

**Case Title:** *HOKA: Disrupting the Running Shoe Market – Sustainable Growth or Market Bubble?*

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## **SUBJECT ORGANIZATION**

**HOKA** – A rapidly expanding running shoe brand under Deckers Brands, acclaimed for its maximalist design and growing influence among elite athletes and mainstream consumers alike.

## **SUMMARY**

Robin Green, President of HOKA, stands at a pivotal moment. Originally a niche favorite among ultrarunners, HOKA has surged into the mainstream, reporting record-breaking sales and posing a serious challenge to industry leaders like Nike and Adidas. Yet this meteoric rise brings strategic uncertainty. While investors advocate for aggressive expansion, analysts caution that the brand's momentum might be unsustainable. Meanwhile, competitors are escalating efforts to reclaim market share. Green must decide how to strike the right balance between rapid growth and long-term resilience, ensuring HOKA's success evolves into lasting impact.

## **EVENT TIMING**

Present day, 2025.

## **CASE PROTAGONIST**

Robin Green, President of HOKA, responsible for steering the brand's global strategy amid a rapidly evolving and highly competitive marketplace.

## **POTENTIAL DECISION POINT(S)**

1. **Expansion Strategy** – Should HOKA pursue aggressive global expansion and diversify its product lines, or consolidate its dominance within the core running segment?
2. **Brand Positioning** – How can HOKA preserve its distinctive brand identity and premium pricing amidst intensifying competition from established and emerging players?

3. **Retail vs. Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) Growth** – Should HOKA continue investing in its direct-to-consumer strategy or prioritize retail partnerships for broader market access?
4. **Sustainability and Innovation** – How can HOKA integrate environmental responsibility into its business model while maintaining innovation and profitability?
5. **Managing the 'Hype Cycle'** – Is HOKA's ascent reflective of a genuine shift in consumer behavior or a temporary trend? What strategies can secure enduring brand loyalty beyond the current wave of popularity?

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Examine the dynamics of disruption within the athletic footwear industry.
  2. Analyze the strategic challenges of scaling a high-growth consumer brand.
  3. Assess the trade-offs between expansion and brand longevity.
  4. Explore the intersection of sustainability, innovation, and competitive advantage.
  5. Apply strategic frameworks to mitigate risk and ensure long-term relevance in fast-evolving markets.
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