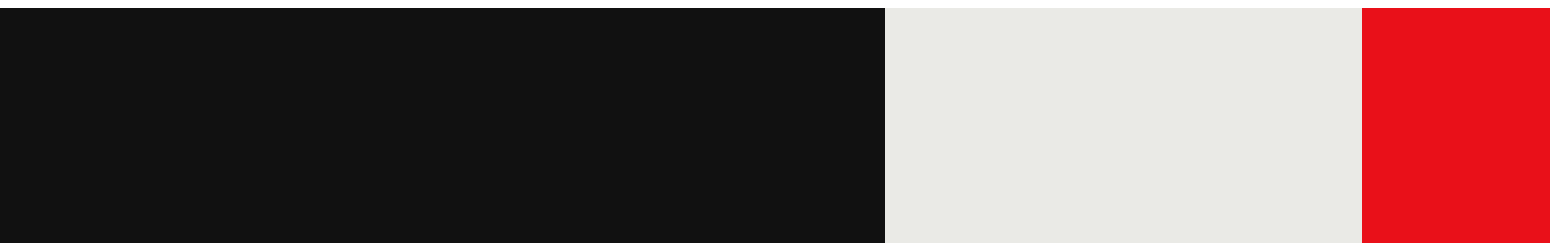



3 things to know for the 2021 back-to-school season

Article



About a third of K-12 students have **already** returned to class amid a fourth COVID-19 wave. While, earlier this year, analysts had predicted a very optimistic back-to-school (BTS) season for retailers and brands, not all is lost: Many parents still want to make school-related firsts and rites of passage as “normal” as possible for their children.

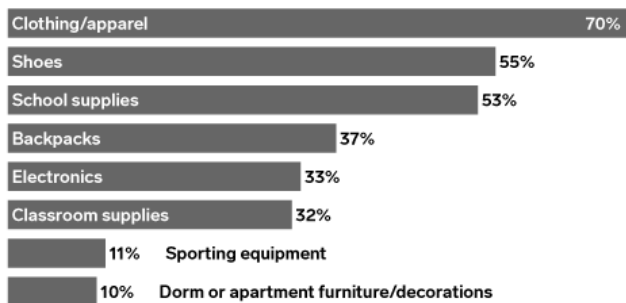
Regardless of how kids end up going back to class, we believe certain trends will remain:

1. Apparel and accessories are key categories.

According to many reports leading into the second-largest shopping season of the year, clothing will by far be the No. 1 category during BTS. Roughly 38% of the \$32.5 billion BTS spending this year will be on clothing and accessories, according to Deloitte's June 2021 projections. Additionally, Sensormatic Solutions found that 70% of US internet users polled in June anticipated spending most on clothing while BTS shopping. The wild card: Nearly 40% said they expect to spend most on backpacks. However, this number may drop if parents wait to see what the fate of in-person learning will be for their kids.

Product Categories US Internet Users Anticipate Spending the Most on While Back-to-School Shopping, June 2021

% of respondents



Source: Sensormatic Solutions, "2021 US Back-to-School Consumer Sentiment Survey" as cited in company blog, July 22, 2021

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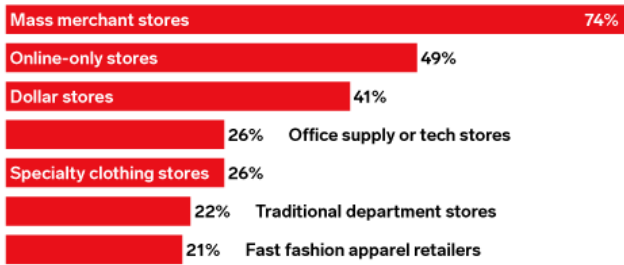
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2. Convenience dominates when choosing where to go.

Deloitte found that an overwhelming majority of shoppers plan to go to mass merchants for their BTS shopping needs; online-only stores (presumably Amazon) followed in a distant second. These channels carry all the items on school supply lists under one "roof" and make it very easy for time-strapped consumers.

Channels/Locations Where US Parent Internet Users Plan to Conduct Back-to-School Shopping, June 2021

% of respondents



Note: n=1,200

Source: Deloitte, "2021 Back-to-School Survey: Tech Sets the New Standard," June 8, 2021

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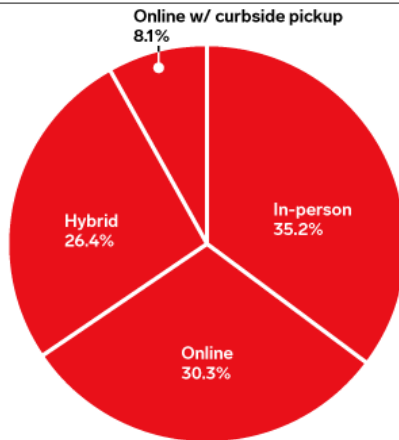
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3. New shopping behaviors are here to stay.

When polled by Tinniti in March this year, 30.3% of US parents said they were already planning to shop online for their BTS needs, with another 8.1% planning to take advantage of curbside pickup. With the uncertainty around the Delta variant, we believe that the number of in-person shoppers may decline slightly as increases in weekly coronavirus cases continue.

How US Parents Plan to Shop for Back-to-School Needs, March 2021

% of respondents



Source: Tinniti, "Back to School Shopping Report: How the Hybrid World has Changed Consumer Habits," May 5, 2021

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