SMARTLY.IO

The Smartly.io Guide to Driving Sales on

Back-to-School on Paid Social

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About
Smartly.io

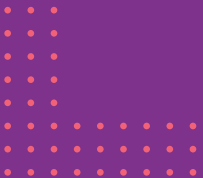# Powering Beautifully Effective Ads

Smartly.io is one of the leading Facebook and Instagram Marketing and Creative Partners. Our all-in-one platform combines creative automation and ad buying, helping our customers scale their results - not headcount.

2013 Founded in Helsinki, Finland

$1.8 Billion Annual ad spend through the platform

+350 Smartlies

16 Offices in key cities around the world

⊙ Our Culture: Why Customers Choose Us and Stay With Us

Smartly.io was built for and with our customers. We always put our customers first and solve all challenges fast - both big and small ones.

⊙ Everyone at Smartly.io Does Support

From Helsinki to New York and Singapore, we're here for you 24/5. Get support from your local office and gain global insights in a matter of minutes.

Why Partner With Us

We answer and solve problems fast: No tickets or waiting required - we are an extension of your team

Watch your ROI soar with AI-driven optimizations

Wave goodbye to manual work: get efficiency through automation

Stay on-brand and improve ad relevance: achieve personalized ads through creative automation and services

Access all things new before your competitors, with our speed of innovation

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Customers

Uber

Hello FRESH

DOORDASH

BARK BOX

THIRDLOVE

letgo

StubHub
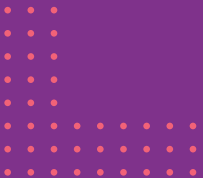
Zillow

TechStyle

hopper

Uber Eats

310

FRESHLY

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Back-To-Class

The Second-Largest Shopping Season in the US

Every fall, millions of students return back to school. Some students return to a familiar classroom, while others embark on a new adventure - all eager to learn and make new friends.

As a new school year is an important life moment, students and parents alike prepare for the new exciting chapter by shopping for things that support students' life.

In this guide, we focus on the back-to-class season, which includes both back-to-school and back-to-college.

Did You Know That in

2018

$82.8 Billion
spent was spent on back-to-class shopping

$55 Billion
spent on back-to-college

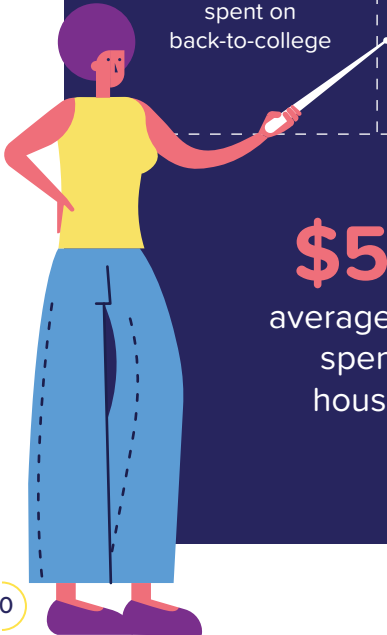### $28 Billion
spent on back-to-school

54%
of shopping happened online

$501
average amount spent per household

$322
Families spent $322 per child

When Do People Start Shopping for Back to School?

July: Early shoppers spend $100 more than late spenders, and they start in July.

**Mid-July to Mid-August:** $18B spent in the US on average during this period.

Mid- to Late-August: Final rush - college students stock up for the semester.

CPMs On the Rise - Back-to-School Still Lower Compared to the Q4 Climb

According to the Smartly.io platform data, CPMs during the back-to-school season are approximately **10%** lower globally compared to the October-December Holiday spend and video spend grew by **23%** (2017 to 2018). Mobile-friendly videos that are designed for sound-off viewing can help stop the thumb.

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How to Build Creative to Win Back-to-Class Shoppers
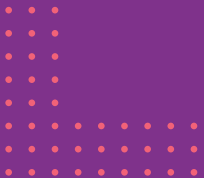
How to Position Creatives for Success?

11x **More assets to test and optimise results in a 23% lower cost per incremental buyer.**

◉ **Static Creatives/Image Templates**

1. Make sure that the brand logo and offer are very visible upon first glance

2. For sales, product shots perform better than brand or lifestyle imagery. Show the product they want to buy and they will!

3. Put all necessary information on the left side of the ad - eyes will fall on that side first
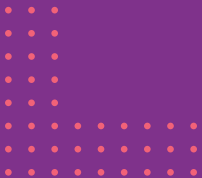
4. Use the time before BTS to experiment and test!

Price/Discount/CTA

Product shot or closeup of someone using product

◉ Video Creatives

1. The shorter the video, the better. 8" is ideal, if you're using a 15" video, make sure to loop the 8" twice.

2. Grab their attention early! Make the value proposition clear by displaying brand, offer, and product - all within the first two seconds.

3. Highlight products or photos of the products in use.

4. Just like static assets, experiment what works best!

Brand Logo → Sale offer → Product 1

Product 2 → Product 3 → End card with brand and sale offer

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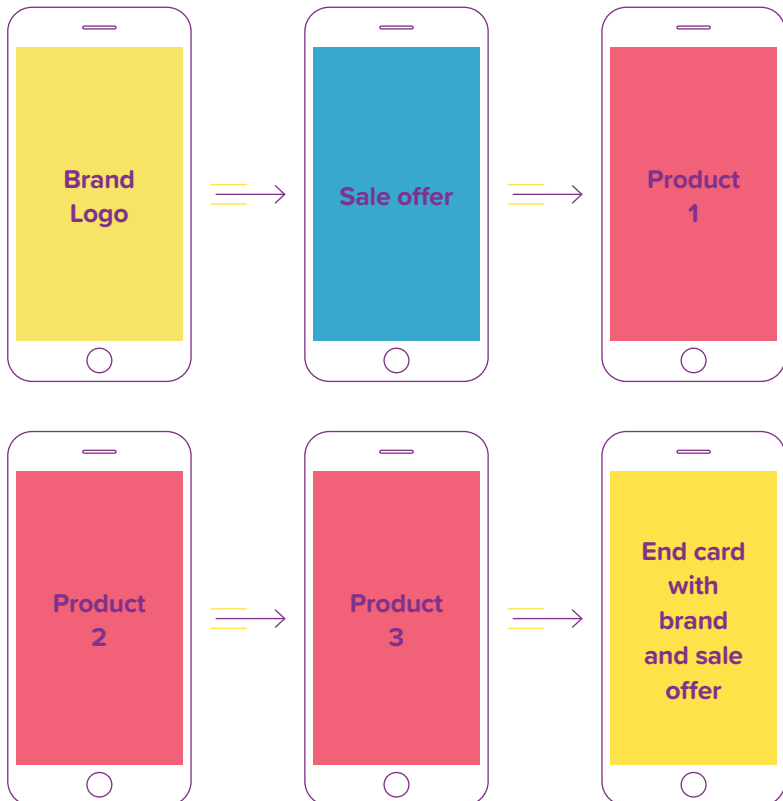
How to Set Up Your Back-to-Class Campaigns

Three Golden Rules

⊙ **Set Up Your Campaigns in Advance**

Set up everything a few days prior to the sale period and allow time for troubleshooting, QA, and Facebook ad approvals.

• Set campaigns and ads in a paused state
• Allow time for Facebook ad approval
• Let triggers set everything live when it is the right time

⊙ **Build Up Budgets -** prepare for max spend

• Don't triple budgets overnight - work up to your maximum budget by stress testing several weekends prior.
• This will allow for you to judge the market, competition, and make changes accordingly.

⊙ **Adjust Your Budget Breakdown -** Expect a much shorter sales cycle when running a sale

• This means our prospecting audiences will most likely convert quicker, resulting in lower CPA's than usual.
• Be quick on your toes and prepare to allocate more budget than usual toward prospecting; knowing that behavior is expected to change (for the better!)

Smartly.io has made optimizing budgets for our campaigns a breeze. We no longer have to make daily manual updates to our budgets as their automated solutions take care of it all for us without having to lift a finger."

Emily Hills
Associate Manager, Growth Marketing, Thirdlove