



31 BACK TO SCHOOL MARKETING IDEAS FOR BOUTIQUES

Each year, over \$83 Billion is spent on the back to school shopping season, with apparel as the most consumed category during this period, more than shoes and school supplies both. Whether your customer is a mom of littles, mom of teens, or a college student herself, you have a huge opportunity each late summer and fall to take part in the back to school rush.

Starting in early July right after the 4th, and ending in mid-September, it's time to create early buying plans so you have the right product mix and creative marketing, guides and bundles when the season hits.

Then...don't forget the teachers. Teachers are one of the largest demographics in the United States who shop primarily at boutiques, so create a special incentive, styling service or unique teacher discount to become the go-to store for your school.

Back to school is the season to focus on serving, styling and creating value - not on low price or savings. They can go to Walmart for that when you have far more to offer!

Here are 31 ways you can maximize the Back to School Season!

1. **Teacher Discounts** - Create teacher discount days, weeks, or how to redeem a discount with a school ID or email.
2. **College ID Discounts** - Fridays might be college prep day, where you offer 10% off with a school ID. Don't forget to plug your #s heavy to this audience, and offer weekly giveaways to those wearing and tagging your products. Then, scout for micro-influencers!
3. **Gameday Collections** - Whether you carry licensed gear, team up with the local screen printer of choice or feature fashions in school colors, feature walls, windows and homepage collections with gameday-school-color features.
4. **Tailgate Party** - Host a tailgate party for the first big game of the year, giveaway coolers, grill, offer drinks and an opportunity to shop gameday or you featured back to school collections. Offer BOGO's and perks to students, teachers, and teams.
5. **NFL Opening Night** - Girls Only Party - While the men watch the game, offer a live shopping night online or in store for the ladies.

6. **College Care Kit** - The newly empty-nester mom wants to make her baby feel loved during her first month away. Create care package bundles for moms to send daughters at school.
7. **Denim Guide** - Denim is one of the top-selling categories each fall for back to school. Create a trend guide, body type guide or buying guide for your customers to know how to shop your store and best sellers.
8. **Back to School for Mom's Night Out** - Mom's run their butts off during back to school shopping, once they are done shopping for the kids, give them a night or way to shop for themselves with special perks and pampering.
9. **Mom Care Packages** - Just like the mom's night out party, create discounted care bath and beauty bundles for mom's who deserve a treat once the kids are back in school!
10. **New Semester, New You** - Second only to New Year, back to school is the season of new starts. Use this motto in your marketing to promote new ideas, closets, charities, and fashion. Help your customer start fresh in outfits she feels confident in.
11. **Teacher Styling Sessions** - Teachers both local and from far away are looking to makeover their closets for back to school, but not break the bank. Offer a video chat styling session to pick out key pieces in her closet and enhance what she already has from your store. Sessions are \$100 and come with a \$50 gift card to spend.
12. **Closet Makeovers** - Just like teachers, women of all ages are looking for a fall closet cleanout, offer in-person or online styling sessions to keep key pieces and clean out the rest.
13. **Sponsor a Sports Team** - This is the beauty of small business, the opportunity you have to make a local difference. There is no better way to get your name out there than to sponsor the local sports team. Run radio ads if you're old school, print ads, get your name on the warm-up jersey or on the football field fence.
14. **Back to School Bundles** - What back to school essentials do you have right now? Outfits, accessories, school supplies and planners? Offer them as a bundle to give mom's and students a reason to shop.
15. **Transitional Season Shopping Guide for Bipolar Weather** - Does your weather go from 100 to 50 in a snap? Wearing shorts in the morning but hoodies at the football game that night? Create collections, videos and shopping guides around the moody weather this time of year.
16. **Friday Night Lights** - Go Team! Create collections, videos and promotions just for your local gameday.

17. **Back To School Clothing Drive** - While everyone is adding to their closet this fall, many are also cleaning one out. Host a local clothing drive as a drop off point for charity. Give all donators a coupon for a purchase in your store or on your website.
18. **Sign up to Teach** - Does your local college have an entrepreneurship class? Can you sign up to volunteer at JA, or teach? You have a story, perspective and idea to share. This builds a relationship and will bring college students, teachers and families back to you for years.
19. **Student Job Fair** - Looking to hire for the holidays and want the pick of the litter? Host a job fair for stylists, models and micro-influencers now before they all get college jobs locked down.
20. **College Model Call** - Do you need brand reps or additional models? Host a model call or run a social media voting contest for new brand reps.
21. **Goods for Grades** - Have students bring in report cards at each semester end and award discounts for each A on the card.
22. **Student Map** - Pin a map in your store, and have customers pin where they are from.
23. **School Spirit Wall** - Hold a contest based on # of purchases by each school. Create rewards for the highest earners on the wall!
24. **Dormroom Diaries** - College girls love to show off a Pinterest worthy dorm. If you have decor or any dorm worthy items, create a hashtag and hold a contest.
25. **Look for micro-influencers & guest writers** - with back to school comes new families and opportunities. Host a call for new micro-influencers and brand reps to collaborate with on social media to be the face of your brand this school year.
26. **#FridayNightFashion** - Create a back to school # for your brand, give credit or contests to those using the tag each weekend at football games. Use this to pump up your gameday collection.
27. **Teacher of the Month** - Feature a teacher of the month all year long and keep activating your teacher or wear to work outfit ideas.
28. **Create an Instagram Worthy Experience** - in-store or at a pop-up. Gen Z is spending more money on experiences vs material items, so tailor your in-store or pop up experience to their gram-worthy desires.

29. **Host a Back to School Fashion Show** - Create a charity growing show, featuring local colleges or high schools to raise money for charity and show off your new fall arrivals.
30. **Back to School Giveaway** - What better time to create a massive bundle or gift card collection than entering those who shop with you during back to school, into a massive giveaway!
31. **Create a Tool They Can Use** - Laundry cheatsheet for college students, or capsule wardrobe plan for teachers using the same piece in 5 outfits, or even a body fit guide for denim.