2014 Back-to-School Survey
Rising to the head of the class

Conducted July 5-10, 2014
1,063 responses
About the survey

The survey was commissioned by Deloitte and conducted online by an independent research company between July 5 and 10, 2014. The survey polled a sample of 1,063 parents of school-aged children and has a margin of error for the entire sample of plus or minus three percentage points.

All respondents had at least one child attending school in grades K – 12 this fall.
Expected spending by parents, children is declining

Average spending on back-to-school shopping has dropped since 2012

“What is the total amount you [parent] expect to spend on back-to-school items this season?”

Average Spend by Parents

- 2012: $598
- 2013: $428
- 2014: $370

“What is the estimated total amount you expect your children will spend on back-to-school items for grades K - 12 this season?”

Average Spend by Children

- 2012: $422
- 2013: $244
- 2014: $173

Families (including children) will spend on average $543 this back-to-school season
Consumer sentiment toward economy is optimistic

2 in 5 respondents (40%) believe the economy will continue to improve and sentiment is even stronger among higher income groups

“How do you think the U.S. economy is performing today?”

- It is healthy: 4%
- It still is in a recession: 16%
- It has been recovering from a recession, and will probably continue to improve: 40%
- It has been recovering from a recession, but it remains weak: 33%
- Don't know/no opinion: 7%

Less than $100,000

- It is healthy: 4%
- It still is in a recession: 18%
- It has been recovering from a recession, and will probably continue to improve: 36%
- It has been recovering from a recession, but it remains weak: 34%
- Don't know/no opinion: 8%

$100,000 or more

- It is healthy: 5%
- It still is in a recession: 14%
- It has been recovering from a recession, and will probably continue to improve: 47%
- It has been recovering from a recession, but it remains weak: 31%
- Don't know/no opinion: 5%
Consumers’ financial situation remains unchanged

76% of respondents say their financial situation is “better” or the “same” today

“Thinking about your household's assets (home, cash, car, etc.) and your liabilities (credit card bills, mortgage, etc.), would you say your household's financial situation today is:”

- Better than it was a year ago: 33% (2013), 32% (2014)
- The same as it was a year ago: 41% (2013), 44% (2014)
- Worse than it was a year ago: 26% (2013), 24% (2014)
Top 5 concerns respondents have about the U.S. economy or their household’s finances that could impact their back-to-school shopping

- Higher food prices: 68% (2014), 65% (2013)
- Higher energy prices: 63% (2014), 60% (2013)
- Higher medical bills and/or premiums: 46% (2014), 54% (2013)
- Personal debt level is still high: 35% (2014), 38% (2013)
- Higher taxes: 41% (2014), 53% (2013)

*No 2012 data available for “higher taxes” answer choice
** Answer choices below 41% not represented
Differences in intended shopping behaviors

Female respondents plan to be more price and budget conscious when shopping for back-to-school items

“How are you likely to change the way you shop for back-to-school items this season, as compared with last year, because of your concerns about the U.S. economy or your household's finances?”

- 49% will buy more back-to-school items "on sale"
- 26% will use more store coupons
- 16% will use more loyalty or other cards that give me reward points or other benefits
- 59% of female shoppers have a budget in mind when shopping this back-to-school season, as compared to 47% of male shoppers
Items most in demand this back-to-school season

Percent of respondents who expect to purchase …

“Which back-to-school items for grades K - 12 will be purchased by you or your children this season?”

- School supplies: Paper, pencils, etc.
  - 2013: 96%
  - 2014: 96%

- Clothes
  - 2013: 91%
  - 2014: 91%

- Shoes
  - 2013: 82%
  - 2014: 85%

- Backpack/book bag/lunch box
  - 2013: 66%
  - 2014: 73%

- Computer software/small accessories
  - 2013: 9%
  - 2014: 9%
Top 5 retail environments consumers plan to shop

“In what type(s) of retail environment(s) do you plan to do your back-to-school shopping?”

% of respondents who will shop at “online sites” increased from 19% in 2011 to 38% in 2014

*Retail environments below 28% not presented in this chart
"Online sites" moves into the No. 2 spot for the first time in survey’s history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Discount/value department stores</td>
<td>Discount/value department stores</td>
<td>Discount/value department stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Office supply/technology stores</td>
<td>Office supply/technology stores</td>
<td>T2. Online sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Dollar stores</td>
<td>Online sites</td>
<td>T2. Office supply/technology stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Traditional department stores</td>
<td>Specialty clothing stores</td>
<td>3. Traditional department stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Specialty clothing stores</td>
<td>Dollar stores</td>
<td>4. Off-price stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Off-price stores</td>
<td>Off-price stores</td>
<td>T5. Dollar stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Drug stores</td>
<td>Traditional department stores</td>
<td>T5. Warehouse membership clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Online sites</td>
<td>Warehouse membership clubs</td>
<td>6. Specialty clothing stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10.</td>
<td>Consignment shops/thrift stores</td>
<td>Consignment shops/thrift stores</td>
<td>8. Consignment shops/thrift stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10. Supermarkets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents find value in free shipping

Shoppers in the south are more likely than others to prioritize free shipping

% who agree or somewhat agree

“I am more likely to purchase from online retailers who offer free shipping during the back-to-school shopping season.”

Northeast 69%
Midwest 58%
South 71%
West 65%

Two-thirds (66%) of all respondents are likely to purchase from online retailers who offer free shipping
Where are you and your children most likely to hear about the items that you intend to purchase this back-to-school shopping season?"

**Parent**

- **Online (i.e., retailer websites, blogs)**: 54% in 2013, 59% in 2014
- **Television**: 38% in 2013, 43% in 2014
- **Newspapers**: 37% in 2013, 38% in 2014
- **Family members**: 42% in 2013, 37% in 2014
- **Other friends**: 41% in 2013, 31% in 2014
- **Social media**: 30% in 2013, 30% in 2014

**Child**

- **Other friends**: 51% in 2013, 46% in 2014
- **Television**: 36% in 2013, 42% in 2014
- **Social media**: 26% in 2013, 24% in 2014
- **Online (i.e., retailer websites, blogs)**: 21% in 2013, 21% in 2014
- **Family members**: 18% in 2013, 18% in 2014
- **Mobile phone**: 7% in 2013, 12% in 2014
Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) respondents plans to use social media sites in their back-to-school shopping.

“With regard to your back-to-school shopping, how do you plan to use social media sites?”

[Base: Among those planning to use social media]

- To find out about promotions: 83% (2014) vs. 68% (2013)
- To read reviews/recommendations: 67% (2014) vs. 60% (2013)
- To browse products: 55% (2014) vs. 47% (2013)
- To visit retailers’ pages on social networking sites: 41% (2014) vs. 31% (2013)
- To post comments, reviews or feedback to retailers or other consumers: 30% (2014) vs. 26% (2013)
Smart phone ownership continues to rise
More than 8 in 10 (84%) respondents own a smart phone today

“Do you own a Web-enabled smart phone?”

Among smart phone owners, nearly 3 in 4 (74%) respondents plan to use their device to assist with back-to-shopping – an increase of 10 percentage points since 2011
“With regard to your back-to-school shopping, for what purposes would you be using/would you likely use a smart phone?”

[Base: Among those who will use a smart phone to assist in back-to-school shopping]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Get price information (62%)</td>
<td>1. Get price information (66%)</td>
<td>1. Get/download discounts, coupons, sale information (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Get/download discounts, coupons, sale information (45%)</td>
<td>2. Get/download discounts, coupons, sale information (60%)</td>
<td>2. Get a store location (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. View a retailer’s ad (44%)</td>
<td>3. Get store location (55%)</td>
<td>3. Get price information (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Get a store location (38%)</td>
<td>4. Locate a store that carries a particular product (50%)</td>
<td>4. Access a retailer’s website (46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Get product information (35%)</td>
<td>5. Access a retailer’s website (44%)</td>
<td>5. Locate a store that carries a particular product (41%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two-thirds of respondents own tablets

Among tablet owners, 6 in 10 (60%) will use them to shop for back-to-school items

“With regard to your back-to-school shopping, for what purposes would you be using/would you likely use a tablet?”

[Base: Among those who will use a tablet to assist in back-to-school shopping]

- Get price information: 60%
- Shop online: 59%
- Access a retailer’s website: 55%
- Get product information: 53%
- Make a purchase: 50%
- View a retailer’s ad: 48%
- Get a store location: 45%
- Get/download discounts, coupons, sale information: 41%
- Read product/retailer reviews: 41%
- Locate a store that carries a particular product: 40%
- Access a shopping app: 23%
Respondents are concerned about the protection of their personal data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% who agree or somewhat agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned about the protection of my personal data when shopping online</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more concerned about the protection of my personal data when shopping online than one year ago</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned about the protection of my personal data when shopping in the physical store</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more likely to shop at a retailer who provides me education surrounding the security of my personal data</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will use a different form of payment when shopping as a result of a data breach</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents will likely wait to shop

More than half of respondents (54%) expect to complete their back-to-school shopping less than a month before the school year.

“When do you plan to complete your back-to-school shopping?”

- 2 months before the school year: 3%
- 1 month before the school year: 16%
- Less than a month before the school year: 54%
- After the start of the school year: 26%
### Additional shopping behaviors and influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>My back-to-school shopping is influenced more by the school’s recommended product list than my child’s requests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>I’ll do research online first before purchasing back-to-school products in the physical store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>I will take advantage of tax-free shopping weekends in my state or another state if offered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% (33% in 2013)</td>
<td>I prefer to purchase from those retailers that offer an option to buy online/pick-up in-store or buy online/return to store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2014 Back-to-College Survey
Rising to the head of the class

Conducted July 5-10, 2014
453 responses
About the survey

The survey was commissioned by Deloitte and conducted online by an independent research company between July 5 and 10, 2014. The survey polled a sample of 453 parents of college children and has a margin of error for the entire sample of plus or minus five percentage points.

All respondents had at least one child attending college this fall.
Parents and children are expected to spend less
College families (including children) will spend on average $1,223 this season

“What is the total amount you [parent] expect to spend on back-to-college items this season?”

Average Spend by Parent

$907

$787

2013

2014

“What is the total amount you expect your child to spend on back-to-college items this season?”

Average Spend by Children

$453

$436

2013

2014
Top 5 items most in demand

College supplies, clothes, and shoes rank 1-2-3, respectively

"Which back-to-college items will you or your children be purchasing this season?"

- **College supplies: Textbooks, calculator, etc.**
  - 2013: 85%
  - 2014: 94%

- **Clothes**
  - 2013: 82%
  - 2014: 82%

- **Shoes**
  - 2013: 64%
  - 2014: 61%

- **Shower and bathing items**
  - 2013: 50%
  - 2014: 61%

- **Dorm accessories and supplies: Bedding, storage solutions, etc.**
  - 2013: 43%
  - 2014: 55%

* Items below 55% not presented in this chart for 2014
Top 10 retail environments where consumers plan to do their back-to-college shopping

“In what type(s) of retail environment(s) do you plan to do your back-to-college shopping?”

- Discount/value department stores: 77%
- Book stores/university stores: 62%
- Internet, excluding auction sites: 44%
- Office supply/technology stores: 40%
- Warehouse membership clubs: 38%
- Off-price stores: 33%
- Home furnishings and housewares stores: 32%
- Home electronics stores: 31%
- Drug stores: 29%
- Traditional department stores: 27%

Respondents expect to take on average 4 shopping trips when purchasing back-to-college items

* Only the top 10 rankings are listed for both 2013 and 2014
Electronic device ownership by college students

Smart phones overtake computers as No. 1 electronic device among students

"Which of the following electronic devices does your college student own?"

- Smart phone: 89% (2014) vs 80% (2013)
- Computer – Desktop/laptop: 84% (2014) vs 82% (2013)
- MP3 player: 51% (2014) vs 52% (2013)
- Digital camera: 45% (2014) vs 47% (2013)
- Tablet: 32% (2014) vs 18% (2013)
- E-reader: 17% (2014) vs 14% (2013)
Households planning to use social media to shop

2 in 5 (44%) families will use social media sites when shopping for college

“Do you or your children plan to use social media sites to assist in your back-to-college shopping?”

- 2013: 42%
- 2014: 44%
Different uses of social media when college shopping

More respondents planning to engage with retailers’ sites and write reviews

“With regard to your back-to-college shopping, how do you or your children plan to use social media sites?”

[Base: Among those who plan to use social media]
Nearly 7 in 10 (68%) respondents have only completed a quarter or less of their college shopping.
Differences in college buying behaviors

Female respondents prefer more flexible shopping options; male respondents will purchase more online to find best prices

85% of college students will likely buy more used textbooks or textbook rentals to help stretch their back-to-college spending budget
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