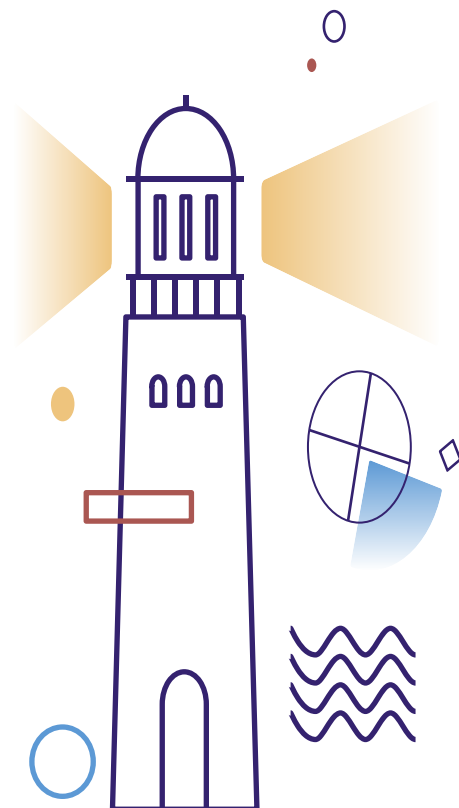
Simply defined, the client experience is how your client perceives your services and brand throughout the buyer journey and beyond. Your goal is to ensure an ongoing positive client experience by anticipating how prospects and clients interact with you at every step along the buyer journey.

As such, your efforts should begin before you initiate first contact. A world class client experience starts well before first contact with a prospect and extends through every touchpoint the client makes. This doesn't mean all clients get the same experience, but that each experience exceeds expectations.

Client Experience Best Practices

So, how do you provide that outstanding client experience? The ways in which you can provide an outstanding client experience are as follows:

- Understand your clients' needs, even before first contact.
- Ensure your products and services meet those needs.
- Determine ideal outcomes with each step along the buyer journey.
- Adapt a flexible mindset to meet the client's changing objectives.



Foundations of a World-Class Client Experience

Who You'll Target

Even before you begin crafting the steps to ensure an ideal client experience, it's important to understand your ideal client. Avoid trying to be all things to all people and find your specialty and be great. By knowing the best customer for your firm, you increase your odds of having great service with every interaction.

How You Will Operate

Understanding your operations is important when it comes to the client experience. The different life stages and levels of wealth are a challenge but having a plan as to how you will treat each client segment can dramatically improve the clients' view of your firm. One type never has to be treated better – just different.

What You Provide

Whether you are a broker representative for a financial services firm or an independent financial professional, you probably already have plenty of products and services to offer clients and prospects. Understanding your offerings and having partners for other needs keeps you at the center of serving your clients' needs.

When and What You'll Communicate

An important part of boosting the client experience is frequent, ongoing communication. This requires segmenting your prospects and clients, and then creating communication plans for each one. The MarketingCentral tools can help you curate content for many different types of clients.

Cetera Client Resources

Cetera offers several world-class products to help boost your client loyalty. The goal is to be so helpful and continually adding value to your clients' lives that they don't mind if you take a few days to get back to them or if there is a market turn. Whether your model is fee-only or commission-based, Cetera can help you grow loyalty and to help clients continue to willingly engage with you.

Some of the recommended Cetera products and services include the following:

MoneyGuidePro® – This service helps you work with clients on defining and prioritizing their financial goals, by encouraging them to pinpoint their needs, wants and wishes before they meet with you. MoneyGuidePro saves time, builds a good jumping-off point for discussions and provides a strong foundation for your client's investment road map.

eMoney – eMoney puts your client in the investment seat, by allowing them to view their holdings. The software also allows them to make trades, if they desire, to help improve returns that fit with their goals.

NaviPlan – This tool helps you create a customized plan for your clients. NaviPlan is flexible, offering goals-based assessments, advanced cash-flow planning analysis and everything in between.

AdviceWorks – This easy-to-use digital platform allows you to collaborate better with your clients. Now you can see all their finances – in one place. Set goals and measure progress.



MarketingCentral Automations

The Cetera Advisor Marketing team uses a robust email program to help you send out timely and relevant emails to your client list. Use the pre-approved templates to make communicating with your prospects and client easier. Set up a time to walk through these automations with your Growth Officer.

Making Fans of Your Clients

We all know the predominant way you grow your business is through referrals. It's just as important to dedicate resources to retaining clients as it is to attracting and signing new clients. Besides the hassle and resources spent on signing new clients, retaining clients and gaining net new assets can bring in significant growth.

Having advocates or "fans" as customers means that they're trusting you with more of their assets, but more importantly they are telling other people about you. A deeply satisfied and loyal client can bring in referrals and become an authentic promoter for the services you offer and your company in general.

Are you asking them?

Get help activating referrals >

Check out our latest guide [Expand Your Network with the Right Referral Strategy](#).

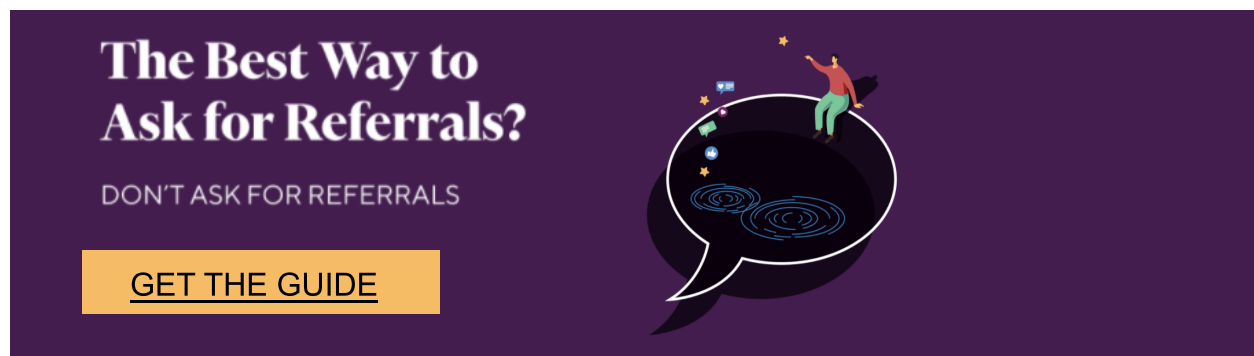
Hear Your Clients' Feedback

How do you know if you're doing a good job and are creating a great client experience? You're gathering feedback from clients and receiving referred prospects from satisfied clients.

Gathering Feedback

Client feedback is one of your most important tools. It tells you if you're creating a great experience. Even more importantly, it helps you identify potential problems or concerns before they turn into poor reviews or departing clients.

One way to gather feedback is through an official system, like an emailed quarterly survey or website pop-up, that helps measure and manage client loyalty. The system gathers data that measures client loyalty, while benchmarking services that compare your buyer's journey against that of the competition. Other ways to encourage client feedback include live chatting with the clients using MyRepChat, analyzing activity on your website or simply asking for the client's opinion.



Client Experience Compliance Safeguards

Staying compliant is vital to protect you and your company's reputations. Take care to avoid language in your messaging that sounds promissory or misleading. Use clear, accessible language on every communication channel. These quick steps can help you establish a system of checks within your firm.

4 Simple Steps to Safeguard Your Firm

1. Learn about the risks: talk with your legal or compliance department.
2. Understand your applicable regulatory requirements. If you are an investment advisor the SEC requires that you act in the best interest of your clients and not place your own interests ahead of your client's interests. If you are a broker/dealer, Regulation Best Interest provides similar requirements.
3. Establish guidelines for reviewing materials and set up approval hierarchies. Make sure your whole team is aware of these protocols.
4. Whether it's you personally, your compliance officer or a trusted vendor, make sure that someone is watching for errors and the correct changes are made before the content goes public.

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Client Experience Overview



As a financial professional, your job is to help people reach their financial goals through building a trusting relationship and providing your clients with a positive client experience. Not all clients will have the same experience with your firm, but they should all trust you with their assets and be your biggest advocate. MarketingCentral, Cetera's digital marketing platform, can help support your client experience efforts and make it simple to give your clients an exemplary experience.

Use the stages below to assess where you are today and find new opportunities for growth.

Visible

Success at the first level is about preparing your firm to provide a positive client experience. Creating a positive experience starts before you connect with a prospect. In the first stage, make sure you know what services you can offer, what your buyer's journey will look like and how you intend on communicating with prospects.

Active

Success at the second level is about creating a positive client experience as you nurture prospects through the customer journey and you onboard them as clients. Consider what channels you'll use to communicate with them, keep track of all client communication and ensure you have a thought out plan for the transition from prospect to client.

Optimized

The third level is about providing a good client experience even after a person becomes a client. You should consider how often and how you'll communicate with every client, how often you'll go over their financial strategies and how you can improve the client experience in the future. Client feedback can help you optimize your process and ensure every client you have will want to share their experience with other prospects.

MarketingCentral by Cetera

Build a strategy for growth with MarketingCentral, a powerful suite of tools built exclusively for you by the Cetera Marketing team. MarketingCentral is a comprehensive multi-channel platform with pre-approved email templates, social media content, downloadable event kits, presentations and so much more that you can fully customize to meet your business and client needs. Take the guesswork out of marketing and focus on growing your business.



Learn more at <https://fmgsuite.com/marketingcentral/experience/cetera-resources/>



QuickStart Guide

Get up and running with this step-by-step guide to MarketingCentral.



Interactive Webinars

Register for an interactive webinar to learn more about the MarketingCentral tools and get assistance with any questions.



Marketing Strategy & Best Practices

Put together a solid client and prospect outreach strategy designed to get results with the help of this straightforward guide.



MarketingCentral Automations

Explore opportunities to automate marketing communications across email, social and print.



Growth Guides

Drive leads and increase prospect conversion rate with these Client Prospecting and Conversion Guides.



Events Guide

Leverage MarketingCentral and these tips to plan, manage and promote your next client or prospect event.



2021 Marketing Calendar Template

Plan the next year of marketing content and strategy with this calendar template.



Required Record Retention

MarketingCentral is an approved record retention tool.



Using MarketingCentral as a Team

Use these tips to personalize a profile if you are using MarketingCentral as an ensemble team or program.

Additional Client Experience Resources

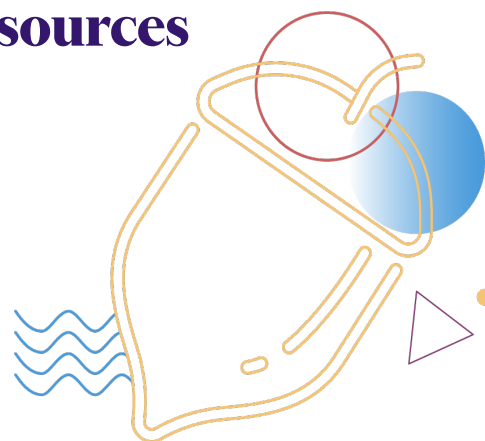
[MarketingCentral Automations](#)

[Quarterly/Yearly Marketing Calendar](#)

[Reaching New Clients Through the Referral Process](#)

[Reaching New Clients Through CRM Tools and Segmentation](#)

[Future of Advice Whitepaper](#)



'Cetera Financial Group' refers to the network of independent retail firms encompassing, among others, Cetera Advisors LLC, Cetera Advisor Networks LLC, Cetera Investment Services LLC (marketed as Cetera Financial Institutions or Cetera Investors), Cetera Financial Specialists LLC, and First Allied Securities, Inc. All firms are members FINRA/SIPC. Located at 200 N. Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 1200, El Segundo, CA 90245-5670.

Individuals affiliated with Cetera firms are either Registered Representatives who offer only brokerage services and receive transaction-based compensation (commissions), Investment Adviser Representatives who offer only investment advisory services and receive fees based on assets, or both Registered Representatives and Investment Adviser Representatives, who can offer both types of services.