

Introduction to the Alliance Fashion and Manufacturing Toolkit

The Fashion Toolkit has been created to help designers communicate their needs effectively to production units. One of the most important components is the recommended Code Of Practice, which will provide the designers and manufacturers with a two-way assurance that both will adhere to a professional set of standards.

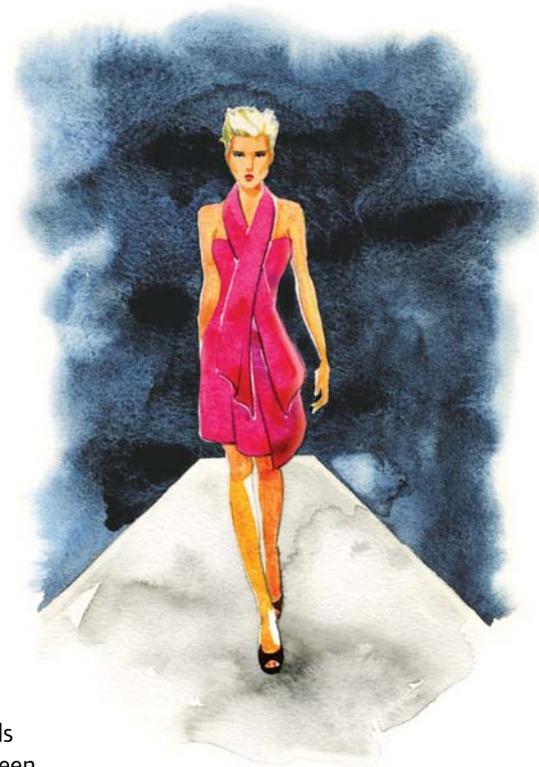
In the UK, production units go under many names but the standard model is 'CMT Factories'. CMT stands for Cut, Make and Trim – meaning that the factory supplies none of the fabric or components, apart from thread and bag, but only carries out manufacture with the materials supplied.

This method of manufacture is the norm in this country for woven garments. If you develop production in the Far East it is much more common to buy garments as 'fully factored', i.e. where the factory supplies everything from fabric to button to zip. The fully factored system also generally applies to knitwear sourced in the UK, as the production of the garments is often carried out by the producers of the yarn.

The golden rule is to establish exactly what is included in the price *before* an order (or docket) is confirmed by you to the factory. Having this clear from the start means that you are in full control of your profit margin and prevents unexpected surprises when the garments are ready and the factory needs paying.

The knowledge compiled in this Toolkit has been gathered from industry professionals with many years of experience in dealing with garment production. The Toolkit has been designed to start you off, the 'fine tuning' can be developed to suit your own needs and the needs of your factories.

Relationships between designers and manufacturers can be problematic for those who fail to understand the basic requirements necessary. Even the most experienced of Production Managers find new challenges and problems with many of their orders. The Toolkit will give you a good start, but ultimately having good relationships will help ease any problems. The factories are businesses that rely on smooth and constant production to create profits. Don't expect to build a great working relationship if you are frequently changing orders and dockets once they have been issued. Don't forget that, as far as a factory is concerned, time really *is* money!



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An Alliance of five key partners working together to support the UK's high-end designer manufacturing sector