

# AIRWALK

If you were a skater back in the '80s or early '90s, Airwalk was your jam. Not only did they make shoes that helped pioneer the classic skateboarding culture, but they also sponsored icons like Tony Hawk and Jason Lee. Nowadays, Airwalk is more than just skate shoes: They have a whole roster of action-sports stars and are involved in supporting the music scene. **ERIC DREYER**, VP of brand management, tells us more about Airwalk's love for unsigned bands and classic '80s kicks.

Not all of our readers may be familiar with Airwalk's heritage. Can you give us an overview of how the company started, and how it's evolved since?

Airwalk began way back in 1986 and is really one of the two or three brands that started the whole skateboard sneaker scene, so the brand has authentic ties to action sports. Airwalk is also super-involved with other things

bringing back some of the looks associated with the brand's heritage, but making them relevant to today. Sometimes this means we take a sneaker that hasn't been around since the late '80s and bring it back almost exactly like it was, maybe with some changes that make it more comfortable. Sometimes we take older styles and switch up colors, materials or constructions. Most of the time [they] are chosen based on people writing and asking us to bring

back certain styles they loved.

**What do Airwalk's products say about the person wearing them?**

Some people wear Airwalk because they love the brand and the fact that it's

an original and one of the most authentic skate brands ever. Some people wear Airwalk because skateboarding is a very important part of their life. Some just like the way they look. I think everyone has a different reason, which means that the statement the brand makes about him or her is also different.

**What does the future hold for Airwalk?**

We're always looking at new collaborations and working with bands or designers that fit our brand. But it has to make sense for the artist and us. This fall, we'll be offering some old-school Airwalk styles for the first time online. Finally you can jump on our website and snag your favorite pair of Prototype 600s, Prototype 540s and other exclusive kicks. Later this year, we'll be re-launching a style that has been, by far, the most requested shoe ever for our brand. I can't reveal it yet, but I can tell you that the shoe is related to a sport that is played on a court. With a net. And racquets.



like music, design and art. But you can be sure that all of our styles will always have an authentic connection to the action-sports lifestyle—that's important to us.

**How did the Unsigned Hero contest start?**

The Airwalk Unsigned Hero program is part of Airwalk's belief in supporting emerging artists and bands. Music is a big part of our fans' lives, and by creating the contest we are able to promote unsigned artists and give them exposure to our online community. As for bands, we support all musicians! The Unsigned Hero winners from last year, Audible Mainframe, are amazing and ended up being a huge favorite. While we love working with them, we're definitely looking forward to taking this year's winner on a few dates on the AP Tour Fall.

**Where does Airwalk's design inspiration come from?**

Airwalk's designs are really about

## 5 FAVE

As selected by Eric Dreyer



1 Jim Tennis 2 Prototype 600F Torch 3 Andy Mac 4 Desert Boot 5 Prototype 540

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