

# NIKE

## A CASE STUDY

since 1964



**How Nike used a deep understanding of its user (the athlete) through design thinking to create innovative products, and then built a global empire through powerful market strategies**

# Introduction

For nearly **FIVE DECADES**, Nike has been more than just a shoe company,

It's been a cultural force.

Today, we're going to break down how they achieved this, looking specifically at two key pillars:

1. Their user-centric Design Thinking process.
2. Their game-changing marketing strategies



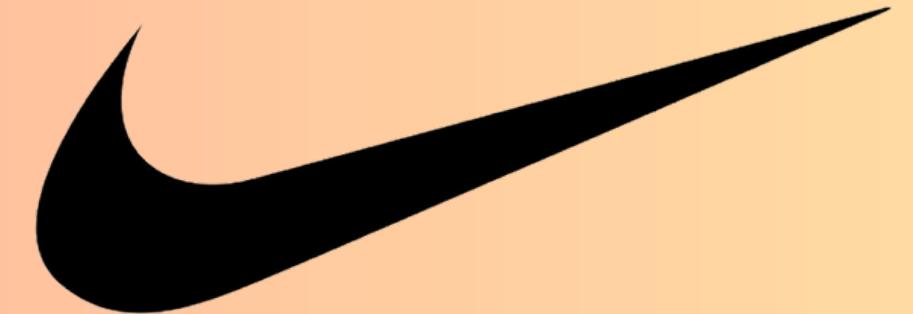
# TIMELINE



*BLUE RIBBON SPORTS*  
**1964**



**1978**



**NOW**



**1972**



**1985**

# It All Started with a Problem

Nike wasn't born in a boardroom.  
It was born on a running track.

Co-founder Bill Bowerman was a track coach  
at the University of Oregon.

He was obsessed with a single problem: how  
to make his athletes' shoes lighter and faster

This is the first step of Design Thinking: **Empathize**.  
Bowerman wasn't a distant CEO; he was the user, deeply  
understanding the athlete's needs for better grip, less  
weight, and more support.

**This empathy became the cornerstone of Nike's DNA!**



# The Athlete at the Center: The Power of Empathy

## Empathize:

- Nike's **deep understanding** of athletes' needs.
- **Observing athletes:** Watching how they move, their pain points, and their goals.
- Partnering with elite athletes: **Collaborating** with the best to understand their specific requirements (e.g., Michael Jordan's need for ankle support).
- **Listening to feedback:** Creating a feedback loop with both professional and amateur athletes.

# Beyond the Product: Selling an Aspiration

## The "Just Do It" Campaign (1988):

A groundbreaking shift from product-focused to emotion-focused advertising.

**Impact:** Elevated the brand from a shoemaker to a **symbol** of **determination, perseverance, and personal achievement.**



# Nike's Design Thinking in Action: Ideate & Prototype

**Ideate:** Brainstorming and developing innovative solutions.

- **Internal innovation labs:** The Nike Sport Research Lab (NSRL) as a hub for science and design.
- **Collaborative design teams:** Bringing together engineers, designers, and athletes.

**Prototype:** Creating physical models for testing

- **Rapid prototyping:** Using 3D printing and other technologies to quickly create shoe models.
- **Iterative design:** Building multiple versions of a shoe and refining it based on feedback.
- Showcase a classic prototype image (e.g., the original Air Max 1 with the visible air unit).





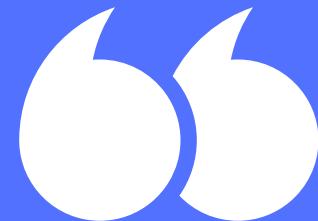
# Selling Innovation! Not Just Shoes

Nike's first market strategy flows directly from its design process: lead with genuine product innovation. They didn't just market shoes; they marketed technology

## NIKE AIR (1979)



They put a **pocket of air** in the sole and made it a visible technology. You weren't just buying cushioning; you were buying '**Air**'.



## FLYKNIT (2012)



A material that **reduced waste** and created a **sock-like fit**. They marketed it as a revolution in shoe construction.



# Thank You For Your Attention

Harshwardhan  
IT-A  
Roll-No-4121

