

Industry Qs >>

SUMMER 2008

The lowdown: Doing business in China

IF IT'S ALL CHINESE TO YOU, take note. Doing business in China doesn't have to be daunting. Just ask Aaron Wong of Lehi's Arrow Quality International. He translates the tough questions for BusinessQ and shares how to prevent those Mandarin mishaps.

Q: What's the first step when you're planning to have a product made in China?

A: Have a sample. A sample is the model or original on which something is made or produced. Another common name is prototype. A working sample is a model or original that works the way you expect it to work, looks like you expect it to look, and feels the way you expect it to feel. By providing a working sample to your factory, this will allow them to know exactly what you are trying to make. The phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" could not be further from the truth here.

Q: What if you don't have a working sample?

A: Hire someone to make one. There are plenty of design firms out there you can hire to make professional prototypes to your exact specifications, although this option can be very expensive. If you don't have a large development budget, another option is to buy your competitor's product. But if even purchasing a product is out of your budget, then consider getting creative with what you have around you. It's amazing what can be accomplished with duct tape!

Q: How detailed do you need to be on your product specifications?

A: As detailed as possible. If you have drawings or illustrations, make sure you also have the measurements, colors and materials for every part of your product. It is difficult for the manufacturer to produce the product you want if there are holes in your design. The factory will always have questions, but



eliminate as many as you can before you begin. This way, your product will be produced faster and better.

Q: Can you give examples of how to be prepared?

A: Ask yourself the following questions:

- 1. What is the size** of each part of your product?
- 2. What material** is used to make each part? The type of material can determine the quality of the product you get.
- 3. What are the colors** of your product and logo? Don't say red — get specific. There are many different shades of red. Find the Pantone and CMYK number for your color of choice. You can find these numbers online with the matching colors.
- 4. What changes** do you want to make to your design? There may be parts of your sample you want to make changes to, especially if you bought your sample product from a competitor. Know exactly what design or functional changes you want to make to it before you begin.
- 5. How many** do you want to order and what are your price points? **Q**

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