

# Reebok announces Shaquille O'Neal as president of basketball

Reebok, has announced longtime brand partner and legendary hall-of-famer, Shaquille O'Neal, as the president of Reebok Basketball. The appointment of the newly created position comes on the heels of Reebok's announcement made earlier this month regarding its long-term strategy to re-emerge into team sport and focus on the brand's global commitment to performance basketball.



In latest move, Reebok is taking bold steps to reclaim its rightful place in performance basketball. Image supplied

Throughout his 19-year career, O'Neal redefined the dominant 'big man' role, tearing down backboards and racking up MVP accolades, all while moonlighting as a pop culture icon who would energise basketball subcultures for years to come. Reebok's signing of O'Neal ahead of his rookie season in 1992, which at the time marked the brand's biggest endorsement deal ever, would evolve into one of the most prolific and impactful athlete-brand partnerships in industry history.

In the partnership's first year Reebok introduced its first-ever signature shoe, the "Shaq Attaq", followed by a host of irreverent and disruptive ad campaigns and product lines that set the stage for the brand's on-court dominance during that era.

Reebok's deal with O'Neal, catapulted the brand's presence in basketball to winning heights in the 90's and early aughts with Reebok bringing on some of the game's most dominant players and personalities like Allen Iverson and Dee Brown and introducing some of the industry's all-time top selling basketball silhouettes including the Shaqnosis, Question, Answer, and the legendary Pump.

“We are thrilled to be expanding upon our partnership with Shaquille with this historic appointment. As an athlete, he made an incredible imprint on not only our brand, but the entire sport and culture of basketball,” said Todd Krinsky, Reebok CEO. “With the combination of his deep-rooted history with Reebok and reigning influence he’s made on the game, there is no one better than this guy to take the helm and lead our brand back to reclaiming its rightful place and dominance in basketball.”

As Reebok’s president of basketball, O’Neal will lead the brand’s basketball category strategy and cultivate partnerships with athletes and organisations in the brand’s quest to return to its position as a dominant force in the sport.

In 2021, together with Authentic Brands Group (Authentic) CEO Jamie Salter, and president Nick Woodhouse, O’Neal played a major role in bringing Reebok into the vast portfolio of iconic global brands owned by the company. O’Neal, an Authentic shareholder, is known as an exceptional brand partner for companies including JCPenney, Papa Johns and Carnival.

The footwear category in particular spans across specialty, mid-tier, off-price and mass channels, further highlighting O’Neal’s broad appeal and consumer reach. O’Neal applied this business savvy and strategic foresight in pursuit of Reebok, proving that his ability to win extends well beyond the court. Together with Salter and Woodhouse, they employed a strategy that allowed the brand to stay true to its roots, while tapping into O’Neal’s strategic foresight that will allow Reebok to reemerge as a key player in basketball.

Speaking to his new role, Shaq simply shared, “We’re back, baby! Get ready.”

“We are proud to further Shaquille’s connection to Reebok as the brand’s new president of basketball,” said Nick Woodhouse, president and CMO of Authentic Brands Group, owner of the Reebok and Shaquille O’Neal brands. “Since acquiring Reebok, we have been steadfast in restoring the brand’s position at the intersection of sports and fashion. This expanded partnership with Shaquille puts Reebok back in the game with a more active position than ever before.”

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