

JALANDHAR

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NIVIA X MASTERS' UNION

JALANDHAR • PGP BHARAT INDUSTRY IMMERSION

Context

One of India's most iconic and trusted sports brands, NIVIA has built decades of equity in the sporting goods market. Known for accessibility and performance, the brand now seeks to **evolve its positioning** and **build a stronger premium perception without compromising or changing its established name**.

Problem Statement

*NIVIA does **not** want to **change** its **brand name**. How can it enhance its **brand image/brand positioning**, particularly for products like Aura, and create a **strong perception of premium value** in the minds of consumers?*

About NIVIA

NIVIA traces back to **Freewill Sports, founded in 1934** in Sialkot and now headquartered in Jalandhar, Punjab, manufacturing sports gear, accessories, athletic wear and footwear, and serving as an official ball partner for leagues like the **ISL** and **FIBA-certified events**. The NIVIA brand itself was formally registered in 1962, marking the company's shift from **generic sports goods manufacturing to building a distinct market identity**.

Today, the scale is real: the company produces over **20,000 sports items daily** and has diversified well beyond its original football business. NIVIA products are sold through more than **1,200 outlets** across India, and the company reported annual revenue of roughly **₹372 crore as of March 2025** with a **workforce** of over **2,300 people**. On the quality/credibility side, NIVIA holds **FIFA** approval for its footballs and **FIBA Level 1 certification** for its basketballs.



The Market NIVIA is competing in

- **Size and growth:** India's sports and fitness goods market was valued at roughly **\$2.5 billion in 2025** and is projected to grow at about **5.4% annually** through **2034**, while the broader Indian sports equipment market is projected to reach roughly **\$56 billion by 2033**, growing at over **7%** a year.
- **Where the premium ground is being lost:** India's sportswear market faces **intense pressure** from **global brands** like Nike, Adidas, Puma, Reebok and Under Armour, which **dominate** the **premium** segment through aspirational positioning, celebrity endorsements and visible product innovation. That's not a marginal effect; industry data indicates that over **70% of premium sportswear sold in India in 2024** came from **international brands**, and **Puma alone** leads India's sportswear category with roughly **6% overall market share**, ahead of **Adidas** at **~5%** and **Skechers** at **~4%**. The pressure is intensifying, not easing: **Lululemon** is **entering** the **Indian** market in the second half of 2026 through a partnership with Tata CLiQ.
- **Structural challenges domestic manufacturers face:** India's domestic sportswear manufacturing base is still underdeveloped relative to global players, creating import dependency and slower responses to shifting consumer demand. The category also deals with a high volume of counterfeit products, which complicates how consumers judge quality and authenticity at the point of sale.
- **This is the real tension in the brief:** NIVIA has **manufacturing scale**, **certifications**, and **decades of trust**; but the *premium* consumer perception in India is currently owned by foreign brands, not domestic ones with a longer track record.

Scope of the Challenge

In scope:

- How NIVIA is **currently perceived** by different consumer segments, and where that **perception** helps or **hurts a premium push**
- **Competitive positioning**: how domestic and international players are winning the premium conversation
- A **positioning strategy** that works *within* the existing brand name (the CXO has been explicit: the name does not change)
- At least **one concrete, executable pilot idea** that brings the strategy to life

Out of scope:

- **Renaming, rebranding, or logo redesign**
- Full pricing/financial modeling or manufacturing overhauls (mention only where directly relevant to perception)
- International expansion strategy

Deliverables

1. **Brand diagnosis**: current perception, and the specific gap between where NIVIA sits today and where "premium" sits in the consumer's mind
2. **Competitive landscape map**: how relevant players (domestic and international) are positioned, and what levers they use to claim premium status
3. **Positioning strategy**: a defensible narrative for NIVIA's premium lines that respects the brand name constraint
4. **At least one executional pilot idea**: something specific and feasible (packaging, retail experience, campaign, digital presence, product-line framing, etc.) that demonstrates the strategy in action

Guiding Questions for the ODC and the Immersion:

Don't try to answer these now; use your context and surroundings to build a focused understanding of the following:

- Who currently buys "premium" sports gear in India, and what pulls them toward an international brand over an Indian one?
- What does "premium" even mean in this category: performance, design, status signalling, price, or the buying experience itself?
- Which parts of NIVIA's existing portfolio could plausibly carry a premium narrative, and which can't?
- How does a "Made in India" identity help or hurt willingness to pay a premium price here?
- What premium cues like packaging, retail experience, endorsements, and digital storytelling is NIVIA currently underusing?
- How does NIVIA's Tier 2/3 distribution reality support or conflict with a premium positioning play?

Submission Guidelines

- **Presentation Format:** Submit your presentation in **PDF format**.
- **Slide Limit:** Maximum **6 slides** (excluding the annexure).
- **Team Formation:** Form teams of **5 members**. Since there are **54 students**, one team will consist of **4 members**.
- **Evidence-Based Recommendations:** Support all recommendations with relevant **data, research, assumptions, or academic/business frameworks**.
- **Practicality:** Ensure recommendations are **realistic, implementable, and capable of delivering measurable business impact**.
- **Clear Communication:** Keep slides **concise, well-structured, and visually clean**. Avoid excessive text.
- **Original Work:** All submissions must be **original team work**. Properly cite any external data, sources, or references used.
- **Naming Convention:** Save your submission as **TeamName_NIVIA_ODC**.
- **Submission & Communication:** Submission forms will be shared separately. All submission-related communication will take place via the **official WhatsApp groups**.