

Back to School



Make the most of your marketing for the start of the new school year!



criteo.



Back-to-school is the second biggest consumer shopping season in the United States after the winter holiday season and it's no wonder as parents, teens, and even grad students start searching for and purchasing the things they'll need for success the year ahead.

We dove into our back-to-school data from across our brands and retailers and this is what we found:

1

New backpacks, lunchboxes, and crayons get younger kids excited about school

Our data shows between mid-July and mid-August, searches surge for book bags, lunchboxes, notebooks, and pencils, indicating parents and students are looking for new gear to get kids in the right mindset for school.

	Searched Term	Average Growth*
	Book bag	733%
	Pencil	575%
	Lunchbox	244%
	Jansport	199%
	Binder	198%
	Notebook	169%
	Backpack	122%
	Folder	112%
	Crayola	51%

*(7/17 - 8/27 compared to 6/12 - 7/9)

Dorms get decorated

Furniture by Sales Volume

916% Divider	319% Storage	53% Brita	16% Swiffer
702% Wall Art	72% Boxes	24% Pillow	(Average Growth in Aug/Sept vs. July)
416% Area Rug	55% Futon	21% Sofa	

For college and grad students, search starts a month later with much of it focused on making their living space more like home. Posters of favorite bands and idols no longer cut it; today's college students aren't afraid to spend their (or Mom and Dad's) money on dorm furnishings. Between mid-August and mid-September, searches surge for wall art, area rugs, storage solutions, and pillows, all necessary to make barren dorm rooms seem more inviting after long days of lectures and studying.

School supplies like binders, notebooks and pencils are likely less searched for by college and grad students since much of the work is done electronically.

Students invest in camaraderie, caffeine, and entertainment

Categories by Sales Volume

122% Audio	122% Pumps	12% Office Supplies
122% Flats	39% Boots	12% Wallets & Money Clips
122% Futon Pads	27% Coffee	10% Video Game Console
122% Pants	24% Video Game Console Accessories	(Average Growth in Aug/Sept. vs. July)

College can be a lonely place, but not if you have an extra futon for visitors and an extra Xbox controller. Compared to July, purchases of futon pads increased a whopping 256%, and video game console accessories by 24%, indicating that most students arrive on campus with the latest video game consoles but are adding accessories to make the games more social.

And to get through their long days of classes and clubs and longer nights of studying and gaming, they're buying lots of coffee. The caffeinated beverage saw a spike of 27% in August and September compared to July.

Fitness regimes kick into high gear

Ah college, the time to expand young minds... and muscles. Our data shows that supplement searches grow 61% and 43% increase in body-building supplements in August and September, respectively, compared to July.

Similarly, sales of diet supplements increase 29% and 55% in August and September, respectively, compared to July.

Key Takeaways



Keep your spend high from July through September. Our data indicates that parents are likely to start searching in early July through mid-August for younger kids, and college-bound and grad students search for dorm room and apartment furnishings beginning early August through September.



For laptops, which have a longer life cycle and are higher priced, Back to School season kicks off the consideration period that leads into big deal events like Black Friday.



There's a huge opportunity for home furnishing and home goods retailers to win more sales come back-to-school with more deals and options for college students looking to make their dorm rooms homier. It's clear from our data that students are searching for items that will both remind them of home and let them express themselves as they live on their own for the first time.