

# Back-To-School Marketing

## What, Why & How

### WHAT is back-to- school marketing?



**The back-to-school season is a prime advertising time for businesses targeting college students (and their parents).** With two semesters, college offers double the opportunity for back-to-school marketing. / Whether college kids are preparing to head back to campus or step foot on campus for the first time, they're a fertile advertising field.

**Back-to-school advertising is a year-round effort.** Marketing for the spring and fall back-to-school periods shouldn't be considered a short-term commitment. / Student preparations and purchasing begin months in advance, and so should yours. / To maximize ROI, brand awareness, trust, and loyalty must be formed before back-to-school shopping begins.

### WHY utilize back-to- school marketing?



**Multiply your impressions without increasing your cost.** With the influx of students on college campuses at the start of each semester, the area population nearly triples in a short period. / The back-to-school season offers the potential to reach more than 20 million college students (and their families).

**On-campus college students are captive buyers.** This important audience will see your ad every morning as they walk to class, every afternoon on their way to work, and every night on their way to dinner or the dorm.

**Back-to-school marketing has many positive effects.** Increase brand awareness and loyalty. / Drive traffic (in-person and online), engagement, and sales.

**Retailers rake in dollars during back-to-school and college shopping.** Back-to-school shopping brings in an estimated \$68 billion in a few weeks. / Back-to-school advertising campaigns contribute more than 15 percent of annual retail sales.

**Back-to-school shoppers equal long-term consumers with plenty of money to spend.** The college years are prime time for brands to get in on the ground floor, create connections with this audience, present solutions to their challenges, and build brand trust and loyalty. / College students collectively have \$593 billion available to spend annually, and it doesn't all go to tuition and rent. / Much of it is spent on food, alcohol, entertainment, and other personal expenses. / Every year, millions of college students graduate and begin professional jobs, earning more money than they ever have before. / The average median earnings of a young adult with a bachelor's degree is \$50,000.

# Back-To-School Marketing

## What, Why & How

### **& HOW**

### **Creative Back-to- School Marketing Strategies**



#### **Utilize traditional advertising.**

As one of the first advertising touchpoints, traditional media increases brand awareness and recognition. / From bike shelters to newspaper kiosks to bus wraps, traditional campus out-of-home advertising provides repeated exposure and increased impressions as students travel throughout campus. / Advertising near the point of purchase is a great strategy. Add directional messaging to point consumers to products they need to purchase. / Digital displays allow flexible messaging for limited-time specials and sales.



#### **Promote your business in campus newspapers.**

Student newspapers are thriving despite today's digital-first media environment. / Both print ads and sponsored content reach and engage a large percentage of college students.



#### **Incorporate digital ads.**

Throughout the back-to-school season and beyond, digital advertising opportunities amplify traditional media efforts. / Younger generations are remarkably attached to their smartphones, so digital ad campaigns place your promotions directly in students' hands and follow your target demographic throughout their digital day.



#### **Take advantage of social media and peer-to-peer marketing.**

Enlist students to talk about your brand in person and online. / Create a hashtag for your back-to-school marketing campaign. Run a paid social media advertising campaign.



#### **Offer discounts, promotions, and samples.**

Regardless of age, sales and promotions attract buyers. / Give away coupons, discount codes, samples, or free branded merchandise.



#### **Provide experiences over things.**

Do college bus tours, making stops at multiple campuses to promote your product or service. / Host or participate in campus events to boost brand awareness. Offer in-person product or service demos.



#### **Try guerrilla marketing.**

Guerrilla marketing includes chalk art, graffiti, flash mobs, and treasure hunts. / Reverse graffiti is a unique form of guerilla marketing that allows brands to create temporary images on streets and walls by removing grime from the surface. / Guerrilla marketing speaks to the importance teens and young adults place on authenticity and creativity.

SOURCES: EDUCATIONDATA.ORG / ADMISSIONSLY.COM / NCES.ED.GOV