

Title:

Nike Primes Shoe Biz for Jordan Play

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214

Summary:

Bidding to restore some luster to its showcase sub-brand, Nike is cutting retail distribution of its Jordan brand footwear in half beginning with the critical back-to-school selling season, with new ads due in July.

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Article Body:

Bidding to restore some luster to its showcase sub-brand, Nike is cutting retail distribution of its Jordan brand footwear in half beginning with the critical back-to-school selling season, with new ads due in July.

Jordan brand chief Larry Miller said that while sales of the latest Air Jordan XV sneaker have exceeded expectations, "We've been riding the brand pretty hard for awhile, because regardless of the state of the market, Jordan is a constant. Now we want to get back to the days when people stood in line for the product."

Nike and every athletic shoe brand has suffered from a glut of models and retailers. While marketers generally have cleaned up excess inventory, the problem of too many stores persists--especially in malls, producing a sales environment that only competes on price.

Nike also plans to expand its apparel into non-shoe accounts, such as department stores and urban outlets. "The idea is to have a look that's a mix of authentic athletic and style" said Miller.

Spending levels will stay consistent at \$12 million, as will creative, which casts Jordan in a more supervisory role to better showcase active endorsers like Eddie Jones, Randy Moss and Derek Jeter.

"We will always use Michael but we cant really show him slam dunking anymore," said Miller.