



Market Demand and Trends

- **Growing sports footwear market:** Southeast Asia's athletic footwear market is on the order of a few billion USD. For example, IndexBox reports the SEA athletic footwear market reached about \$2.2B in 2024 [indexbox.io](#). In Malaysia alone the entire footwear market was USD 755.7M in 2024 [imarcgroup.com](#) (projected ~USD 1,049.6M by 2033). Health and fitness trends are driving strong demand: IMARC estimates SEA athletic shoe sales growing at ~4–5% CAGR (2025–2033) [openpr.com](#). Consumers are increasingly living active lifestyles and treating athletic/casual shoes as fashion, boosting overall market size [openpr.com](#) [imarcgroup.com](#).
- **Health/hygiene awareness:** There is growing concern about foot health and hygiene, especially in tropical climates. Studies of hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating) show prevalence rates up to 5–14% of the population [sweathelp.org](#). In one Shanghai sample, 14.5% had primary hyperhidrosis [sweathelp.org](#), and nearly 9% of U.S. adults aged 18–39 report it [sweathelp.org](#). These figures imply millions of young, active consumers in SEA experience sweaty feet and related odor issues. Brands that keep feet dry and odor-free can appeal strongly to this audience. For example, antimicrobial and moisture-wicking materials (charcoal-infused fibers, silver/zinc treatments, plant extracts) are known to inhibit odor-causing bacteria and keep feet comfortable [cariuma.com](#) [skechers.com](#). In short, hygiene-conscious consumers now expect breathability and odor-control features in athletic gear.
- **Technology & sustainability trends:** Footwear innovation is focusing on antimicrobial and eco-friendly solutions. Brands like Cariuma (eco-sneakers) highlight the use of natural antimicrobial extracts (tea tree oil, eucalyptus) to control odor and moisture [cariuma.com](#). Industry suppliers (e.g. Scissent) stress odor-free durability: "a pair of damp feet or foul odor may ...make your customer toss your product" [scissent.com](#), so new products emphasize built-in anti-odor coatings (charcoal, Agion® silver compounds) to extend shoe life [scissent.com](#) [skechers.com](#). This trend supports marketing an anti-odor shoe as both a health and quality feature.

- **Digital and social shopping:** E-commerce is rapidly expanding throughout SEA [openpr.com](#). Consumers (especially youth) are discovering new products via social media and mobile shopping. Data from Malaysian TikTok trends show very high sales of affordable sports-style shoes: e.g. a RM15.38 pair of "NOVENCCI Outdoor Sneakers" sold ~34K units recently [findniche.com](#). This indicates youth buy inexpensive sneaker designs in bulk. Social channels (Instagram/TikTok influencers, viral ads) can drive demand. IMARC notes influencer and celebrity endorsements are boosting sports footwear sales in SEA [openpr.com](#). **Gap in current market:** Despite this demand, major sports brands largely *do not* advertise odor-control. Nike even "restricts the use of ... odor control technologies" in its lines [about.nike.com](#). Customers instead use sprays or powders [deepmarketinsig...](#) [lazada.com.my](#). This suggests a niche gap: no mainstream sports shoe specifically solves sweaty feet. A specialized brand can fill this gap by integrating anti-odor tech in the shoe itself.

Customer Behaviors and Market Gaps

- **Need for freshness:** Customers with sweaty feet often resort to after-market products (sprays, charcoal insoles, powders) to manage odor [deepmarketinsig...](#) [lazada.com.my](#). Such solutions indicate demand but also inconvenience. If sports shoes advertised built-in freshness (e.g. "stays odor-free"), many would switch. As Sciessent warns, "a foul odor may be the very thing that makes your customer toss your product and start shopping" for a better brand [sciessent.com](#). Thus foot-odor is a pain point affecting repurchase behavior.
- **Price sensitivity:** Analysis of TikTok-shopping in Malaysia shows buyers flock to low-priced sneakers (RM10–30) [findniche.com](#) [findniche.com](#). Many trending products are rugged sandals or simple slip-ons under RM20. This implies younger consumers are price-conscious and seek viral deals. To attract them, CH likely needs competitive pricing (~RM100–150 range) and strong social-media presence.
- **Preference for comfort & style:** Surveys indicate Malaysian consumers prioritize shoe comfort, breathability and design [imarcgroup.com](#). Sports footwear buyers look for ergonomic support and on-trend looks (e.g. athleisure). They expect cushioning and airflow in performance shoes. CH's sports designs must therefore meet these core expectations (well-cushioned, breathable mesh uppers) *plus* the odor-control USP.
- **Trend toward online discovery:** Youth and urban shoppers often research via mobile. Data show e-commerce growth in tier-2/3 markets aided by convenience and deals [openpr.com](#). Presence on platforms like Lazada/Shopee (with localized marketing) is crucial. TikTok and Instagram ads can target young fitness enthusiasts. Overall, customers are digitally savvy and expect online convenience, fast shipping and interactive branding.

Competitive Landscape

- **Global sports brands (Nike, Adidas, Puma, Under Armour, etc.):** *Strengths:* World-class branding, large R&D budgets, broad retail (malls, e-tailers). *Weaknesses:* No dedicated anti-odor feature – most models use standard synthetic materials without antimicrobials [about.nike.com](#). Pricey (RM200–500+). These brands focus on performance tech (cushioning, carbon plates, etc.) and fashion collaborations, not odor issues. CH cannot outspend them, but can occupy the hygiene niche they ignore.
- **Comfort-oriented brands (Skechers, New Balance):** *Strengths:* Known for comfort and value. Skechers runs sales around RM130–300, often with memory-foam insoles [skechers.com](#). Notably, Skechers markets some models with charcoal-infused insoles that “help neutralize odor” [skechers.com](#). This shows consumers accept a charcoal-odour claim in casual shoes. *Weaknesses:* Less focus on active performance. CH’s advantage would be pairing odor-control with genuinely sporty design.
- **Outdoor/Casual brands (Crocs, Merrell, etc.):** Crocs famously claim their Croslite® resin “is easy to clean and odor-resistant,” and Merrell touts “no-stink” insoles on some boots. These emphasize breathability. But they don’t compete well in serious sports categories. CH can claim better support for running/workouts.
- **Local and budget players:** Many cheap off-brand sneakers (e.g. Dexun, Novencci) flood online marketplaces. Prices are very low (RM20–50) [findniche.com](#). *Strengths:* Extremely affordable. *Weaknesses:* Poor quality, no tech, minimal comfort. CH would need to position above this level (higher quality) but affordable for middle-market buyers. Those low-cost players pose little direct risk on odor feature but compete for entry-level buyers.
- **Indirect competition (shoe deodorizers):** Sprays, charcoal insoles, sachets, and foot powders are widely available (pharmacies, e-commerce). The SEA shoe-deodorizer market was only ~\$19.2M in 2024 [deepmarketinsig...](#) – tiny. This indicates that few consumers consistently spend on odor-control products, possibly preferring to switch shoes instead. This low spending on deodorizer products signals a market gap for integrated solutions.
- **Key Differentiators for CH:** CH should emphasize its unique technology (e.g. “anti-odor zinc/silver-coated mesh”, “charcoal-lining insoles”, “breathable mesh uppers”). Messaging can focus on staying fresh all day. Compete on perceived value: better hygiene without extra cost/time. Since CH will produce in a low-OPEX SEA country (e.g. Vietnam has ~\$3/hr labor vs China’s \$6.50 [tradebeyond.com](#)), it can price competitively. Branding as a homegrown Asian brand might also appeal.

Market Size and Share Estimates

- **Regional scope:** Starting in Malaysia (pop. ~33M) then Singapore (6M) and Indonesia (273M) by year 5 covers ~312M people. The combined athletic shoe market could be roughly estimated as follows: If Malaysia’s sports shoes are ~30% of its footwear (USD~225M), Singapore’s (wealthier, but small pop) might be ~\$50M, and Indonesia’s (large pop but lower GDP) could be \$300–400M. Thus total ~USD 600–700M across all three. (By comparison, SEA as a whole was ~\$2.2B [indexbox.io](#) .)

- **Market penetration:** As a niche brand, CH's potential share would be small initially. Even 0.5–1% of a \$250M Malaysian sports shoe market yields USD 1.25–2.5M. If growth is strong, capturing 1–2% of Malaysia + similar small shares in SG/ID by year 5 might bring low millions USD in annual sales. This is plausible for an online startup. By way of analogy, the entire shoe-deodorizer market is only USD 19M in SEA [deepmarketinsig...](#), so CH's niche is emerging.
- **Segmentation:** Target end-users are men and women aged ~15–40 (students, office workers, athletes) with active lifestyles. IMARC lists men/women/kids all buying athletic shoes [openpr.com](#). CH's focus will likely be urban youth and young professionals, plus fitness enthusiasts. Early adopters will be those who already try deodorizing solutions.
- **Growth outlook:** SEA sports footwear is expected to expand (4–5% CAGR [openpr.com](#)). Any trend toward sustainability or health could boost CH. However, if the economy slows or disposable income falls, sports shoe sales could dip (IndexBox noted a slight decline to \$2.2B in 2024 [indexbox.io](#)). CH must stay agile on pricing and costs.

Financial Feasibility

- **Startup costs (approx.):** Using the MYR 100,000 budget (~USD 24K) for a lean launch implies tight cost control. Key expenses include: shoe design/prototype (USD 2–5K), initial inventory (say 500–1,000 pairs at ~\$10–15 each = USD 5–15K), branding/packaging (USD 2K), website/e-commerce setup (USD 1–2K), marketing (social ads, influencers, ~USD 5–8K), shipping & logistics (~USD 2K), legal/trademarks (~USD 0.5K). Summing roughly USD 17–30K, which matches the budget with little margin. (By contrast, one source suggests even very small footwear startups invest only a few thousand USD [blucactus.blue](#).) Thus, the budget is minimal, so CH may need to start with a very small product run and focus on high-impact marketing.
- **Revenue projection:** If CH prices a shoe at RM150 (USD 36) with cost of goods ~RM50–70 (USD 12–17), gross margin is ~55–60%. Selling 100 pairs/month yields RM15,000 revenue (~USD 3.5K) with ~USD 2K gross profit. To cover initial expenses (say USD 20K), CH would need on the order of 800–1,000 pair sales (roughly USD 20K revenue, ~USD 11K gross profit) – achievable over ~6–12 months if marketing is effective. If monthly sales ramp to 500 pairs, that's RM75K (USD 18K) revenue monthly, far exceeding break-even. In summary, breakeven may come in the first year if scale picks up, but more likely 12–24 months considering operational delays.
- **Pricing and volume:** Given TikTok trends [findniche.com](#), youth accept ~RM20–25 shoes, but CH will aim higher quality. A mid-market price (RM120–180) can justify better materials. If CH can gradually raise brand awareness, it might command a slight premium. Bulk orders (e.g. 1,000–2,000 pairs) from the manufacturer could lower per-unit cost, improving margins.
- **Breakeven timeline:** Assuming fixed startup costs ~USD 15K and ~55% gross margin, each pair contributes ~USD 20 profit. To recoup USD 15K, CH needs ~750 pairs sold. At 100 pairs/month (modest entry), that's ~7.5 months. If launch is slower, break-even might extend beyond year 1. Fast growth or additional funding could shorten it.

- **Funding constraints:** The small budget is a significant risk. As noted by industry commentary, even an "international footwear company" might require only a few thousand USD to start [blucactus.blue](#), but that assumes extremely lean operations (likely selling through existing outlets). CH's broader plans (marketing, inventory) likely need the full RM100K. Any overspend on marketing or mis-timed inventory could quickly exhaust funds. Careful financial monitoring and phased spending will be crucial.

Go-to-Market and Key Strategies

- **Online-first approach:** Launch on major e-commerce platforms (Shopee, Lazada, Bukalapak, Tokopedia, etc.) and own website. Use promotions (flash sales, discount vouchers) to attract early customers. Leverage platform ads (e.g. Shopee Live) to gain visibility.
- **Influencer/social campaigns:** Recruit fitness influencers, local athletes or sneakerheads to review the shoes. Emphasize "no more stinky shoes" in content. Run hashtag challenges (e.g. #SmellFreeRun) on TikTok/Instagram. Positive user testimonials (e.g. before/after odor tests) can convince skeptics. In-region examples like "Alpro x Skechers" campaign (mentioned by IMARC [imarcgroup.com](#)) show that branded initiatives can boost awareness; CH could sponsor a local fun-run or sponsor a minor sports event to get name recognition.
- **Youth-targeted marketing:** Focus on gym-goers, college students and urban commuters. Advertise on social apps heavily used by Gen Z/Millennials. Utilize viral formats (short videos, memes). Offer student discounts or referral codes. Participate in campus fairs or pop-up events near universities.
- **Product positioning:** Brand name "CH" should be promoted as innovative and youthful. Packaging can highlight technical features (e.g. "Activated charcoal lining for 24h freshness"). Because our shoes are sports-focused, marketing could show real athletes or relatable fitness scenarios (lifting, running, soccer) with a "fresh feet" tagline. In PR materials, mention any certifications (e.g. "anti-microbial tested"). If sustainable elements are included (e.g. recycled materials), highlight that to appeal to eco-conscious youth.
- **Customer service:** Offer easy returns/exchanges and responsive support, as first impressions matter for a new brand. Positive reviews online will drive sales. Encourage reviews by including a thank-you note with each shipment asking for feedback.
- **Gradual expansion:** Succeed first in Malaysia (online, local marketing). Once stable sales, translate content to local languages and regionally ship to Singapore and Indonesia. Seek local online marketplaces and possibly local micro-influencers in each country.

Risks, Challenges and Mitigation

- **Budget limitation:** RM100K is very modest for a product launch. Risk of running out of funds before scaling is high. *Mitigation:* Adopt a lean startup model. Start with a pre-order campaign to validate demand before full production. Use cost-effective digital marketing (organic social content plus targeted ads). Consider small business loans or partnerships (e.g. a local sneaker store for co-promotion) to stretch the budget.
- **Competitive response:** Larger brands might downplay CH or introduce similar features. *Mitigation:* Emphasize CH's unique focus and agility. Protect branding through trademarks. Continuously innovate (e.g. latest antimicrobial tech) faster than legacy brands. Engage customers directly (social listening, community-building) to build loyalty that big players lack.
- **Supply chain issues:** New product could face quality or delay problems. *Mitigation:* Vet and start with a reliable manufacturer (likely in Vietnam or Cambodia for low labor cost). Order smaller batches first for quality control. Build relationships with suppliers to improve terms over time. Have a backup plan (alternative supplier) in case of disruption.
- **Market acceptance:** Shoppers may doubt "anti-odor" claims. *Mitigation:* Back claims with science (if possible, test a sample pair in a lab to measure bacteria levels) and real testimonials. Offer a guarantee (e.g. "not satisfied – return for refund"). Use visuals: show a charcoal fiber or silver dots under microscope to prove concept. Educate consumers on social media about the problem/solution.
- **Pricing pressure:** Competing on price with cheaply-made shoes is hard. *Mitigation:* Focus on value (health benefit) rather than being cheapest. Highlight long-term savings (no need for sprays, longer-lasting freshness). Possibly introduce a basic model and a premium model to capture different segments. Consider cost-saving manufacturing (bulk orders to reduce unit cost, duty-free zones, etc.).
- **Regulatory hurdles:** Exporting to Singapore/Indonesia may incur tariffs or compliance. *Mitigation:* Make use of ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (ASEAN-FTAs) by properly certifying origin. Work with logistics providers experienced in SEA delivery. Ensure materials meet any local safety standards.
- **Customer churn:** If product or service disappoints, word will spread (especially online). *Mitigation:* Prioritize early customer satisfaction. Monitor reviews and respond quickly to issues. Use customer feedback to refine designs. Gradually expand sizes/styles only after initial models prove successful.

Each of these factors should be continuously monitored as CH develops. Overall, the anti-odor sports shoe concept has promising tailwinds (health trends, e-commerce growth) but must be executed carefully given tight budget and strong incumbents. Combining a clear USP (odor control) with solid sports shoe fundamentals and savvy online marketing is key to viability.

Sources: Industry market reports and company data [imarcgroup.com](#) [openpr.com](#) [deepmarketinsig...](#)

[about.nike.com](#) [scissent.com](#) [cariuma.com](#) [skechers.com](#) [sweathelp.org](#) [findniche.com](#) . (Cited data reflects latest available figures for Southeast Asia and Malaysia.)

Citations

 **South-Eastern Asia's Athletic Footwear Market Report 2025 - Prices, Size, Fore...**

<https://www.indexbox.io/store/south-eastern-asia-training-shoes-market-analysis-forecast-size-trends-and-insights/>

 **i Malaysia Footwear Market Size, Trends and Forecast 2033**

<https://www.imarcgroup.com/malaysia-footwear-market>

 **South East Asia Athletic Footwear Market Outlook 2025-2033:**

<https://www.openpr.com/news/4056022/south-east-asia-athletic-footwear-market-outlook-2025-2033>

 **South East Asia Athletic Footwear Market Outlook 2025-2033:**

<https://www.openpr.com/news/4056022/south-east-asia-athletic-footwear-market-outlook-2025-2033>

 **i Malaysia Footwear Market Size, Trends and Forecast 2033**

<https://www.imarcgroup.com/malaysia-footwear-market>

 **Epidemiology of Primary Hyperhidrosis - International Hyperhidrosis Society | O...**

<https://www.sweathelp.org/about-hyperhidrosis/epidemiology-of-primary-hyperhidrosis.html>

 **Epidemiology of Primary Hyperhidrosis - International Hyperhidrosis Society | O...**

<https://www.sweathelp.org/about-hyperhidrosis/epidemiology-of-primary-hyperhidrosis.html>

 **Epidemiology of Primary Hyperhidrosis - International Hyperhidrosis Society | O...**

<https://www.sweathelp.org/about-hyperhidrosis/epidemiology-of-primary-hyperhidrosis.html>

 **Eco-Friendly Antimicrobial Sneakers – CARIUMA**

https://www.cariuma.com/blogs/stories/antimicrobial-sustainable-sneakers?srsltid=AfmBOooQmyPlAp0dpIREiF9RTag4YXXtJ54QFokZJC-r4bn8x4aI0_S

 **Skechers Slip-ins Relaxed Fit: Pollard - Waylon**

<https://www.skechers.com/skechers-slip-ins-relaxed-fit-pollard---waylon/205333.html?srsltid=AfmBOoqpPj1aoDwOLoXmc0h75n5FPcZHqqa8qzJWYulgpmQruGc1pNdQ>

 **Eco-Friendly Antimicrobial Sneakers – CARIUMA**

https://www.cariuma.com/blogs/stories/antimicrobial-sustainable-sneakers?srsltid=AfmB0ooQmyPIAp0dplREiF9RTag4YXXtJ54QFokZjJC-r4bn8x4alO_S

 **Footwear Antimicrobial, Odor, & Water Repellent Protection - Scissenschaft**

<https://www.scissenschaft.com/markets/textiles-and-apparel/footwear/>

 **South East Asia Athletic Footwear Market Outlook 2025-2033:**

<https://www.openpr.com/news/4056022/south-east-asia-athletic-footwear-market-outlook-2025-2033>

 **Fn Top Trending TikTok Shoes products in Malaysia in 2025 - FindNiche**

<https://findniche.com/tiktok/trending-shoes-products-my>

 **South East Asia Athletic Footwear Market Outlook 2025-2033:**

<https://www.openpr.com/news/4056022/south-east-asia-athletic-footwear-market-outlook-2025-2033>

 **Sustainability Policies - About Nike**

<https://about.nike.com/en/resources/sustainability-policies>

 **DM South East Asia Shoe Deodorizers Market Size, Share & Growth Analysis By [20...**

<https://deepmarketinsights.com/vista/insights/shoe-deodorizers-market/south-east-asia>

 **Buy Anti Bacterial Spray For Shoes Online at a Better Price - Lazada**

<https://www.lazada.com.my/tag/anti-bacterial-spray-for-shoes/>

 **Footwear Antimicrobial, Odor, & Water Repellent Protection - Scissenschaft**

<https://www.scissenschaft.com/markets/textiles-and-apparel/footwear/>

 **Fn Top Trending TikTok Shoes products in Malaysia in 2025 - FindNiche**

<https://findniche.com/tiktok/trending-shoes-products-my>

 **b Vietnam: Rising Footwear Manufacturing Capital | TradeBeyond**

<https://www.tradebeyond.com/blog/vietnam-rising-footwear-manufacturing-capital>

 **South East Asia Athletic Footwear Market Outlook 2025-2033:**

<https://www.openpr.com/news/4056022/south-east-asia-athletic-footwear-market-outlook-2025-2033>

 **I How much does it cost to create a shoe fashion brand? | BluCactus**

<https://blucactus.blue/how-much-cost-create-shoe-fashion-brand/>

 **i Malaysia Footwear Market Size, Trends and Forecast 2033**

<https://www.imarcgroup.com/malaysia-footwear-market>

All Sources

 indexbox

 imarcgroup

 openpr

 sweathelp

 cariuma

 skechers

 scissenschaft

 findniche

 about.nike

 deepmarketinsights

 lazada.com

 tradebeyond

 blucactus

