



Hush Puppies®



THE MARKET

Since the mid 1990s, North America has been the center of a worldwide casual boom in fashion. Khaki trousers and comfortable knit shirts have replaced more tailored European fashions. Businesses established “Casual Friday” dress codes that soon extended to the rest of the week. “Uniform” business attire has given way to a relaxed, more individual style of dress. And Hush Puppies — the footwear brand that “invented casual” — has kept pace with relevant product styling that supports its brand values of Relaxed, Confident, Youthful and Modern.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Since its introduction in 1958, Hush Puppies has become the world’s best loved shoe brand. Sold in 120 countries around the world, Hush Puppies enjoys a brand recognition of over 90 percent in Canada and nearly that high in most of the countries in which the brand is sold. Somewhere in the world, a pair of Hush Puppies is sold every two seconds throughout every day!

HISTORY

Hush Puppies is a subsidiary of Wolverine World Wide Inc., which also owns many of the world’s best known shoe brands.

The company that would become Wolverine World Wide Inc. was founded in 1883, by G.A. Krause. Ten years later, G.A. and his sons built a shoe factory in Rockford, Michigan, and were soon producing 300 pairs of horse leather shoes a day. G.A. Krause was a true visionary who ran his business like a modern tycoon: he recognized opportunity where no one else did; he was a risk taker and an innovator. By 1919, G. A. Krause took his business to the next level with an advertising campaign and one of the earliest national sales forces in the U.S. Krause never rested on his laurels, and was always a

step ahead of his time. As horses began to disappear from the American landscape, Wolverine’s engineers created a new leather: pigskin suede — a soft material that led to a breakthrough in 1957 — with the design of soft, casual shoes which were called Hush Puppies after a treat that Southerners used to quiet their barking dogs.

In an era when footwear choices were limited, Hush Puppies provided the world with a new alternative — a modern shoe which offered authentic style,

casual flair, as well as comfort. Hush Puppies — fashioned of pigskin suede and light crepe soles — were an innovation that would ultimately change the kind of shoes we wear.

The Hush Puppies brand was launched in 1958 with a heavy marketing and advertising campaign, marked by the beloved basset hound that soon embodied the easygoing Hush Puppies style.



Introduced during a time of new freedoms and changing lifestyles, the Hush Puppies brand name and mascot quickly became symbolic of the emerging optimism of mid-century America.

Hush Puppies were an amazing success from day one. As soon as the shoes hit retail stores, Greb Shoes of Canada signed up as the first licensee. Plans for international expansion were soon under way.

By 1963, one in ten American adults owned a pair of Hush Puppies, and sales continued to expand. The brand never got stale and continued to attract consumers around the world for the next three decades. In 1990, Wolverine World Wide created a dynamic new image for Hush Puppies: “We invented Casual” and five years later, Hush Puppies Shoes were voted Fashion Accessory of the Year by the Council of Fashion Designers of America. Although Wolverine World Wide would go on to acquire many prestigious shoe brands, Hush Puppies are still the jewel in the crown of a company that began as a little shoe factory at the turn of the 20th century. They keep evolving with the times: relaxed and classic in design, they continue to define what it means to be both modern and casual.

THE PRODUCT

Today, Hush Puppies offers a lot more than the original suede shoe that made the brand famous. Hush Puppies produces complete collections of contemporary casual footwear for men, women and



children. There are styles appropriate for work, for play and for all aspects of today’s busy lives.

In December 1989, Hush Puppies Canada Ltd. was formed to create new product ideas in the casual segment of the footwear market. The goal was to provide the consumer a uniquely Canadian perspective on footwear while encompassing the Hush Puppies philosophy of “Relaxed, Confident, Youthful and Modern” shoes for the entire family.

In order to deal with Canadian winters, the logical extension of the classic Hush Puppies suede oxford was a casual winter boot. Therefore Hush Puppies Canada went about establishing itself as a premier manufacturer of waterproof



casual Hush Puppies winter boots in smooth leather and suede. Hush Puppies boots are now viewed as the footwear of choice for people looking for quality and comfort combined with stylish fashion.

The Hush Puppies brand name can also now be found on accessories from handbags to watches, eyewear, socks and even plush toys.

While styles may change, one thing remains the same with today’s Hush Puppies: their comfort. Hush Puppies have long been known as “the world’s most comfortable shoes,” and designers and technicians continually work to ensure comfort is a top priority. Wolverine World Wide has received over 120 proprietary design patents over the course of its history.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Today, Hush Puppies offers a wide range of comfort technologies, from “ZeroG” — lightweight footwear built to athletic specifications — to “WaveReflex,” a uniquely designed outsole, with reverse-action waves that combine to provide extreme flexibility for immediate comfort.

In fall 2001, Hush Puppies introduced its new Float FX cushioning — a nitrogen oxide filled heel bubble, ABS stabilizer and non-liquid fore-foot gel pad to customize the entire walking motion from heel-strike through toe-off.

PROMOTION

The Hush Puppies basset hound remains one of the world’s great icons. It is as well known as “the

Hush Puppies dog” as it is by its breed. Basset hounds were first introduced in many countries around the world soon after the introduction of the Hush Puppies shoes.

It was one of the first nationally advertised shoe brands, appearing on the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and the *Today* show with Hugh Downs. There have been many memorable Hush Puppies moments in advertising — from shoes that “make the sidewalk softer” in the 1960s to “We Invented Casual” in the 1990s. In 1988, Hush Puppies won the prestigious Gold Lion at the Cannes Festival for a television commercial showing the basset hound on a subway grate with its ears flapping in the air as a train passed below. The ad was later named one of the top 100 television commercials of all time by *Entertainment Weekly* magazine.

Today, the Hush Puppies spirit is reflected in its contemporary imagery, which positions the brand as relaxed, modern, and confident. The image conveys that Hush Puppies understands fashion and has the right shoes for today’s modern consumer.

BRAND VALUES

Hush Puppies was built on the foundation of innovation, its reputation for comfort and a style distinctly its own. The brand is authentic, as it was the first casual shoe made in America. It is established as one of the most recognizable names in footwear throughout the world. And while the roots of the Hush Puppies brand are firmly planted in a relaxed and casual lifestyle, the shoes always express a fresh new style, which keeps them looking youthful and modern. They are classics, but also completely modern and up to date.

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT HUSH PUPPIES

- Nearly 40,000 pairs of Hush Puppies shoes are sold every day around the world.
- In 1959, just one year after being introduced in the United States, Hush Puppies began its globalization with its entrance into the Canadian marketplace.
- Many celebrities have worn Hush Puppies, including Tom Hanks, Sharon Stone, Nicolas Cage and Susan Sarandon.
- Hush Puppies shoes have been featured in many major movies, including a recent appearance in *Austin Powers in Goldmember*.
- The actress Rene Russo appeared in a Hush Puppies catalog in the 1970s, early in her modeling career.
- Hush Puppies Canada has been a proud supporter of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation since 2002.