

**Taboola**

# EDUCATION

**Discovery  
Benchmark  
Report**

Global Data, Trends & Insights





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# INTRODUCTION

From the back-to-school rush for this year's trendy school supplies, all the way to selecting courses for higher education or career development, marketing for the education vertical is poised to capitalize on huge consumer spending.

The global higher education market will hit \$33.74 billion in 2023<sup>1</sup>, global online education will reach \$132.98 billion by 2023<sup>2</sup>, and according to the National Retail Federation, the U.S. alone will spend \$80.7 billion on school supplies<sup>3</sup>.

But most importantly, it's not just about big-box store shopping and college rankings anymore—they're making discoveries directly from the brands themselves.

In the middle of this direct-to-consumer renaissance, it's important to build 1:1 relationships with your customers. In order to do that, the consumers first have to know about you.

That's where online marketing efforts come in.

<sup>1</sup> Technavio: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20181120005265/en/Global-Higher-Education-Market-2019-2023-Growth-Internationalization>

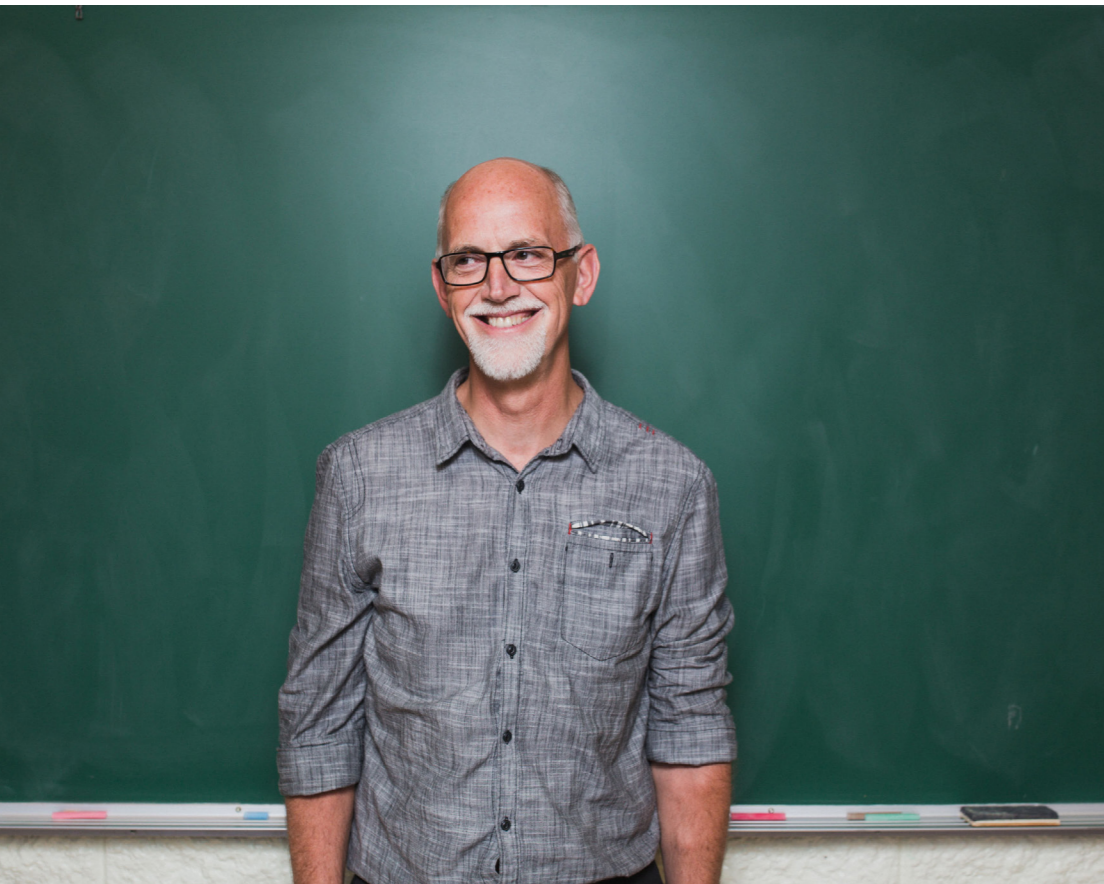
<sup>2</sup> MarketWatch: <https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/online-education-market-2019-by-industry-size-estimation-industry-share-future-demand-dynamics-drivers-research-methodology-by-2023-2019-04-29>

<sup>3</sup> National Retail Federation: <https://nrf.com/insights/holiday-and-seasonal-trends/back-school>





# EDUCATION ADVERTISING TODAY



Education marketing today has to convey *worth* of cost.

**Parents want deals.** A quick search for back-to-school shopping reveals a list of the hottest deals—in fact, 6% of Amazon Prime Day shoppers were there for back-to-school items.

**Students want an education that delivers.** Rising tuition rates have left many students thoughtful about not just their education, but doors that education is guaranteed to open post-graduation.

To convey what your education product is really worth to consumers, you need a constant flow of fresh content and campaign creatives targeted strategically to your audience online, and you need to know exactly how to optimize those campaigns as trends change.

You'll need both a strong creative strategy and media mix.

Today, you're likely using search and social to do so. Discovery is the third pillar of any successful digital strategy complements them both—it's the most effective way to reach people who've never seen your brand before and to reach people with the right content, in the right place at the right time.

In this report, we'll guide you through data-driven insights to help you build a successful discovery campaign for your education brand.

<sup>4</sup> eMarketer: <https://content-na2.emarketer.com/the-amazon-prime-day-2019-halo-effect>

<sup>5</sup> The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/09/college-cost-indebted-zaloom/597181/>





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# START YOUR CAMPAIGN TODAY

START NOW



# WE'LL COVER...

The **who, what, when, where, and how** behind today's most successful discovery campaigns in the education industry.

**We're going beyond benchmarks and defining where your brand has the most opportunity on the open web.**

We've defined opportunities for several types of targeting tactics—from content types to time of day, and more. Opportunity for each exists at the intersection of supply and demand. When there is high demand for education content but low supply, there's a high opportunity for success.

To get even more specific, we define demand in this context as a click-through-rate (CTR). If someone is clicking on a piece of content, we assume they want to see it. Supply is defined as the percentage of spend that marketers have allocated toward a type of content on our network.

The data in this report is based on campaigns from all types of advertisers in the education industry—including e-commerce retailers, disruptive education courses, higher education institutions, related article content and more—which includes 8,052,334,829 impressions and over 6,371,453 clicks.

Opportunity is different for every industry, especially when it comes to seasonality.

READ ON TO DISCOVER DATA-DRIVEN

INSIGHTS BEHIND:

- The **audiences** you should target, test and optimize
- The **content types** for which you have the biggest opportunity to grow your audience
- **Time** of year, week and day that's best to reach your audiences
- The **platforms** and **countries** with the best chance for campaign success
- The **KPIs** your peers are targeting, and how to **measure** and **A/B test** them effectively.



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# WHO SHOULD YOU TARGET?

THE RIGHT WAY  
TO USE AUDIENCE  
SEGMENTS AND DATA

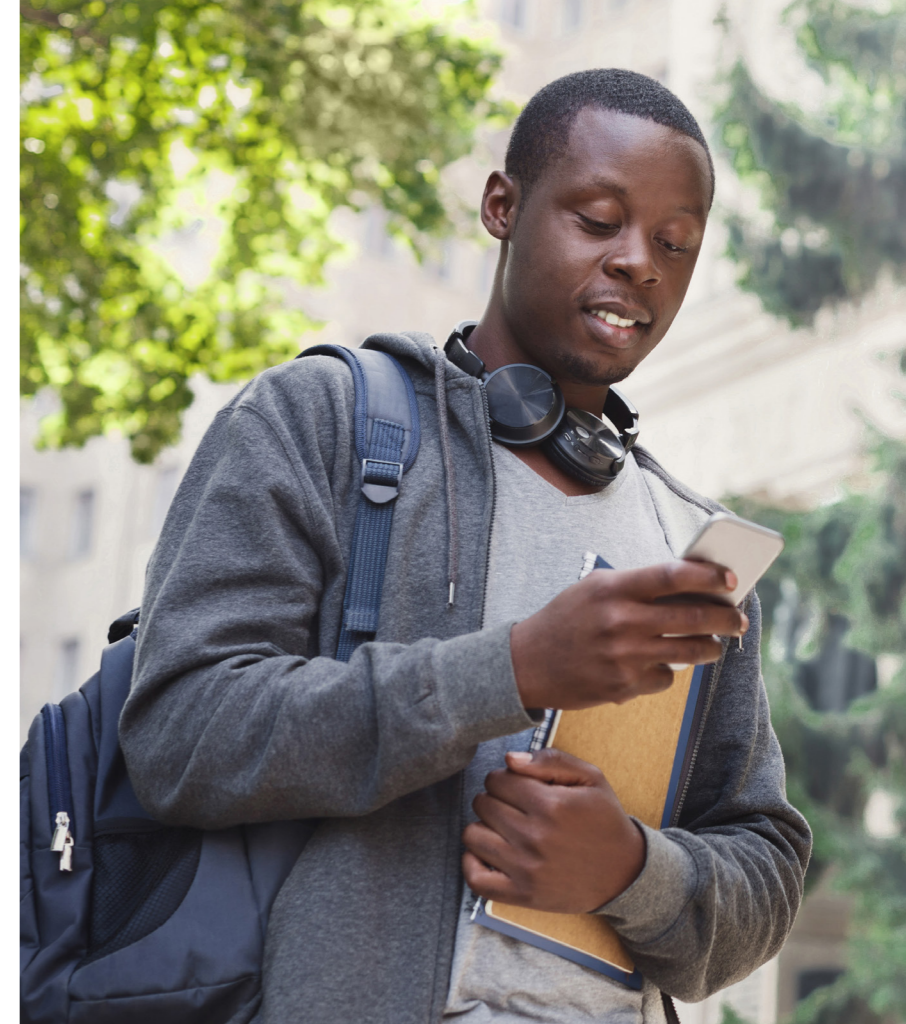




# HOW TO FIND YOUR PERFECT AUDIENCE

Marketers tend to assume they know their audiences—and they do, just maybe not as well as they think.

The best way to tell is to analyze activity on your own campaigns—knowing who responds to your content is the educational experience that you need in the beginning of a campaign in order to get the content and targeting just right.



## HERE'S HOW WE RECOMMEND YOU ORGANIZE TARGETING FOR A ONE-MONTH CAMPAIGN:

### WEEK 1

When you're starting out, keep your targeting wide—we often recommend no targeting at all. This will give you a clear picture of exactly *who* is responding to your campaigns without any bias.

### WEEK 2

Check in with your campaign at the end of the week. Who responded? Are you surprised by gender, location or interests? Choose several audience segments to test based on your initial results.

### WEEK 3

This is a good time to take a look at your creative performance. Is each headline, photo or video resonating with each audience segment? A/B test different combinations for the right fit.

### WEEK 4

When analyzing your campaign, take a look back at what surprised you, and look to test new audiences in order to expand your reach in the future.

### DO IT AGAIN

Rinse and repeat..



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# USING DATA FOR SUCCESS

Our data marketplace includes data from leading data-providers as well as data of our own.

**Try testing some of these segments in your next campaign:**

- Interest > Education > School Supplies > High Interest
- Interest > Education > Higher Education > US Colleges
- Interest > Education > Online Education > Marketing

*And many, many more!*





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# WHAT CONTENT SHOULD YOU DISTRIBUTE?

HOW TO CHOOSE  
BETWEEN ARTICLES,  
PRODUCT PAGES,  
VIDEO AND MORE





# HIGH OPPORTUNITY POST-CLICK CONTENT TYPES

Sponsoring events and content partnerships are a well-known tactic for education marketers, but it's not the only effective option—leading consumers to pages containing videos also performs well.

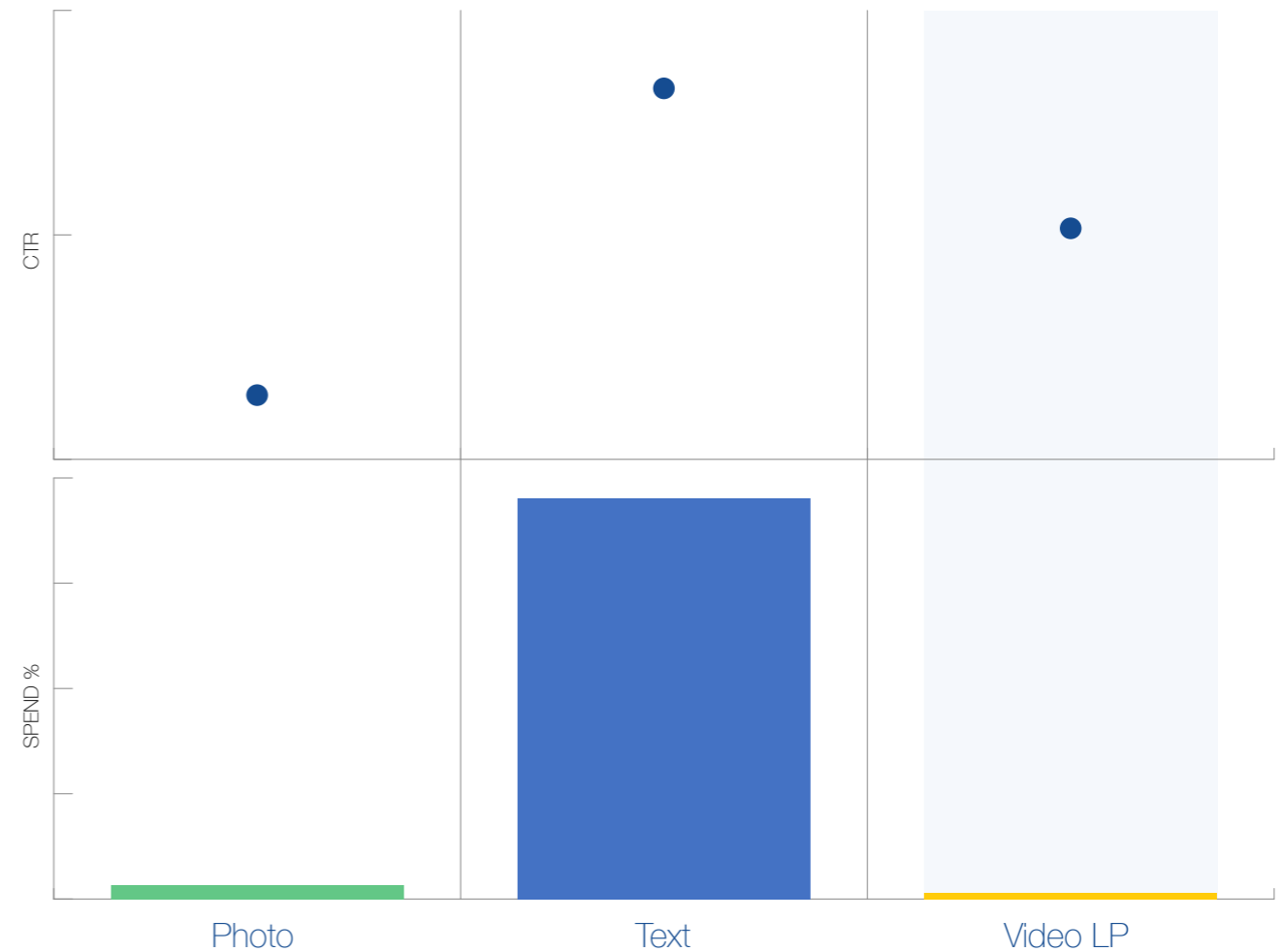
While supply of text articles is high, marketers should also promote more landing pages that include video.



## TIP

Consider testing video landing pages.

**Discovery Content Type Performance for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2019**  
Supply<sup>6</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>7</sup> by Content Type



<sup>6</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on education content

<sup>7</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for education content



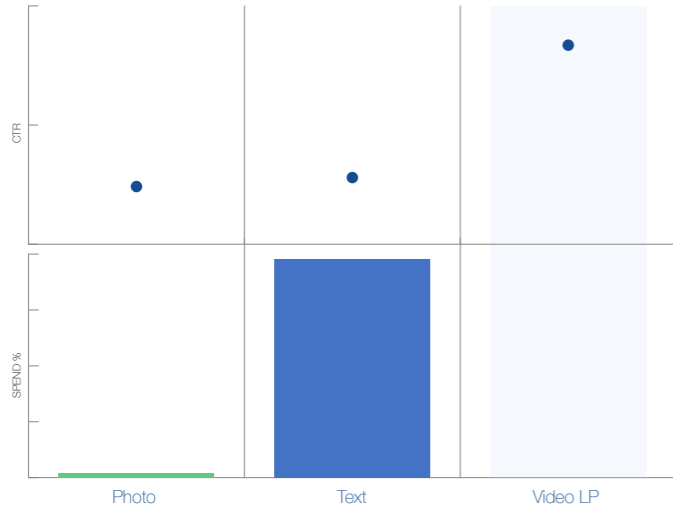
## HIGH OPPORTUNITY POST-CLICK CONTENT TYPES, BY COUNTRY

These country-specific trends provide a benchmark for advertisers looking to allocate spend by post-click content type in specific countries.

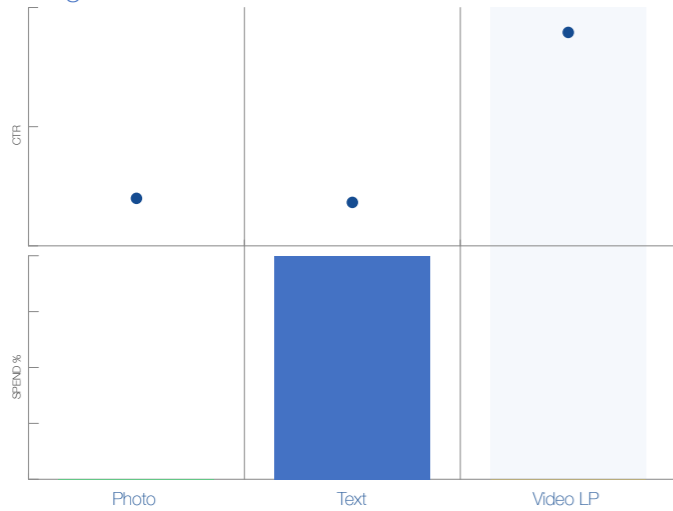
For example, an education advertiser in the United States leading users to an article page should consider testing photo galleries in their sponsored content campaigns as the demand is the highest and supply is very low.

Or, an Education advertiser in the United Kingdom should test driving users to a video, as there is high demand and not much competition.

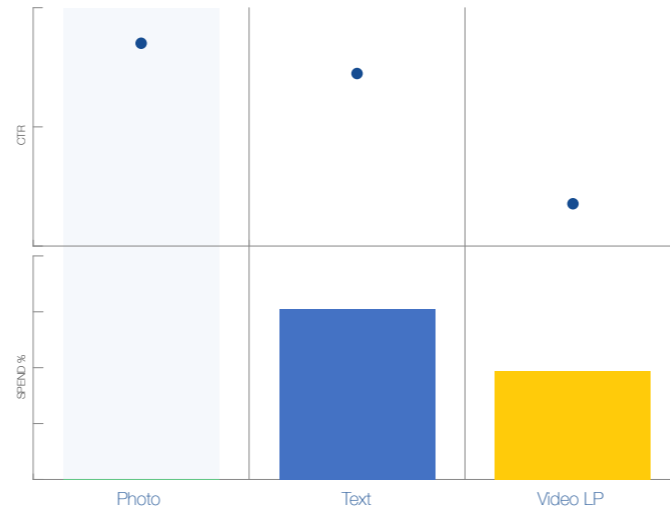
Australia



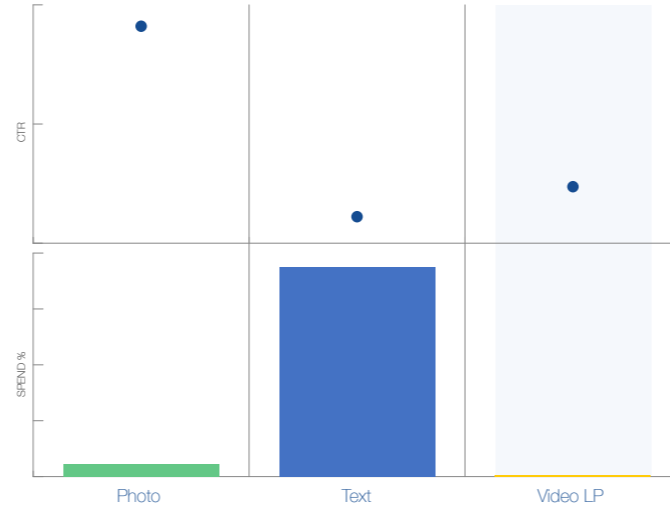
Belgium



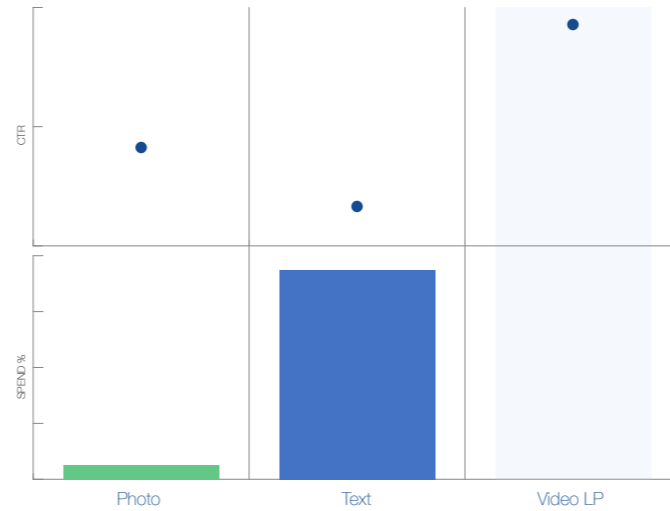
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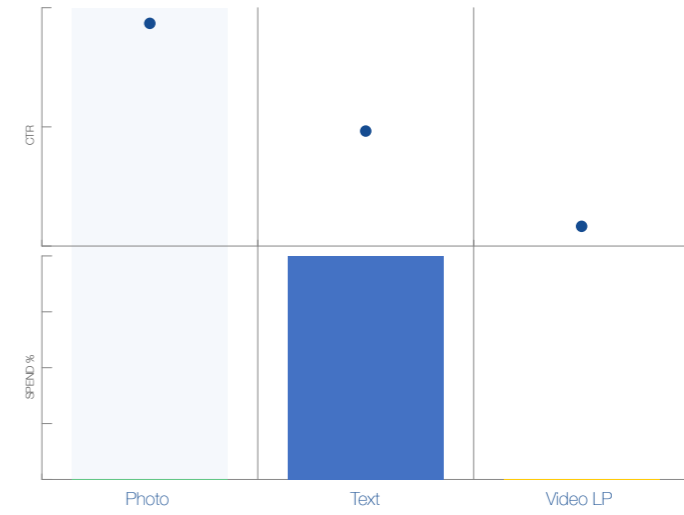
Canada



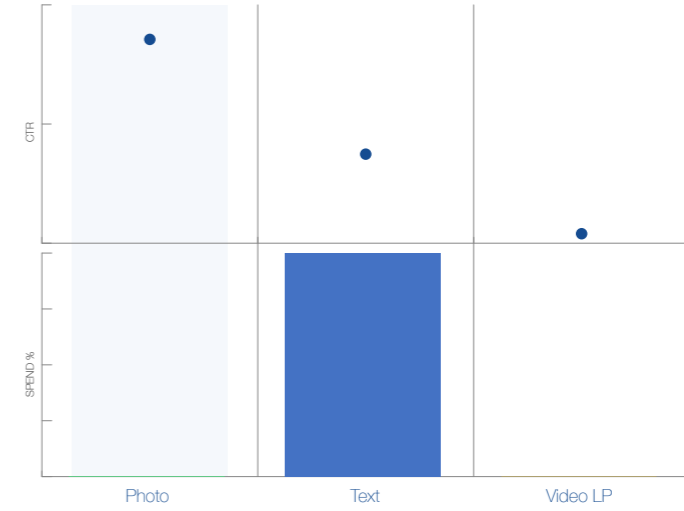
China



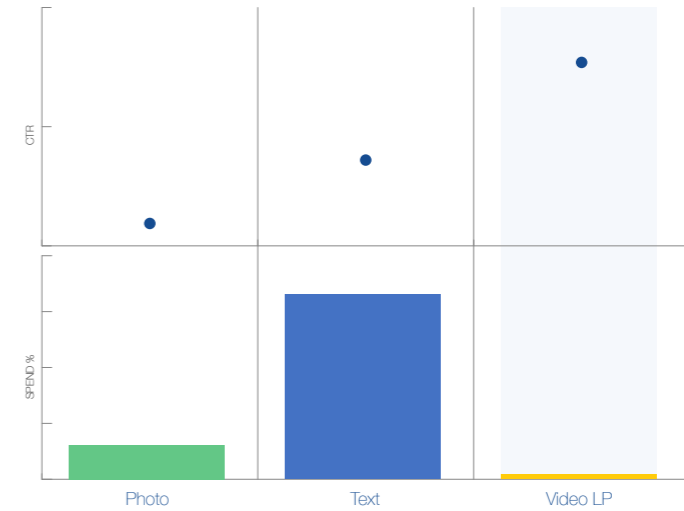
France



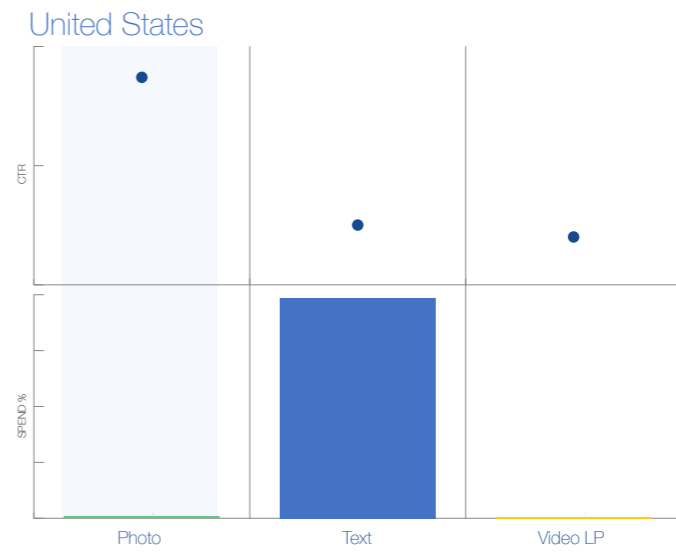
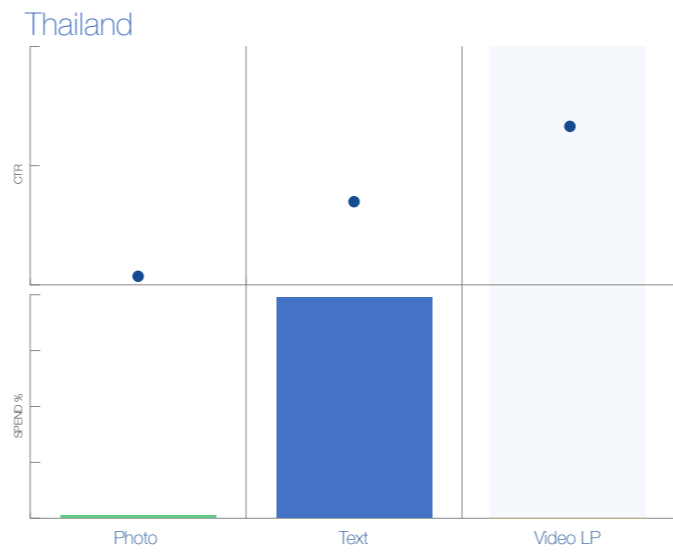
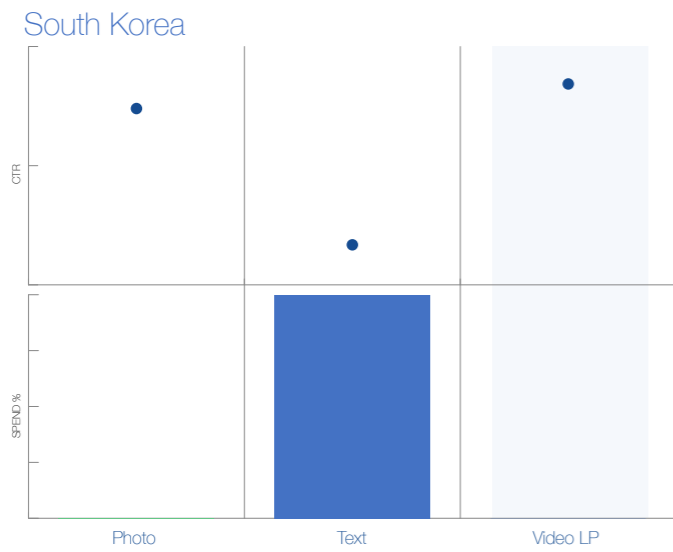
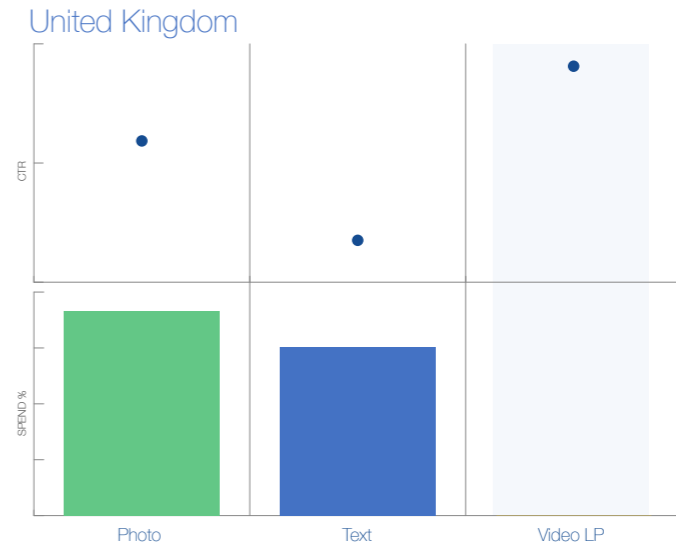
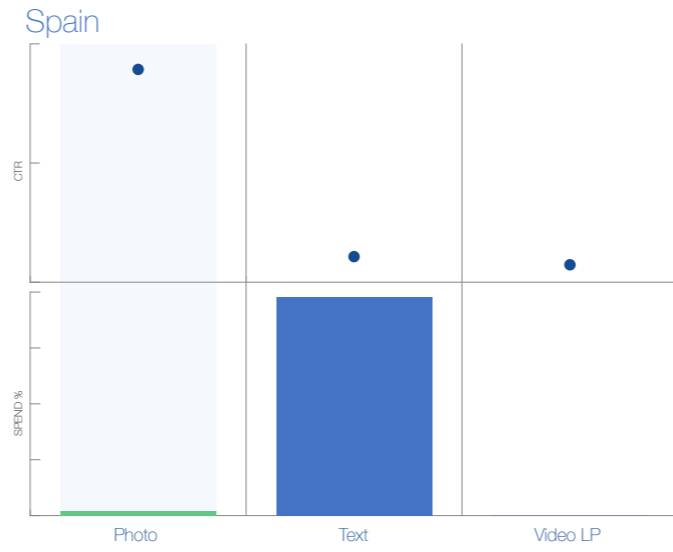
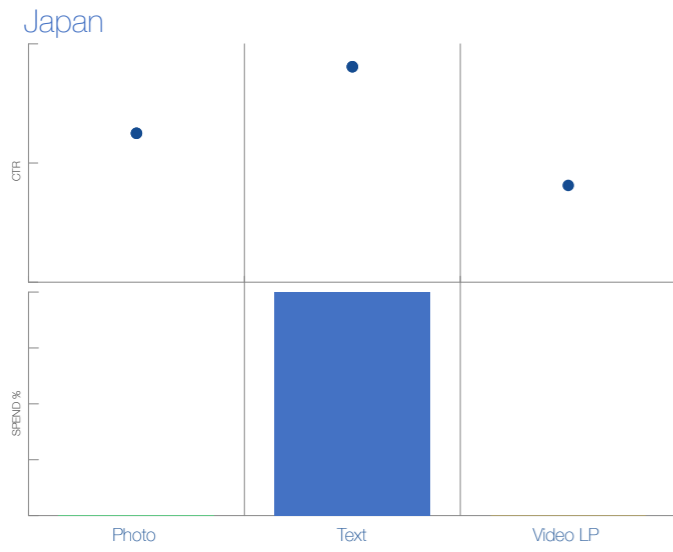
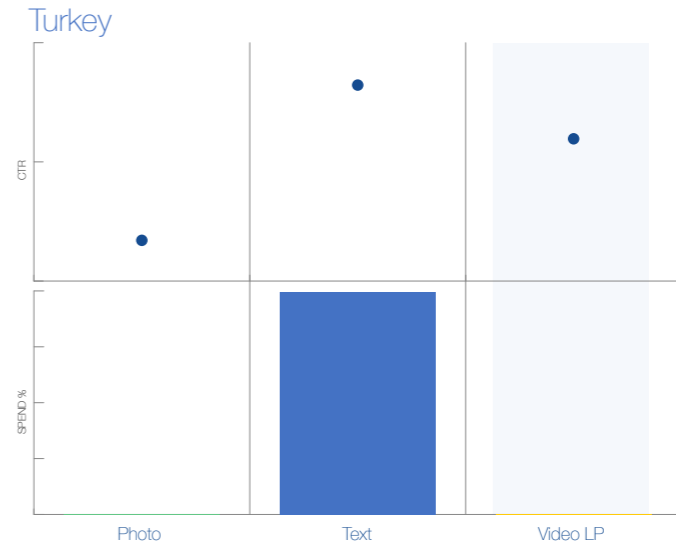
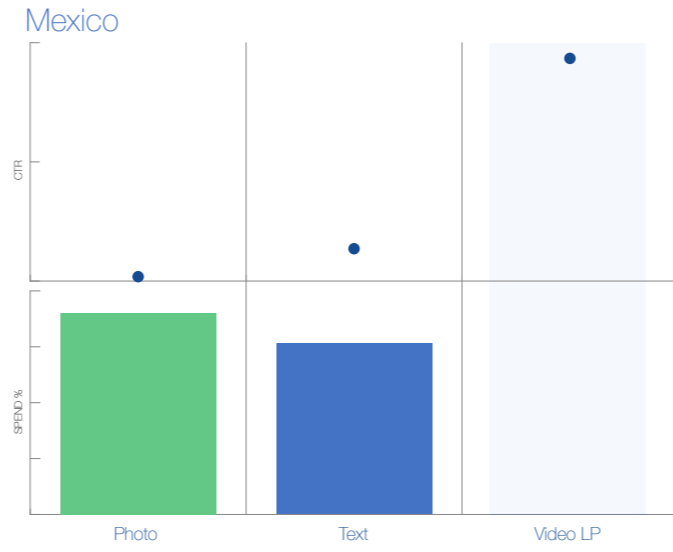
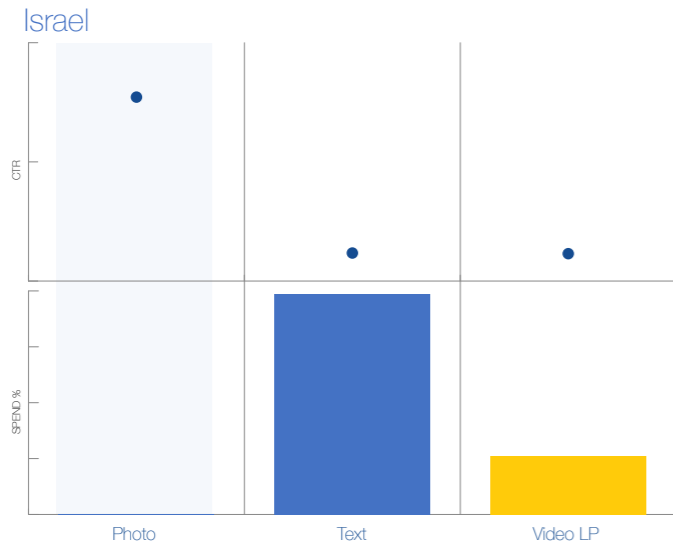
Germany



India











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**START  
YOUR CAMPAIGN  
TODAY**

[START NOW](#)



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# VIDEO ADS: DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS BEHIND WHAT MAKES A GOOD ONE



## LESS THAN 30 SECONDS

Our video length recommendation.  
Keep it short and sweet.

## OPTIMIZE FOR SOUND OFF

Include subtitles in case your consumer is in the office, doesn't have headphones, or just doesn't want video with sound.

## THREE

The number of video creatives we recommend you test for optimization.

## LOGO

If brand awareness is your goal, include your logo on-screen at all times.

## END CARD

Leave your viewers with an action item—an end card is a great way to direct them to your website or more content.

In addition to these general best practices, including certain types of content, like people driving, dancing or videos in black & white can increase the likelihood that your video is completed.

These video characteristics drive both high viewability and completion rates.



Video Characteristics by Viewability and Completion Rate for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2019



**TIP**

Consider testing black & white videos versus color for your next campaign.



# SPONSORED CONTENT: CAPTURE ATTENTION WHEN PROMOTING ARTICLES AND PHOTO GALLERIES

## WORLDWIDE TRENDS: IMAGE PERFORMANCE

Performance often hinges on the images an education advertiser chooses for his or her creatives. Based on data from Taboola Trends, these types of images increase conversion rates (CVR)<sup>8</sup> the most.

### CVR IMPACT FOR EDUCATION IMAGES TARGETING PURCHASES

**Distance** vs. Close-up (FACE SIZE)



+2.28% CVR

**Man** vs. Woman (GENDER)



+1.97% CVR

**Photo** vs. Illustration (IMAGE TYPE)



+0.78% CVR

**Text** vs. No Text (TEXT)



+0.69% CVR

### CVR IMPACT FOR EDUCATION IMAGES TARGETING LEAD GENERATION

**Color** vs. B/W (SUBJECT)



+3.88% CVR

**Text** vs. No Text (TEXT)



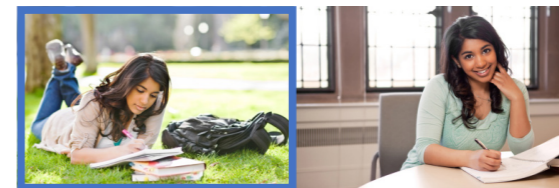
+1.15% CVR

**Person** vs. No Person (SUBJECT)



+0.54% CVR

**Outdoor** vs. Indoor (LOCATION)



+0.29% CVR

<sup>8</sup> Benchmark CVR is calculated from campaigns optimizing for purchases.



## CTR IMPACT FOR EDUCATION IMAGES TARGETING LEAD GENERATION

Based on data from Taboola Trends, these types of images increase click-through-rates (CTR) the most.

### No Animals

(ANIMALS)



+55% CTR than Animals

### Color

(IMAGE COLOR)



+54% CTR than BW

### Indoor

(LOCATION)



+36% CTR than Outdoor

### Photo

(IMAGE TYPE)



+35% CTR than Illustration

### No Text

(TEXT)



+27% CTR than Text

### Food

(FOOD)



+20% CTR than No Food

### Person

(SUBJECT)



+16% CTR than No Person

### Distance

(FACE SIZE)



+7% CTR than Close Up

### Man

(GENDER)



+4% CTR than Woman

# SPONSORED CONTENT: BE UP-FRONT ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE SELLING

## WORLDWIDE TRENDS: KEYWORD PERFORMANCE

Headlines are another extremely important aspect of campaign performance for all native advertisers. This chart indicates performance for the most popular keywords worldwide.

### CTR IMPACT FOR EDUCATION KEYWORDS

Strong Engagement Keywords <i>(Keywords with high demand)</i>		Strong Competition Keywords <i>(Keywords with low demand)</i>		Opportunity Keywords <i>(Keywords with low supply and high demand)</i>	
Time	+70% CTR	Practitioner	-62% CTR	Around	+51% CTR
And	+59% CTR	Management	-58% CTR	Executive	+51% CTR
How	+40% CTR	World	-49% CTR	Year	+51% CTR
Invention	+37% CTR	Data	-47% CTR	Progress	+51% CTR
Device	+32% CTR	Nurse	-38% CTR	Kid	+51% CTR
College	+31% CTR	Offering	-32% CTR	Worst	+50% CTR
Have	+31% CTR	Business	-31% CTR	Universe	+50% CTR
Waste	+31% CTR	Research	-31% CTR	Reality	+50% CTR
Speak	+30% CTR	Innovative	-30% CTR	Marvel	+50% CTR
Second	+30% CTR	That	-28% CTR	Who	+50% CTR

### CVR IMPACT FOR EDUCATION KEYWORDS

Keywords	
Internet	+190% CVR
Fast	+36% CVR
Speaking	+23% CVR
Demand	+19% CVR
Kids	+17% CVR
Enroll	+16% CVR
Apply	+15% CVR
Medical	+15% CVR
Million	+14% CVR
Online	+14% CVR



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# WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO REACH YOUR AUDIENCE?

TIME OF YEAR,  
WEEK AND DAY  
WITH THE HIGHEST  
OPPORTUNITY



# HIGH OPPORTUNITY TIME OF YEAR

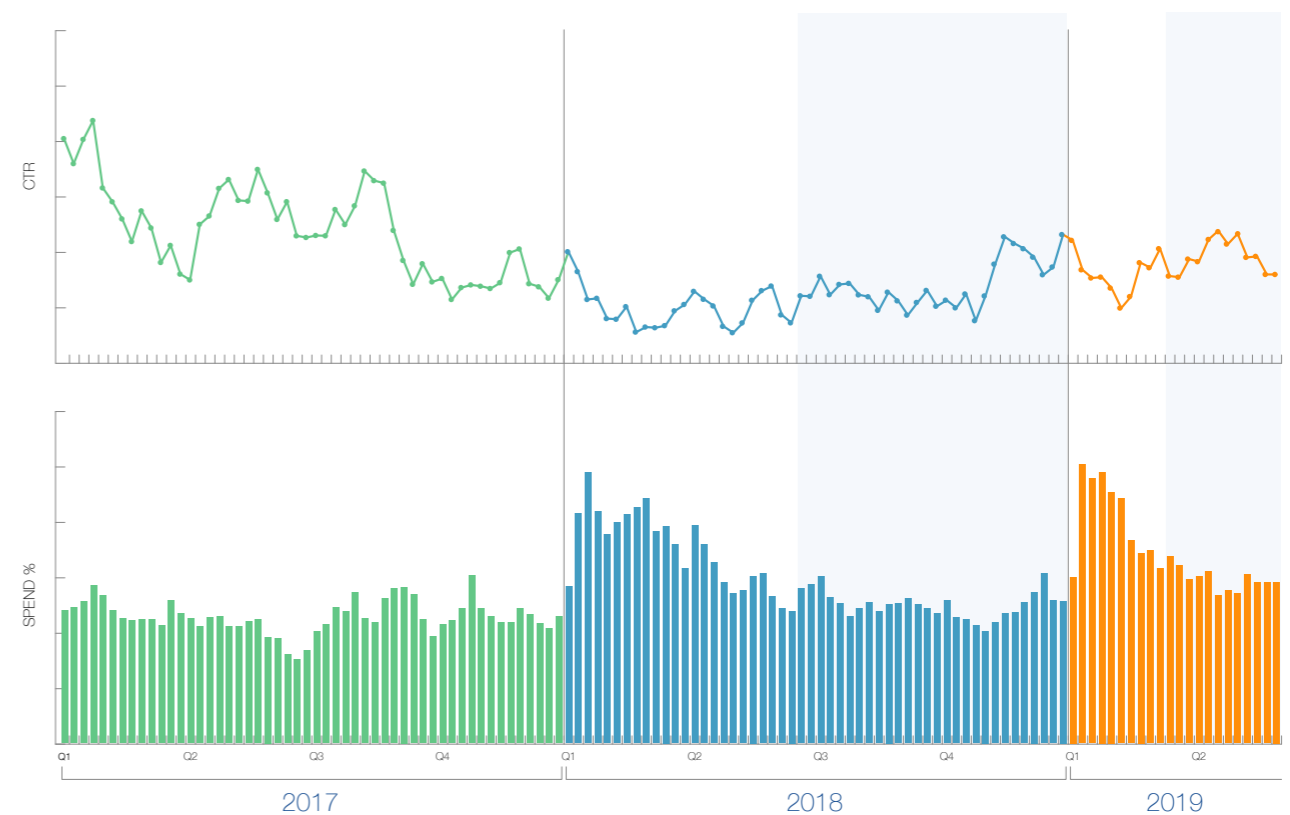
Demand for education products and information truly ramps in Q3 as the back-to-school season approaches—but don't stop when the new year hits. Demand stays high when students return for their second semester.



## TIP

Increase your budget over July, August and September, but don't forget about February.

**Discovery Market Opportunity by Time of Year for the Education Vertical Worldwide**  
*Month over Month Supply<sup>9</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>10</sup>*



<sup>9</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on education content

<sup>10</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for education content



# HIGH OPPORTUNITY DAY OF THE WEEK

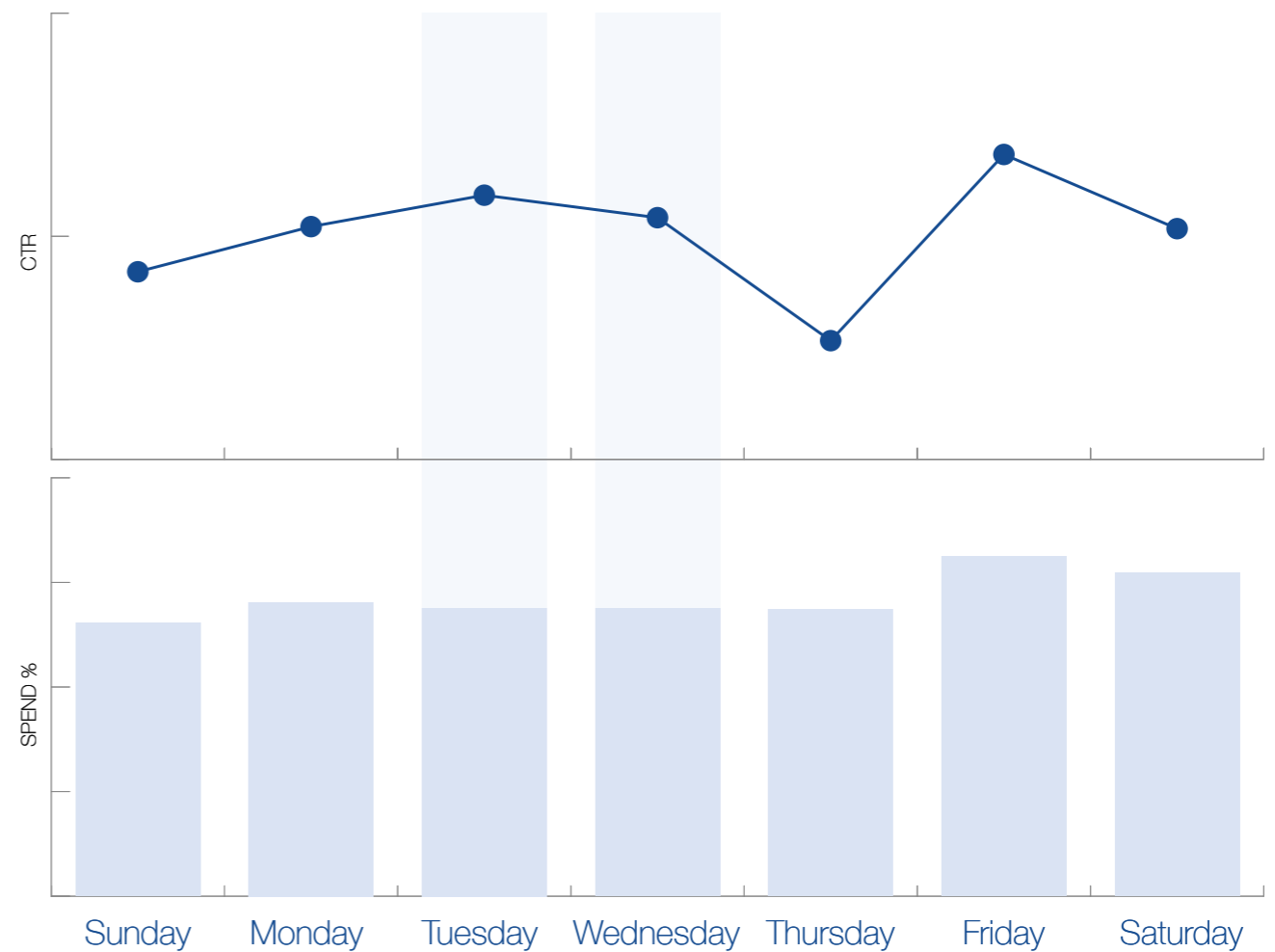
Consumers are interested in education products and content during the week—in fact, the opportunity for marketers is highest on Tuesday and Wednesday.



## TIP

Test Education campaigns on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when demand is high and supply is low.

**Day of Week Performance for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2019**  
Supply<sup>11</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>12</sup> by Day of Week, 2019



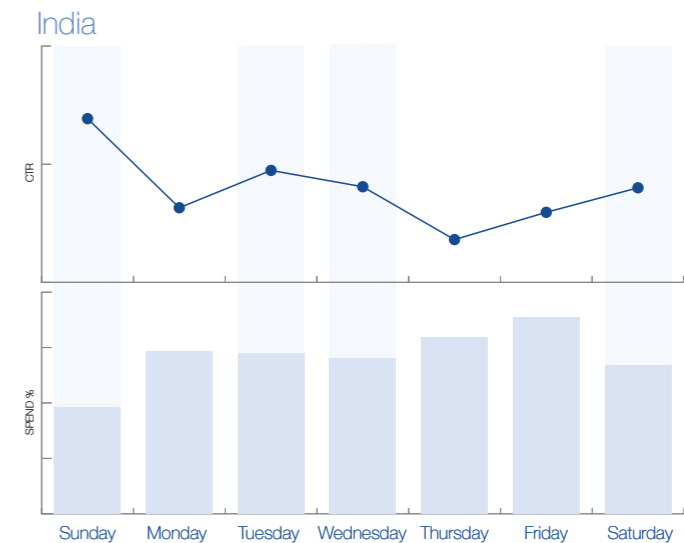
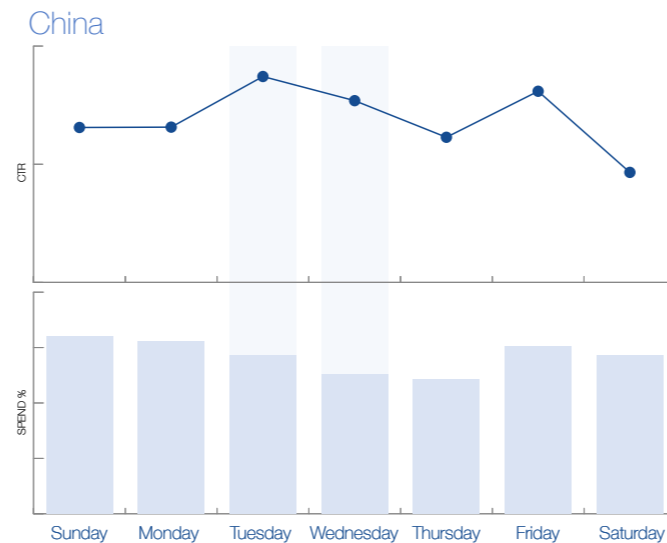
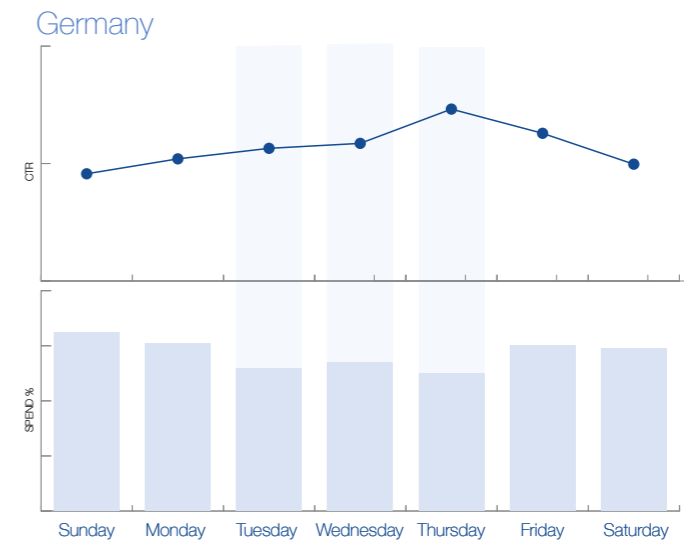
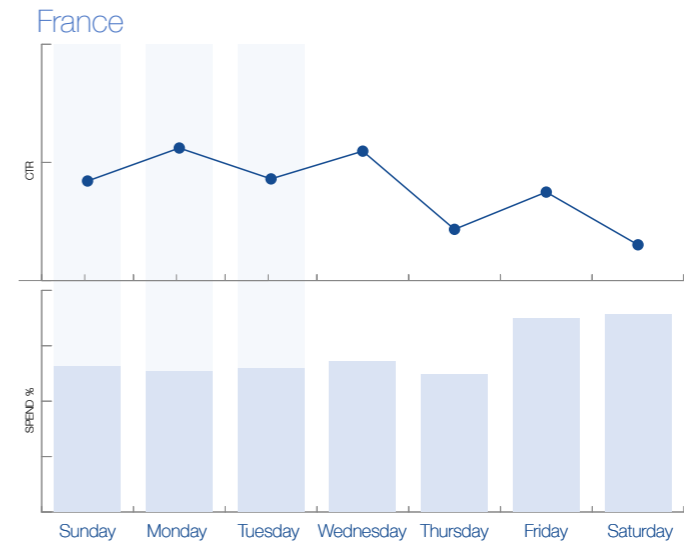
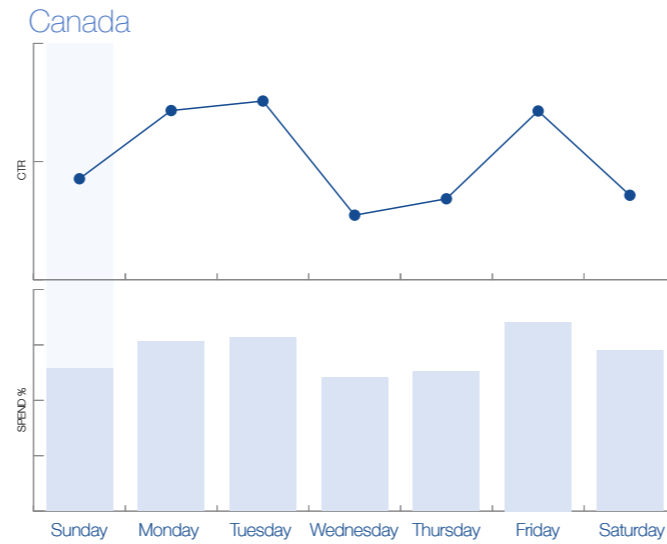
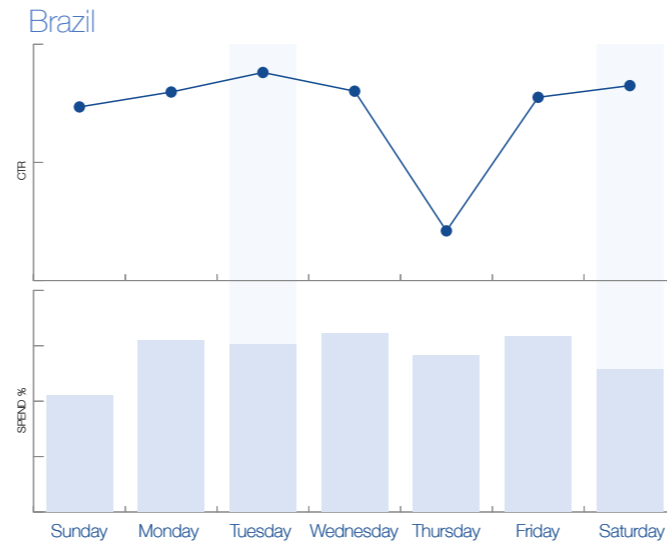
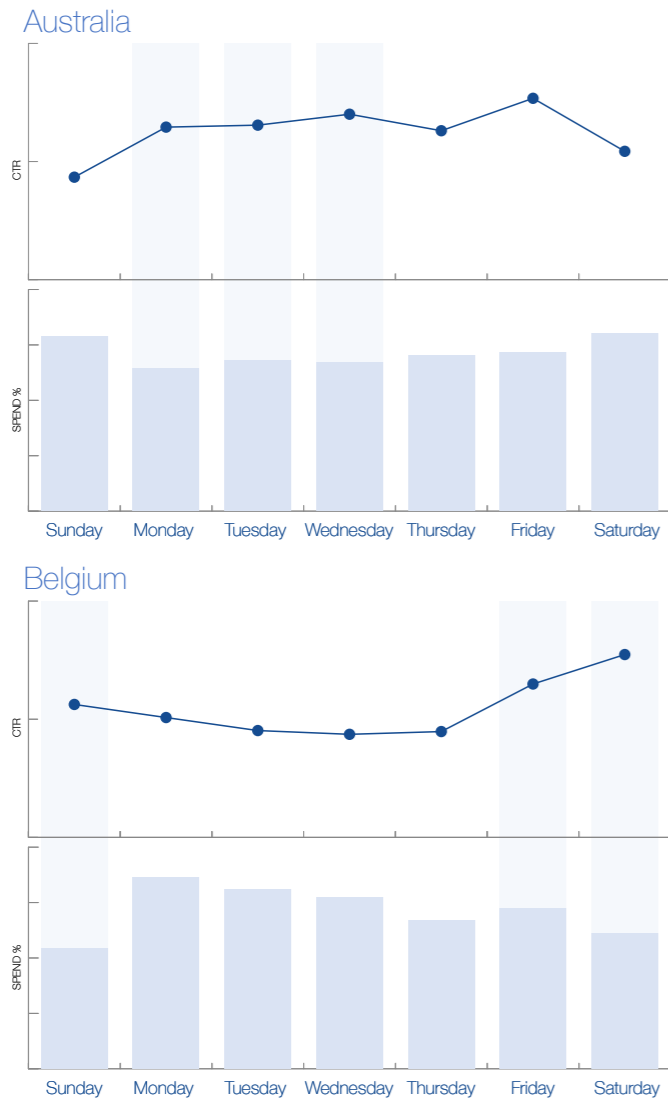
<sup>11</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on education content

<sup>12</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for education content

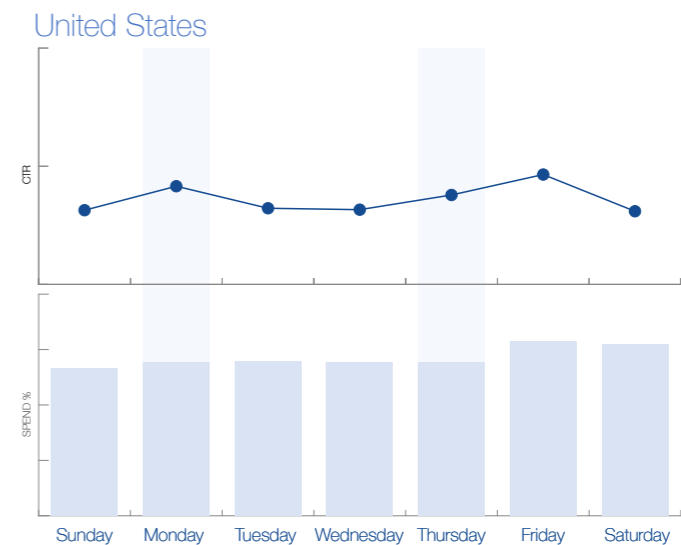
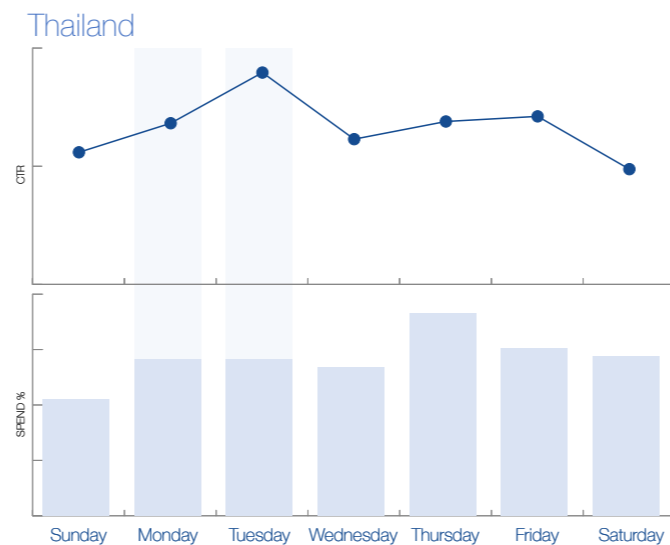
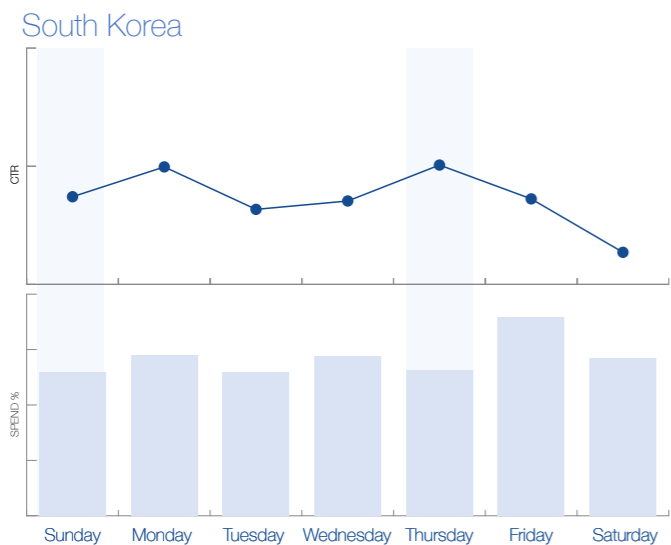
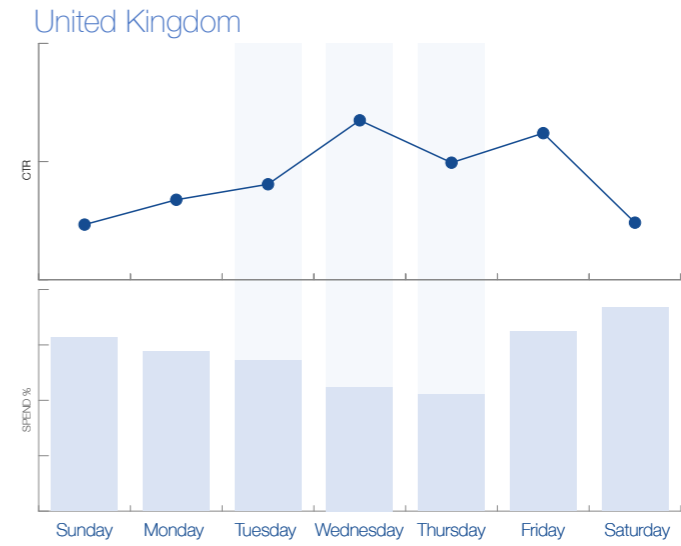
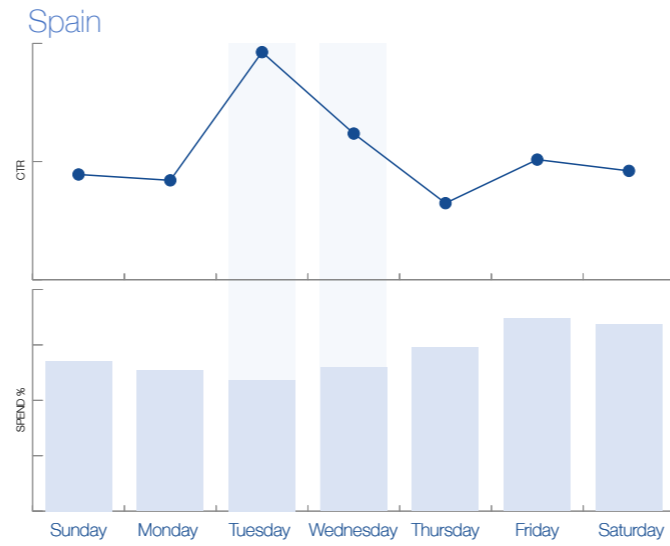
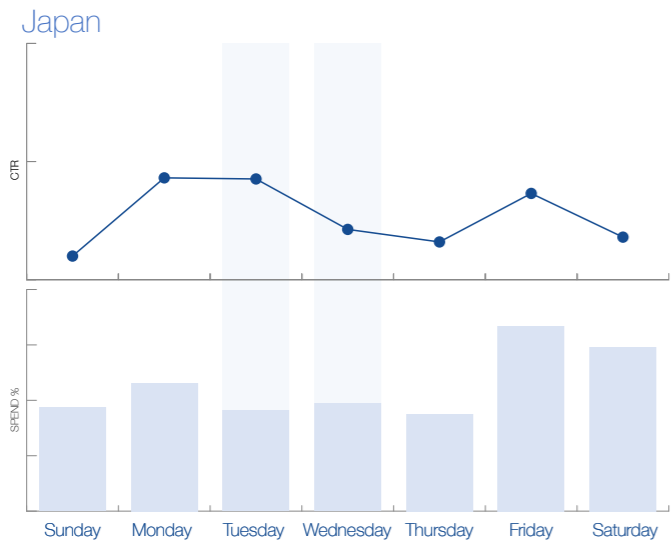
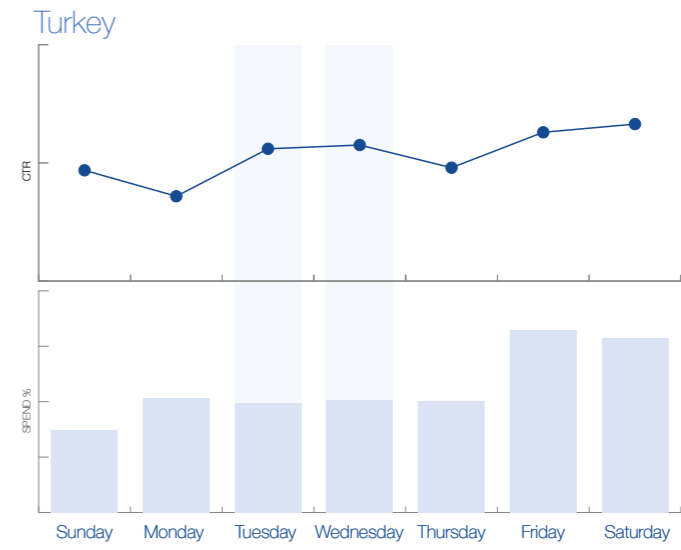
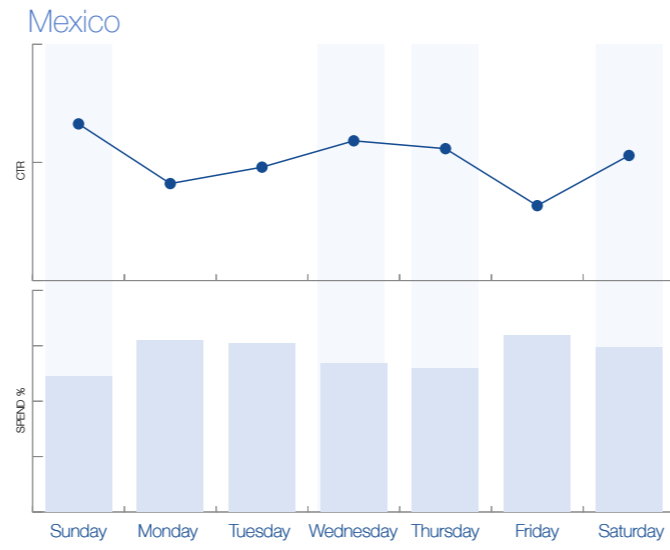
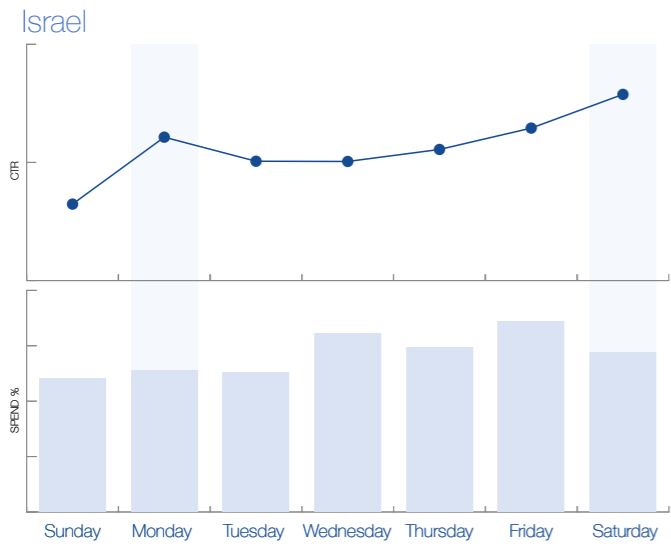
# HIGH OPPORTUNITY DAY OF THE WEEK, BY COUNTRY

When we just look at the United States, Monday and Thursday stand out as a higher opportunities than Tuesdays and Wednesdays for education marketers.

Most of Europe on the other hand, including the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, and France, all stay true to the global trend with high opportunity for marketers on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.











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# START YOUR CAMPAIGN TODAY

[START NOW](#)



# HIGH OPPORTUNITY TIME OF THE DAY

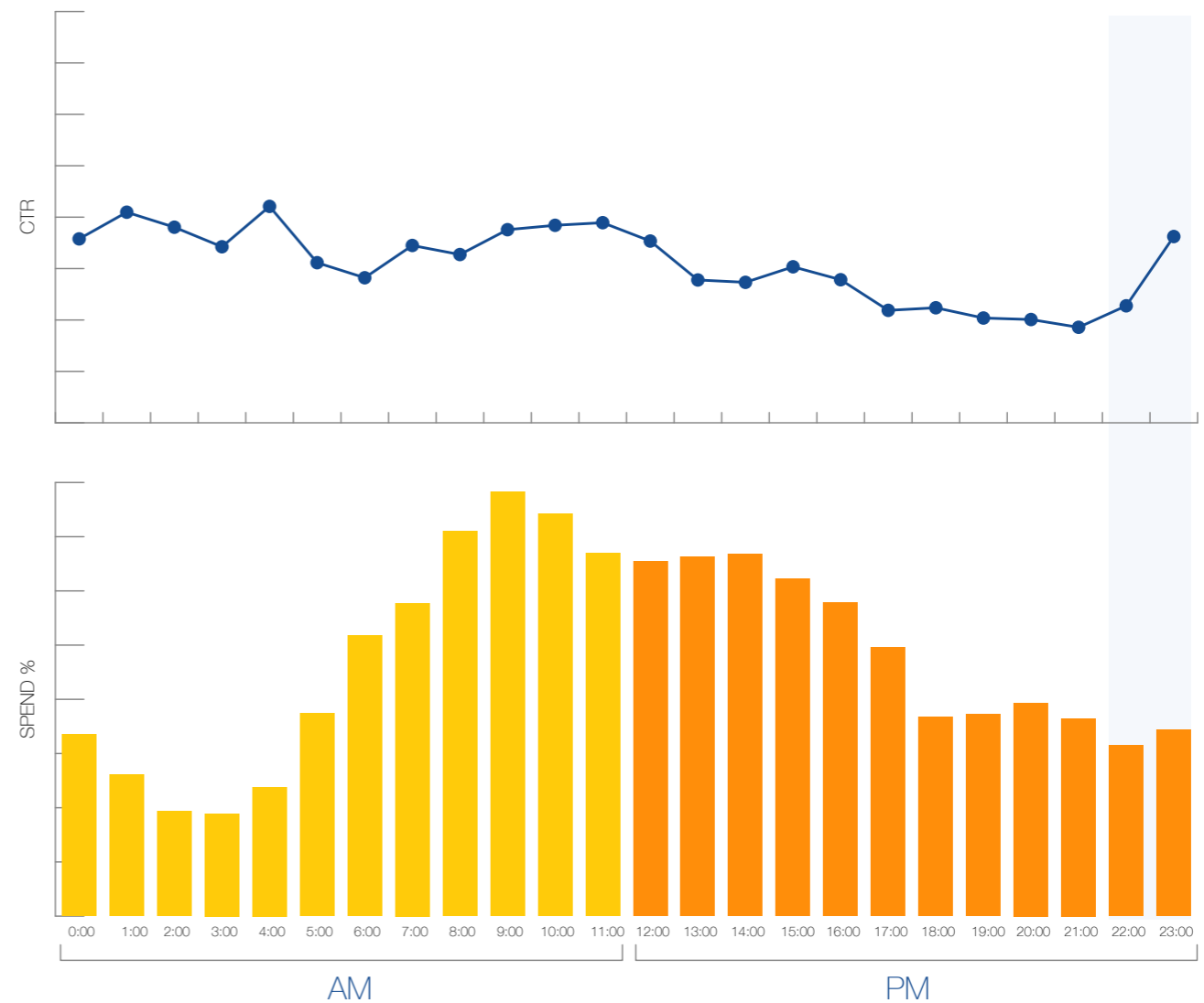
While education shoppers might be active during the work week, demand isn't highest during work hours. In fact, education marketers have an opportunity to capitalize on late night shopping, when there's high demand for content and low competition.



## TIP

Test campaigns for late-night shoppers, around 10pm local time.

**Time of Day Performance for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2019**  
Supply<sup>13</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>14</sup> by Time of Day, 2018

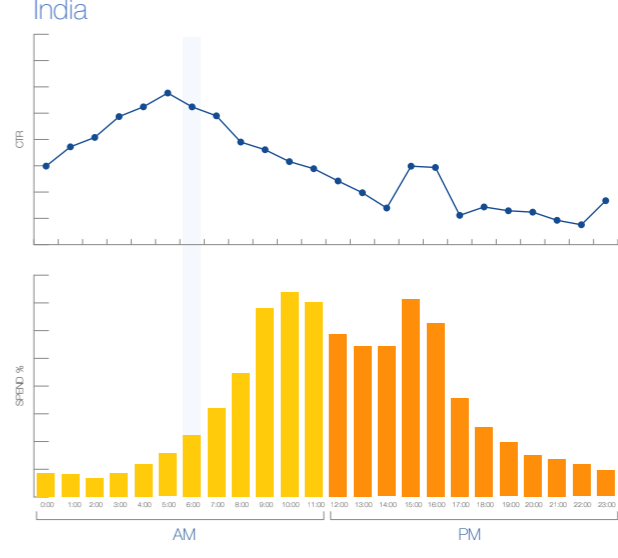
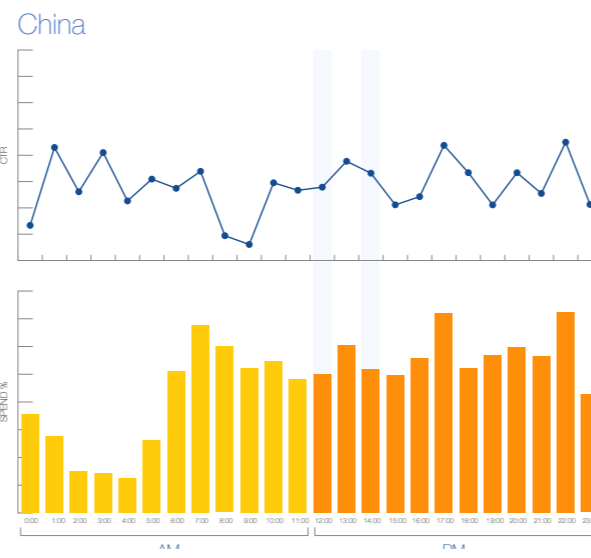
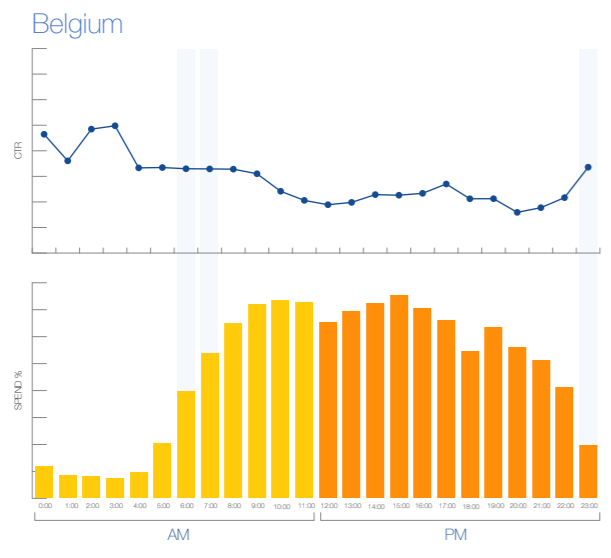
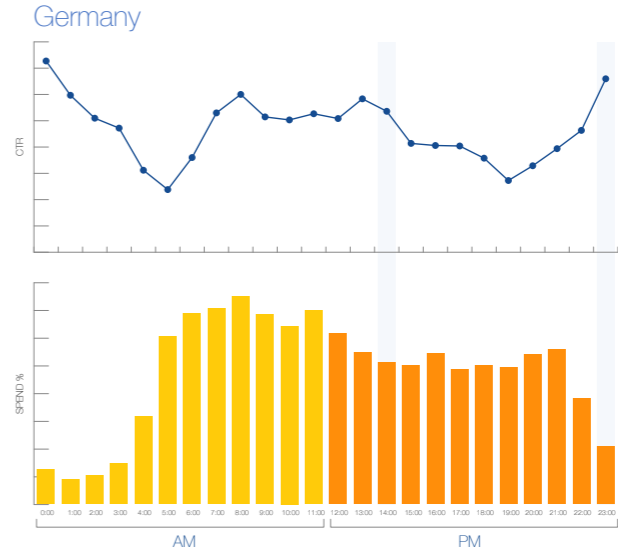
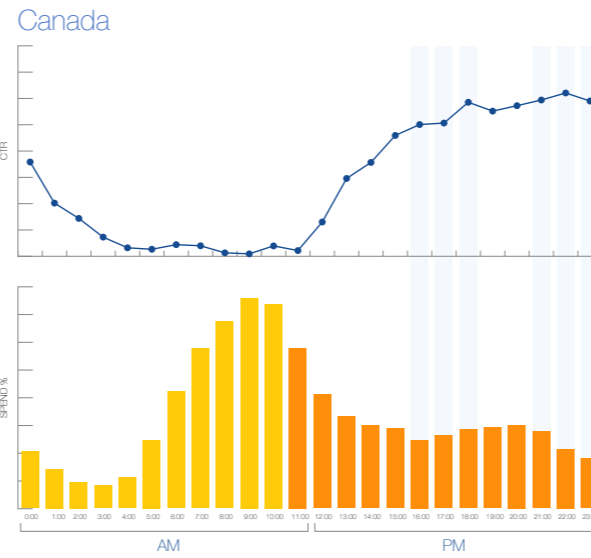
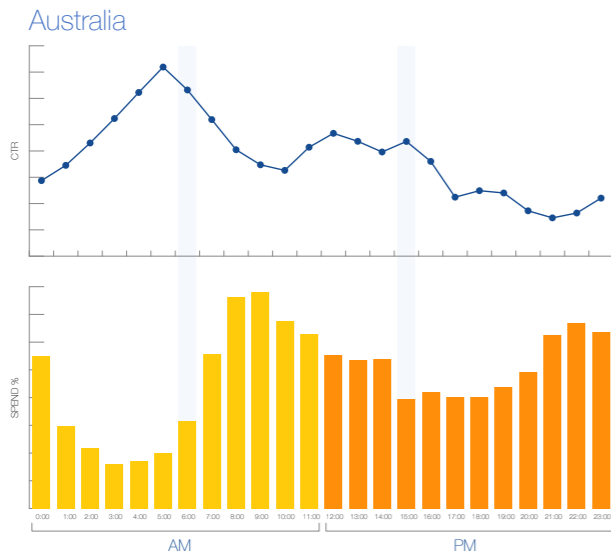
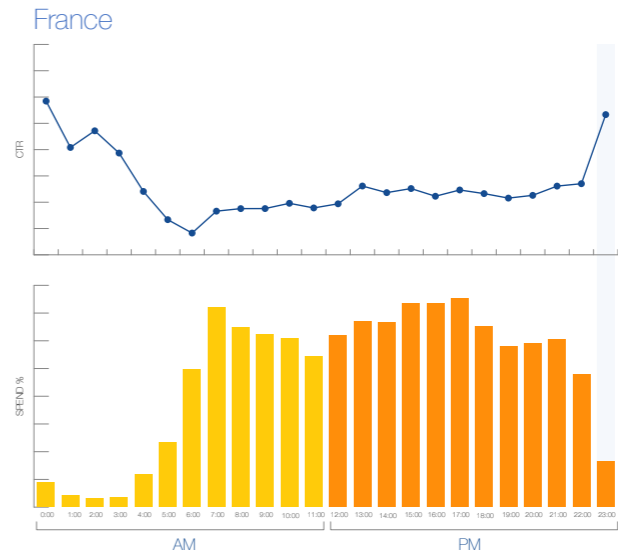
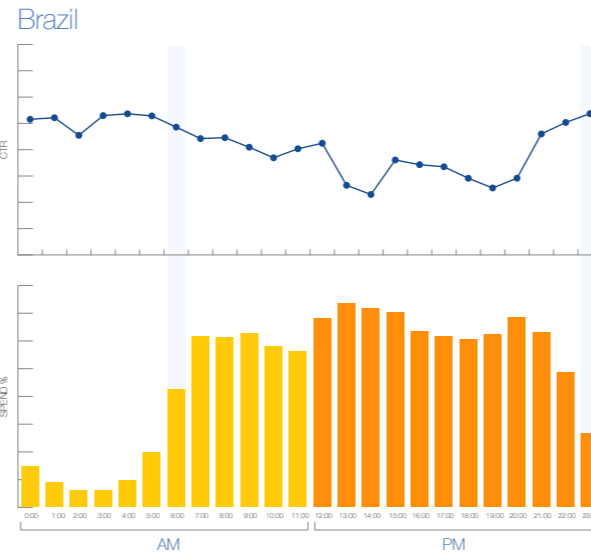


<sup>13</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on education content

<sup>14</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for education content

# HIGH OPPORTUNITY TIME OF THE DAY, BY COUNTRY

Various countries see more engagement with education content during work hours, and some before and after work. Either way, take into consideration the gap between the demand for education content and the supply to identify the times of day with highest potential by region.







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# WHERE IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

TARGETING BY DEVICE,  
COUNTRY AND SITE





# HIGH OPPORTUNITY DEVICES

Across all device types—desktop, mobile and tablet—supply of education content is the highest on mobile devices as opposed to desktop and tablet devices, but desktop campaigns are showing the highest opportunity.

## BENCHMARK CTR

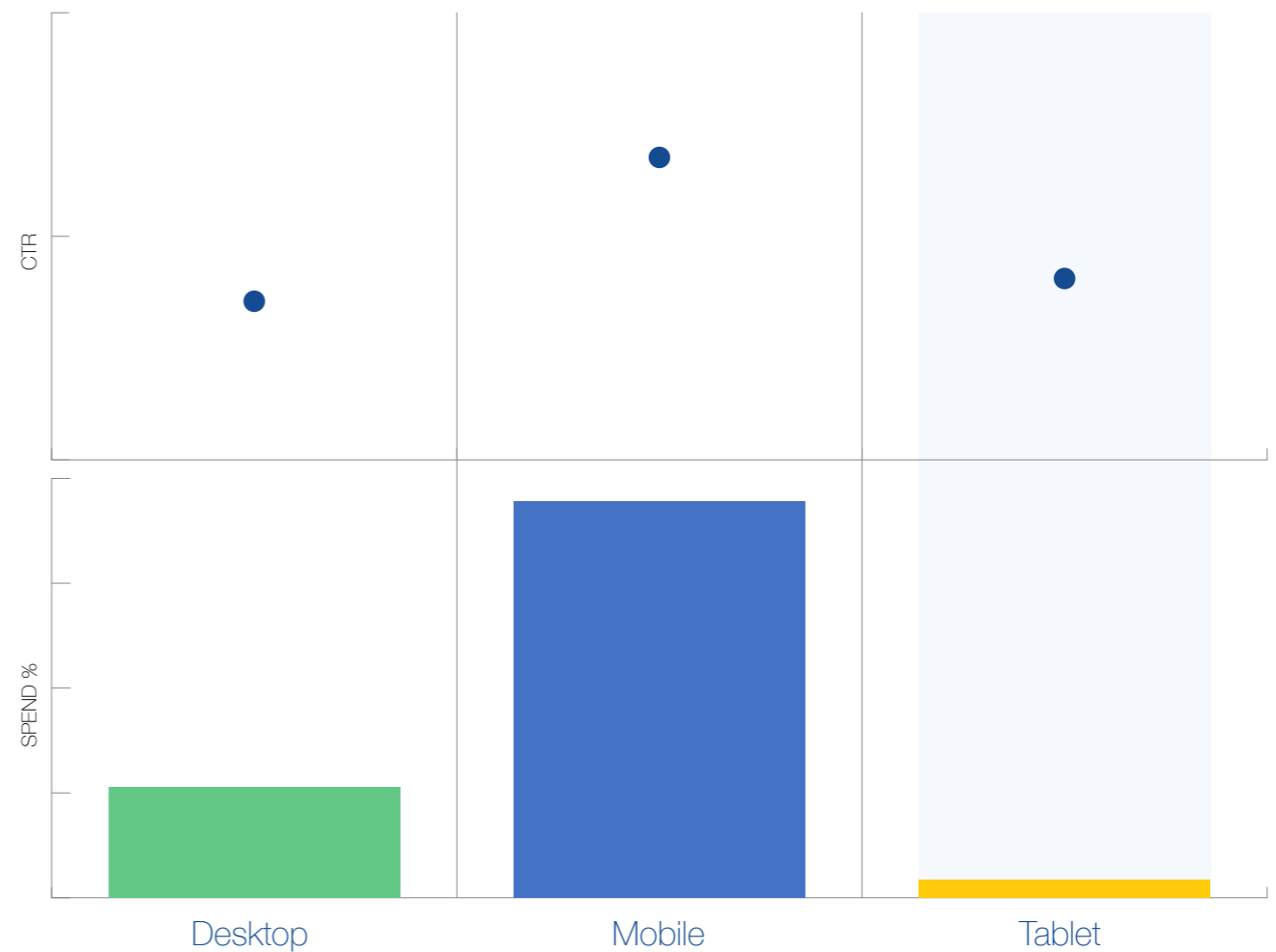
0.082%



### TIP

Test tablet device targeting on your next campaign.

**Device Performance for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2019**  
Supply<sup>14</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>15</sup> by Device, 2019

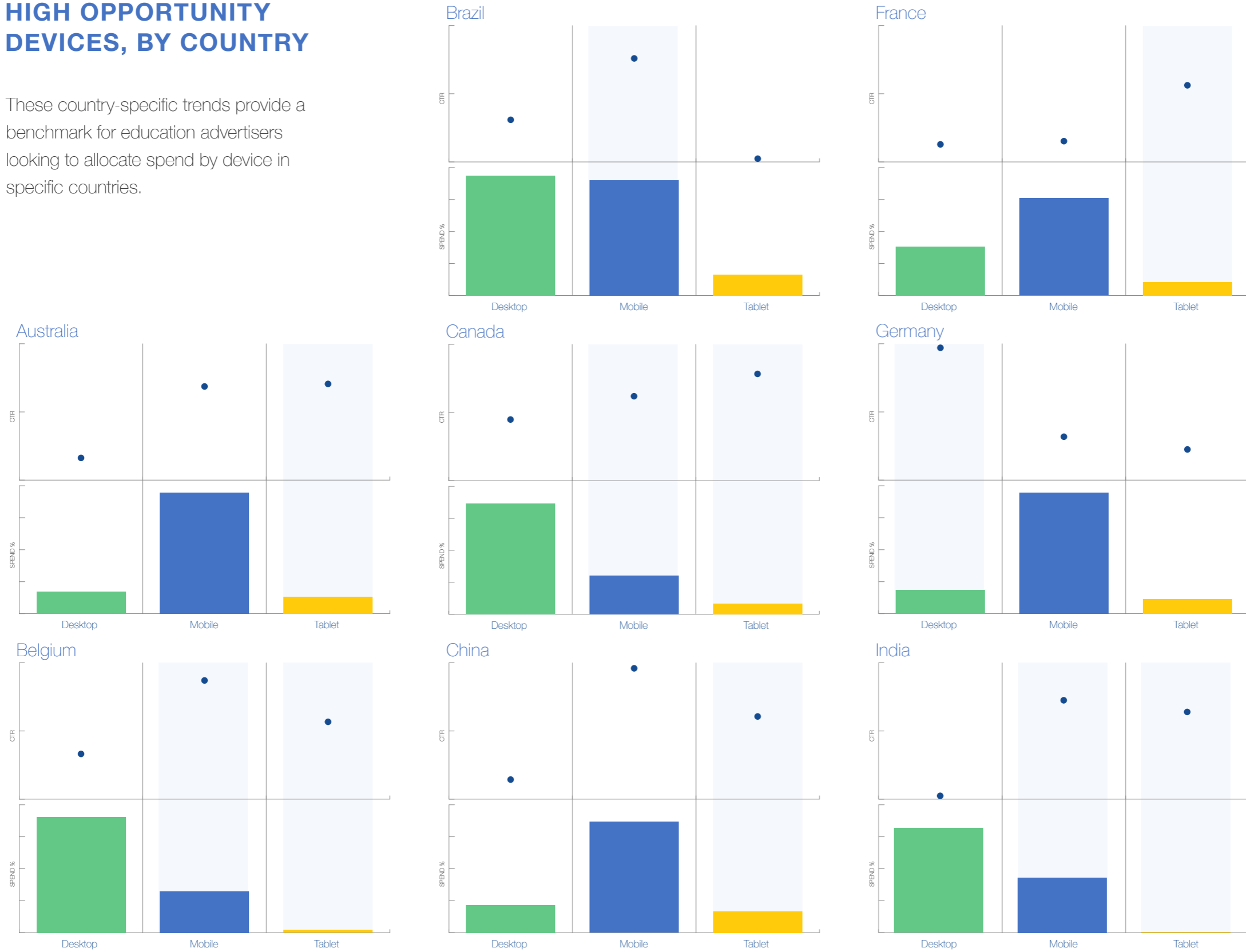


<sup>14</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on auto content

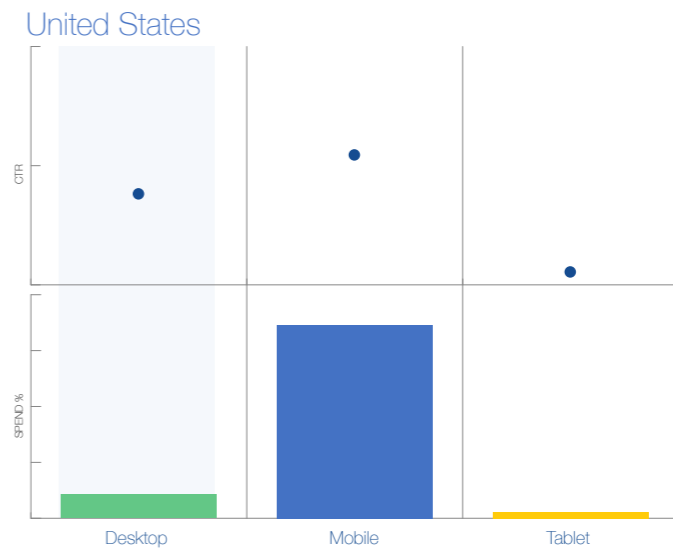
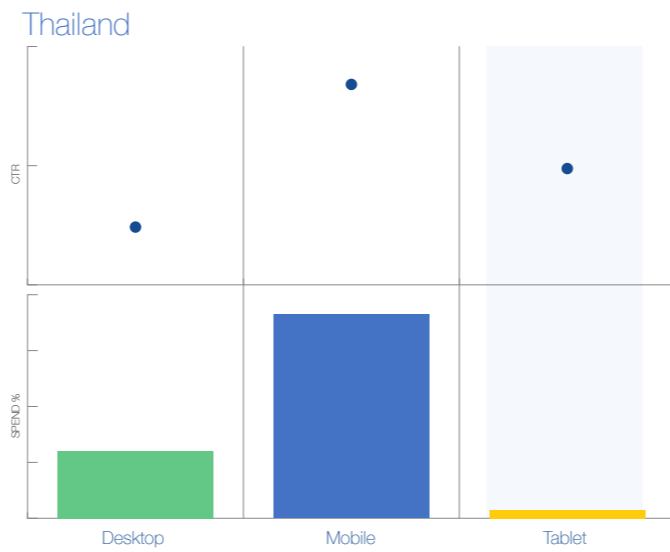
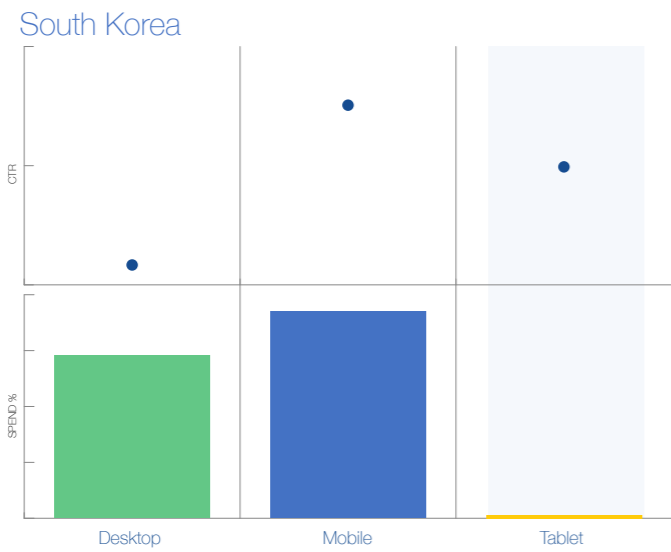
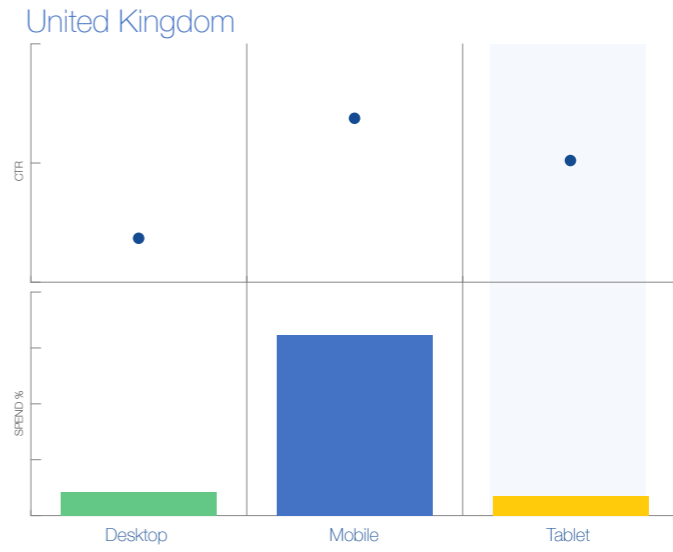
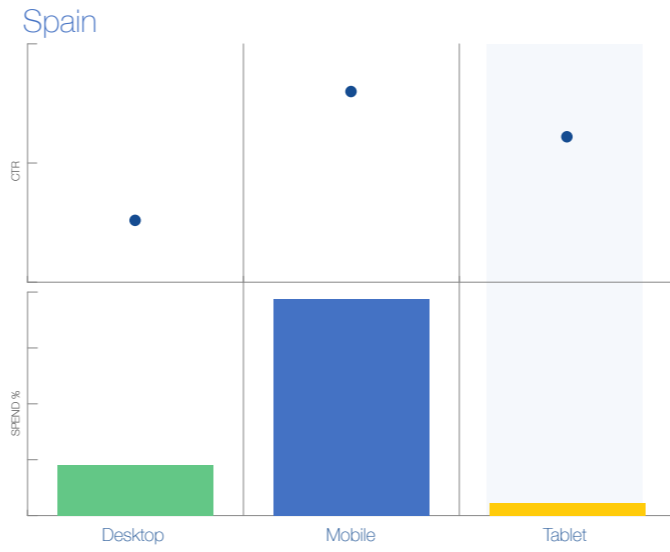
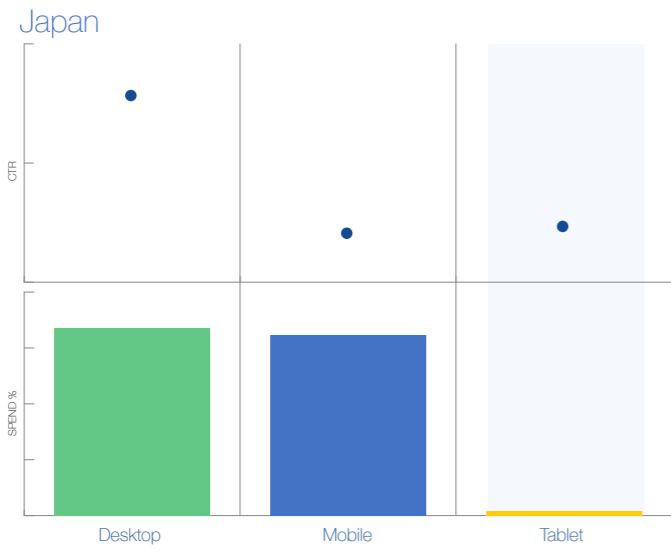
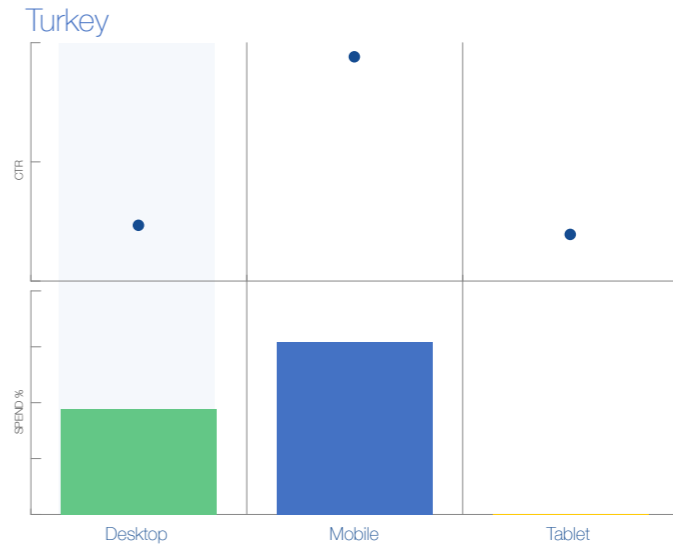
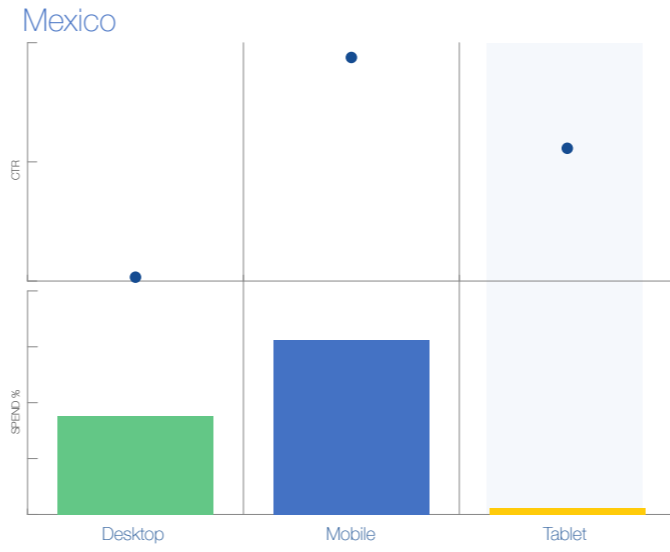
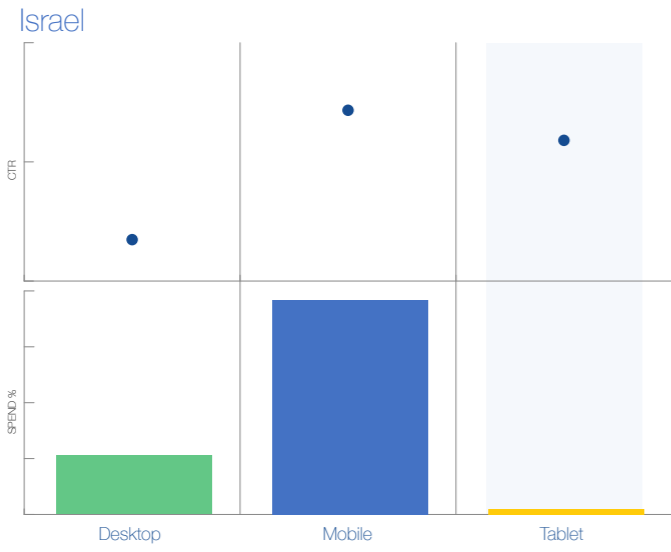
<sup>15</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for auto content

## HIGH OPPORTUNITY DEVICES, BY COUNTRY

These country-specific trends provide a benchmark for education advertisers looking to allocate spend by device in specific countries.







# TARGETING BY SITE: HOW TO FIND YOUR NICHE

Marketers tend to assume that when choosing sites on which to advertise, that they'll have more success if their ad fits contextually alongside their content.

But this isn't always true—the best way to tell is with data. Similarly to audience targeting, you'll want to start with wide targeting, see which sites perform best, and optimize from there.

## HERE'S A TARGETING FLOW WE'D RECOMMEND FOR A MONTH-LONG CAMPAIGN:

### WEEK 1

When you're starting out, keep your targeting as wide as your comfortable with—we recommend using brand safety measures like black lists if you need to exclude some sites at first.

### WEEK 2

Check in with your campaign at the end of the week. Where did your ads perform best? Are you surprised by the vertical? Choose several sites to test based on your initial results.

### WEEK 3

This is a good time to take a look at your creative performance. Is each headline, photo or video resonating with every site? A/B test different combinations for the right fit.

### WEEK 4

When analyzing your campaign, take a look back at what surprised you, and look to test new sites in order to expand your reach in the future.

### DO IT AGAIN

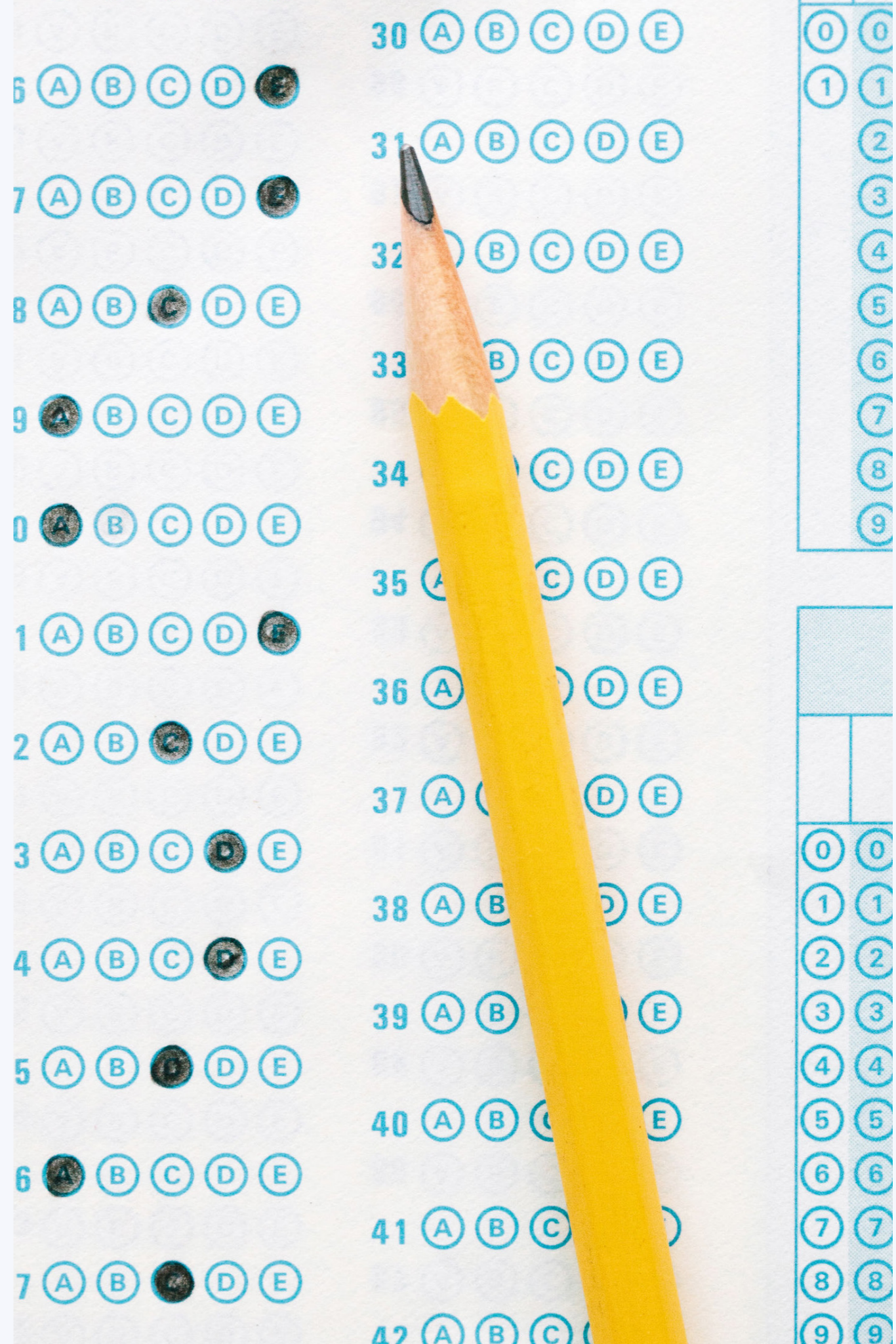
Repeat..



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# HOW DO YOU MEASURE?

HERE'S WHAT THE  
COMPETITION IS  
TRACKING



# COMMON KPIs

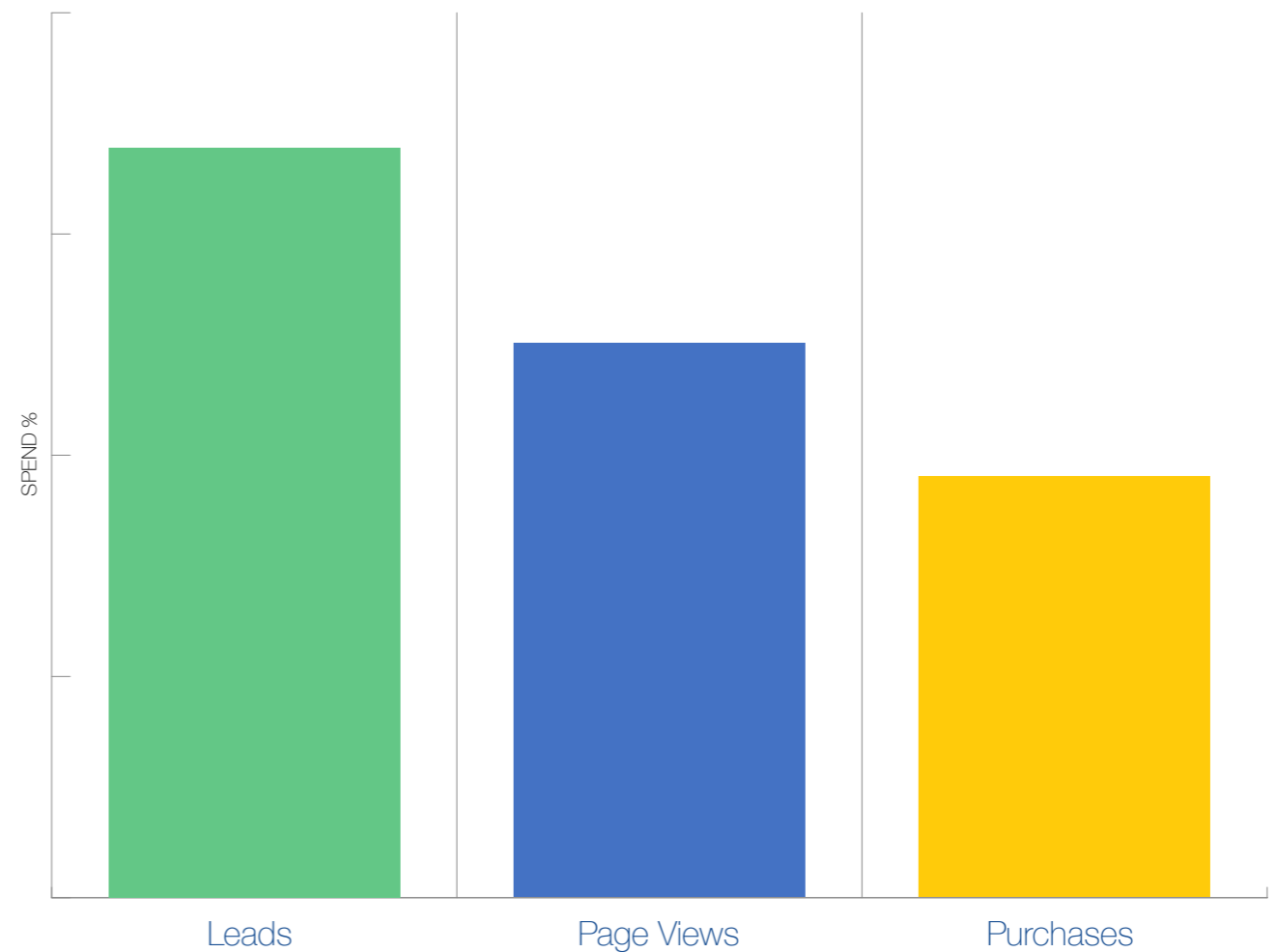
Education marketers differ when it comes to their main key performance indicators (KPIs) or goals for discovery campaigns. Campaigns range from the top of the funnel to the bottom, and on a high level, look for three types of actions—website visits, form fills for lead generation, and purchases.



**TIP**

Try testing a top or middle of the funnel campaign.

**Most Used KPI for the Education Vertical Worldwide, 2018**  
*Supply<sup>17</sup> of Education Content vs. Consumer Demand<sup>18</sup> by KPI, 2018*



<sup>17</sup> Supply is indicated by the percentage a market spends on education content

<sup>18</sup> Consumer demand is indicated by the average calibrated CTR for education content





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# START YOUR CAMPAIGN TODAY

[START NOW](#)



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# TO SUM IT UP...

We've gone through a lot—the who, what, when, where and how of education discovery campaigns, and how *you* can find opportunities for success.



## HERE ARE FIVE TAKEAWAYS:

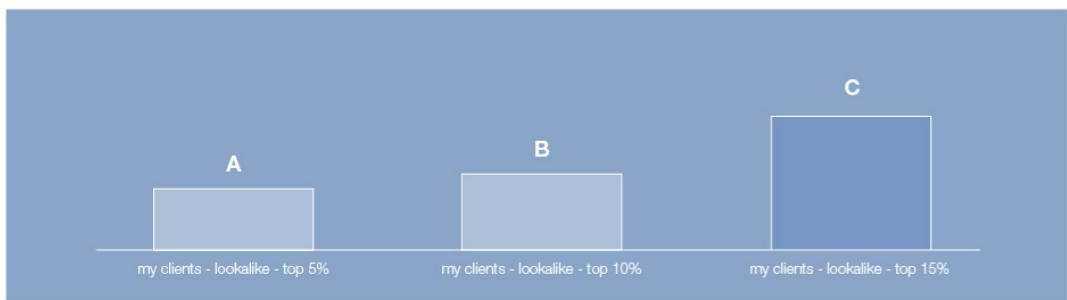
- 1 **Who.** Don't assume you know all of your audiences. Dig into your campaign's data for demographics and audience segments you might be surprised to find are interested in your products.
- 2 **What.** Focus on video content when trying to reach consumers shopping for education products.
- 3 **When.** Reach consumers when they're after your products—don't ignore the July, August, September and February, and focus on after hours during the middle of the week.
- 4 **Where.** Tablet devices have been neglected by education marketers to date.
- 5 **How.** Finally, test your next top or middle of the funnel marketing campaign with native. There's a high opportunity for scale.





# GET STARTED WITH TABOOLA

Taboola enables over 1.4B people to discover what's interesting and new at the moments they're most ready to explore. Advertisers use Taboola to reach their target audience when they're most receptive to new messages, products and services.



TOP CAMPAIGN CONTENT		
Segment	Impressions	Actions
A my clients - lookalike - top 5%	297,100	2,192
B my clients - lookalike - top 10%	399,102	3,012
C my clients - lookalike - top 15%	807,631	5,011

## We've Got the Tools to Help You

### Taboola Pixel

Track multiple conversions by multiple audiences across multiple URLs.

### Retargeting

Reach customers closer to the point of sale— target people who are more likely to convert.

### Smart Bid

Automatically adjust the baseline bid to drive conversions or page views by site.

### Lookalike Targeting

Model the behavior and characteristics of your current customers and use it to target similar audiences.

That's not all. Taboola has every targeting option you need for a successful discovery campaign—location, demographic, creative and more.

**START YOUR CAMPAIGN TODAY**

**START NOW**

