

BIDTELLECT STUDY GUIDE: YOUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL DIGITAL STRATEGY



This year is expected to be filled with both excitement and anxiety as students approach the closest thing to normalcy since 2019.

For brands, their 2022 back-to-school digital marketing strategies will need to make digital shopping as easy as possible, offer content that is inspiring, and maximize technology to reach shoppers at points of research and interest.



Scale & Spend To Match Consumer Spending



Maximize A Context-Driven Approach To Target & Re-Target Interested Consumers



Make Your Creatives Stand Out With Trends & Promos



Capture Attention With Video Ads



Don't Sleep On Mobile

Tip #1

SCALE & SPEND TO MATCH CONSUMER SPENDING

As nearly all students plan to head back to school in-person, count on higher spending across the board. Now is the time to spend big on scale and be thoughtful about your KPIs. Bidtellect's **AARDvark** -Automatic Algorithmic Rate Determination – adjusts to the best value of a bid according to campaign goals; partnered with **Bid Shading** and you'll minimize cost without sacrificing win rate.

Hello, Spending

In 2021, total combined back-to-school and back-to-college expenditure in the United States amounted to about 108.1 billion U.S. dollars (Statista, 2021). In 2021, families with children in elementary through high school planned to spend about \$848 (NRF).

Retail back-to-school sales reached \$95.83 billion in 2021; a 9.3% increase from the year before (eMarketer, 2021)

When Does School Start?

United States:

- Southern, Mountain and Central regions: mid to late August
- Northeast, East North Central, and West Coast: beginning of September or later

Canada: Early September

When Will Shopping Start?

- Count on shopping in July, August, and September.
- Spend by the end of July will account for 59% of total back-to-school spend.



What Are BTS Shoppers Buying?

According to most reports, consumers will spend the most on apparel and back to school supplies, but technology is not far behind (and likely will grow in popularity each year).

- Clothing accounts for as much as 55% of the budget for back to school in the U.S. (Much Needed, 2022)
- Product Categories on Which US Back-to-School Shoppers Expect to Spend Most of Their Budgets (eMarketer)



60%
Apparel



10%
Technology



3%
Books



24%
Back to School
Supplies



4%
Dorm Furnishing
Supplies

Top Product Categories (NRF)

Back to School

- \$12.9B Electronics
- \$11.1B Clothing
- \$7.0B Shoes

Back to College

- \$18.1B Electronics
- \$9.7B Dorm/apartment furnishings
- \$9.4B Clothing

Tip #2

MAXIMIZE A CONTEXT-DRIVEN APPROACH TO TARGET & RE-TARGET INTERESTED CONSUMERS

Students and parents of students are already researching back to school items, determining their budgets, and waiting for sales. They'll be researching and shopping online, or will make use of a hybrid approach. Adjust messaging to make online research easy all the way through the purchase funnel. Utilize Bidtellect's contextual targeting technology to reach consumers already researching back-to-school deals and products and engaging with content in relevant environments. Combine our context-driven solutions with audience creation to reach the most interested and relevant consumers in your category.

Who Makes the Spending Decisions? Parents vs. Students & How to Reach Them

Should you be targeting your digital ads to parents or students? It depends on the age. In general, parents may be doing the purchasing, but they are listening to their kids, especially when it comes to clothing and accessories. College students are most likely to shop for themselves, but they're on a tight budget, which means deals and discounts will be most appealing to them, as well as alternative options like secondhand shopping and trade-in options.

This would be a great chance to utilize **context demographics targeting** to reach the students and parents of your target age ranges. Be sure to include **deals and promotions** in your creative assets that appeal to both parents and older students.



Parents are influenced the most, **at 80%**, by children to buy clothing and accessories on back-to-school expenditures [Statista, 2021]

8 out of 10

8 in 10 college students have a back-to-school budget they try to stick to as much as possible [Mintel Research, Report 2022]



2/3 of college students are mostly purchasing items for themselves [Mintel Research, Report 2022]



1/3 of college students would like to see more secondhand shopping options and trade-in programs for discounts/upgrades from back-to-school items [Mintel Research, Report 2022].

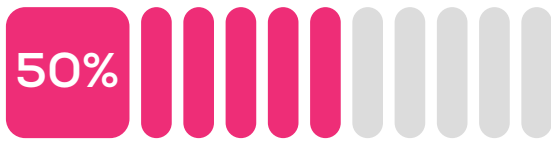
Tip #2

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Online vs. In-Store vs. Hybrid Shopping

The pandemic saw a huge jump in ecommerce sales, especially when it came to back-to-school and retail in general. While many are excited to return to in-store shopping, just as many will continue to shop online. Others will take a hybrid approach, popping online to research products, compare prices, but ultimately purchasing in-store or vice versa. For these reasons, click and collect will continue to hold strong.

Once you've reached your target consumers, **re-engage with users** who have interacted with your brand using **creative retargeting** (sequential messaging), **lookalike audiences**, or site retargeting to **complete the purchase funnel**.



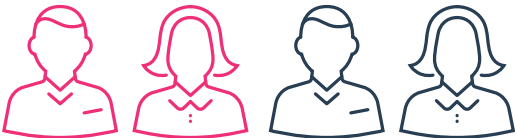
Google, 2021

50% of North American back-to-school shoppers say they'll check for in-store inventory online before going into a store and 48% will shop at stores that offer curbside pickup or contactless shipping



Salesforce, 2022

1/3 of retailers plan to turn locations into micro-fulfillment centers with popular fulfillment options like buy online, pick up in store



AdAge, 2021

Parents and college students that participated in back-to-school shopping during the 2021-22 school year shopped for supplies nearly equally online and in-store



+\$1 TRILLION

Emarketer, 2022

US retail ecommerce sales will exceed \$1 trillion for the first time this year as the flexibility and convenience customers found during the pandemic sticks



eMarketer, 2022

43% of respondents preferred to both browse and purchase online when shopping for apparel, compared with 32% who favored stores for both. Another 20% preferred to browse online and complete their purchases in stores



Google, 2021

66% of consumers expect personalized marketing and shopping experiences



Tip #3

MAKE YOUR CREATIVES STAND OUT WITH TRENDS & PROMOS

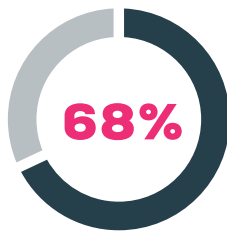
Appeal to TikTok, Pop Culture Trends With Creatives

Get your creative messaging up to speed. Style trends right now are all about Y2K - see cut outs, low rise, slides, and more. Teens and Gen Z are enamored with the style on hit TV series Euphoria, but count on the new season of Stranger Things to influence retail trends this summer, too.

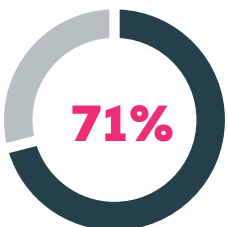
Work with **Bidtellect's in-house creative team, [b]+studio**, to ensure your creative assets appeal to younger generations and feature the latest trends.

Give Shoppers What They Want: Back to School Discounts and Deals

Fashion trends may change, but a pervasive purchase decision-maker remains: discounts. Competitive prices, deals and promotions are the primary purchase triggers for consumers. In fact, 71% of U.S. shoppers are willing to wait *more than two weeks* to buy something if they want to take advantage of a sale, deal or promotion.



Deals and promotions are important to 68% of back-to-school shoppers (Google, 2021).



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Tip #3

MAKE YOUR CREATIVES STAND OUT WITH

TRENDS & PROMOS

Offer deals, discounts, incentives, and reward programs.

Check your price competitiveness in your market. When it comes to advertising, include those discounts in your creative assets! Then scale far and wide to get your message out there - who wants to miss out on a discount? No one.

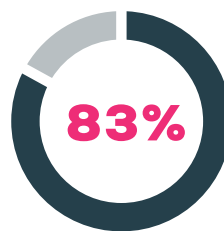
Bidtellect's [b]+studio consistently sees the highest performance with headlines that include a discount, such as % or \$ discount, promo codes, bundle deals, **free shipping**, flash sale, week-long sales events, loyal customer discounts and pre-sales, and more.

On That Note: Shoppers Expect Fast Shipping & Free Returns

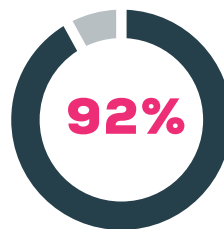
In reports by eMarketer, free returns, free standard shipping without a minimum, free two-day (or faster) shipping with no minimum, and rewards/loyalty points were the top features rated as "extremely valuable" by apparel buyers [eMarketer, 2022].



Not only should brands be sure to offer these features, but communicate them in their creative assets for back-to-school.



83% of consumers prefer stores that offer free shipping [NRF via FitSmallBusiness, 2022]



Studies show that 67% of shoppers check a merchant's return policy before making a purchase, and 92% will buy from the brand again if it's easy to make a return. [NRF via FitSmallBusiness, 2022]

Tip #4

CAPTURE ATTENTION WITH VIDEO ADS



Maximize Video to Capture Attention & Showcase Trends from Apparel to Campus Life

Students and parents are enticed by videos, **especially when video ads are aligned with relevant content**. Last year, students and parents relied on videos to get a taste of campus life as in-person campus visits declined due to the pandemic. While researching back-to-school supplies, products, and style, video captures attention and forms a connection with consumers - leading to higher engagement, brand awareness, and conversions. Plus, students will have shorter attention spans than most - so capture theirs with snappy video ads.

Bidtellect's Video Offering: A+

Bidtellect offers Outstream, Instream, and Vertical video ad type at 6s, 15s, and 30s. Access all of Bidtellect's premium supply partners under one roof, like TripleLift, ShareThrough, Teads and YieldMo. Our context-centric platform delivers engaging solutions so you can reach your audiences within the content they are consuming - efficiently.



36% of campuses experienced a decline in campus visit requests - creating an increased opportunity to build brand awareness and reach prospects through video
(OHO Interactive, December 2021)

2.7
seconds

Attention spans are shortening leaving marketers with 2.7 seconds to capture audiences
(MarketingMag)

9
out of
10

9/10 people report wanting to see more videos from brands in 2021
(Hubspot)



87% of marketers say video has generated positive ROI
(Wyzowl)



93% of marketers say video has helped them increase brand awareness
(Wyzowl)



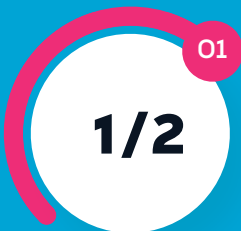
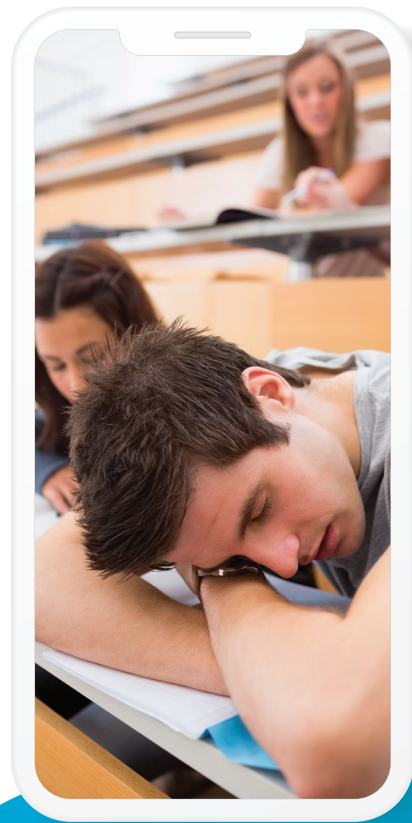
80% of marketers confirmed that video helped increase sales
(Wyzowl)



Tip #5

DON'T SLEEP ON MOBILE

Don't sleep on mobile shopping. Users are spending more time on their mobile devices than ever before to connect with friends, colleagues, content - and to shop. Bidtellect's technology renders mobile ads in real time and optimizes down to the placement level. This ensures your ads are placed in key placements to catch users' attention while scrolling, and also guarantees you won't overspend for a lower impact placement.



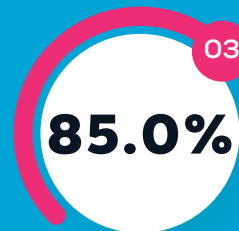
AD AGE, 2021

Over half of smartphone users will pay via mobile by 2025, and spending will grow nearly four times faster than the number of users.



EMARKETER, 2022

Desktop and laptop retail ecommerce growth will decelerate as the segment bleeds share. Instead, customers will buy more on mobile, which will exceed 4 in 10 retail ecommerce dollars for the first time this year. Rising time spent on mobile will trickle into shopping.



EMARKETER, 2022

The biggest beneficiary will be smartphones, which will make up 85.0% of mcommerce sales this year.



TO CREATE A CUSTOM BACK-TO-SCHOOL DIGITAL STRATEGY, REACH OUT TO YOUR BIDTELLECT REPRESENTATIVE!