Handicraft Sector
Design and Business Development Manual

A Step by Step Guide
Bronwyn Blue
Handicraft Sector Design and Business Development Manual:
A Step-by-Step Guide

Bronwyn Blue

International Labor Office
Artisans Association of Cambodia
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Printed in Cambodia
The handicraft sector is one of the fast growing sub-industries in Cambodia. Though its contribution to the economy and to the country’s exports is still small compared to the garment industry, handicrafts employ a considerable number of persons, and is one of the principal sources of livelihood available to persons living in precarious circumstances, such as single mothers, small farmholders, war victims, and people with disabilities. With Cambodia’s burgeoning tourist and export market, much potential exists for handicrafts to contribute economy, especially in rural areas.

In order to harness and translate indigenous skills and resources into better incomes and living conditions, small-scale production processes, currently organised and conducted at household level, have to be improved and made more consistent. Design and quality of output need to be upgraded to meet standards demanded by the export and tourist markets.

The ILO for its part seeks to “promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity”. It achieves this goal by promoting employment creation through the development of enterprises and improving the quality of jobs. Its mandate covers not only formal sector workers but workers in all types of employment throughout a growing diversity of work settings - among them, handicraft workers, street vendors, construction workers, transport operators and farmers.

In keeping with this mandate, the ILO Subregional Office in Bangkok launched the Informal Economy, Poverty and Employment (IE) Project funded by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID). The IE Project, implemented in 2003-2006, provided the opportunity to promote decent work in the informal economy through three broad theme: (i) organization, representation and voice, (ii) improved productivity and market access, and (iii) reduced vulnerabilities. The project covers Cambodia, Mongolia and Thailand.

In Cambodia, one of the main partners of the IE Project is the Artisan Association of Cambodia (AAC), a member-based organization consisting of its 27 enterprises or producer groups, employing over 600 workers, a third of whom are people with disabilities and 77 percent women. The partnership between the IE Project and the AAC consisted of organizational development assistance, association building, product design and marketing consultancy, work conditions improvement and participation in trade fairs and peer exchanges.

The Handicraft Sector and Business Development Manual: A Step-by-Step Guide is a concise and easy-to-use package detailing how to develop handicraft products and bring them to bigger markets. This guide is borne out of a 15-month consultancy that the IE Project supported, in collaboration with AAC, its members, and a consultant, Ms. Bronwyn Blue of Cambodia House. This manual is a collection of inputs and activities undertaken through the consultancy and improved through continuous peer assessments. It is also illustrated with actual cases encountered during the partnership. Parts of this manual are already being used by members and staff of AAC based on the materials circulated during the consultancy. This manual puts all these experiences together, thereby allowing more effective use and replication with more handicraft producers.
We are grateful first and foremost to the members of the Artisan Association of Cambodia who willingly cooperated with this partnership. A total of 22 enterprises participated in the consultancy and much was learned from their experiences. The consultancy was led by Ms. Bronwyn Blue, who also authored this manual. Ms Blue was assisted by AAC Director, Mr Men Sinoeun and other AAC staff Mr. Nuth Sitann and Mrs. Long Sophea. The IE Project in Cambodia was coordinated by Mr. Tun Sophorn, who was also strongly supportive of this partnership and helped identify several opportunities for further learning and exchange. The IE project is backstopped from the ILO Subregional Office for East Asia in Bangkok by Ms. Sandra O. Yu, Chief Technical Adviser, and by Ms. Ginette Forgues, Senior Specialist on Local Strategies for Decent Work. Thanks are due to Ms. Debra Perry, Senior Specialist for Vocational Rehabilitation for having established the link between AAC and the IE Project. Ms. Perry has been supportive of the AAC and its affiliate organization, the World Rehabilitation Fund, for many years now. The Cambodia-based ILO project on Integrated Support to Small Enterprises in Mekong Delta Countries (ISED, with funding from the ILO Netherlands Partnership Programme), provided several capacity building and marketing interventions which benefited members of the AAC, including training on small business associations and setting up of trade fairs.

We hope that this manual will contribute to the further development of the Cambodian handicraft industry in a way that promotes better employment and livelihoods, and reduces vulnerabilities for persons working and living in the informal economy.

Ms. Christine Evans-Klock  
Director  
International Labour Organization  
Subregional Office for East Asia  
Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. Men Sinouen  
Director  
Artisan Association of Cambodia  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
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The author would also like to express her thanks to Ms. Sandra Yu, Ms. Ginette Forgues Ms. Debra Perry and Mr. Tun Sophorn, for their input and ongoing support throughout the project and in the publishing of this manual.

Bronwyn Blue
This manual was not conceived as a text book to be used from cover to cover, rather as an informal document, the chapters of which can be used for training purposes in the order in which different organizations may require it. We hope that the users of this manual find it a support in their on going efforts to bring the unique beauty of Cambodian products and personality to the world market.

Part One  
**Foundations of Change**
This section of the manual introduces tools for addressing the need for change in any business or organization. Implementing tools such as S.W.O.T analyses, creating a set a trading terms and conditions for your business, or implementing quality customer service can provide the foundations for business development. The section also investigates the value of team work and team building as vital ingredients to effective business growth and organizational development.

Part Two  
**Market Research**
This section of this manual and its sub sections investigate and explain common market research tools and techniques. The value of market research must not be underestimated, as broader knowledge of your market facilitates improved access new markets, new product development and creates a competitive advantage.

Part Three  
**Marketing and Marketing Materials**
This section of the manual is comprised of practical step by step guides to developing the most frequently requested marketing and advertising tools for a business or organization. This section also underscores the value of the internet as an essential for working with current export buyers and a tool for reaching new markets.

Part Four  
**Product Development – Design, Costing and Marketing**
This section of the manual explains a range of tools for developing new product lines. It incorporates all aspects of product development from color usage to costing development. This section also discusses the concept of ‘differentiation’ as a marketing tool and the role of Khmer design in differentiating Cambodian made products from other regional products. The final section introduces to world of trade fairs, and the steps necessary for successful attendance at those fairs.
PART 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of this section of the manual, readers will be able to:

1. Define Team Building;

2. Understand and apply the Team Building Process when approaching new projects and team development;

3. Describe and apply different models for developing a sense of team work within a business or project management framework;

4. Define and understand the Five Stages of Team Development.
What is Team Building?

Team building can be described as activities intended to improve the development and functioning of a group of co-workers who are working towards a mutual goal. The cooperation of a team can be the key to successfully fulfilling a project’s objectives. Team building activities can be very useful when planning the development and facilitation of a well functioning team.

For example, for the successful implementation of the Artisans Association of Cambodia (AAC) ‘Next Step Project’, undertaken by the AAC Staff and consultant Bronwyn Blue in 2005 to build on the strengths of Cambodian handicraft producers, it was clear that no one person working alone could achieve all the goals that had been outlined in the project plan. Therefore it was essential to introduce adequate staff including a Marketing Officer and a Design Officer. With these new additions to the AAC team, the next step was to undertake team building activities, facilitating a well-coordinated team to implement the project and achieve its goals.

Recent research into organisational behaviour suggests that there are four main activities that can facilitate the process of quality team building. Implementing these activities can help to ensure that each team member has the opportunity and support necessary to be as productive as possible. These activities include:

1. Role definition
2. Goal setting
3. Problem solving activities
4. Interpersonal processes

1. **Role definition** provides each member with the opportunity to clearly understand their role in attaining a team's final goals. By clearly defining the role of each team member in the context of the team's desired outcomes, there remains little confusion regarding the responsibilities, lines of reporting, and terms of reference for each team member.

In the context of the AAC 2005 ‘Next Step’ Project, the roles of the AAC staff members were clearly stated in the project outline as well as in each staff's terms of reference prior to the outset of the project. These roles were reiterated throughout the project and adjusted according to time constraints and the changing needs of the AAC members. At each of these changes, the AAC Project manager ensured that all members of the team were informed of the changes and how this would impact on the end goals of the project. These actions assisted in the maintenance of a sense of cohesion and open communication within the team.

2. **Goal Setting.** The value of this step is reflected in the saying, “If you do not know where you are going, you will never get there.” Goals provide a team with a specific target, a sense of cohesion and direction. Furthermore, an established goal and the exercise of goal setting provides a strong reference point for team members to feedback on how well decisions were made in an effort to attain goals, and how these processes can be improved upon in the future.

As per the process of role definition, the AAC Design and Marketing team made use of the goal setting to provide themselves with a monthly work plan and achievable targets to assist the AAC members. As the team worked together to meet these goals in a timely and efficient manner, the goals became part of how the team defined itself as a service provider.
3. **Problem Solving** provides an excellent opportunity for teams to share ideas, brainstorm decisions, and generally develop their own style of task-related decision-making procedures. This is also part of the ‘Norming’ stage of team building that will be outlined in the next section of this manual.

Problem solving skills were essential when the AAC Marketing and Design team prepared for particular events such as trade fair participation for the AAC members. Problems involved differentiating groups and their products, negotiating with the groups to facilitate their cooperation for the fair, and organising the logistics of the event. These problem solving activities clarified the strengths and weaknesses of each team member, and facilitated the development of group communication and cohesion.

4. **Interpersonal Processes**, such as team meetings to discuss project progress, are helpful in the development of open communication, resolving miscommunications, answering questions, and strengthening relationships between team members. Other forms of interpersonal process can include informal non-work-oriented team gatherings.

The AAC marketing and design team had many opportunities to benefit from interpersonal processes through regular weekly meetings, working with members to devise their action plans, and also through informal situations such as dining out together. These experiences all assisted in the bonding, communication, and facilitation of the team.

All of these steps can assist in the development of effective team relationships. While the terminology may seem daunting, when establishing quality group work ethics, these activities should be applied through day to day tasks to better facilitate efficient team relationships.

---

**Five Stages of Team Development**

The steps between bringing a group of people with different skills and personalities together and eventually forming a ‘team’ involve several stages.

Research into the area of effective team development has highlighted the stages outlined below. An awareness of this research is useful when attempting to develop functional teams and co-worker relationship. An awareness of these stages can also assist a team leader to be sensitive to the potential needs and changing relationships that occur within teams at different times, affecting their ability to work together.

As highlighted by modern organisational development theorists, the stages of team development are outlined below.

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing
5. Adjourning

---

**Forming**

During this stage, new team members are getting to know each other, and are likely to defer to the team leader or manager to resolve uncertainties. It is during this phase that new team members attempt to discover what the team expects of them and what they can bring to the situation.

It is in this stage that role definition and goal setting must be developed to assist the effective initiation of the team and its purpose. At the end of this stage, all team members should have understood their own and their team members’ roles, and the goal that they are working towards together.
2 Storming

During this phase, a team may incur some interpersonal conflicts or disagreements about the way one of the team members is carrying out their role. For example, one member may not be fulfilling their responsibilities to the rest of the team, or there may be disagreements on the strategies for achieving the outlined goals. At this time, it is essential that the team leader provide excellent mediation skills. Problem solving and interpersonal processes are extremely useful and can facilitate open discussion about the direction of the team.

3 Norming

High quality team leadership is essential as team norms (common assumptions of what kind of work ethic is and is not acceptable) are developed. Team norms impact upon all aspects of the way a team works, from the group's expectations of timeliness, or reporting, to their processes for achieving their goals. Once these norms are in place and the whole team is abiding by those regulations, it will facilitate their efforts in the next stage: performing.

4 Performing

At this stage, team members will have acknowledged their team's expectations of them as individuals, and of the whole team. Together with strong mechanisms for communication and mediation, the team should be able to become task oriented, and place trust in each other's abilities to perform the tasks they have been assigned. At this time, the sentiments among a well-performing team will be that of mutual support, respect and cooperation.

5 Adjourning

This stage refers to the part of a project where the goal is achieved and the team is disbanded. At this stage, it is essential to assess the outcomes of the relationship. Most importantly, were the goals achieved?

- If not, why not?
- What are the necessary next steps from these achievements?
- What did each team member learn during this effort that could be improved on in their next team exercise?

This form of debriefing is essential to be able to learn what the team achieved and to take these lessons into the next project.

The AAC 'Next Step' Project was an act of teamwork that experienced all of the previous stages. While the project is ongoing, the departure of the Marketing and Design Facilitator allowed the team to go through an 'Adjourning' phase, as the team members were no longer supervised by the facilitator, leaving both members of staff responsible for the AAC's marketing and design activities.

Conclusion

It must be said that the most valuable activity that can be gained by working as a team is the communication and sharing of ideas. Idea development always benefits from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. One example of this is the process of the brand development and business profiles. Through many of the tasks outlined in this manual, teamwork is essential and the above information can be used as a guideline for forming efficient and productive teams.
At the end of this chapter, reader should have an understanding of:

1. What is a S.W.O.T analysis
2. The rationale behind the use of a S.W.O.T analysis;
3. How to use a S.W.O.T analysis;
4. Who does using a S.W.O.T analysis benefit?
5. The value of using S.W.O.T analysis;
6. The process of distilling the information gathered through the interview process into an appropriate action plan to address the weaknesses of an organization through its strengths;
7. How to select the appropriate person to conduct the S.W.O.T analysis;
8. The difference between internal and external opportunities;
9. The process of conducting an efficient interview
What is a S.W.O.T Analysis?

S.W.O.T analysis is a systematic way to investigate different aspects of a business or organization quickly and efficiently through their:

- **S** - Strengths
- **W** - Weaknesses
- **O** - Opportunities
- **T** - Threats

Why is S.W.O.T useful?

The S.W.O.T can be used to address specific aspects of an organization, such as its design and marketing skills. It can also be used to assess an organization in a broader manner, investigating all levels of its processes. In the initial process of investigating the overall efficiency of an organization, a S.W.O.T analysis can be used to assist interested parties to identify trouble areas that may need specific attention.

How does S.W.O.T work?

A S.W.O.T analysis involves an interview process between a consultant and a relevant member of the business or organization in question, the responses to which can later be distilled into an analysis of that organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

During the interview, specific questions are asked of the appropriate people to gain an insight into the area of the business that needs to be addressed. For the interviewer, the information is useful as it will highlight essential information as they seek to match the group's resources and capabilities to its operating environment.

An outline of example organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are outlined below:

**Strengths:** It is valuable to identify what your organization's strengths may be from your organization's operator's perspective AND from the organization's buyer's perspective. Furthermore, it is valuable to identify the organization's strengths in comparison to competitors. For example, if all the organization's competitors provide high-quality products, then a high-quality production process is not a strength in the market; it is a necessity.

- An organization's strengths are its resources and capabilities that can be leveraged to develop a competitive advantage, or achieve more successful systematic business practices.

**Weaknesses:**

- Weaknesses are the areas in which an organization has difficulties. They may be the opposite of some strengths.
- Do other people seem to perceive weaknesses that you do not see?
- How could your organization be more competitive in the market?

**Opportunities:**

- Opportunities are new possibilities for your organization's profit and growth.
- Look at your organization's strengths and ask whether these open up any new opportunities.
- How can you systematically change your organization's weaknesses into opportunities?

**Threats:** Threats are the obstacles that your organization faces, such as:

- Things that your competition is doing better than your organization;
- Any difficulties that may threaten your organization's business; and
- Any weaknesses that your organization have not addressed.
Very organization has its challenges. To be able to address those challenges, it is essential that the individuals in a position to create change are aware of the challenges they face, and the resources available to address them. These challenges and resources are what a SWOT analysis can bring to the attention of management.

**S.W.O.T Analysis is used by organizations who want to investigate different ways to grow. A business manager could also conduct a S.W.O.T analysis on their competitors! However, it is advisable that an impartial, third party conduct the S.W.O.T analysis to ensure an unbiased judgment.**

The S.W.O.T analysis can provide objective information on how to mobilize strengths, and minimize weaknesses and threats. Furthermore, the organization can maximize opportunities by transforming information found during the interview process and using it to develop an action plan.

**Methodology**

To perform a S.W.O.T analysis, first there must be some preliminary research into the nature of the organization. In most cases this means an interview with the target group that would like to develop their organization.

A S.W.O.T analysis is best performed by an outside organizational auditor. Depending on the area of your organization that requires investigation, it is advantageous to invite an independent, appropriately skilled person to conduct the S.W.O.T analysis. This allows the interviewer/researcher to see the organization in an unbiased manner and their specific experience of the area targeted for improvement will be pivotal in their role of developing appropriate ‘next step’ recommendations.

For example, if an organization were to experience management difficulties, a business would call to invite an experienced manager or management expert to conduct the S.W.O.T analysis. Likewise, if a business wants to increase production capacity, they would invite an experienced production manager to assess the situation.

**Isolating Opportunities**

Isolating some aspects of the S.W.O.T Analysis may be clearer than others. For example, the strengths and weakness of an organization may be more obvious than the opportunities.

When developing a realistic action plan, both internal and external opportunities need to be considered in order to identify all the possibilities available to the organization. Before attempting to outline the opportunities, it is valuable to be clear on the difference between the internal and external opportunities, and the value of both.

**Internal Opportunities:** The opportunities that can be developed by making changes from within the organization.

**Example:** If the role of marketing manager is needed, assess the skills of current staff and find a current staff member that could be groomed to take the role. Another option is to rearrange the roles within the organization to achieve more from each person’s skills.
External Opportunities: The opportunities that arise from interaction with the outside world.

Example: Take part in an international trade fair or train staff to communicate more clearly with potential buyers.

The aim of an interview is to obtain the kind of information necessary to be able to assess and respond to the needs of each group or individual interviewed. In the interview situation, there must be an interviewer and interviewee (or a person to ask questions and a person to reply). The person who is asking the questions will take notes to be sure they remember in detail the answers to the questions they ask.

The interviewer will proceed to ask questions about their organization, to further understanding of the four areas of interest.

- Strengths
- Weakness
- Opportunities available and
- Threats.

Research indicates that there are several theories regarding how to perform a ‘best practice’ interview. Indeed a good quality interview is the result of a patience, well preparedness, empathy, understanding and curiosity. The rational behind a well patterned interview is that it can achieve the necessary outcome in less time and with less disruption to the interviewee.

The following theory has been developed by Brian L. Delahaye of the Queensland University of Technology. According to his theory, the process of a good-quality interview requires several steps to ensure that the best possible responses are acquired from the interviewee.

According to Delahaye, a well designed interview is based on six factors:

- The pattern of the interview
- Listening
- Questioning
- Paraphrasing
- Probing
- Non-verbal behavior.

The interview pattern itself consists of four stages. These are the following:

- Stage 1. Entrance Time Investment
- Stage 2. Activity No. 2
- Stage 3. Intimacy
- Stage 4. Exit Time Investment

Stage 1. Entrance Time Investment

This stage outlines the six steps necessary to prepare the interviewee to enter the ‘rapport zone’. In his text, Delahaye outlines that this first challenge involves assisting the interviewee to feel comfortable and encourage a flow of information. Once the interviewee is in this zone, a more effective efficient interview can be conducted. To facilitate this comfort zone for the interviewee, the following six steps are extremely useful.
The six steps of the 'Entrance Time Investment' stage are:

1. Rituals
2. Pass time
3. Reason
4. Rules
5. Preview
6. Activity Number.1

**Rituals:** A common stereotype greeting such as “Good morning. My name is (interviewer's name) Please have a seat.”

**Pass time:** A brief conversation initiated by the interviewer that does not refer to the interview process directly. This could include, “How are you today?” or “I hope you had no trouble finding the room” or even “nice weather we are having at the moment”.

These first two steps may seem superficial, but they are part of assisting the interviewee to feel at ease with the interviewer and the environment. These steps may also assist the interviewee to take their mind off the previous tasks they have been doing, or the tasks they have to do next.

**Reason:** At this stage, the interview can communicate the ‘rationale’ of the interview. They can introduce the reasoning behind the investigations that are underway. In this way, the can assist the interviewee to feel informed and give them an informational framework from which to respond to the upcoming questions.

**Rules:** In this stage, the interview can inform the interviewee of the ‘rules’ of the interview, that is to inform them that the information gained from the interview is confidential, and tell them how the information will be used. At this stage, the interviewer should ask the interviewee’s permission to use a tape recorder to record the interview and, or take notes.

**Preview:** Very briefly, this stage outlines how the interview will proceed. For example, “I will ask you a range of 20 questions pertaining to the production of your products, please answer to the best of your ability”

**Activity Number.1:** This stage involves a final question or introduction to the interview process. This stage could also include some information about how long the interview will take and how long until the research may be complete.

All the above stages should only take a few minutes of the interview time.

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**Stage 2. Activity No. 2**

In this stage, the interview uses tools such as questioning, active listening and paraphrasing to gain the most detailed responses from the interviewee. This stage of questioning will revolve around the pre-prepared questions that generally focus on the interviewee’s explicit, rather than implicit knowledge of the organization. For example “How many people work on the production team?” or “How many products can be produced per month.”

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**Stage 3. Intimacy**

At this stage, the questions may change to explore more implicit knowledge of the organization in the context of the interview subject. This involves how the interviewee ‘feels’. For example “Do you believe that your organization has strong leadership?” or “Would you prefer to have more support from the staff/directors etc?”
Just as the entrance time allows the interviewee to lower their defenses and relax with the interviewer and the interview questions, the ‘Exit Time’ stage can assist the interviewee to prepare for the end of the interview and feel satisfied with the conclusion.

This stage is also composed of six steps. These are

1. Final Comments
2. Summary
3. Future Actions
4. Final Questions
5. Pass Time
6. Ritual

**Final Comments:** When the interviewer has collected all the information they feel necessary for the research, it is important that they ask the interviewee if they have any final comments to make as the interview is nearing its end. This could take the form of “That concludes the questions I planned to ask. Do you have any questions or comments you would like to make?”

**Summary:** The interviewer can then highlight the main points that were discussed during the interview and the main purpose of the interview.

**Future Actions:** This step includes telling the interviewee what is the next step to be taken with the research, and how useful the information they have provided will be.

**Final Questions:** to be sure that the interviewee is satisfied with the conclusion, it is prudent to ask “Do you have any final questions?”

**Pass Time:** This stage provides the interviewee with the chance to prepare to leave. This can include non verbal communication such as turning off the tape recorder, closing the note book and standing up.

**Ritual:** Similarly to the beginning of the interview stage 1, this step concludes the interview and gives a sense of finality. This includes the interviewer providing a closing comment such as offering a handshake and saying “Good bye and thank you for your time.”

When gathering the necessary information to be able to compile a S.W.O.T analysis, it is helpful to ask questions that will provide information on the overall running of the organization/business being assessed, as well as more specific information on the aspect of the organization management wishes to improve. Therefore, there are two phases of questioning that can be useful.

The first questions are more general questions about the business/organization.

### Sample Questions

- For how many years has the organization existed?
- How many paid staff does it support?
- How many unpaid staff is currently supported?
- How many hours do paid and unpaid staffs generally work?
- Is the organization self sufficient?
- Did you have funding for the organization? If so, what percent of the overheads are covered by donor funds?
- Are there any international or local groups that support you in other ways (non-financial)?
- Does your organization have a goal?
- If yes, does all the staff understand and work toward that goal?
- In your office, can your staff communicate (read/write) in different languages?
The second focus of questioning will be specific to the area that the organization is interested in improving. The focus of the questions will vary according to the products that are produced, and the nature of the business or organization. As an example, below are some questions that can be used as a basic guideline for a marketing, design, and production focus.

**Sample Questions**

- What is your monthly production output?
- Does that cover your costs?
- What are your most popular items?
- Do you have a realistic costing system?
- Who is responsible for the costing?
- Do you have a pattern teacher?
- How do you find new designs?
- Do you have a production plan?
- Outline your current production procedure?
- Are your current production procedures adequate?
- Do you have a system for assisting buyers to buy your products, such as
  - Color books
  - Product codes
  - Accessory books
- Do you import any accessories from Thai or Vietnamese suppliers?
- Do you work with your own weavers?
- What kinds of dyes do you use?
- Do you have a production workshop?
- Do you have a consistent system for communicating the products - from the buyers, to the production manager, to the trainers, and to the producers?
- Do you have any standard specification sheets or costing sheets?
- Do you have a quality control person in your workshop?

**Marketing**

- Do you have an effective marketing manager?
- Do you have any marketing materials?
- Does your organization have any branding or logos?
- Who is your mail market?
- Do you have a target market?
- Do you focus on the local or the international market?
- Do you want to change your focus?
- Do you have any international buyers?
- Who are your buyers? Why?
- Which market has been the most profitable?
- Can your staff use internet/email?
- Have you ever been to an international trade fair?
- Have you ever been out of the country?

**Compiling the Information**

After conducting the interviews, all the information collected must be compiled into a logical and easy-to-follow description of the organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

This is the step of the process when the interviewer and researcher need to draw on their own exposure, experience, and fresh perspective to compile a realistic organizational assessment. The information can be compiled in a variety of ways. One suggested format is outlined below in a sample.

*In the following sample compiled S.W.O.T, the Opportunities section is divided into two: Opportunities (WHAT) and Actions (HOW). This is to simplify the next step of the S.W.O.T analysis process, the development of the Action Plan.*
ABC Business – S.W.O.T Analysis

Strenghts

- A new marketing strategy for 2005 – aims to focus on the local market.
- Having commenced advertising through the Cambodia Daily
- Having a marketing officer in place;
- Having marketing tools available:
  - Website - successful in terms of promoting export;
  - Flyers - successful in promoting local sales;
  - Brochure; and
  - Advertising in guide books.
- Strong overarching organizational structure;
- GROUP A Shop is in a good sales location – should be able to attract more customers through attractive, visible street advertising;
- A concise, clear ‘Export Terms and Conditions’ policy;
- An ability to deal with contracts and intellectual property rights;
- Shop renovations;
- Brochure developed;
- Strong communication skills;
- New production centre available;
- A current catalogue;
- Good costing system;
- A target market – focus on elegant silk ware and GIFTS; and
- Value added production – to provide work for people with disabilities.

The organizations Strengths in Design Include:

- Strong skills in product sampling developed over the years through collaboration with export buyers;
- Large supply of silk meterage stock;
- Having three groups of silk suppliers that work regularly with GROUP A. However, only one of these groups has trained in the use of Dystar (German dyes);
- A production workshop with all facilities and 30 newly trained producers,
- Access to accessory suppliers in Bangkok;
- Consistent export buyers;
- The support of donor organizations through training and funds;
- Good market access and range of product distribution;
- Good knowledge of shipment procedures and challenges;
- Experience of exposure to the international environment - designs and ideas;
- Good understanding of design interpretation;
- In-house workshop supervisor and pattern developer;
- Growth in producers’ awareness of timeliness and its impact on sales;
- Extensive international exposure;
- Access to training in the use of Dystar dyes
- Exposure to local competitive markets (e.g. Vietnam, overseas) providing GROUP A with valuable information on competitive pricing and product designs;
- Retail shop location. This information is useful for deciding what products do and don’t sell in the local market – i.e. research for export;
- Ability to research latest trends via available methods such as internet and imported catalogues;
- Understanding the value of exposure to neighboring countries to study their quality and look for opportunities in design and production;
- Understanding the value of product development;
- Good connections with the local and international accessories markets; also has an understanding of the cost advantages of buying through the local market;
- Good understanding of costing system;
- A color swatch book, and other basic product information already available;
Value Added

- Cambodian owned and run business;
- Open to more Khmer influences;
- Works in association with producers, tries to provide benefits to producers.

Weaknesses in the organizations marketing procedures include:

- Marketing Manager has limited understanding of the role of International Trade Fairs and how they can be leveraged to promote the organization;
- Lack of understanding of, or focus on target customers needs;
- Organization not mentioned in the most widely read Cambodian guide books such as The Lonely Planet;
- Limited research into product development;
- Currently production plan for 2006 un-established;
- Lack of recent feedback from local and international clients;
- Poor signage at the front of the retail outlet;
- The shop assistants are not proactive in gathering information regarding the customers. For example: “How did you hear about our business?”;
- Marketing manager not 100% confident in his skills – allows manager to take over his role;
- Marketing manager unsure of the value of Cambodian silk and Cambodian products in the international market place;
- No direct sourcing of raw materials; therefore, not marketing Cambodian silk;
- Low level of quality control;
- Poor communication skills affects some members of staff ability to best perform their duties (unable to approach or communicate with potential buyers)

Weaknesses in the organizations Design procedures include:

- Shop assistants need to develop a better understanding of how to present the products in a clean and fashionable way. Presentation of the shop does not change frequently enough. Action must be taken regarding the implementation of new shop fittings;
- Limited ability to access the Dystar dyes for EU export;
- Limited understanding on the concept of product range development;
- Access to accessories not developed;
- Too many products/colors on display;
- Regularly, with silk producers who supply them with silk dyed with Thai dye, it means the colors are often not the same;
- Team leader has potential design skills, however her time is often monopolized by general management troubleshooting and meetings;
- Unclear job descriptions;
- 30 producers are new. Therefore, the production is slow;
- Products are too simple – lack of “design” elements;
- Old fashioned products - not fashionable or sophisticated;
- Little attention to details (shapes or color combinations);

Production: Production manager has an inefficient relationship with the producers due to his lack of guidance and lack of timeliness;
- No dedicated design officer whose responsibility it is to develop a MINIMUM of number new products a month;
- Inconsistent silk colors using Thai dyes;
- Disregard for buyers wishing to purchase consistent colors;
- Lack of clear, efficient communication strategies for working with producers and minimizing QC problems;
- No labeling or information regarding product care;
Lack of understanding of international standards and specifications for silk such as denier and twist per meter (TPM) and the uses of those differences in creating new products, and

Use of lower quality raw materials, therefore, more breakages, more time for weaving and overall lower quality of silk;

**Opportunity**

The organization’s design and marketing opportunities include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT (Opportunity)</th>
<th>HOW (Action)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain an insight into your frequent local customers</td>
<td>Research:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What is their country of origin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What are they looking for in Cambodia (what kind of experience - product)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What is it like in their country of origin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ What are people’s tastes for colors and fashions in that country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct some research into the kinds of tourists that are traveling down from Siem Reap.</td>
<td>Leave questionnaires and promotional information at travel agencies and main tourist venues in Phnom Penh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build reputation within the local market.</td>
<td>▪ Advertise in ALL local tourist maps and guides;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Invest in PROMINENT signage that will be seen by passers by. Currently it is very difficult to find the shop;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Make a financial arrangement with tour guides in PP to bring tourists to the shop;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Prepare a marketing event for foreigner-specific holidays, Easter, Christmas;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Promote the products to the Khmer community via POP magazine;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Distribute color flyers to upper class universities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Pannasatra;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Royal University of PP;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ National; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Nou Thong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Marketing:</strong></td>
<td>Keep a record of the BIGGEST international trade fairs and research appropriate wholesalers that might be interested in your production capacity. Market GROUP A as a reliable producer of high-quality silk products, already wholesaling internationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise GROUP A’s internal awareness of international buying seasons, keep informed of the latest design trends.</td>
<td>Research all relevant annual upcoming international trade fairs to your business via the AAC and through the internet. Investigate the suppliers of business who sell specialty fabrics in major markets. Introduce your business to these suppliers via the web, outlining your services and products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in the local and international trade fairs to build local identity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To avoid further losses, management must begin to delegate tasks and train extra staff. For example: if the marketing manager could focus on marketing, a better client base could be developed. Instead, time is spent arranging shipments and doing invoices.

List five present staff members that you could train and delegate work to. What roles would each person take? It is important to have the right person in the right job. Reappraise present people and their roles. Write clear job descriptions:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

When you have decided who would be appropriate for the necessary roles, write out a list of tasks you would like each of them to achieve in the next three months in their new positions. If some of the tasks require skills they do not have, ask AAC how you could train these people so that they could fulfill your business needs.

| Employ new staff to receive training. | Approach BAC (through AAC) for financial assistance for training new staff. Create a simple proposal (one page) in order to receive the proposal format to receive stipend for staff. To be eligible for this program, staff must be newly employed, not existing staff. BAC can provide a stipend for three months to cover the costs of employment while training is taking place. Then your organization must ensure a secure job position within the organization. |
| Network with other AAC members to learn from their experience over the last five years of local and international business; | Taking advantage of this opportunity can be useful in many ways. For example, by better understand the available outsourcing skill levels if necessary. |
| Participate and sell products via the upcoming AAC boutique. | Develop a range of products and use the AAC shop front as a test market for new wholesale designs. |
| Market products via the AAC website; | Contact the AAC Marketing Office regarding photography of products appropriate for insertion into the website. |
| Join the AAC exposure tours to Bangkok International Gift Fair and to Laos; | During the fair, investigate the cost of comparative products, ask silk vendors where they purchase their raw materials and why, and investigate design ideas. |
| Access design and marketing assistance via AAC; | Contact AAC design and marketing staff regarding training opportunities. |
| Make use of AAC to assist in the development of an appropriate costing system; | Ask AAC Financial Officer for information on appropriate costing systems. |
How to Prepare and Compile a S.W.O.T Analysis

Part iii

Design

| Develop a new product range to be available for wholesalers and retail. | With the assistance of the AAC design team, develop a range of new products in one or two color-coordinated storyboards, utilizing available new silk and textile techniques including:  
- Silk painting;  
- Silk screen printing. |
| Develop the interior design of the GROUP A retail outlet. | 1. Work with AAC designer to develop new strategy and cost analysis for shop interior,  
2. STOP "color blocking". It has been the same old system for too long – need to find a new strategy. |
| Invest in a short training to assist the silk selectors to purchase better-quality silk from the supplier. | Develop a training session on how to recognize different classes of silk thread and how different qualities of thread will impact on the final quality of the end product. |
| Improve quality control by developing appropriate communication systems for design specifications. | Ask AAC to provide you with a sample specification sheet that you can change to suit your needs. |
| Access design training and advice from AAC. | Stay in contact with AAC designer to share ideas and ask for feedback. |

Threats

Threats that the organization faces in the context of Marketing Includes:

- Lack of active marketing will leave GROUP A with lack of local identity and client base;
- Lack of business structure. Without appropriate task delegation, the manager will become overburdened.

Threats that the organization faces in the context of Design Includes:

- Not being able to service the needs of buyers appropriately and in a timely way will leave buyers dissatisfied and looking for new suppliers;
- Continuing to not address the basic needs of the buyers in terms of good quality silk and raw materials;
- Not paying attention to the attitudes of the producers could see them leave GROUP A to work with other organizations;
- Without appropriate agreements/contracts with producers, ownership of silk and credit will be unclear and leave buyers disappointed;
- Without appropriate quality control, raw materials can be wasted. Product should be sampled and tested for durability prior to production.

Communicating in findings from the completed S.W.O.T Analysis

When communicating the finding and outcomes of the S.W.O.T analysis to the assessed organization, it is essential the interviewer/researcher stresses their openness to feedback and suggestions. This is very important to avoiding any miscommunications between the interviewer/researcher and the assessed business or organization.

After the investigator has received feedback from the organization, this S.W.O.T can be used to develop an action plan based on the findings of the analysis. A guide to developing an action plan from the findings of the S.W.O.T analysis is outlined in the next section of this document.
At the end of this chapter, the reader should have an understanding of:

1. What an Action Plan is;

2. The rationale behind developing and using an Action Plan

3. How to use the information gained from a S.W.O.T analysis to create an action plan,

4. When it is appropriate to develop an action plan

5. How to lay out an action plan
What is an Action Plan?

An action plan is a written outline of steps that will be taken to instigate positive change within an organization. The development of an action plan can assist an organization to gain clearer goals, and better procedures for attaining them, leading to a more successful and efficient business. In other words, an action plan provides a road map for change and outlines the specific tasks necessary to achieving the goals of the action plan.

Why is an Action Plan useful?

While a S.W.O.T analysis can provide an organization with a better understanding of its organization and clear information regarding how an outside organizational auditor may perceive it, the S.W.O.T analysis does not explicitly state how to implement these changes. Done properly, an action plan provides a time frame outlining how each task can be done to ensure these goals are achieved.

When is it appropriate to develop an Action Plan?

An action plan is useful when:

a. Addressing a specific issue that requires change
b. Instigating specific changes within the organization
c. It is in conjunction with an S.W.O.T analysis. By first developing the S.W.O.T analysis, the findings can be used to create the framework for your action plan.

How to develop an Action Plan based on the findings of the S.W.O.T Analysis.

The persons who will implement the action plan must have a clear understanding of issues such as time and staff availability. For this reason, an action plan is best developed and implemented by the team leader, or manager. An action plan can also be developed by the external researcher/interviewer who developed the S.W.O.T analysis in cooperation with the management that will implement it.

To construct an action plan based on the findings of the S.W.O.T analysis, the person who will develop the plan must have a solid understanding of the outcomes of the S.W.O.T analysis.

One way to begin to develop an action plan using the findings of the S.W.O.T analysis is to consider how the organizational strengths can address the weaknesses. Another perspective is to consider how to mobilize the strengths of an organization, to action the opportunities identified.

For example:

Strength: Some members of staff speak English well and have full understanding of the internet.

Weakness: No marketing department and very little advertising or communication with potential buyers.

Opportunities: Train one member of the staff to act as a marketing officer.
Once several of these avenues for change have been identified, it is useful to layout the necessary activities in a time line, during a period that has been set aside to implement the plan. In the first column, the objective of the month has been clearly defined to be able to pace your actions according to the overall objectives of the month.

Like the first S.W.O.T Analysis, after the first draft of the action plan is outlined, it is essential that those who will put the plan into action check it for comments, feedback and possible changes. After any adjustments have been made, the plan can be finalized.

Below is a sample of how to layout your action plans.

**REMEMBER,** no plan is worth the paper it is printed on if it is not followed through.

### Design Action Plan for One Month

**Trainer**

Om Sopeap

The four staff that have been identified for training, currently working Nyemo are:

- Tida
- Polin
- Bopha
- Chanti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August 15th</th>
<th>August 16th</th>
<th>August 17th</th>
<th>August 18th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The four ladies identified for training will work with the AAC designer to learn about color theory and ensure and clear understanding of how / when different colors can be used in product development</td>
<td>The ladies identified for training will work with the AAC designer to learn about color theory and ensure and clear understanding of different colors can be used in product development</td>
<td>Together with the NYEMO ladies, develop a color range for training to be based on new color range and theory.</td>
<td>Together w/ Chanti and two seamstresses training on the process of developing products from specification sheets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19th</td>
<td>Together with Chanti and two of the main seamstresses, training on process of developing products from specification sheets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 22th</td>
<td>Final day working on products from spec sheets. The outcome of this part of the training will be at minimum one product per person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23th</td>
<td>Together with Tida and Polin, choose and develop new embroidery ideas that will be used on the new Christmas decorations and home wares. Learn each of the new styles with the AAC designer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 24th</td>
<td>Together with Tida and Polin, choose and develop new embroidery ideas that will be used on the new Christmas decorations and home wares. Learn each of the new styles with the AAC designer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 25th</td>
<td>Together with Tida and her staff, begin to develop 15 new Christmas decorations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26th</td>
<td>Together with Tida and her staff, begin to develop 15 new Christmas decorations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 29th</td>
<td>Together with Tida and her staff, work on new Christmas decorations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30th</td>
<td>Complete the new samples of 15 new Christmas decorations working with Tida and staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1st</td>
<td>Work with Polin to develop a range of ten new home wares products. Incorporate the new embroidery styles that were introduced.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2nd</td>
<td>Work with Polin to develop a range of ten new home wares products. Incorporate the new embroidery styles that were introduced.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3rd</td>
<td>Work with Polin to develop a range of ten new home wares products. Incorporate the new embroidery styles that were introduced.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4th</td>
<td>Ask members of team to assess products &amp; provide constructive feedback before new products go into production.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 5th</td>
<td>Develop interior plan for Nyemo retail outlet together with appropriate budget for presentation to the Nyemo management.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6th</td>
<td>Develop interior plan for Nyemo retail outlet together with appropriate budget for presentation to the Nyemo management.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7th</td>
<td>Develop interior plan for Nyemo retail outlet together with appropriate budget for presentation to the Nyemo management.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. What are Trading Terms and Conditions?
2. How Trading Terms and Conditions are useful;
3. What should be included in a set of Terms and Conditions;
4. What is a Contract?
5. The difference between a set of Terms and Conditions and a Contract;
6. The value of researching Import Regulations for main export markets.
What are Trading Terms and Conditions?

Trading Terms and Conditions are points on a working document that outline essential information for any buyer that may be interested in working with your business.

How are Trading Terms and Conditions useful?

Trading Terms and Conditions are useful for both the business and the buyer.

By providing Terms and Conditions, your business delivers a well-prepared and organized image to current and prospective buyers. By providing buyers with as much relevant information as possible in one document, you save time and money rather than sending various emails and faxes replying to the many different questions the buyers may have about working with your business.

Terms and Conditions also provide buyers with the information they need to make well-timed orders and make well-informed decisions about the type and number of products they want to buy from your business.

In many ways, a set of Terms and Conditions provides a form of insurance for the business or organization that it represents as it clearly states the businesses potential AND limitations. By providing this information to potential buyers before becoming involved in any contractual agreements or financial commitments, there is less opportunity for misunderstandings or inappropriate expectations on either parties' part.

Trading Terms and Conditions are particularly relevant when working with international buyers, as they are often unaware of the many practicalities (such as the transferral of funds, or customs matters) in countries outside of their own.

Providing the buyers with guidelines about what is expected from them and what they can expect from your business facilitates the most effective working relationship.

When and how to distribute Terms and Conditions

The set of Terms and Conditions should be included with your catalogue or other marketing material when buyers enquire about your products and working with your business.

When should Terms and Conditions change?

A set of Terms and Conditions should be updated as frequently as your prices or production capacity changes. If there have been any significant changes in the way your production operates or in the way you source your raw material, these updates should be added into your terms and conditions and sent to your current buyers.

What should be included in a set of Terms and Conditions?

While each set of Terms and Conditions will be different in regards to product, there are many similar issues that need to be addressed.

Below (Appendix 1) is a set of generic Terms and Conditions that AAC provides to members. These Terms and Conditions give an indication of the main areas of interest for prospective buyers in the handicraft sector, and the areas that should be addressed by any production facility. This set should be altered to suit your business and products.
**What is a Contract?**

A contract is a legally binding agreement between two or more parties that outlines the conditions for the exchange of value (for example, money exchanged for title to property).

**How do Terms and Conditions and Contracts compare?**

In some ways, a set of Terms and Conditions is similar to a Contract, as it provides the buyer with vital information about the best way to work with an organisation/business. However, a set of Terms and Conditions is informational whereas a Contract is legally binding.

**How are Contracts useful?**

A contract can be important for protecting your own rights as a producer and for protecting the rights of the buyer. As an exporter it may not always be necessary to enter into a contractual agreement with the buyer that you are working with. However, there are some cases where you might feel that it would be a valuable step to take.

Contracts are extremely useful when you enter into business relationships with local and international business partners. The value of contracts is that they represent the mutually recognised set of regulations that apply to both producers’ and a buyers’ obligations. Sometimes it may be the buyer that initiates a contractual agreement. This is often the case in terms of copyright, or duplication of designs.

Contracts are also useful for protecting your businesses rights as a consumer when working with local producers for outsourcing partnerships or suppliers.

The situation described below provides a fictional example of how a pre-arranged contractual agreement with a service provider or supplier can avoid damage or unnecessary costs to your business and products.

**Situation A**

Silk fabric will be screen printed with the design of an international buyer. Your business purchases the silk fabric at your cost until the finished products are delivered. However, when the printed silk is delivered from the printer, around 20% of the fabric has not been well printed and therefore cannot be used to produce the buyer’s products. However, the screen printer still wants to be paid, and your business is left with many meters of silk that cannot be used.

At this stage, the fabric will have to be re-purchased and the silk re-printed. The order for the buyer will have to be delayed and their shipment will be late. This is a lose-lose situation.

**Situation B**

Before entering into production with a screen-printing workshop, a contract was developed outlining that 5% of faults in the printing would be the maximum level of faults accepted by your business on behalf of your client. The contract also outlines that anything over 5% will not be paid for.

Before commencing work, the contract was signed by all parties. Because the screen-printers were aware of their parameters for fault prior to beginning the order they are more likely to produce a better quality finish. Furthermore, in the contract with the buyers, you will have advised them of the timing involved if fabrics need to be re-printed, and they have accepted that risk prior to lodging their order.
Appendix 1: Sample Terms and Conditions

Note: Comments in RED are the writer's comments and would not normally be included in a set of working Terms and Conditions.

Organizational Profile: Add organizational profile.

Objectives: Add organizational objectives.

Monthly Production Capacity

X large pieces per week.
X medium pieces per week.
X small pieces per week.

Please note: These figures indicate maximum production capacity. This estimate does not include time necessary to order or purchase raw materials. This will vary according to each buyer's requirements. All orders will be placed in a cue in the context the current production schedule.

Order Procedure

Initial Discussion: On the first communication with the buyer, we will be happy to receive information regarding the:

- Type of product the buyer is interested in;
- If the buyer has a wholesale or retail business;
- The quantity of product the buyer may be interested in, and
- Optimum lead-times for production and shipment.

When you have this information, you can begin to tailor a production package that would suit your requirements.

Send specification sheets.
Receive Samples.

At this stage, you inform the buyer of your production commitments, so that there is a clear understanding of your availability to produce the buyer's order.

If the buyer orders some sample products, use the following procedure.

1) Sample order acknowledgement. New samples are delivered by hand or via images over email. If you are sending your sample design via email, please include the complete sample specification sheet. See sample.

After receiving the sample order, send an email to confirm receipt of the order. If no confirmation is received, the sample order may not have been received.

PLEASE NOTE: IF NO DESIGN SPECIFICATION OR PHYSICAL SAMPLE ARE SUPPLIED, a fee of $## is CHARGED per new product developed by our staff. This fee is deducted from the eventual larger order of that particular product.
2) When the samples are ready, we send them via normal post, or as otherwise specified by the buyer. There are currently many reliable systems for postage available including EMS, TNT, Fedex and DHL. Please let us know you preference. If you would like to know more about the comparative prices of these service providers, please contact aacmarketing@online.com.kh. We will send an email to the buyer to confirm samples departure.

3) Quality Control. Please let the supplier know of any changes or comments on quality before making an order.

4) After the buyer has accepted the samples, an order is placed by using the attached order form. The order is made via an email-able order form that we will send you.

We will reply with a proforma invoice. This is an informal invoice, sent by email to confirm the details of your order (product names, quantities, colors, custom requirements, unit price and total costs), and to project our date of completion and shipment. We also ask the buyer to nominate their international airport of choice.

5) Confirmation and deposit. We ask the buyer to confirm the details of their order via email, and to transfer the initial payment to us. After this, production begins.

6) Shipment. After delivery of the product to the freight company, we will fax you the following documents. These are required to retrieve the goods from the airport.

- An itemized customs invoice (NOT your final invoice – do not pay on this invoice. This does not include the shipping charges),
- A packing list for each box in the shipment,
- A statement of materials and origin,
- Any additional documentation (if any) that you’ve sent to us for your own customs bureau; and
- An Airway Bill for the consignment.

7) Final invoice. We will email the buyer a final invoice 2-3 days after the goods have been sent. The buyer then makes arrangements for the final payment, and lets us know when they have sent the transfer.

Researching Import Regulations

It is the buyer's responsibility to understand import regulations and duties in the country of the products’ destination. The buyer must enquire about import restrictions (if any), labeling requirements (if any), documentation and applicable duties to import for that particular destination. Investing time in this research will ensure that the importing of products goes smoothly.

With each order we provide:

- An itemized invoice. Each invoice states that the products are “Handmade Cambodian craft goods”; distinguishes our products from garments (which often carry additional duty, quotas and labelling requirements); to state that products are “Made in Cambodia” may entitle the buyer to a lower duty assessment,
- A packing list for each carton in the shipment, and
- Statement of materials and origin.
Shipment

Air: Our most common system of shipment is airfreight. This system is fast, reliable, and it is possible to airfreight to any international airport within a few business days. It is the responsibility of the buyer to retrieve the goods from that airport, clear them through customs, and transport them to their business.

Sea: This system is suited to large quantities of goods, as it is charged by the square meter. Sea-freight can take as long as one month for delivery to port.

Promotional materials

We can supply flyers or a CD Rom catalogue along with products free of charge.

Raw Material Information

Silk

- The silk used by our organization is an average of 90 cm wide.
- Silk is available in plain or twill weave according to the buyer's requirements.
- The silk used to create our products is hand-dyed and woven in Cambodia.
- Some of the silk used in our products is the traditional Ikat-dyed, or ‘Hol’ silk.
- We can source plain silks in many different colors. We can work with the buyer to design their own silks; however, this does require time and investment. Please send us an email to find out more.
- Colors: Please find a variety of colors available together with this document. Please note that due to screen representation, colors may appear differently on your screen. We are happy to source specific colors. Please send us samples of the colors, and we will send the necessary swatches.

Colors

Many organizations have their own color palettes and color swatch books that represent the silks and silk groups they can supply to the buyers. Some of these groups have their silk ranges available in e-catalogues (emailable versions). When looking into color options via emailed or faxed images, buyers must be warned that due to on-screen or print representation, colors may appear differently on your screen. We are happy to source specific colors. Please send us samples of the colors, and we will send the necessary swatches via mail.

Means of payment

There are currently two reliable means of payment to Cambodia.

1) Bank-to-Bank transfers: A wire direct to your account. When the transfer has taken place, please send an email advising to let us know. This method will incur a flat fee of US$20.00

2) Western Union: Though this system is also reliable, the fees are high for non-members, and they do not currently accept Cambodian members. However, if your business is considering regular trade in Cambodia, it may be worthwhile to consider becoming a Western Union member. Each transfer requires the client to fax the transfer receipt to us, including the password used for that transaction.
International Bank Transfers

To transfer US dollar funds, please provide the following information to your own bank.

Pay to:
For the account of:
Beneficiary name:

Contact:
We encourage email communication.

Export Terms and Conditions

1 * Orders received must be accompanied by 50% deposit of the total cost of order. New buyers will be requested to make a payment of 75% in advance of shipping. Images of products can be made available prior to shipping if required. Reminders of payment are due up to 30 days after receipt of products.

2 Freight and shipping charges are at the cost of the buyer.

3 Certificate of Origin can be supplied only on large orders.

4 Buyers wishing to have their own label on their products must supply sufficient labels and details of label location. Labels must be received three months before production begins.

5 ** Exclusivity of sale is valid for the original country of origin only. We reserve the rights to sell the products to other countries.

6 We are responsible for providing the products in good condition and the following paperwork at the time of shipment:

   ■ An itemized customs invoice (NOT your final invoice – do not pay on this invoice. This does not include the shipping charges),
   ■ A packing list for each box in the shipment,
   ■ A statement of materials and origin,
   ■ Any additional documentation that buyers have sent for their own customs bureau; and
   ■ An airway bill for the consignment.

7 *** Cambodian silk is hand dyed and hand woven. If Thai dyes are used, colors chosen will be as close to original shade as possible. Any differences are due to the nature of the dyes available in Cambodia.

8 **** Timing of order: To ensure the quality and timeliness of your products, we request that our buyers place their order a MINIMUM ONE MONTH IN advance.
Terms of payment

- Terms for first export orders: 50% deposit when the order is placed, and 50% within 30 days of delivery.
- Terms for following export orders: 50% deposit when the order is placed, and 50% within 30 days of delivery.
- Buyers who use bank-to-bank transfer will incur an additional $20 bank fee. This cost is the responsibility of the buyer. The buyer is required to pay for bank transfer. This is a flat fee, regardless of the amount of money being transferred.
- Buyer is required to pay for shipment fees up front.

Design Exclusivity

To secure an exclusive import arrangement, we require a guaranteed regular order for that item. Under these circumstances, we will not allow any product developed by one particular buyer to be sold to any other buyer, unless specified to do so by the original designer/buyer. However, in the context of the marketplace, we cannot guarantee that once available in the market place, others will respect your exclusivity. Furthermore, if the client decides not to market that particular product any more, we retain the right to sell that design to other buyers.

Silk and color

Large orders or in unique colors required a lead-time of one month. Weavers need 2-3 weeks to set up loom/to color specifications, and then several weeks to do the actual weaving prior to shipment.

Timing of Orders

We request that our buyers PLEASE PLACE THEIR EXPORT ORDERS A MINIMUM ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE.

This time generally permits for planning, sourcing of raw materials and production. Also, this way we have the opportunity to develop and maintain our production schedule. This is particularly important at the end of the year. For this reason, we request our buyers place their orders for end-of-the-year/Christmas from mid-October through mid-November.

As Cambodia celebrates a series of major holidays towards the end of the year, it is imperative for timely delivery of your order that orders are placed by mid-October. With each order we receive, we will send the buyer a projected date of completion and shipment. Production time takes into account orders currently in production.

We invest our money in people, not in inventory; we do not hold great quantities of stock.

Many thanks! We look forward to hearing from you soon.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. What is Customer Service?
2. The value of quality customer service in developing better relations with local and export clients
3. Who is responsible for delivering quality customer service and why
4. The difference between internal and external customers
5. A simple, three-step system for ensuring quality customer service
What is Quality Customer Service?

Quality customer service is when a service provider is available to listen to a customer’s needs and is therefore more equipped to satisfy their needs.

In the service industry, including retail and wholesale sales, it is clear that only happy customers become returning customers. The way a business can directly impact upon the attitudes of customers served is to leave them with a positive impression of the business by delivering quality customer service.

Who is responsible for Customer Service?

EVERYBODY within the business or organization, whether they do or do not meet face to face with the buyers, is responsible for customer service.

More traditionally, customer service has been the responsibility of shop attendants, trade fair staff, marketing officers, or any staff member who has direct contact with the customer. However, as the nature of the service industry changes, the opportunity to take responsibility for the customer’s happiness is becoming everybody’s responsibility.

Consider this:

- A producer can create customer satisfaction by producing high quality products;
- A marketing manager can create customer satisfaction by communicating with them in a polite and timely manner;
- Shop attendants can create customer satisfaction by providing them useful suggestions and friendly service;
- A Director can create customer satisfaction by upholding values that promote customers well being as one of the organisation’s focuses.

Remember: Whether the customer meets a service provider face to face or otherwise, everyone within an organization is responsible for quality customer service.

Be Aware: The impression the customer has of your customer service will reflect on their attitude to your whole business, and this impression is what they will share with other potential customers. People remember where they felt well treated, and where the service was poor, AND THEY TELL OTHERS! Well trained polite staff can be a company’s best advertising/marketing tool.

Customer Satisfaction: How do you keep your customers happy?

A simple three-step system for ensuring quality service is to:

- LISTEN: to customers’ needs;
- ACT: on those needs; and
- SELL: quality products.
Sometimes during a shopping trip, customers may tell the attending staff that they are “just looking” or “window shopping”. However, customer service people must remember that both local residents and international visitors travel to Cambodia because they are interested in the country. Furthermore, if they are visiting your business, then they are also interested in what it has to offer.

Therefore, the customer’s presence in your store is a unique opportunity to advertise aspects of your businesses or products. There is no better qualified person to discuss the Cambodian products, or how a Cambodian business began, than the Cambodian staff who work there. However, sometimes the idea of just starting to talk to new customers can be intimidating. Some sample questions to ask are:

a. How long have you been in Cambodia?
b. Are you enjoying yourself?
c. What has been the highlight of your trip?

If all of this sounds complicated, another way to begin is with a simple, “Hello. How are you?” and a smile.

Once you have established contact with the customers, you can use the remaining, ACT and SELL techniques to provide quality customer service.

The situation outlined below is a real-life example of poor quality customer service. After reading it, consider how the sales person could have used the “Listen, Act, Sell” system to improve their service.

Recently in a dress boutique, a customer was looking for a dress in her size. The customer-service person told her simply that her size was not available. The customer was very disappointed and mentioned that she had visited the boutique several times and found they were always out of stock and that other friends of hers had the same problem. Again, the customer-service person dismissed her requests by repeating that they did not have anything for her. The customer went away empty handed.

What could the customer service staff have done to better serve this customer’s needs and ensured she will visit again?

If the customer-service person had listened to the customers comments, the customer would have felt valued, and known that the service person was attempting to assist her. Had the customer-service person really listened, she would also have heard that this customer has often visited this boutique, indicating that she likes the outlet and would like to buy more products. This indicates that this customer could be a valuable returning client.

It would have been more appropriate for the customer-service person to apologise to the customer about her previous requests not having been addressed, and telephoned other retail outlets to check for other sizes. This way, the customer would know that the service person was trying to address her needs. Even if her size was not available, the service person could have suggested other stores or tailors where garments could be tailored for her.

Furthermore, the service person could have relayed this information to the product development section of the business, requesting that that particular size was often out of stock and more stock needs to be ordered. In this way, the service person could request that the buyer visit again when they would have some suitable stock for her, or that the staff would telephone to her when the stock came in.
In this way, even though there was nothing suitable for the customer in the stock that day, she could ensure that the customer felt valued, and would visit the boutique again to find something that suited her.

Remember, it is much easier to work with a few dependable repeat buyers than to be constantly finding new business clients. Customer satisfaction and repeat business ensures your good name in the business world.

It is clear that one way to encourage buyers to buy from your business is by giving them a positive experience of your business or organisation. Therefore, when considering how to improve your customer relations, it is beneficial to ask “what gives people a positive experience?”

At the very least, we can offer a customer a smile! It is important to remember that many of the products our businesses need are not necessities. Therefore, every business needs to help customers perceive the value of their products. One way to give the products value is to inform the customer about why the products are unique. For example:

- All the silk products are made from hand-woven silk in rural Cambodia;
- Explain about the social priorities of the business;
- Emphasize the unique qualities of Cambodian products and raw materials.

While it may be true that some customers are ‘only looking’, they are looking for something to buy! Often people shopping are not sure what they are looking for. By asking in a polite and friendly manner, perhaps your businesses staff can help them find it. Try:

- When a client comes into the shop, ask them “How are you today?” OR “How can I help you?” Let them look around the store by themselves.
- If they have not asked you anything, ask if there is anything you can do to assist them. If they respond, “No, thank you” feel free to remind them, “If you have any questions, or if there is anything special you are looking for, please do not hesitate to ask.”
- If the customer seems interested, offer information on the products that they are looking at. Often the story of the product is what will sell it. Let them know:
  - Where the product came from
  - Who made it
  - What it is made of
  - Any history you know about this product or the area it is produced

It is preferable NOT to hover over the customers or to give them the feeling they are being watched.

**REMEMBER!** Be flexible and imaginative – nobody wants to hear the words “NO” when they are shopping!
When a staff member is at work, they are the public face of that business. For this reason, it is very important that staff feel good and confident about what they do.

Providing excellent customer service takes training, thought and research. Training is an invaluable way to improve our customer-service skills. This does not have to be in a classroom or training workshop. Rather, opportunities to learn surround us every day. While on the job, customer service people can do market research. For example, we can learn from others who provide high-quality service.

An easy way to do market research is to visit businesses you know have a good reputation for providing good-quality service.

- Observe the way they respond to clients.
- Think about positive experiences you have had in their customer-service environment.
- What happened?
- Could you use the same techniques?

Be aware of the service available around you. When you go shopping, investigate the competition. For example: If you see similar products to your own in other shops for more competitive prices, let the supervisor know so that the prices can be changed or the product can be altered to be competitive.

Wearing a uniform makes it easy for customers to recognise the staff, and is an opportunity to make a statement about the business. It is very important that uniforms are clean and neat. A uniform can be as inexpensive and easy to produce as a silk screen printed logo on a tee shirt.

Retail staff can be a business's biggest asset. Therefore it is important there are clear lines of communication whereby retail, or the staff that work face to face with clients, can feedback what they learn about the customer's needs.

It is important that staff know they are a valuable part of attaining the business's goals. Therefore, for staff to know that their feedback is valuable is essential for making business the best it can be.

Management should ask their staff and themselves:

- Are staff motivated by their roles?
- Do they know the mission or goals of the organisation?
- Do they understand and value those goals?
- Are there effective lines of communication between shops and head office?
- Do staff know whom to contact with questions or feedback?
- When someone has a problem, do they know whom to talk to?
- Does everyone have their ideas heard? If not, how can this be facilitated?
Customer Service
tips to remember:

- Staff behaviour is a comment on the business that they represent. Therefore, customer service can be a valuable marketing opportunity;

- Customers will associate the way they are treated by staff as representative of the whole business; and

- The best advertising is word of mouth. When one customer has a good experience, they will tell other people.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. What Market Research is;
2. The value of Market Research;
3. The Steps required to perform quality market research;
4. The basic principals of Exploratory Research;
5. The difference between Primary and Secondary data, and its role in information collection;
6. How to design a questionnaire for research purposes;
7. How to prepare a sampling plan;
8. How to analyse collected data;
9. How to prepare a research report.
What is Market Research?

Market research is about familiarising yourself with your buyers and potential buyers, their needs, and investigating ways to better respond to those needs.

It includes the process of collecting information that can be valuable to your business or organization. Often the kind of research conducted is dictated by the current needs of the business. For example, you are interested in finding out more about what American buyers spend on silk scarves in one year and where their current main supply is from; or you want to know which nationalities are visiting Cambodia and what kinds of products they are looking for.

Market Research Development Steps

There are several steps involved in developing good-quality market research. They are outlined below in the following sections.

1. Problem Definition;
2. Research Design;
3. Information Sources;
4. Questionnaire Design;
5. Sampling Plan;
6. Data Collection and Analysis; and

There may be a part of the market you don’t know how to access, or you have an idea for a product but don’t know if it would sell well.

The first step is to translate the problem into a market research question. This is done in the form of questions that define the information we need and how we can find out.

Example: A prototype product has been developed by the design team, however, management is not sure if the product is competitive in price with the comparable products already in the market. The problem may be whether or not to launch a new product at a certain time. The research problem could be to decide whether the market would accept the new product at the suggested price, or if this is not competitive.

For good results we need a clear AIM. Before you begin to investigate the market, be clear what it is you want to know.

Ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose of this research?
- What knowledge do I hope to gain from investigating these buyers/this market?
- How will that help me to achieve better sales?
2 Research Design

Once the research has an aim, it is easier to develop a strategy to find out the necessary information.

There are many different kinds of market research. However, one of the most common forms of initial research is ‘exploratory’.

Exploratory research has the goal of gathering explanations, gaining insight, eliminating impractical ideas. Exploratory research is characterized by its flexibility, and can be as simple as:

1. performing a survey focussed on a relevant target group and their experience, or,
2. performing focus discussion groups.

These two systems of gathering information are useful as they provide information from target groups that directly applies to specific questions.

3 Information Sources - Where shall we get our information?

Primary Data

Information, sometimes described as ‘data’, is collected to inform the final report or answer to the research problem. In the context of research, this information can be described as primary and secondary data.

This is the information that is collected directly from wholesale and retail buyers.

Common types of primary data are:

- Demographic and socio-economic changes
- Lifestyle information;
- Opinions;
- Awareness and knowledge - for example, brand awareness;
- Intentions - for example, what people want to buy; and
- Motivation - a person’s motives are more stable than his/her behaviour, so motive is a better predictor of future behaviour.

Primary data can be obtained by:

- Observation - recording of actions, which is performed by either a person or some mechanical or electronic device, like cameras; and
- Communication - surveys (verbally or in writing) and emails. (Communication is often faster and less expensive than observation.)

Secondary Data

Secondary data is information such as sales invoices and records. It can also be published information, such as information found on the internet.

This system has the advantages of secondary data include saving time and costs. The disadvantages are that the data may not perfectly fit the research question.
Secondary Data can provide insight into information such as:

- What are the businesses best selling items?
- Where the businesses buyers' nationalities?
- What are the fashions and trends in those countries?
- The latest colour trends.

When using secondary data, keep in mind a couple of issues:

- Is this information relevant to our aim/questions?
- How current is the information?
- Is it accurate?
- Who is providing the information?

4 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is a very important tool for gathering primary data. Thought must go into preparing the questions, as misunderstandings can invalidate the research data. The questionnaire should also be tested prior to conducting the survey.

Many of the questions in a market research survey are designed to measure attitudes. Attitudes are a person's general evaluation of something. A buyer's attitude is an important factor in market research because:

- Attitudes do not change much over time.
- Attitudes produce and can indicate consistency in behaviour.
- Attitudes can help us to understand buyer preferences.

Self-reporting is the most common technique used to measure attitude. A self-reporting questionnaire is a good method to use to measure attitudes. A sample questionnaire is supplied at the end of this section.

5 Creating a Sampling Plan - Whom do we ask?

The sampling frame is the group of people that you invite to answer your survey. The telephone book is often used as a very general sampling frame. For many businesses in the handicraft sector, current and potential buyers are the best sample frame for information about your most immediate market.

When creating a sample frame, it is better to survey as many relevant people to address your specific research question as possible for several reasons. For example, the more responses you collect, the better you can understand your buyers' needs and the more appropriate service/products you can provide. Furthermore, the number of surveys distributed will be more than the number of responses collected, as not everyone will fully complete or even begin to complete it. For this reason, it can be useful to provide your participants with an incentive to complete and return the surveys.

Providing your buyers with the information that your survey is in order to learn more about, and in turn provide them with better service, this alone may be enough incentive to complete and return your survey. However, it may also be the offer of a small discount on their next order.
Once you have collected the responses to your survey, the data can be analysed and used to answer your research question.

Depending on the nature of your survey questions, the responses may provide insight into:

- What kind of products your buyers are looking for?
- What are the problems they have experienced dealing with your staff or business?
- What trends will they be investing in for the next season?

Using this information, you can respond by:

- Developing appropriate products according to the buyer feedback,
- Aim to address challenges that buyers have had working with your business
- Utilise their knowledge of upcoming trends to develop buyer orientated products

After you have completed analysing the response to your survey questions. It is valuable to compile those responses into a concise report for all interested parties to read and understand. The format of the marketing-research report varies with the needs of the organization. Formal marketing-research report often contains the following elements:

- Authorization letter for the research;
- Author;
- Table of contents;
- List of illustrations;
- Executive summary;
- Research objectives;
- Methodology;
- Results;
- Limitations;
- Conclusions and recommendations; and
- Appendices containing copies of the questionnaires, etc.

Not all reports need to be such formal documents. However, the goal of this document is to outline the results of the research findings, how that responds to the research question and how it will be implemented. That way, all those who will be involved in implementing the required changes will all have read the same information.
Buyers’ Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>20-25</th>
<th>26-30</th>
<th>30-40</th>
<th>40-50</th>
<th>50-60</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Profession:
Country of Origin:
Sex: Male Female
(Optional) Family Structure eg. Married, partner, single, number of children.

Please circle the most appropriate response, or write your response below.

1. I enjoy shopping for home-wares / giftware products at the following locations:

2. I enjoy shopping at these outlets because:

3. The most important aspect of the home-ware / giftware products that I take note of when I am shopping for myself is:

4. I browse through home furnishing / giftware stores
   - Every week
   - Once a fortnight
   - Once a month
   - Rarely
   - Never

5. I buy something from a home-ware / giftware shop
   - Every week
   - Once a fortnight
   - Once a month
   - Rarely
   - Never
6. When I go shopping, I usually go:

   Alone          With friends or partner

7. Good quality and finishing of products is very important to me.

   Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

8. I am happy to compromise on quality if I can get a cheaper product.

   Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

9. The phrase ‘hand-crafted’ attracts me to products and makes me feel as though I’m buying something unique.

   Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

10. When I discover that a product it is made by a ‘fair trade’ organization, I am much more likely to buy it.

    Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

11. I don’t really mind where the product is made, as long as I like it and the price is right.

    Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

12. I am not really attracted by designer labels when purchasing products.

    Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree
13. If I see that two products are the same but one has a brand label, I am happy to pay a little extra for it.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

14. The average amount I spend when buying products for my house or gifts on myself is:

Less than $10  $10 - $20  $20-$40  $40 - $100  $100-$200  $200+

15. The average amount I spend when buying birthday, house warming and Christmas presents is:

Less than $10  $10 - $20  $20-$40  $40 - $100  $100-$200  $200+

16. The average amount I spend on a wedding gift is:

Less than $10  $10 - $20  $20-$40  $40 - $100  $100-$200  $200+

17. I tend to use the couple’s gift registry when purchasing a wedding present. It makes things so much easier.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Not Sure  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. What the Internet is;
2. Why the Internet is useful;
3. The role of the Internet in researching new markets and many other topics that can give a business a competitive edge;
4. The basic functions of the Internet;
5. The concept of Search Engines and how to use them;
6. The process of navigating responses to searches via popular Search Engine pages.
What is the Internet?

As the name suggests, the internet is a network of information available via a network of computer servers that is useful for quickly and inexpensively accessing a large amount of information.

Why is the Internet useful?

As a research tool, the Internet can be extremely useful for many reasons, especially when the researcher is physically far from the desired information's source. One example of this is researching the latest fashion trends in England from Cambodia. This could be very difficult without a contact in the desired country or access to foreign fashion magazines. There are internet sites that provide this information, in the absence of other resources, or as a supplement to them.

When working in an environment and running businesses that depend on fresh product designs, high quality, and competitive prices for survival, it is essential to have access to all the information that can facilitate a competitive edge. The internet can provide this information.

Challenges of using the Internet

Using the internet can be daunting because of the magnitude of information available. Unless specific information is searched for, it can seem almost impossible to find your way to the necessary information. While the internet has more information available than we will ever need to access, we can use specific internet related tools to make it easier to find the information we are looking for.

Researching via the Internet – The Basics

Search engines are similar to the Yellow Pages directory. A search engine consists of a main page, through which the researcher can search for 'key words' that relate to the topic of interest. There are different kinds of search engines.

What is a Search Engine?

Examples of popular generic search engines:

- www.google.com
- www.yahoo.com
- www.altavista.com
- www.msn.com
- www.bongthom.com

Other kinds of search engines are much more specific; for example, search engines that can only search for particular items such as academic writing or jobs:

- Job Search: www.jobsearch.com
- Music Search: www.napster.com
- Academic Journal Search: www.jstor.com
Using the internet to research potential suppliers and possible buyers is easier than it seems. If you are not sure where to start, a good place is with a reputable search engine. By typing in the URL names, or ‘addresses’ for the search engine page you require, such as www.google.com, the Google main page will load up onto the computer screen.

To search for particular topics, ‘keywords’ need to be entered into the available window to have ‘hits’ or successes, in your search.

A keyword is the name of the object or organization you are looking for. There is always a section in every search engine for you to type in your keywords. It usually looks like an empty box on the page. Type your keywords into that box.

For example, if you are looking for zippers, your keyword is ZIPPER.

However, it would be helpful to you to be more specific or you will have too many hits that are not useful to you.

To be more specific, you can add more than one keyword.

For example: Zipper, wholesale, Vietnam.

Or if you are looking for potential buyers of your product overseas, your keywords could be

For example: Silk, boutique, London.

You can also arrange the order of the keywords to be more specific about which keyword is most important.

After you have typed your keywords into the search box, options or the ‘hits’ your keyword found will show up on the screen. The ‘hits’ your keyword has found will include ‘links’ to the web pages that relate to that keyword. Under each link there is often a summary of what that link page contains. By reading the summary above each link, it becomes easier to choose which ones you want to view.

After you have chosen a page link you think is relevant, click on the link and the page will open up.

If the linked page is not interesting to you, and you want to go back to the search engine ‘hits’, there are two options. Depending on the settings of your computer:

1. Once you left click your mouse on the link, the linked page will come up in a new ‘window’, or
2. In the same window as your search engine.

In case number one, to get back to the search engine page, you must simply close the new window, or move it to one side.

In case number two, you must click on the ‘back’ button in the top left-hand corner of the window (which often is an arrow pointing to the left).
Like any new skill, exploring the possibilities made available by the internet can take time and practice. However, the time invested in this opportunity will be rewarding, as access to information can be the competitive edge that your business needs.

The internet is a very versatile and useful tool that can provide a wealth of information to anyone who takes the time to investigate its possibilities. While this document only provides a preliminary exploration into the use of the internet, further assistance and advice as to how to use this tool can be obtained by contacting the AAC Marketing Officer.
MARKET RESEARCH

The use of the Internet for Researching Potential New Buyers

Part 2

Learning Objectives

On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The potential for the internet as a tool for researching new markets;

2. How to use the internet as a practical tool to researching potential international export buyers and products;

3. Using the information from searches to contact new buyers.
Once the user is familiar with the use of the internet and its tools, researching potential new buyers via the internet can be an uncomplicated process. One of the best places to begin research is via specific search engines.

In researching potential international export buyers, one place to begin is to research product specific international trade fairs. The information found on these sites can be useful in several ways. For example, many international trade fair sites contain lists of exhibitors and often their contact details and web sites. These can be useful links to investigating upcoming trends and exhibitors that may also be potential buyers. A list of some of the main international trade fairs for gifts and home wares are listed in the Trade Fair Preparation section of this manual.

Gathering information to find a good match

Often good buyer/supplier relationships are created through the presence of equal demand and equal supply. Therefore, when researching new buyers, it is important to consider your businesses limitations as well as capabilities.

By visiting the direct website address of each exhibitor, you can investigate the kinds of products exhibitors/buyers are already marketing; including the prices and minimum sale quantities they advertise. This information can provide an insight into the nature of each business and if they could be a potentially suitable buyer for your businesses products.

Price is a good indicator of the suitability of the buyers for your business. For example: If a buyer/exhibitor advertises in their site that the business sells a silk scarf for retail $20.00 and your businesses wholesale silk scarf price is $20.00, then your businesses wholesale prices are too high for this buyer and your businesses are geared towards different markets.

Quantity is also another important indicator of whether your business would be an appropriate match to a potential buyer. Indications of quantities that buyers may order may be estimated by how regularly the change stock (seasonally/annually) and by how many wholesale buyers or retail store they sell their products through.

Contacting potential international export buyers

When a list of particular buyers that may fit your required buyer profile has been established, the next step is to introduce your business and production capacity via email. Such a marketing package could include an introductory letter including for example:

- The business logo;
- A brief introduction to and overview of your business;
- An outline of what you have to offer; and
- Several images in the introductory email.
- An e-catalogue;
- Terms and Conditions;
- The businesses contact details,
- This letter may even provide a financial incentive to buy, e.g. a discount on first order.

This form of marketing is a good learning strategy in terms of marketing your business without a ‘face’, but on the strength of your marketing materials and written communication. While this is not the most direct form of marketing, it is a useful method for maintaining an understanding of buyers in other countries and their needs, both of which can be the foundations of creating a competitive edge.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The concept of a ‘trend’ and how - incorporating trends can be useful for both suppliers and buyers
2. The challenges of trend-based product development
3. The concept of ‘signature style’ and how that can create a niche market of its own
4. The concept of ‘trend setting’ in business and product development and how this can facilitate market leadership.
What is a trend?

There are many ways to approach product development. One common approach is to incorporate fashion ‘trends’ to ensure the salability of the products developed for the season. Trends are highlights of new fashion season designs, colors, accessories and themes. Trends are temporary, moving in and out of ‘fashion’ to facilitate the consumer’s interest in new products, ensuring that new products are always in demand by the consumer. This is one way fashion houses maintain consumer interest in their products.

There are many elements involved in creating trends: including the state of the economy, the environment, and the seasons. For example, color and textile trends for homeware products are often inspired by the trends of the fashion runways.

Knowing trends in your market or industry will help to determine where the industry is strongest, and how your business can utilize those trends to tap into new markets.

Trends change with every new fashion season. Your business can take advantage of the changing trends by providing a product or services that reflects the needs created by those trends.

To identify current trends:

- Pay attention to magazine and television advertisements;
- Read trade publications relating to industries which interest your business;
- Study popular magazines that focus on fashionable and trend-setting people;
- Talk to retail and wholesale buyers to get their opinions on current and future trends;
- Observe the fashions and fads on the street around you;
- Attend trade/fashion shows and visit fashion stores;
- Transfer fashion ideas from other industries to your own area of product interest;
- Develop products and ideas based on fashions from popular movies, TV shows or celebrities;
- Use the internet to research fashion and trends.

How to make the most of trends

Trend-based product development can be useful in the range-planning process as it can provide the inspiration to:

- Develop a coordinated a sample range to the stage where it could be marketed as a collection at an appropriate trade fair;
- Make products less complicated to develop, display, merchandise and sell as the ideas have come from one theme;
- Support effective communication and beneficial relationships between designers, producers and buyers as all are working around a common theme.
Trends experience a rapid rise and fall in popularity. Marketing ‘trendy’ products requires a quick response to provide ‘in trend’ products once the trend has begun, and then an ability to reduce inventories quickly enough to make space for the incoming new trend products after the previous trend has passed. For this reason, some fashion houses, or brands, develop a ‘signature style’.

Products developed under a signature style are different from trend products because aspects of the product such as the basic color palette and styling theme remain the same over many seasons. This style often tries to encapsulate aspects of a particular lifestyle that the consumer aspires to. In this way, a signature style can also be an effective marketing tool, as consumers slowly build an affinity with the products and often, with the lifestyle projected by the brand’s advertising.

For example, the brand Ralph Lauren defines itself through the following styling themes:

- refined American
- luxurious
- elegant
- simple
- clean
- fresh

The Ralph Lauren brand would not alter its image or ‘signature style’ by incorporating many of the trends that move through fashion, as they already have an established, recognized style. Moreover this brand understands that their established market is not interested in buying faddish product that does not align with the above mentioned trends.

For more information on the brand, visit [www.ralphlauren.com](http://www.ralphlauren.com)
Who are Trends Setters?

Following trends may not always be the best option for your business. Being a ‘trend setter’ is about defining your business and product as unique, and standing out from the competition by not responding to trends but creating them. Understanding how you can define your business as unique compared to the others in your market is a strong competitive advantage.

Being a trend setter can be as uncomplicated as developing unique products by using and combining materials that other groups have not previously used. Providing unique services such as lower delivery costs or faster production lead times could also contribute to your businesses reputation as a trend setter. A combination of such unique service and products is what determines who are the market leaders in any industry.
Part 2

Learning Objectives

On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. How trend research and incorporating trends into product development may affect your potential customers buying patterns;

2. How to utilise trend research websites to improve your knowledge of the fashion industry and how to incorporate those ideas into product development;

3. The concepts of fashion trends and color forecasting and how they can be used to facilitate product development;
What is Trend Research?

Trend research is about investigating the fashion industry’s seasonal changes, such as the new fashion season’s color palette or the ‘stylistic threads’ that ties a range together. Trend research is also about identifying the prominent themes or ‘looks’ such as: ‘feminine’, ‘military’, ‘gypsy’ or ‘casual’ through the many mediums available. These can then be interpreted as new ranges of products for your own business.

Why is Trend Research Useful?

Researching trends can be useful when developing product ranges for specific target markets that are driven by ‘fashion’ colors, or the ‘look’ of the season. By developing products that work with the trends for the season, your products are more likely to appeal those buyers, as they coordinate with the season’s fashions, and therefore may be more commercially viable.

While trends are useful for gaining an insight into the fashion influences that impact upon your buyers, and their buying habits they can also be used to provide ideas for new products and accessories.

Where to Begin Trend Research?

Often trends used to develop ranges of fashion accessories grow out of color and design trends from high fashion as seen in fashion magazines and on fashion runways. There are many avenues for researching trends and upcoming fashions for new product ideas. Some of these include:

- Fashion magazines and journals;
- Direct buyer contact and feedback;
- Fashion television;
- The internet.

Fashion Trend Research in Practice

One fashion trend research website easily accessible is www.catwalking.com. Some areas of this site are restricted to fee paying members only. However, there are many areas of the site that can be viewed free of charge. The following is a trend report reflecting the ideas and trends that Catwalking was picking up on as the common trends in the Autumn Winter season’s fashions. Note the language the journalist uses to highlight each of the fashion trends.

Key Colour (tone or shade) - Black

After several seasons of conspicuous absence, black makes a welcome return to the catwalk. Contrasting matte and shiny fabrics and tone-on-tone embellishment elevate black from basic wardrobe staple to striking style statement. Prada captures the quiet drama of the new look with intricate lace, seams, beadwork, and crochet detailing on coats and dresses.
Key Component - Collar/Lapels

Designers play with proportion this autumn, adorning both tailored and unstructured jackets with exaggerated collars and lapels. The dramatic but wearable look ranges from soft (see the huge, floppy collars at Dior, Galliano, and McQueen) to sharp without being severe (Giles, Chalayan, and Yamamoto).

Key Detail - Rolled Hem

A key element of the new, softer tailoring – a significant departure from the strict, no-nonsense lines of last year’s ladylike trend – is the rolled-under hemline, appearing on skirts, tops, and jackets. Marc Jacobs, Dolce and Gabbana, Dior, and Gucci use rolled hems and volume to give clothes a modern, feminine feel. The rolled-hem skirt is a more commercial distillation of another standout trend, the puffball.

Key Fabric - Sheer

Floaty chiffon and tulle feature prominently on this season’s runways, but these are not the head-to-toe ethereal looks of summer. Balenciaga mixes structured tops and jackets with diaphanous skirts; Galliano and Dolce and Gabbana use heavier fabrics like velvet and fur to anchor sheer pieces, lending them a wintertime wearability.
Key Skirt Shape - Tulip

In spite of the fact that most women will do anything to avoid making their hips look bigger, voluminous skirts dominate the runways this autumn. Yards of fabric are sculpted and draped to create skirts shaped like inverted tulips, full and loose around the hips and tapering at the knee. Marc Jacobs champions this look, but women might find it difficult to get right.

Key Beauty - China Doll

Forget natural: this season's make-up is deliberate, bold and conspicuous – make-up for the sake of make-up. Models look like porcelain dolls, with pale skin, painstakingly painted-on lashes (Chanel) and exaggerated eyeliner (Miu Miu). Dior, forever pushing the envelope, takes it a step further with glossy blackest-red lips and slashes of bright colour on cheeks and brows.

Silhouette - Volume

One of the unifying themes of A/W [Autumn Winter] 05 is volume. Virtually every major designer experiments with shape and proportion, bestowing a loose, artistic feel upon the collections. Attention-grabbing pieces like the billowing skirts and dresses at Marc Jacobs contrast with slightly more subtle offerings like Galliano's slouchy trousers and skirt suits at Louis Vuitton.
Now that seventies boho has been done to death, designers have abandoned that decade in favour of one that feels fresher. This season is all about the simplicity of the sixties. Designers reference the period using clean lines, shorter skirts, and sharp tailoring. The hugely influential Nicholas Ghesquière takes his cues from Courrèges; the look at Balenciaga is monochromatic, streamlined, and nostalgically futuristic. McQueen does a subversive sixties Hitchcock heroine, while Dior and Dolce and Gabbana push floppy newsboy caps and short hemlines.

Fashion's current mood is a dark departure from the cheery frocks of summer. Designers are newly sombre, showing romantic, slightly Gothic collections for autumn. High necklines, low hemlines, loose shapes, and dusky colours - black, grey, navy, purple - feature prominently. Marc Jacobs spearheads the trend with slouchy mid-calf-length skirts, voluminous floor-length dresses, roomy jumpers, and boxy cropped jackets. The use of satin, velvet, sequins, and fur creates an edgy fairy tale feel.

Copyright © 2004 Christopher Moore Limited www.catwalking.com
Color forecasting is another style of market research. The main goal of color forecasting is to predict the upcoming fashion color pallet that will lead the new seasons fashions. In this way, color forecasting also represents the color trends that will be interpreted into fashion accessories, homewares and interior design.

As with all trends, these forecasts can be followed, interpreted or ignored, depending on the nature of your clients, business and your business products. As you will find by reading the following forecast, it is difficult to find clear cut answers to ‘what will sell’. However, it is helpful to be familiar with the language and concepts of color forecasting as it is a useful aspect of the market research and development process.

Color forecast information is available via subscriptions to trend forecasting magazines or via the internet. The following color forecast is downloaded from designer and forecaster Adam Polselli’s web site, www.adampolselli.com. In the following pages his color forecast highlights the major color influences for the coming fashion season.

Adam Polselli: As everyone knows, there are two sides to every story, and this year’s forecast is no different: some say pink is still the color of the moment, while others insist that purple is the new pink. I agree with both, but, as you can see, more so with the latter. The whole pink trend is tired if you ask me, and purple is the perfect replacement.

Purple is one of those colors that will last through the year because it can change with and adapt to the seasons. Dark purples express warmth and sophistication for the winter, while brighter purples and lilacs will express a fresh playfulness for the spring and summer.

Desaturated purples such as DAD1E9 and 5E4D80 will rule all others. Get ready to see these duller purples in both the fashion and car world. They’re great for carrying those of us in the Northern hemisphere through the rest of winter, and, mixed with some more vibrant hues, will transition perfectly into the warmer seasons.
Adam Polselli: This year, deep browns and natural hues take the place of 2004’s blacks and grays. Online design can often be cold and “techy” as it is, and grays tend to reinforce that feeling, so this year look to browns and beiges to act as the base colors of your design. Throw in an ochre hue and a purple from above, and you’re set.

Like purples, browns and naturals will easily adapt to the changing seasons. Rich, dark browns are great for the colder seasons, while straw hues and brighter yellows will complement the warm months.

The great thing about this palette is that, like blacks and grays, it goes great with any color: colder hues such as blue and green, or warm reds and oranges. (If you’ve been paying attention, though, you’ll know to match it up with purple.)

A few words of warning: don’t let this palette steer you towards more natural designs; that’s not the point. Instead, mix it with vibrant hues to create a warm, contemporary look for 2005.

Adam Polselli: This palette consists of colors that have been desaturated. These washed-out hues are relaxed and warmer than their more vibrant brothers and sisters. For that reason, they’re great for the winter and fall seasons, but perhaps not so fitting for the warmer months. Therefore, these colors might disappear for a while, but reemerge later in the year.

This palette is partly based on the muted metallic fabrics that are popular in fashion right now, such as Gap’s sparkly scarves and Banana Republic’s metallic thread coats and skirts.
Make sure not to be overly vintage with this palette, which would be an easy thing to do seeing as these colors look very aged. Luckily, it's easily avoidable by utilizing the other colors in this forecast.

**THE TRIPPY TINTS**

- 8AFF3C
- FFFF00
- B700B7
- 66FF99
- FF664A
- 21EBE6
- E6EG00
- FF0066

Adam Polselli: The previous palettes have more or less represented the toned-down, more-natural approach that is likely to be seen in 2005. Come June or July, though, people will grow sick of the whole thing and throw it out the window, instead looking towards these trippy tints for some rebellious fun.

These out-there colors won't come alone, or even in pairs... they'll be seen in packs. Designers, desperately searching for something fresh and new, will be applying this palette to tripped-out patterns of stripes, polka dots, and plaids to create looks similar to those seen on the streets of Tokyo. I picture a sort of grunge-goes-neon theme, with shock value being a top priority among designers: who can pull off the most off-the-wall design without scaring their audience away? And don't be surprised if black resurfaces for at least a couple months, as I see it being quite essential to making this palette work.

If right now you're scared and asking yourself what the am I thinking, don't fret: this palette is meant to be fun and freeing, like a release from the traditional rules of design. Instead of a pirate draped in red, white and black, picture one tripped out and draped in neon purple, yellow, and yellow-green. With this palette, everything becomes a little less ordinary.

Below is a wide range of trend prediction websites with excerpts from their sites included. This information was found on the internet under one website (www.apparelsearch.com) servicing the fashion industry.

**The Color Association of the United States**

http://www.colorassociation.com/

With the growing impact of global communication, the importance of color and its influence on modern life has never been so evident. No business or individual can afford to be unaware of the impact of color. Large and small corporations have chosen to work with this reliable color service in the US to maximise their business potential. The Color Association is the oldest color forecasting service in the US. Since 1915, the Association has been issuing color reports in elegant, fabric-swatches booklet form. The Color Association forecasting service selects its colors through a committee panel of eight to 12 industry professionals.
The Color Box
http://www.thecolorbox.com/index_flash.html

The Color Box is one of the foremost color forecasting and design services in America. Their staff research and evaluate information gathered in the United States and Europe, and then develop comprehensive color and design stories specifically for the American fashion market. Four forecasts per year assure their subscribers of a constant flow of directional colors, certain to spark the creative instincts that help keep their products looking fresh and exciting. The color box is also a full-service design studio. Their professional staffs of artists and CAD operators are available to design, develop, and recolor any knit/print/woven pattern you require. They also create graphics, original illustrations, minibodies, and presentation boards. Address: 15 West 36th Street 12th Floor New York, NY 10018 Contact: Marni Greenberg, President. Phone: 212-594-6222 Fax: 212-594-8920 email: marni@thecolorbox.com

Color Portfolio
http://www.colorportfolio.com/flash/cphome.htm

Color Portfolio is a full-service, dependable, American color and trend company. In existence for over 20 years, Color Portfolio offers affordable color and trend books to retailers, manufacturers, and allied industries, providing directional and understandable recommendations for successful color, trend, and textile merchandising.

Cool Hunt
http://www.coolhunt.net/

Led by Chief Editor Cezar Greif, Cool Hunt employs a team of 10 experienced editors and photographers, each based in a different city. Our editors know each city's trends because they are based there all year long, speak the language, and can find out about new ideas and styles much faster than some journalist just visiting for a few days. Using exclusively digital technology, with advance software such as Genuine Fractals, Cool Hunt's innovative delivery system enables magazines to receive text and photos instantly on a single website, making sure publishing deadlines are always met.

Fashion Forecast Services

Fashion Forecast Services has been operating since 1991, and is now recognised as the leading source for international reports for color and trend services to the fashion and associated industries. Proof of our international focus is our client base, which extends throughout Australia and New Zealand. We visit numerous international trade shows each year and are able to offer photo reports to men's and children's wear markets. Fashion Forecast Services currently supplies these reports to major retailers and manufacturers.

Fashion Information
http://www.fashioninformation.com/

fashioninformation.com is a new concept in fashion reporting published exclusively on the internet. A great women's wear forecasting and trend reporting service offering a close and detailed insight into fashion trends from a unique perspective.
Fashion Snoops
http://www.fashionsnoops.com/

Fashion Snoops provides online fashion trend reports enriched with tools and practical information for the day-to-day needs of fashion professionals. Market research is done on a daily basis in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Tokyo, New York and Los Angeles, with occasional coverage from Montreal, Miami and other fashion locations. Fashion Snoops is updated constantly so you can immediately get a true sense of what is happening in Europe, the US, Canada and Japan, without leaving the office. Complete merchandised collections around important fashion themes - with runway and store shots that bring together the look and the design details, with suggested Pantone coded colors, as well as sketches prepared by Fashion Snoops’ design team that you can download and use in any of your drawing programs (like: Illustrator or Freehand). Collections are updated every second week.

International Colour Authority
http://www.internationalcolourauthority.com/

In a complex, multi-faceted market place of constantly shifting consumer desires and information overload, it is not surprising that the day-to-day color picture is one of daunting confusion: of too much choice, too many opinions and often too much guesswork. There is an urgent need for guidance - informed help to formulate an accurate palette which focuses on the most important seasonal colors and provides designers, manufacturers and retailers with a proven, dependable inspiration for their future color thinking. The trends published by INTERNATIONAL COLOUR AUTHORITY (ICA) provide precisely this service. Created twice yearly in London by panels of international colour specialists and marketed worldwide, ICA provides the apparel and interior textile sectors with directional palettes for women’s wear, menswear, leather fashion, furnishings, carpets, paints and decorative effects.

Jenkins UK
http://www.jenkinsuk.com/

Jenkins UK tracks the signs of the times and changing trends, analysing and clarifying consumer tastes to come. Jenkins UK produced a portfolio of inspirational trend books for clients in fashion, interiors, retail and consumer products. Mixing meticulous research with intuition sharpened by experience, Jenkins UK’s publications provide key directions in colour, mood, print/pattern, shape, silhouette, and retail and product concepts. Address: 3 Winchester House, Kennington Park Cranmer Road, London SW9 6EJ, UK T: +44 (0)20 7840 5850 F: +44 (0)20 7840 5859 E: editorial@Jenkins-Reports.com

Milou Ket
http://www.milouket.com/

Trend books and consultancy. In 1980 Milou Ket started her own styling and design company, first in Amsterdam, later in Purmerend, 18 kilometres north of Amsterdam. She has been working for different branches for years, putting together fabric and print collections, doing product development for yarn manufacturers, accessories, and active sports for Puma and Flaim, and did consultancy work for different retail and buying groups for children, women fashion and sports. For these firms, she and her studio also prepared booklets for their members with information about colors, color combinations, developments of yarns, materials and key silhouettes.
RD Franks
http://www.rdfranks.co.uk/

One of London's most exciting and diverse range of fashion books, magazines and trend forecasting. Located in the heart of the West End, you can visit our retail showroom or, if you are unable to, then contact them and they will send you fashion information to any part of the world. They also supply a subscription service to ensure you receive all of your favourite magazines.

SnapFashun Inc.
http://www.snapfashun.com/

SnapFashun® provides interactive fashion libraries of women's, men's and kids' items based on BGA's 25 years of fashion reporting experience covering the hottest selling items and details from Europe, Los Angeles and runway. All SnapFashun libraries work as a plug-in for Adobe Illustrator for Mac and Windows. All sketches are drawn to scale allowing for easy manipulation, alteration, and the interchanging of components for quick and accurate design generation. SnapFashun is the #1 software program of its kind in the fashion industry. It works along with Adobe Illustrator to provide an interactive reference library as well as browser-to-store sketches. All SnapFashun libraries include both details and items that can be “snapped” together, manipulated, altered and resized, so students can develop their own designs and portfolios. Also it quickly and easily teaches students the indispensable tools of Illustrator that the fashion industry requires. This, teamed with their learning the correct names of fashion details and silhouettes, is the beginning that gives them the verbal and technical skills required to work in the industry. All libraries include: a hard copy of the contents of the library, a manual, and a CD. Address: 7551 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 203 L.A., CA 90046  Tel: 323-882-6620 Fax: 323-882-6712  Contact: Bill Glazer  Email: sales@snapfashun.com

The Trend Report
http://www.thetrendreport.com/fashion/home.cfm?info=1

The Trend Report describes and demystifies current styles and trends. Their goal is to separate the hype from reality and bring you an editorial report that is based on fact - reflecting what trendsetting consumers need to know to be trendy.

Tobe Report
http://www.tobereport.com/

The Tobe Report is considered the fashion industry's leading and most respected fashion/merchandising publication for retailers. Often referred to as the “bible of the fashion industry.” The Tobe Report's editors analyse every facet of the women's, children's, men's apparel and accessories markets. The Tobe Report, in business since 1927, is published 38 times per year, and subscribed to by retailers throughout the world. Tobe clients range from top line department and specialty stores, to mass merchants, chain stores, fashion press, colleges and universities.
Trendease International  
http://www.trendeaseintl.com/

Trendease International is a new online design and fashion publication. They travel extensively to gather visions and digital images from shops, showrooms, trade fairs, exhibits, and fashion shows in all the major European fashion capitals: Paris, London, Milan and many others. Trendease aims to inspire through the use of these images accompanied by interviews and articles.

Worth Global Style Network (WGSN)  

WGSN is the leading global service providing online research, trend analysis and news to the fashion, design and style industries. Launched in early 1998 by founders Julian and Marc Worth, WGSN is sweeping the style industry, being viewed as one of the most dynamic and successful services to emerge online. Their staff travel extensively on behalf of subscribers and work with a network of experienced writers, photographers, researchers, analysts and trendspotters in cities around the world, tracking the latest stores, designers, brands, trends and business innovations.

FashionInformation.com

www.fashioninformation.com is a new concept in fashion reporting published exclusively on the internet. A women’s wear forecasting and trend reporting service offering a close and detailed insight into fashion trends from a unique perspective.

InStyle

www.instyle.com magazine provides consumers with a unique mix of celebrity-driven stories and advice. Enjoy editorials, useful tips, and fashion-savvy advice. Everyday, InStyle.com publishes online-only celebrity, fashion, beauty and style news and advice that’s unique from In Style magazine.

Style.com

www.style.com is the definitive fashion website, extending the editorial authority of Vogue and W magazines to the internet. Offering comprehensive runway coverage with over 50,000 photos, authoritative trend reporting, the latest social, celebrity and fashion news and interactive forums on every aspect of the fashion industry.
DEVELOPING A CORPORATE IDENTITY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Part 3

Learning Objectives

On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. What is a Corporate Identity, a brand and a logo and how these assist your business to appear more professional;

2. How to develop a brand and logo step by step;

3. How to develop a Color Palette and Text for the logo and profile;

4. How to work through the process of logo and corporate ID development and design as a team to be able to produce a professional and well presented range of marketing materials.
**What is a Corporate Identity?**

A corporate identity for a business is the graphic representation of how the business perceives itself and would like others to perceive it. A corporate identity or corporate ID incorporates a brand and logo that are present on all of the products, letterheads, shopping bags, swing tags, labels, and more or less anything that is associated with the business. A logo should be memorable and easily recognizable, differentiating the business from competitors’ logos. Some of the world’s most widely recognized logos include Coke beverages, McDonald’s fast food, and Shell petroleum. The images below are some examples of other different well known logos.
The value of branding is in developing recognition and familiarity of your business within your target market. Over time, a brand comes to represent everything that the business strives to achieve such as high quality, timeliness and excellence in product and customer service. In this way, the brand can facilitate the buyer’s recognition of these qualities of your business and in time will facilitate the association of those qualities with your business.

The following is a step by step approach to creating a new corporate ID for a business. While it is not exhaustive, it will help to get the process started.

**Initial Steps:**

1. **Gather a team:** When developing a corporate identity for a business or organization, it is practical to gather a team that understands the business to brainstorm what it is that the business offers its clients and how to market this message to the right customers.

2. **Elect a facilitator:** To facilitate this group ‘brainstorming’ session to develop a corporate ID, it is useful to use an impartial facilitator who can steer the group through some of the ideas for discussion.

3. **Timing:** Discussion may take place over a series of days, allowing the team to reflect on the ideas raised during the previous meetings.

4. **Props:** It is advisable to use a large whiteboard to put the group’s ideas clearly on display for comment and consideration.

Now that your team is in place and are ready to begin, the following are the simple steps to developing the corporate ID.

1. ‘Brainstorm’ the business;
2. Establish and outline the business’s goals;
3. Establish a color palette based on the goals, profile and ‘brainstorming’;
4. Establish the target market based on the goals and profile;
5. Establish the corporate text and/or slogans based of the goals, profile and target market.

A ‘brainstorming’ session is the outcome of a group of interested people sitting together sharing ideas in relation to a particular topic with the aim of bringing every idea out for discussion and exploring all possibilities for addressing the questions or goals established at the beginning of the session.

To provide the overall theme for the discussion, the team should consider what the business represents and what it wants to achieve.

On the white board, the facilitator outlines the team’s ideas about the business’s main goals, a brief overview of the business’s history, and who the current clients of the business are.
To assist the discussion, the facilitator can ask the team the following or similar questions:

- What is the motivation for the business?
- Is it a social enterprise?
- Is it an NGO?
- Is it a for-profit business?
- What are the values of the business?
- What are the goals?

Or, in short:

- Where the business came from?
- Who is the business?
- Where is the business going?

To illustrate the process, this document will use one of the Artisans Association of Cambodia (AAC) member’s process as an example of how AAC assisted them to develop their corporate ID. The brainstorming team consisted of a marketing officer, a designer, a representative of the business and the marketing and design facilitator to share ideas as to how best to represent the emerging business.

The AAC brainstorming session outcomes were the following:

**Ta Prohm’s Goals:**

- **Goal 1:** To provide training, employment to and assist rural women to earn better incomes;
- **Goal 2:** To produce high quality fashion accessories for export to the international market.

**Ta Prohm’s History:**

Co-managers have diverse skills and backgrounds. The co-managers feel they had adequate skills to provide quality products to export customers for competitive prices.

**Ta Prohm’s Current Customer Profile:**

- Foreigners;
- Female;
- Majority American and Australian;
- Between the ages of 25 – 45;
- Up-market.

**Step 2. Brainstorming Describing words**

With above information on the board, the brainstorming team begins to choose range of ideas and words that reflect the business and their target market. It is useful to write the name of the business in the centre of the whiteboard. Everyone involved in the brainstorming session must contribute ideas and words they associate with that business.
At the end of the AAC brainstorming session, the whiteboard looked like this:

The next step is to develop a color palette and text that will become the logo and profile. Both must reflect the organization and appeal to the kind of target market defined in stage one, as well as the ideas defined in stage two.

The lists below are the outcomes of the AAC team's palette development. Consider the information outlined in Color Theory (see Part 2v – Trend research) to remember the impact of color and color across different cultures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>Essential Silk</td>
<td>Foreigners;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Discover Silk</td>
<td>Female;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep red</td>
<td>The Magic of Silk</td>
<td>Majority American and Australian;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Discover Silk</td>
<td>Between the ages of 25 – 45;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>Imagine Silk</td>
<td>Up-market; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden</td>
<td>Silk Escape</td>
<td>Classic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Silk Adventure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>Cambodian Silk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The colors chosen were put into a color palette using Adobe Photoshop for consideration and discussion with the business co-managers, and to collect general feedback from third parties such as buyers and visitors to the AAC office.

It is recommended that the logo will use no more than two colors, and that it also works well in black and white for cost convenience.

At this stage, the team has enough information to begin to develop some design concepts for discussion. In the example of Ta Prohm, the initial round of image research is clearly inspired by the sculptures of Ta Prohm itself.

The team needs to reconsider what the main function of this brand and logos is. This can assist in the development of the shapes and ideas, as they need to fit into certain design parameters, such as letterheads or business cards.

The following images were used during the research phase.
In the case of Ta Prohm Silk, the co-managers decided that in accordance with the classic, stylish tastes of their target market, and with their own young and innovative profile, they wanted their logo to incorporate a modern, angular version of this traditional icon. The AAC then researched more images of the Ta Prohm to work with. The image below was found on the internet.

Once a concept, such as the Ta Prohm has been selected to reflect the ideas developed from the group’s brainstorming session and the target markets needs, the ideas must be translated into a unique logo.

In the case of Ta Prohm, the AAC designer transferred the image into Adobe Photoshop and outlined the image. By manipulating the image in Photoshop and applying several of the different color combinations which had been selected earlier, they developed the following concepts to show to the co-managers of Ta Prohm.

Step 5A – Basic Outline
Step 5B– Text and Fonts

At this stage, the team began to experiment with text and fonts. The font style used has a strong impact on the overall effectiveness of the finished logo.

When selecting a font, it is useful to consider the following questions with reference to your customer:

- Who are my target customers?
- What styles of font would appeal to them? Romantic? Feminine? Techno?
- What impact does the choice of font have on the look of the logos?
- Which font best portrays the profile of the business and the essence of the message the brand are trying to portray.

Examples of how different fonts can impact on how a message is portrayed are outlined below. All of the sentences are the same, but the different fonts gives the reader different impressions of the words before they have even read them.

1. **THE CAT SAT ON THE MAT.**

2. The cat sat on the mat.

3. The cat sat on the mat.

4. **The cat sat on the mat.**

If the kind of font you are looking for to suit your branding is not already available in your computer, there are many fonts available for free on the internet.

Some great sites for downloading new fonts are:

- www.fonilover.com
- www.searchfreefonts.com
- www.fonts.com
Step 5C – Testing Logo Ideas in Black and White

Once some initial shapes for the logo have been decided upon by the brainstorming team, some experiments with placement and general composition should be done. After seeing the ideas on paper, it becomes clearer which ideas are less likely to suit the needs of the business.

For example, will it work in letter heads, business cards, banners, websites etc?

It is also useful to show these ideas to customers, staff and friends for their feedback by asking questions such as these:

- Which do they prefer?
- Which combinations better reflect the style of the business?
- Which ones do not appeal and why?
- Is the name of the business clear?
- What are the first impressions of the business that represents itself through these ideas?

The following were some examples of composition and different logo ideas for Ta Prohm.
Step 5D – Ideas with Color Combinations from Original Color Palette

After receiving feedback on the black and white ideas laid down in step D, the team can experiment with the preferred ideas in color from the palette developed earlier.

Step 5E – Two Ideas Selected for further Development

At this stage, after evaluation by the businesses managers, members of the brainstorming team and by others not involved in the process of logo development, all the ideas and feedback about placement, text, font and colors should be narrowed down to two. The best two ideas can be further developed adding text and final coloring.

In the case of Ta Prohm, the following two ideas were selected.
Step 5F – Experimenting with Different Color Combinations
Step 5G – Applying the Logo across all the Marketing Materials

After the final logo, text, fonts and colors have been finalized, the finished logo can be applied across all the necessary marketing materials.

Examples of some of the completed Ta Prohm marketing materials.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The value of timely professional communication over the internet;

2. How to introduce your business through an introductory email over the internet;

3. The information that a buyer requires to be able to work effectively with your business.
If a business is considering investigating the export market for their products, it is essential that the communication staff of the business be well versed in the use of email and the internet.

Whether you are emailing a prospective buyer, or emailing with current buyers regarding an order, it is essential that communication via email is polite, professional and timely.

A well-formulated email as an initial form of communication can be the foundation for a potential buyer’s positive perception of a business. Well maintained communication also nurtures a perception of your business as a timely, reliable and professional organization.

One way to approaching new buyers over the internet is to use an email template to introduce your business. A template can also be useful when many ‘follow up’ emails need to be sent after a trade fair. However, when using a template it is important that the template is altered slightly for each buyer, incorporating their name or details of a particular product they may be interested in.

The essentials of an introductory email letter should include:

- Your logo and contact details;
- Product images to catch the reader’s attention;
- An overview of your business, goals and services;
- An attached a copy of your trading terms and conditions;
- An invitation to view your new product catalogue.

Below is an example of an introductory letter:
E-newsletters are also a very useful marketing tool. For information on how to develop an e-newsletter refer to part 3iv of this manual – Newsletter Development.

On receipt of direct marketing, some potential buyers may ask for further information or request a catalogue. As it is likely you have visited this buyer’s trade fair booth, or visited their website, you must already have an idea of the business’s product and therefore can address their specific interests.

If the buyer is interested in making a sample order, there are several things it is important to know as a supplier to be sure you can provide the best possible service.

This will affect the kind of materials and lead times they should work with.

For example: Currently in Cambodia, there are two options for silk purchasing.

**Retailer:** Recommend that they work with Thai-dyed silks purchased from the market.

Rationale:
- Colors are less easily replicated. This is the nature of Thai Dyes that are frequently available in the market place;
- These fabrics are less costly: $5.00/$6.50 per meter;
- Quicker in the short term.

**Wholesaler:** Recommend they order their raw materials direct from the weavers using German Acid Dyes.

Rationale:
- Better colour fastness, AZO Free, export-quality dyes;
- More colour consistency;
- Availability of color and quantity appropriate for buyer’s needs;
- Raw material costs of approximately $7.00 per meter plain silk;
- Suggest that buyers send their color palette via mail for replication, as email does not always provide perfect color representation.

A suggestion for both buyers is a compromise of sample development in market-bought silk and if and when larger orders are placed, the silk colors can be replicated with the weavers and dyers.

Remind potential buyers of your minimum orders for export. E.g:
- Small product = 200 pieces
- Large items = 50 pieces

Advise the buyer that to minimise the time and cost of sample development, buyers with a specific products in mind should be advised to send a sample or precise specification together with their sample order.

Inform buyers about your current production schedule, and when your production centre will realistically complete the samples. This step involves the production manager having a complete understanding of the current production, production plan, and of the production capacity.
To assist buyers, email or fax them a copy of your standard specification sheet so that they can fill in the details, and fax or email it back. A copy of a sample specification sheet can be found at the end of this section.

**Remember**: if your production centre is overloaded, outsourcing is an option.

In the process of sample development, if buyers provide design specifications or samples, they will save time and money. To avoid loss of income through sample development, your terms and conditions will need to inform the buyer that they may be charged for sample development. This may be between $5 - $20 dollars per sample, depending on how long it takes your producers to develop each one.

Alternatively, first samples must be paid for; but the cost of samples can be deducted from orders of that product.

**4 Costs of Samples**

**5 Thank you!**

Thank buyers for their order and welcome feedback. Invite them to visit Cambodia. Remember, you are your own best advertising!

---

### Sample Specification Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Your Business logo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designer:</td>
<td>Contact details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Business Name:</td>
<td>Product Specification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Name:</td>
<td>Diagram And Color Swatches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Producer Name: |                                |
| Contact: |                                |
| Material: |                                |
|   - Color code: |                                |
|   - Fabric: |                                |
| Lining: |                                |
|   - Color code: |                                |
|   - Fabric: |                                |
| Accessories: |                                |
| Zip(s) number: |                                |
|   - Color: |                                |
|   - Size: |                                |
|   - Tabs: |                                |
| Magnetic Snap: |                                |
|   - Size: |                                |
| Velcro: |                                |
| Fusing: |                                |
|   - Thickness: |                                |
|   - Color: |                                |
| Handle: |                                |
| Label Location: |                                |
| Other Notes: |                                |
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. How to prepare the product and background for taking quality digital product photographs;

2. How to create three different kinds of image file for use in catalogues, e-catalogues and other marketing materials including:
   a. Original size, editable images;
   b. E-mailable sized copies of all the images in separate folders;
   c. Excel Catalogues converted into Adobe PDF Files.
How to take Quality Digital Photography for Catalogue and Email Purposes

Getting Started

Digital photography is a great way of:

- Documenting new samples;
- Creating contact sheets to email to international buyers as a form of e-catalogue;
- Creating hard-copy catalogues for potential clients.

Before taking photographs, it is best to have the following information for the products being photographed organized in an Excel spreadsheet. This way, the images can simply be inserted into the catalogue for easy reference.

- Codes;
- Free On Board (FOB) prices;
- Sizes;
- Description.

Images that will be sent over the internet or used in e-mailable catalogues must clear and well taken. The environment in which the photos will be taken must be clean and bright, with enough space for the products you want to photograph.

To ensure it is easy to see the product in the photograph, use a clean white or off white backdrop. This must be kept clean while you are taking the photographs. Before taking the photo, note two very important things:

**Product Positioning:**

- The product must be in the centre of the shot with as little background showing around it as possible.

**Product Presentation:**

- Make sure the product is well padded;
- Make sure the product is not marked or scratched;
- Put the best side of the product forward.

For examples of appropriate and inappropriate images, see the ‘Part 3v - Product Catalogue Development’ of this manual.

Where and how to take the best images?

Positioning and Presentation of Products to be Photographed

Step 1. How to Select Images for Renaming and Manipulation

Once you have downloaded your images onto the computer, there are several ways you can select images for manipulation.

- **Individual Photo Selection:** Click with the mouse on the image you want to select. When the image is framed by blue, then it is selected.

- **Selecting images one at a time:** Mouse click on the image > hold down the ‘control’ button > click the mouse on any additional images you want to select;

- **Batch Image Selection:** Click on and highlight (Blue) the first image in the batch, hold down ‘control’ and left click on the last image of the group. This will highlight all the images between the first and last image selected.
To move selected images into separate folders, right click on the computer desktop > new > folder.

This will automatically place a folder onto the desktop.

Code the folder by giving it an appropriate name such as, FA0105.

FA = Fashion accessories
01 = January
05 = 2005

Move all the appropriate images into the folder, and move the folder into the appropriate file such as ‘My Pictures’.

After you have downloaded the images from your digital camera and sorted them into files, it is important to delete all the images that are not acceptable.

Open each folder and check your images are all facing the right way up, and are in the correct order.

- At the top of the open folder window, click ‘view’ > thumbnails.
- Select all the images that need to be rotated.
- Delete all the double and out of focus images.
- Right click and select ‘rotate clockwise’ or ‘rotate anti-clockwise’.

Now you have a folder of good-quality images that are ready to be resized and made email-ready.

The ‘Action’ tool is a recording device that will record any changes you make to an image. This information will be stored in the Actions window and can be recalled at will.

- Create a folder on your computer together with your images named ‘Email ready’. Leave it empty for now.
- Open Adobe Photoshop: Click Start > Programs > Adobe > Photoshop.
- Click File > Open > browse to find the folder with the images you want to resize.
- Highlight all the images (click ‘control’ and ‘alt’ simultaneously to select all) > open
- Click Window; on the tool bar > Show Actions
- When the Actions window opens, click the small black arrow in the top right hand side of the Actions Window;
- Select > New Action in the scroll-down menu;
- Open any images from the folder that you will batch change once you have recorded the Action.
- Make the following changes:
  - On the task bar click Image > Mode > CMYK
  - Under Image > Image size > Click ‘constrain proportions box’ then Resolution 150 pixels/inch, Width 4 cm, height 3 cm > ok;
  - Click File > Automate > Batch;
  - In Actions window > click to black arrow to select the action you just created; i.e., CMYK150 dpi;
  - In source > Opened files;
  - In destination > folder > choose > browse > My documents > Email Ready
  - Tick to override Action ‘save in’ commands
  - Click > ok.
Step 5. Developing a Spreadsheet for an E-mailable Product Catalogue

Open Microsoft Excel: Start>programs>Mircosoft>Excel.

When Excel opens, click File > new, to open a new spread sheet.

In the top five columns across the page, enter the following headings:

- Image Number
- Code;
- USD Price;
- Description;
- Size.

Step 6. Insert the images you have prepared earlier into the spreadsheet

Click the cursor in the cell in which you want the image to appear > click file> insert>image>locate the image in the file that it was placed it in earlier> double click on that image.

After you have filled in the entire spread sheet with images and information, transform the Excel document into an Acrobat document. This way, it will be non-editable and easy to send via the internet.

Step 7. Creating an Adobe Acrobat PDF File

PDF is an abbreviation of Portable Document File. These files can be read using Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded for free from the internet.

When the file you wish to PDF is open, click File>Print
Select the Acrobat PDF option in the printer selector

Name the file appropriately and save the file with the other images.

There should now be three sets of files for images on your computer, ready to be used for marketing materials or sent over the internet.

1. The original size, editable images;
2. E-mailable sized copies of all the images in separate folders;
3. The Excel Spread Catalogues converted into Adobe PDF Files.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The value and usefulness of an e-newsletter as a marketing material;
2. How to develop appropriate text for your newsletter;
3. How to select and resize appropriate images for the newsletter.

Note: This guide assumes the user has access to the computer programs Adobe Photoshop and Microsoft Word.
**What is an Electronic Newsletter?**

A newsletter is a medium of communication that can be sent over the internet in a way that provides your buyers, your suppliers and your producers with informative updates about your organization or business.

A newsletter via the internet is a convenient way of ensuring all those interested in your business or organization has regular updates on your activities.

A newsletter is also an excellent marketing tool. Your supporters may be looking for ways to support or get involved with your organization, or learn more about you and what kind of services you provide. By providing this information regularly, you can be sure that all interested parties are informed and involved in your activities.

To develop an attractive, informative and relevant e-newsletter, it is important to consider:

1. **What is our specific message?**
   - What are we trying to say this month?

2. **What is the overall message we want to convey?**
   - What do we want people to understand about us?

3. **How do we want to convey that message?**
   - Which media do we want to use to help us convey that message?
   - Would it be more appropriate to use images or text to convey that message?
   - Is it appropriate to use both?
   - Which language(s) should be used?
   - What is the level of understanding of our stakeholders?

Depending on the answers to the above questions, the form and style of each business's e-newsletter will vary to reflect each one's communication needs.

To provide an example, Artisans Association of Cambodia (AAC) has answered those questions in the following way:

- AAC use the e-newsletter to convey its and its members monthly activities to stakeholders so that they are informed and have an awareness of the incremental developments attained by our members.
- AAC is a Khmer organization; however, many of the stakeholders understand English. To make it more accessible to more people, they have chosen to write the newsletter in English.
- As the newsletter is informative rather than technical, they have decided to keep the newsletter's use of English to a low-medium level of sophistication.
- To maximize information transferal, in a brief and entertaining format, we have selected a brief one-page A4 format.

**What is Your Message?**

When writing text for a one-page newsletter, the key points to remember are:

- Clear, and
- Concise.

For a monthly newsletter, the goal is to communicate to your stakeholders (or other interested parties) what your organization has completed or achieved during that time.
The best way to organize your text is by making a dot-point list of the achievements that your organization has accomplished over the last month, or of the messages you want to convey to the readers. For example:

1. A group visit to Bangkok Trade Fair;
2. Hosting a visit from Australian buyer; and
3. Facilitating a successful meeting between Canadian buyers and group for product development.

Once you have the dot-point list, go back and fill out each dot-point with further information. Ask yourself:

- What happened?
- Why was it important?
- What were the outcomes?

The main body of text to fill an A4 page, in 11-12 pts size, should be around 300 words. It is a good idea to write your text in a normal word-processing program such as Word, to be sure that all your spelling and punctuation is correct before you paste the text into your final Adobe PageMaker layout. Once you have your main body of text, choose your images.

Before you add the images to your Adobe PageMaker layout, you must resize and prepare them in Photoshop. Browse through your photos from the month, taken at various trainings and events. Choose two photos that you feel best reflect the events and achievements of the month. The images can be resized in Adobe Photoshop.

For assistance with resizing and re-sampling images in Photoshop, open Photoshop and choose Help > Resize Image. This interactive wizard helps you scale your images for print or online media. Also refer to Part 3iii of this manual—Digital Photography and Image Manipulation for Marketing Materials.

To open images with Adobe Photoshop

1. Choose File > Open.
2. Select the name of the file you want to open. If the file does not appear, select the option for showing ‘All files’ from the File Type option box.
3. Click Open.

The difference between Up and Down sampling your images

Re-sampling refers to changing the pixel dimensions (and therefore display size) of an image. When you down sample (or decrease the number of pixels), information is deleted from the image. When you resample up (or increase the number of pixels), new pixels are added based on color values of existing pixels. You specify an interpolation method to determine how pixels are added or deleted.

Keep in mind that re-sampling can result in poorer image quality. For example, when you resample an image to larger pixel dimensions, the image will lose some detail and sharpness.
You can avoid the need for re-sampling by scanning or creating the image at a high enough resolution. If you want to preview the effects of changing pixel dimensions on-screen or print proofs at different resolutions, resample a duplicate of your file.

Using a consistent template for your newsletter is useful for two reasons. Firstly, it makes the process of developing the monthly newsletter less complicated, and secondly, it becomes part of your branding and a consistent part of your marketing materials. Refer to part 3i of this manual – Developing a Corporate Identity for more information on the importance of branding.

There are several programs that can be used for desktop publishing. However, some these programs can be expensive and difficult to use. For more information on desktop publishing, please consult the AAC Marketing Officer.

Below is a template of a newsletter that could be used as an initial training material. This template was downloaded from the internet and should be used for training purposes only. The template found on the next page is a Word document and can be opened using Microsoft Word.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. Types of Product Catalogues
2. The value of developing a product catalogue for a retail or wholesale business
3. The value of Researching your buyers' and incorporating your findings into the layout, use of color and design of your catalogue,
4. The difference between product images and lifestyle images in a catalogue,
5. How to present your information in a clear and balanced manner.
There are two kinds of product catalogues.

1. The first style of catalogue provides limited information about the organization and is product focused. This catalogue includes many product images in a standard spreadsheet format, and provides interested buyers with basic information about the products, such as size, colors available, wholesale and retail prices.

2. The second style of catalogue is a combination of practical product catalogue and marketing material. It includes information about the organization, images of the products in use the design of this style of catalogue reflects the nature of the organization through its design.

This document deals with the development of the second type of catalogue.

Marketing materials are useful for raising awareness of your organization and the product range that you offer. In many cases your range of products will be much broader than what is on display at your trade fair booth, or retail outlet. For this reason, it is worthwhile to catalogue your products, so that you can demonstrate your full range of products to the buyers on request.

Furthermore, some buyers may not be able to visit your retail outlet or trade fair stand. Therefore, an email-able catalogue is important for accessing new markets.

When developing a catalogue appropriate for your organization, there are several easy steps that can be followed. These steps help you to be sure you have considered all the information your buyers require and that your organization is presented in a way that reflects your business.

When developing a catalogue it is useful to consider:

1. **Research**: What do the buyers need?

2. **Design**: What does the design of the catalogue need to be?
   
   a. **Color**: What colors best reflect your business?
   b. **Images**: Which images should be used?
      
      i. Lifestyle
      ii. Product

3. **Clear Information**: How can the information be presented clearly?

   Market research is very useful for compiling an effective catalogue. The catalogue will provide information regarding your business and products to potential buyers and therefore is the information needs to be:

   - Reliable;
   - Easy to understand; and
   - Organized.
Step 2  Design: What does the design of the catalogue need to be?

It is useful to visit the Artisans Association of Cambodia design library and look at the collection of marketing materials collected from a wide range of international trade fairs for inspiration.

Color - What colors best reflect your business and what colored products will look best with those colors? (See 2v: Trend Research in this manual)

Similarly with the building of your corporate ID (See 3.1 Developing a Corporate Identity in this manual), your product catalogue should use the colors you have selected for your logo. Keep a consistent theme and use of color across your marketing materials also develops consistency that allows your style to be more easily recognized over time.

As a catalogue is a time-consuming and expensive project, it is better to develop a catalogue template that you could update, rather than develop a new one every six months.

It is preferable to keep the use of colors in the catalogue to two or three. Many colors within the layout can distract from the images of the actual product you are marketing.

Images

In many catalogues, there are two kinds of images that are incorporated.

- Lifestyle images; and
- Product images.

Lifestyle Images: images that represent how a product can be used

These images should be taken and used according to the kind of message you want to convey about your products and your organization.

As part of the brainstorming for the development of the catalogue, word-association games can be useful as it can help you to decide what and where are the best styles of lifestyle images to take.

Start with the simple words to decide if your products are:

- For young or mature buyers?
- Traditional or fashionable?
- For males or females?
- For use inside the house or outside?

For example; if your products were evening accessories for young fashionable females, it would make sense to do a photo shoot in the evening in an environment that reflects the lifestyle of a young fashionable woman of your target market. Maybe set the photo shoot in a restaurant, having dinner, or walking into a theatre.

Below are two images for a fashion catalogue that markets casual young fashion accessories. The images are relaxed, in a casual environment, modeled by a happy young women who fits the profile of the target market.
Whatever you choose, it is important the images reflect the goals and style of the business and the needs of the target market.

Product images

Product images are clear, close-up images of the clean, well-lit product.

With all the competition in the market, the products displayed must look their BEST! When taking images of products to be placed in a catalogue or sent to buyers, the product must be:

- Well lit,
- Padded with something (if necessary to show the shape of the product);
- Close up, with as little of the background distraction as possible;
- ONE product per image;
- Clean; and
- On a plain white background.

Below are samples of inappropriate and appropriate images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Appropriate</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Not Appropriate Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Appropriate Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This image is not clear, and the product is not padded properly, so it is leaning to one side. The above image is clear and the product is well padded.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Appropriate</th>
<th>Appropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Not Appropriate Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Appropriate Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this image, there are too many products, and background is too colorful.</td>
<td>The plain white background makes it easier to see the details of the product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Not Appropriate Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Appropriate Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The angle that the image has been taken at gives the product a distorted look. It is not easy to see what the actual size and shape of the product is.</td>
<td>By taking the image directly from the front, it is clear to the buyer what the shape of the product is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Not Appropriate Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Appropriate Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no need to have arms or hands in the images, unless the image is a lifestyle image.</td>
<td>A simple image against a plain background is most effective for communicating what the product looks like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Not Appropriate Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Appropriate Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As the products are wrapped in plastic, the light from the flash of the camera makes it difficult to see the details of the products.</td>
<td>By taking the product out of its plastic wrapping, it is much easier for the buyer to see the details of the product.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3 Clear Information: How to present your information clearly

Once you have determined the information and style of catalogue that would appeal to your target market, you must consider the best way to communicate that information.

It could be though the use and combination of:

- Images;
- Colors;
- Layout; or
- Text.

Many websites are like online catalogues. For inspiration about combining images, colors and text, it is useful to research the web sites of market leaders in your target market for ideas about how to catch your preferred buyer's eye.

The image below is the front page of an interior design business. The colors are muted and classic; the design is clean and uncomplicated to reflect the simplicity of the designs. The business targets design orientated customers with an interest in good design. The information is clearly set out and easy to navigate.

Following in the traditions of master craftsmen, I Ching Décor offers a range of high quality interior design and architectural solutions for the discriminating individual's home and commercial business needs.

Our services include expert advice on architectural work, interior design, custom made furniture, home accessories and Feng Shui.

Situated in the heart of Phnom Penh city, the capital of Cambodia, our showroom offers a wide range of interior products from window dressings to kitchen ware, dining, living and bedroom suites.

We also provide a diverse range of glassware, soft furnishings, lighting and other home accessories.

Our products are sourced from a range of top quality suppliers in Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand. In particular we aim to work with Cambodian designers to create smart and unique pieces for the home.

For export inquiries, please download a set of our Export Trading terms and conditions. For further information, please contact us directly via email. We look forward to assisting you.

The key to good marketing publications is balance, so as you build your catalogue it is also important to balance text, color and images to ensure you clearly communicate your information to the buyers. It is useful to ask for the assistance of the AAC marketing manager when you are putting together a catalogue or similar marketing materials, as a second, and even third opinion is always useful.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. Basic color theory;
2. An understanding of primary, secondary and tertiary colors;
3. The concept of color harmony and how to create it;
4. Analogous colors;
5. Complementary color;
6. The Properties of color;
7. Color relativity and context.
Color theory has been an area of investigation and experimentation for many years, addressing different questions in fields ranging from science to art. Understanding ‘Color Theory’ is useful for developing a better understanding of the use of impact of color, and how it can be incorporated to facilitate successful product development.

History

Sir Isaac Newton developed the first circular diagram of colors, The ‘Color Wheel’ in 1666. Since then, scientists and artists have studied and designed numerous variations of this concept.

Contemporary Color Theory works with three color wheels that build on combinations of colors. These three groups of colors, depicted here are wheels are called:

- Primary colors
- Secondary colors and
- Tertiary colors

The Color Wheel
Primary Colors are:
- Red,
- Yellow
- Blue

In color theory, these are the three colors that cannot be mixed or formed by any combination of other colors.

All other colors are derived from these three.
Secondary Colors are:

- Green,
- Orange,
- Purple

As you can see, these six colors are formed from the three primary colors.

- Blue + Yellow = Green
- Blue + Red = Purple
- Red + Yellow = Orange

The tertiary colors are:

- Yellow-green
- Yellow-orange
- Red-orange
- Red-purple
- Blue-purple
- Blue-green

Combining primary and secondary colors forms these colors:

- Yellow + Green = Yellow-Green
- Yellow + Orange = Yellow-orange
- Red + Orange = Red-orange
- Red + Purple = Red-purple
- Blue + purple = Blue-purple
- Blue + Green = Blue-green

Now that we have looked at how all these colors are formed, we can use this as a guideline to understand why some colors are better suited to use together, and some are not. Colors that work well together form what is described as ‘color harmony’.
**Color Harmony**

Color theory has a name for well-matched or combined colors. It is "color harmony". Consider these definitions of color harmony, as it what we want to achieve with our products.

- Something that is pleasing to the eye,
- It engages the viewer and it creates an inner sense of order, a balance in the visual experience,
- When something is not harmonious, it can be unappealing or chaotic
- Colour harmony delivers visual interest and a sense of order.
- If used incorrectly, color can create conditions that can cause fatigue, increase stress, decrease visual perception, damage eyesight, increase possible worker errors, and negatively affect orientation and safety.

**In summary**

- Extreme unity leads to under-stimulation,
- Extreme complexity leads to over-stimulation.
- Harmony is equilibrium.

**How do we create Color Harmony?**

The following illustrations and descriptions present some basic formulas for creating "color harmony".

These are:

- Analogous Colors,
- Complementary Colors
- Color schemes based on nature.

**Analogous Colors**

- Analogous colors are any three colors that are side by side on a 12-part color wheel.
- Usually one of the three colors predominates.
- Example: yellow-green, yellow, and yellow-orange.
Complementary colors are any two colors that are directly opposite each other.

Example:

- Red and green,
- Red-purple and Yellow-green

In the illustration above, there are several variations of yellow-green in the leaves and several variations of red-purple in the orchid.

These opposing colors create maximum contrast and maximum stability.

A Color Scheme Based on Nature or the Environment

Nature provides a perfect departure point for color harmony. As in the photo from the National Museum, the pinks, greens and greys create a harmonious color scheme.
The Properties of Color

After the basic concepts of primary, secondary and tertiary colors, there are other elements of color described as properties. These can be used to soften the combinations of the primary, secondary and tertiary colors, as they create more avenues for playing with the Analogous, Complementary and natural combinations.

These properties of color are:

- Hues are either chromatic (having color) or achromatic (colorless neutrals).
- Values are used traditionally in a range from white to black, but high-key or low-key value leads to expressive color.
- Intensity (purity or grayness) contributes, along with value, to the effect of light in paintings.
- Temperature creates mood and spatial effect: cool = far and warm = near.

Exercise: Discuss elements of the above color theory in the context of textiles

Three exercises.

1. Choose two colors on the color wheel and develop a range of hues for that color.
2. Choose another color from the wheel and add equal parts of white to create different values of that shade.
3. Choose another color from the wheel and add equal parts of black to create different values of that shade.
Using textile swatches:

- Thinking about hue, value, intensity and temperature, discuss the fabric swatches that are on each table. What are the colors?
- How do they relate to the color wheel?
- How does texture affect the color in fabrics?
- How do different materials reflect/absorb the original dye colors
- What happens to colors if:
  - They are layered through translucent fabrics
  - Pleats
  - Braids
  - The same prints on solid fabrics and translucent fabrics?

Color Relativity and Context

Observing the effects colors have on each other is the starting point for understanding the relativity of color. The relationship of values, saturations and the warmth or coolness of respective hues can cause noticeable differences in our perception of color.

Look at the diagram below. In each of the different colored squares we see a plain red square. Note how different that red looks in the context of the black, white, orange and blue.

In the above example, Red seems:

- more brilliant against a black background,
- duller against the white background
- lifeless against the orange
- brilliant against the blue-green.

This example highlights the importance of an awareness of color relativity when we pair different colors in our product development.
Take a close look at the different-colored squares in this image.

The small purple rectangle on the left appears to have a red-purple tinge when compared to the small purple rectangle on the right.

However, as seen in the next image, they are both the same color. **This demonstrates how the same color can appear to be two different colors.**

This is important to note when we are coordinating a range of products.

Marketing research indicates that over 80% of visual information is related to color. In other words, color conveys a lot of information. It can also draw attention to itself through symbolic meaning.

Cambodia has a particular relationship with color. Traditionally, each day of the week has a particular color assigned to it. Ikat or ‘Hol’ is traditionally woven in particular colors. There are many more examples of traditional uses of color from all around the world and what those colors mean to each cultural group.

For example, in the western culture white represents purity and brides wear white on their wedding day. In Japan, white is worn at funerals.

When developing products for different countries and nationalities, it is important to be aware of colors’ meaning. If red, yellow and green are the color of traffic lights, we don’t want to use it in a silk scarf! The colors we use should be appropriate for the product.

Barry Ridge is the vice-president of strategic planning for American company The Color Management Group. He mentions the importance of appropriate color use in product development.

…“Having an understanding of human response to certain colors is important in sending successful communication of a particular message. For example, a bank logo in pink and purple would not send a message of a solid, wise company. Using color appropriately is the answer”.

Select the most appropriate colors by analyzing products and your target market. It is essential that colors bear some relationship — either symbolic or literal — to the product.

For example: a shop that sells clothes for young women may stock clothes in bright fun colors. A shop that caters to a more mature client may have a more traditional and classic color range. In this way, the products are responding to the market they target.
Exercise E: Appropriate use of color in our everyday lives

In focus groups, think of a few examples of how strong color affects us in our everyday lives, and what might be appropriate and inappropriate color combinations for homeware and fashion products.

In the context of what we have just discussed, think about what colors could be good to use in:

- A workshop environment
- A retail shop
- A hospital

Which colors could be appropriate to be used to advertise (logo, packaging, signage) and why:

- Toothpaste
- Children's toys
- Paintings and art.
SILK PREPARATION AND DYING PROCESS

Part 4

Learning Objectives

On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The concepts of TPM and Denier for selecting the right kind of silk threads for each particular project
2. How to prepare the skeins of silk before dying
3. The ideal calculations for different woven products
4. The first and second round of the silk degumming process
5. How to bleaching for Khmer Golden Silk
6. Using ‘German’ Dyes or Acid Dyes effectively with white Vietnamese silk
7. The costing for silk meterage prepared with ‘German’ Dyes
8. Sizing the warp
9. How to prepare a Dye Sheet Record
Thread Preparation

When purchasing silk to weave, for comparison in the future always note the:

- Brand,
- Size, and
- Quality.

When purchasing silk for a particular product, you should be careful about the Twists Per Meter (TPM) and Denier (D) as these will make a big difference to the beauty and strength of the finished product.

The denier tells us how many threads are twisted together to make a single thread, and then how many of those are twisted together. This calculation indicates how soft the silk will be when it is woven. Different kinds of denier thread are ideal for different kinds of finished products.

For example the calculation:

\[ 24/26 \times 4 = 156 \text{ D} \]

This means there are:

\[ 4 \times 24-26 \text{ size threads twisted together} = \text{total of 156 Denier} \]

A different denier calculation can be:

\[ 150/200 \]

This calculation means that there is one thread of 150/200 D = no twisting

Both deniers are around 150 D, so that means that the only difference between these them this that the 150/200 is softer as these is NO TWIST!

Finest to Thickest Silk = 20/22 D, 24/26 D, 28/32D, 50/55, 150/200 D.

Twist

TPM = Twists per meter. Current the Vietnamese silk available has a low quality / irregular twist. This means that when it woven, it creates bars across the warp and weft of the fabric.

Twisting gives the silk a smooth finish, therefore it is very slippery. It is similar to Chinese taffeta. Twisting the silk before weaving it gives different effects to the finished silk.

For example:

- Less twist = softer silk

For very soft silk, experts recommend 15 – 20 twists per meter. This gives excellent softness, but the silk thread is often very weak.
**Cambodian calculations**

Currently we use approximately:

Warp: 28/30 x 6 = 180 Denier (Vietnamese silk)

**Expert Suggestion**

Vietnamese Weft = 28/30 x 6 = 180 Denier.
High twist = stiff.

Yellow silk weft in single yarn. (200/250 Denier OR 30 picks/cm)

**What is the difference between Cotton counts and Silk Denier?**

- Cotton is graded in counts. The lesser the count, the thicker the material. The higher the count, the thinner the material.
- Silk is graded in deniers. The lesser denier yarn is a finer silk. A thicker denier is a heavier silk.

### Preparing the Skeins

- Ideal number of 6 cross diamond sections (Kam Rong) on a skein
- Ideal length for a skein of silk = 55 cm

### Ideal Calculations for different products

#### Sheer Weight
- Summer Scarf – 1st Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density</th>
<th>30 ends/cm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mtr squared Weight</td>
<td>45-50 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 30 per cm squared (OR 60 D Vietnamese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier) x 30 per cm squared (No Twist Domestic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(100/120 Denier) x 30 per cm squared (No Twist Domestic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 300 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Summer Scarf/ Garment/ Necktie/ Bedcover – 2nd Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density</th>
<th>40-50 ends/cm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mtr squared Weight</td>
<td>65-70 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 30 per cm squared (OR 60 D Vietnamese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier) x 30 - 35 per cm squared (Domestic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(100/120 Denier) x 30 - 35 per cm squared (Domestic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 300 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Scarf Preparation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>30 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mtr squared Weight</td>
<td>50 – 55 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 30 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(100/120 Denier x 30 – 35 per cm squared)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 350 – 400 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This preparation gives good consistency and strength, particularly when cut.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warp Density:</td>
<td>40 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Density</td>
<td>Yellow silk. 30 picks/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed:</td>
<td>(I 00 I) . Reeds sticks = 50/inch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>65 – 70 gms per meter squared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>150 /200 Denier (textured)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 2) 370 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 370 TPM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB:** Yellow silk had much less twist than the Vietnamese silk. This gives it a softer finish. Also, a single yarn on the weft will maximise the softness.

**Silk Scarves or Dresses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>30 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>70 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 48 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier x 30 per cm squared)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Single Domestic Yarn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 350 – 400 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shirts / Blouse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>30 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>120 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 48 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier x 2) x 25-28 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Fine -Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 350 – 400 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Light Furnishings / Drapery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Specification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>30 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>120 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 48 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier x 2) x 25-28 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Fine -Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 350 – 400 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Medium Furnishings / Partitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>40-50 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>85 - 100 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) x 48 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(150/200 Denier x 2) x 25-28 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(250/300 Denier x 1) x 25-28 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp TPM</td>
<td>(20/22 x 3) 350 – 400 TPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warp Construction**

- NO TWIST! Just parallel threads. Fine Domestic (Wallpaper?)

**Weft Construction**

- NO TWIST! Just parallel threads. Coarse Domestic

### Upholstery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>30 ends/cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft</td>
<td>100/120 Denier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>300-350 gams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(200/250 domestic single) x 24 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(250/300 Denier x 6) x 14 -16 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(200/250 domestic single) x 24 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight 1 mtr squared</td>
<td>400 gms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp Construction</td>
<td>(250/300 Denier x 12) x 6 - 8 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weft Construction</td>
<td>(250/300 Denier) x 8 - 12 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(200/250 x 6 of 3 or 4 colours) x 10 per cm squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Twill / Tabby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warp Construction**

- NO TWIST! Just parallel threads.

**Weft Construction**

- 400 gms.

### How do we formulate the final tissue?

Total weight divided by length = gm/m

**Remember** – if we don’t know the weight, we don’t know the quality.

### Degumming

Minimum Liquid Ratio = 30 lts boiling water: 1 kg silk

**Note:** More water is better.

#### Pot Recommendations

- Good pot size = 50 cm in diameter.
- OR 500gms of silk = 10 litre pot.

#### Silk Weight Loss

1. **Fine:** 70 – 75% of silk left after degum. 150 Denier = 60/2 or 40/2 (metric)
2. **Medium:** 70 – 72% of silk left after degum. 200/250 Denier = 40/2 (metric)
3. **Coarse:** 60 – 70% of silk left after degum. 250/300 Denier = 20/2 (metric)
4. **Mixed Grade.**
For 2 kg Raw silk

Use:
- 200 gms soap (= 6 pieces. Satellite Brand)
- OR liquid soap @ 2% instead of solid blocks
- Sodium Carbonate 8% (= 160 gms per 2 kg)
- 60 litres of water
- Sodium hydrosulphate 4% (= 80 gms per 2 kg)

For 1 kg of Medium grade silk

Use:
- 1000 gms of silk
- 1 piece of soap
- Soda ash 8% (80 gms)
- Hydrosulphate 4% (40gms)
- 30 litres of water

NB: SC = Double SH

Process:
1) Ph level should be around 10-12 at the first stage of degumming.
2) Dissolve soap in separate container. Strain through a piece of fabric into the bigger pot.
3) Dissolve the soda ash in a separate pot, and then add to larger pot.
4) Add silk and allow water to heat up to 95 degrees C. Don't add more water than you need, as it is too expensive to heat and boil.
5) Rotate the silk left and right every ten minutes.

NB: The timing is very important as too much alkali = less sheen to the silk.

2nd Round of Degumming

Reduce temperature to 60 degrees and use 30% of all the chemicals then treating the silk.

I.e.: Soda ash - 40 gms @ 30% = 12 gms
     Soap – 100gms @ 30% = 30 gms.

   1) Add cold water to the already hot water to reduce the heat rather than starting again.

Suggested heat for degumming Process

NB: Newest technology in degumming suggests that VERY HIGH TEMPERATURES (100 degrees) are a good substitute for the chemical as it dissolves the gum, yet does not damage the silk.
Bleaching for Golden Silk

Dying with German Dyes

Difference between Acid and Reactive Dyes

**Acid**
- Easier to control under our particular circumstances
- They need minimum 30 minutes or the fastness is no good

**Brands Available via Dystar**
- **Supranol**: bright colours. Less Fast
- **Isolan**: Darker and softer colours. Better fastness
- **Mixing the two**: the fastness is not the best. Add extra levelling agent for better results.
- **Mixing colours**: max 3 different dyes in one combination

For Pastels use 0.5%
Normal shades: 2.5 – 3%
Minimum - Maximum = 0.25% - 8% maximum

**Reactive Dyes**
- Cheaper on the short term
- Cause more difficulties under our dye circumstances because they need to be kept at 60 degrees over 30 mins to ensure fastness. This kind of assurance is not currently available to us.

**Levelling agent**
- **Hastopan T 2%**
- **Avolen 2%**

Levelling agent = Assist in the absorption of dye combinations of colour into the silk at the same time.

**Mesitol**: Treatment for the colour fastness.

**Acetic Acid**
- Controls the PH balance which controls the depth of shade.
- If the PH is up = the shade is deeper.
- When adding the acid DO NOT ROTATE! The acid can be added in two lots.
- The PH should be tested before the AA is added.
  - Ideal before AA = around 7-8
  - After the AA, around 3-5
- By adding the AA at the end of the process, we maintain a constant PH level of around 8 –9. After adding the AA in the warm wash, we lower the PH slowly to neutralise the silk. (See diagram)
Water Hardness

We treat with Carbon (CO2)

PH balance

- Water PH should be around 6.5-7.2 for drinking!
- If the PH is very high at the beginning of the dye process, then we do not need to use as many auxiliaries.
- Normally we use 2% Avolen and 2% Hastopan = 4%
- If PH is high we could use 1% Avolen and 1% Hastopan = 2%
- With less levelling agents, the PH level comes down.
- SIMPLE: Levelling agent = high PH, AA = lowers the PH.

Process: A good process requires less auxiliaries (cheaper).

Maximum time = 45 mins. Don’t leave the silk in the water for too long.

Dye Process for White Vietnamese Silk.

2000 gms of raw silk = 1600 gms post degum.

Hastopan T 2% = 2 x 1600/100 = 32 gms
Avolen 2% = 2 x 1600/100 = 32 gms
Salt 5% = 5 x 1600/100 = 80 gms

NB: Decrease Temp before adding AA

95 degrees C
30 degrees C

Silk
Silk

Add Dystuff
Add Levelling Agent

30 mins
10 mins

60 mins
10 mins

Constant PH of 8.9

30-45 mins

Add Acetic Acid

20 mins

Rinse Hot

20 mins

Rinse Cold

Colour

When using the dyes, it is a good idea to build up a library of colours that can be mixed. Eg:

- 50 pastels
- 50 mid tones
- 50 deeps
- 50 neutrals

When developing the colours – ALWAYS keep colour cards.

Cleaning plastic rings for dying:

- Use hydrosulphate.
- Boil for five minutes

Red colours are more difficult to get out. May need to boil for 10 minutes.
1) **Silk Costs:** For 1 pcs of 100 cm wide, 4 mts length (2 mts plain/ 2 mts Hol)

**On loom:**
- Warp length set 100 mts
- Vietnamese Silk yarn: 20/22 x 3 = 60 Denier
- Raw Silk: 5 kg
  - 1 kg = 96,000 riel
  - 1 mts = 96,000/20 = 4,800 riel
  - 1 piece = 4 mts. Weight = 0.50 kg = 500 gms/ pc
  - 1 mt = 500/4 = 125 gms.

- 100 mt: 20/22 x 3 = 60 Denier = 5 kg
- Warp 1 mt = 5kg/100 = 50 gms/mt
- 50 gms Raw Silk = 80% fibre (after degum) Therefore 40 gms (actual fibre)
- 40gms/mts (fibre) - waste 3-5% (reeling and left on bobbin)
- Net Weight: Approx 38 gms of tissue. @ gms Waste.

Total Tissue: 1 mt squared is 125 gms
Warping = 38 gms
Weft = 125 gms - 38 gms = 87 gms of fibre.

Weft = 87 gms/m of fibre + 5% waste = 92 gms/m

**Domestic Weft 150/200 D (75% fibre, 25% gum)**

**THEREFORE:**
- 100 x 92/75 (after degumming = 75% gms of silk) = 123 gms/m of domestic raw silk

123 gms = 123/1000 = 0.123 kg (raw silk)
0.123 kg x 80,000 riel = 9,840 riel (final cost of yarn only).

**Fabric Cost for 1 meter**
- Warp: 4,800 riel
- Weft: 9,840 riel
- **Total:** 14,640 riel

2) **Chemical Costs of Degumming the Warp - Raw Silk @ 50 gms/mts**

To degum:
- Liquid Soap 2% = 1 gm = 0.001 kg x 5000 riel/kg = 5 riel
- Soda Ash 4% = 2 gms = 0.002 kg x 1500 riel/kg = 3 riel
- Energy (gas, labels etc...) = 200 riel

**Total** = 208 riel

3) **Chemical Costs of Dying the Warp – 80 % = 40 gms fibre.**

**Basic Dye Costs Comparison**
- Dystar Price: 26,000 – 30,000 riel / kg = 65 – 75 USD
- Thai Dye Price: 6000 riel /kg = 1.50 USD

**Ingredients:**
2% Avolen = 0.8 g = 0.0008 kg x 30,000 riel / kg = 24 riel
2% Hastopant = 0.8 gms = 0.0008 kg x 40,000 riel/kg = 32 riel
5% Sodium Sulphate = 2 gms = 0.002 kg x 1500 riel = 3 riel
3% Orange KRSS = 1.2 g = 0.0012 kg x 300,000 riel/kg = 360 riel
Labour = 200 riel
Total = 620 riel

4) Sizing the Warp = 40 gms of Fibre

Ingredients:
10 % Glosemol = 4 gms = 0.004 kg x 18,000 riel/kg = 72 riel
2% Levamin = 0.8 gms = 0.0008 kg x 6000 riel/kg = 5 riel
Total = 77 riel

5) Reeling

Reeling 40 gms = 0.04 kg x 10,000 riel/mts = 400 riel/mts
Warping Etc = ready on loom = 40,000/100 = 400 riel/mts
Total = 800 riel/mts

6) Weft Costs - 123 gms of raw domestic yarn

Degum = Soda Ash 8% = 9.84 gms = 0.00984 x 1,500 riel = 15 riel
Sodium Hydrosulphate 4% = 4.92 g = 0.00492 x 8000 riel = 39 riel
Soap (1 pc = 300 riel) = 9.84 gms
Labour = 200 riel
Total = 258 riel

7) Bleaching

\[ \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 \ 30\% = 36.9 \text{ g} = 0.00369 \text{ kg x 4200 riel} = 155 \text{ riel} \]
Liquid soap 2% = 2.46 g = 0.00246 kg x 5000 riel = 12 riel
Labour = 200 riel
Total = 367 riel

8) Dying Silk

Hastopan T 2% = 1.84 g = 0.00184 kg x 40,000 riel = 74 riel
Avolen 2% = 1.84 g = 0.00184 kg x 30,000 riel = 55 riel
Salt 5% = 4.6 gms = 0.0046 x 1500 riel = 7 riel
Dyestuff 3% = 276 gms = 0.00276 kg x 300,000 riel = 828 riel
Acetic Acid 0.5% = 0.615 = 0.000615 kg x 3000 riel = 2 riel
Labour = 200 riel
Total = 1166 riel
9) Weft Reeling 92 gms

92 gms = 0.0092 kg x 8000 riel = 736 riel

10) Weft Weave = 6000 riel

Final Addition

1) Raw Silk = 14,640 riel
2) Degum Warp = 208 riel
3) Dye Warp = 620 riel
4) Size Warp = 77 riel
5) Reeling and Warping = 800 riel
6) Degum Weft = 258 riel
7) Bleach Weft = 367 riel
8) Dye Weft = 1166 riel
9) Reel weft = 736 riel
10 Weaving = 6000 riel

SUM total = 24,873 riel/mts for 3 shaft (domestic weft) silk.

Sizing the Warp

Warp: 1160 gms

Use:

7% Ghosenol
20% Levamin Oil
5:1 Water

Process:

1) Dissolve ghoseral @ 60 degrees C
2) Add Levamin
3) Pull silk over a 1.5 cm in diameter stainless steel rod.
4) Paint on sizing formula
5) Dry in the shade.

General Trouble Shooting

Problem: Dry Season: Threads too hot. Too much static!

Solution: Water the floors under the looms in the afternoon so cool down the rooms.

Put unglazed jars of water around the looms. Jars made with sand are more porous.

Grow more trees around the workshop!

Problem: Unreasonable prices for silk weaving. 1 day = 1 mts = 6000 riel.

Solution: Should be minimum 4000 riel per meter for plain weave. The wage SHOULD be 6000-7000 riles per day BUT production should be around 3 mts. AVOID DOWN TIME!
SAMPLE DYE SHEET RECORD

Dye Sheet:

Date:

Dye Lot Number: *This number should correspond to the number on the colour cards.*

Yarn Type:

Company:

Order Number:

Colour Number:

Raw Silk:

Fibre:

Colour Formula: .......... %

................ %

.............. %

Auxiliaries Used: Hastopan .......... %

Sodium Sulphate. ........... %

LAvolen ............. %
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The various stages of product development
2. How to incorporate a color range into product development
3. Aspects of color ranges such as ‘key colors’,
4. The use of specification sheets in product development
5. The use and value of costing and costing sheets in product development.

The process of product development is as simple as following some basic steps. If all the steps are incorporated into the product development process, then the outcome will be a well researched, buyer focused, market ready range. The basic steps of product development are outlined below and then expanded upon in the following sections. This basic process of product development is necessary for successfully costing and designing quality products.
The Stages of Product Development

The stages of product development are the following:

‘Kick Start’ – Drawing stage. Time required: 1 - 4 weeks
- Product research – Costs – Budget.
- Color range
- Details – Fabric, lining, motifs.

Line review: Samples produced. Time required: 1 - 4 weeks
- Assess Costs
- Assess Quality
- Assess Quantity that can be produced

Freeze: Revised samples. Time required: 1 – 4 weeks
- Review costs and pricing
- Rework samples for quality
- Production and sale.

Research: Identify the buyers' needs

To develop appropriate product, it is essential to understand your target market's needs before you begin. Ideally, your products are developed for a specific kind of buyer. The needs of this buyer, or target group, can be researched, and the outcome of this research is used to inform the first stage of product development.

Ask yourself:
- What product have your customers been asking for?
- What is in fashion?
- What is missing in your showroom?
- What products are not sold by your competitors?
- What are your limitations?
- What do you do really well and how can those skills be incorporated into new products that are of interest to your target market?

It is also important to keep in mind the importance of:
- Quality
- Range - choice
- Freshness

The Basic Products

After you have researched what your target market is looking for, the next step is to design five related, coordinating products. Identify the shapes and general styles of products required to fulfill your buyers' needs.

For example: If research indicates that your target market buyers is interested in soft furnishings, develop a coordinated range such as:
- 60 x 60 cushion
- 45 x 45 cushion
- bed cover
- lamp cover
- table cover
When developing a color range, choose your colors the way you choose your products. Research:

- What colors have your customers been asking for?
- What is fashionable for the upcoming season?
- Which colors are missing in your store?
- Will these colors work for your target market? What is the upcoming season in their country of origin?
- What kind of products will the colors be applied to?

The product that the color will be applied to is a deciding factor for the colors that will be used.

In homewares, the more expensive the item, the more neutral the colors used. This is because people consider more expensive items investments. These items should last over time.

Smaller items are easier to experiment with color as these items, cushions for example, are inexpensive to change every season.

‘Key colors’ are the main colors used in a color range. They are the foundations that the rest of a color range will be planned around. Key colors can be chosen to reflect the trends your target buyers are working to. Complementary and neutral colors can be added to key colors to augment the range.

If you are developing a range of homeware products, pay attention to the color trends for homewares. By incorporating those trends, your products will be more appropriate for commercial buyers whose sales are also dictated by those trends.

The use of key colors and a trend oriented coordinated color range are useful tools when coordinating a retail space or trade fair stand. If the colors work together, they are more appealing for several reasons, including:

- Buyers can see clearly how to work your products into their existing range
- Buyers can see clearly how to display the products
- A coordinated color story makes it easier to sell the products as a range, rather than as individual pieces.

The images below is a visual representation of the range-planning process outlined in the above section.

1. Develop the range of products that respond to the needs of your target market.
2. Select your color palette

3. Lay out the colors as key and subsidiary colors
4. Distribute the color range across the products

5. The range now easily color-coordinates in a space such as a boutique or trade fair booth.
Prior to this stage, the product range is still just designs on paper. When the designs go into sampling stage, specification sheets and costing sheets are essential tools.

A simple tool for managing product development once it is prototype stage is specification sheets. Please see section 3ii. Initial Marketing Communication via Email for a sample specification sheet.

These sheets keep all staff involved in the production chain informed about the basic elements required to complete the product accurately.

Costing is an essential part of product development. Costing sheets are essential tools for the costing process at all stages of product development.

A costing sheet is a tool that is used at various stages of production to break down all the costs involved in developing new product.

In product development it is essential that producers are aware of their budget and the budget of potential buyer before they begin to develop new products. In order to do this, use a costing sheet effectively at three stages of product development.

G oing step by step thought the basic costs for all the raw materials necessary for the designed product, and estimating the amount of time needed to develop that product, designer, production manager or purchasing officer can develop an initial budget for each new product based on the products design and buyer specification.

This is a very important as it raises several issues:

- Does the total cost of each item necessary to complete this product make the design too expensive?
- Is it over budget? Why?
- Are the raw materials you need for this product available in Cambodia?
- Are the accessories you need for this product available in Cambodia?
- If not, where?
- What will importing these products do to the costing of the product?

This is the moment to reassess the product, before any fabric, accessories and time are used to develop an inappropriate product.

During this stage, the sample development officer develops the full sample according to the buyer's specifications. After the sample is complete, the cost sheet can be adjusted according to timing and other changes such as fabric usage. The costing sheet can be attached to the end sample after all the adjustments have been made.
When the product is being developed, it is useful to have copies of the estimated costing sheet (developed in stage one), and the specification sheets kept together with:

- The production manager;
- In the production room; and
- On file for future reference.

This way, the production centre can implement a standard system whereby the product and items used to develop it can be cross checked by the Quality Control officer or Production Manager while it is in progress and avoid costly mistakes.

At this stage you have a final product and a final cost. This is useful for several reasons including:

- For future reference: if for example your buyers would like to develop a similar product, by keeping the costing sheet, you will always know how the price was ascertained and how to make necessary adjustments for new product;
- By keeping copies of specification and costing sheets, it is not necessary to keep samples. This way, you reduce stock of samples.
SAMPLE COST SHEET

Contact: Mr. Man - Manager
Mobile: +855 12 22 33 44
Tel: +855 23 33 44 55
Retail Address: # 9, Street 8,
Sangkat Chey Chumneas, Daun Penh,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
Email: Cambodia@camnet.com.kh

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<tr>
<td>SIZE RANGE:</td>
<td>COLORS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCER:</td>
<td>METERAGE ALLOWANCE:</td>
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1. MATERIAL

<table>
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</table>

Lining
Total Materials Costs

2. Accessories

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<th>Amount.</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Buttons
Zips
Fusing
Elastic
Woven brand Label
Care / Size labels
Packaging
Embroidery
Total Accessories Cost

3. Labor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Cutting
Labor
Marking
Grading
Payroll Taxes
Transportation
Total Labor Cost;

4. TOTAL

SKETCH &
MATERIAL SWATCH
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The concept of value creation by incorporating Khmer design into product development
2. The value of differentiation
3. Some practical steps to incorporating Khmer design into product development for export
Value Creation

Consider what it is about your products and your business that your buyers feel is valuable. Is the value they find through:

- Their specific interest in Cambodia?
- The Khmer style of silk or other textiles?
- The quality?
- The price?
- Want something unique?

Below are some images of Japanese students taken on the streets of Tokyo.

It is clear from the unusual and dramatic way they are dressed that their aim is to differentiate themselves. But why?
Differentiation is a way of:

- Gaining others’ attention;
- Making a statement about your business;
- Expressing yourselves, or the goals of your businesses.

Ask yourself:

- In your business, is differentiation a goal you are trying to achieve?
- How can it be done?
- What makes your business and culture unique?

Khmer heritage is rich with traditional craft and culture. An ancient example of these qualities is the spectacle of Angkor Wat. This unique culture is all around us everyday in Cambodia and part of every Khmer person.

Buyers come to Cambodia looking for unique products that reflect aspects of their time in Cambodia. Highlighting Cambodian traditional design is an immediate way that businesses can differentiate their products from other products in Thailand or Vietnam.

Exercise: Bringing Khmer design into product development

1. Ask yourself “What do you consider unique to Cambodia?”
2. Write a list of ideas that come to your idea of products, colors, designs or motifs that are uniquely Khmer.
3. The ideas and designs on your list are some of the things that make Cambodian culture unique. By developing these ideas into products, you make a statement to the rest of the world that you are proud of your culture and your artistic history.

Beginning - How can ideas and inspiration from Cambodia and Cambodian Culture help you with product design?

It can help you to:

- Identify the kinds of products to be developed;
- Shapes of products and the way they are finished;
- The motifs used to embellish them;

The first step to incorporating more Khmer style or design into your product development is to choose one aspect of traditional design that you would like to focus on.
Step 1. **Find your inspiration**

Below are some images of Savannah Phum shadow puppets. With their intricate carved patterns, they are a perfect example of a place to find design inspiration in Cambodian traditional design.

Step 2. **Apply your inspiration**

Leave colors and trends to the side for now. Decide if you want to develop:

- A product shape and style (style bag, styles of curtains, styles of table covers);
- A particular way of finishing a product (trims, accessories);
- Motifs and surface designs (screen prints, embroidery).

Do not forget that there are many embellishment options for fabrics available now in Cambodia. These include:

- Embroidery;
- Screen printing and
- Beading.

Step 3. **Research the buyers**

The only way to know you are developing an appropriate product for the market is to better understand the buyers’ needs.

Research through:

- Investigating trends via the web;
- Reading latest fashion magazines.

**Step Four: Develop new products**

The following was the process I followed to develop some products.
Research and Motif Development

1. Investigate various images of Cambodian traditional design. During this time shadow puppets drew my attention.

2. I chose aspects of six pictures of shadow puppets.

Each of these pictures was taken by a digital camera and imported into Photoshop. In Photoshop, I cut and pasted parts of these images together until I found some looks that I liked.

Below are some motifs developed using the above Sovannah Phum, to be developed into screen prints.

I then showed these ideas to the buyers and they selected one of the designs that they preferred.

This design was then turned into a screen print and was used on both silk and cotton products in a range of colors.

Using Ikat or ‘Hol’

The key to incorporating Ikat or ‘Hol’ is through the use of color and combining it with other fabrics and textures to make it more appealing to the foreign sense of aesthetics.
I chose some classic flower motifs from the market and took them to ikat experts to dye appropriate colors for my range.

- **Step 1:** Add colors.
- **Step 2:** Remove all the main animal motifs unless your buyer has specified that they are interested in them.
- **Step 3:** Incorporate other techniques such as
  - Hand stitching;
  - Quilting;
  - Screen printing; and
  - Beading.

After the ikat was dyed in the selected color palette, we developed a range that incorporated:

- Plain ikat
- Different sizes
- Plain silk and ikat
- Ikat and hand stitching
- Ikat and organza,
- Ikat and other trims such as webbing.

In this way, a group of products:

- Work together as a range;
- Were more appropriate color range for the export market

---

**Exercise:**

**Design Inspiration**

In teams of two, choose three images, designs or photos that you consider to be especially Cambodian, or to represent Cambodia.

Modify your ideas to be used in your product development from these Cambodian ideas and images.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The process of costing a product including the steps of calculating costs including:
   - direct material costs,
   - direct labour costs and
   - overhead costs and
   - profit margin calculation.
What is Costing?

Costing is the process whereby the direct material cost, direct labor cost; and direct overhead costs incurred throughout the product development process are added together to find the final cost of a product that the businesses profit margin will be added to find the ex factory, or ex works cost of a product.

The simple costing system below outlines the main costs associated with the product:

- The Direct Material Cost (DMC);
- The Labor Cost (LC); and
- The Overhead Cost (OHC) (next page for further information).

DMC + LC + OHC = Final cost

Final cost + % of Profit = Factory Price or Work Price

Together these costs incurred are the complete costs of the development of the product or service.

What are direct material costs?

The direct material cost is made up of the raw materials and products necessary to develop the completed sample product.

The shipping and other handling costs for those raw materials must be included in these costs.

Once you have established this cost (using a costing sheet) be sure that your suppliers maintain their prices, so your raw material costs will not change from the time wholesale orders are placed.

What are direct labor costs?

The direct labor costs include the salaries and benefits costs involved with completing a specific job.

The labor cost is calculated by multiplying the number of direct labor hours required by the direct labor cost.

It is very important to accurately determine the amount of direct labor hours involved to complete the service.

There are some costs such as the direct cost of employee benefits such as pay during leave that are often forgotten. These can be calculated either as part of the labor OR the overhead costs. It is important that these costs are remembered in the costing; otherwise they will eventually constitute a loss.
Overheads are the indirect cost of the service and consists of:

- indirect materials,
- indirect labor, and
- other indirect costs related to the product or service.

Overhead costs are all the costs incurred by your business that are neither direct materials nor direct labor costs. As mentioned previously, these costs may or may not include employee benefits.

To calculate the dollar figure of overhead related to particular services or jobs, the following calculation can be used:

1. Overhead Rate = Total Overhead Cost divided by the Total Direct Labor Cost

OR

2. Overhead Rate = Total Overhead Cost divided by the Total Direct Labor Hours

The second method is more common for services that are billed at an hourly rate.

These overhead costs should also take into account the change in costs due to inflation, for example, the rising costs of petrol or raw materials.

Once these individual costs have been calculated, the total cost of the product can be calculated by adding all three costs together.

\[ \text{DMC + LC + OHC = Final cost} \]

What is a Profit Margin?

The profit margin is the percentage of the total costs that is the earned income of the producer.

Calculating a profit margin

There are two common strategies for developing the profit margin. These are:

1. Applying a percentage of profit to each of the total direct costs;

OR

2. Applying a percentage of profit to the total costs.
An example of the first option, or applying a profit margin to each of the three direct costs is outlined below.

Material Cost = Material Cost + Freight & Handling Costs

Material Cost = $18.00 + $2.00

= $20.00

Labor Cost = Direct Labor Cost per Hour X Hours Required

Labor Cost = $5.00 per hour X 2.0 hours

= $10.00

Overhead Cost = Overhead Rate X Direct Labor Cost

Overhead Cost = $100,000 (Total Overhead) / $50,000 (Total Direct Labor)

= $2.00 (Overhead Rate)

= $2.00 (Overhead Rate) X $10.00 (Labor Cost) = $20.00

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It is important to remember that the size of the profit margin will impact on the competitiveness of the sales price of the product.

Exercise 1:
Raw Materials Case Study

A designer in an organization wants to use a particular kind of leather for the trim and handles on some new handbags that have been developed for a particular buyer. At the initial stages of product development, the designer did not do the costing sheets to check the costs of the raw materials. When the final samples were developed the final products were too expensive to be competitive in their wholesale market.

What could the designer have done to prevent loss of time and money in the product development process.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. Concept of ‘visual merchandising’
2. The value as a marketing tool, and impact it can have on potential customers
3. the importance of the front entrance and window display
4. techniques for store layout
5. use of location and lifestyle merchandising
What is Visual Merchandising?

Visual merchandising is the strategic arrangement of color, product and props at a trade fair or retail showroom to attract potential buyers and communicate information about your business and products.

Effective visual merchandising includes creating a pleasant experience for the customer to the effect that they have a desire to return.

Good use of visual merchandising is an excellent marketing tool for communicating with your customers about the style and values of your business.

This particularly applies to showroom and trade-fair merchandising, as these are the two powerful opportunities your business has to engage the customer visually through the presentation of products, and convey information about your business.

According to previous research by the Henley Centre into consumer habits, it has been suggested that 73% of purchasing decisions are made in-store. This research highlights that value can be added to a business through well-prepared displays.

Visual merchandising is also useful stock monitoring system, for example: it is easier to notice if something from your display is missing. This can be an indicator that the showroom needs better security.

Creative product merchandising begins with planning. One of the best ways to begin includes time to consider what is and what is not working in your retail space.

Together with the shop manager, the general manager could ask:

- Which sections of the shop do not get much attention?
- Which products are not selling very well?
- Are there particular colors that seem to draw people to the products?
- What days of the week is the shop not busy and why?
- What time of the day do people not shop?

When this basic information is gathered about the way people relate to your sales space, this information is used to begin the changes.

The Entrance and Window – The Customer’s First Impression

The entrance and the shop window is the first chance you have to grab the buyers attention. It is essential that this part of your shop is attractive, renewed often and eye catching. This includes:

- The shop signage;
- The walkway leading to the shop (is it clean, tidy and free of clutter?);
- The window (Is there one? If not, would making one be a possibility?)

The way merchandise is displayed in a window also has a lot to do with enticing the customers into the store.

Signage and Logos

A corporate identity is a graphic representation of your business and its values. Please see section 3i Developing a corporate identity for more information. It helps you communicate the style and value of your business before the potential buyer has even walked into the store.
As part of the corporate ID, your logo is something you want the buyer to remember and recognize long after they have left your shop.

Examples of where you might have your logo and corporate colours:

- Sign over the shop entrance way
- Swing tags
- Brochures
- Sealing for product packaging
- Ribbons and gift wrap for gift wrapping services
- Website
- Banners, internal and external
- Colours of wall and ceiling paint, and
- Staff uniforms

The photographs below are images of store fronts in a popular shopping street in Sydney, Australia. Look at the images and consider the message the business conveys to the customer through the visual merchandising in the shop windows.

**Image 1. L’Occitane Boutique.** This beauty product company specialises in the use of natural ingredients to develop their products. This is illustrated through the use of flowers (lavender) in the presentation of the shop window.

The natural essence of the products is expressed through the use of warm colours, timber tables and wicker baskets.

However, the most obvious message in this image is that this business is having a big sale with large discounts. This shop front is on a busy street, so large and obvious signage is very important. MAKE IT BIG AND BOLD!
Image 2. Elegance Boutique: This boutique has an unusual mix of products in their window. However, the message they are trying to convey is that their boutique offers something for everyone. It may be that a buyer is looking for homewares, fashion accessories or garments, and it is clear that this boutique provides all of those products.

This boutique is also making a clear statement that their style. Their style is feminine, young and could be described as “Modern Ethnic” incorporating Indian design.
Image 3. Made in Japan. This business sells products from Japan. The display is minimal and the buyers can clearly understand that “minimal” is the essence of the products they sell and the lifestyle they support through their products.

While the window does not actually display many products, this can also be a technique for helping the buyer to focus their attention on one particular product (a new item in the store, or a sale item) rather than losing focus by presenting too many products and walking out without buying anything.
In developing an effective store layout, useful questions to ask yourself during the planning stage are:

- How can we make the products easier to locate?
- How should the products be displayed?
- How can you keep all the products clean and well presented?

There are several approaches to retail store organization and merchandise display. Two systems we will discuss here are Location Merchandising and Lifestyle merchandising.

The first and most common system is to display similar merchandise all in the same area. This is a “supermarket” approach to display; however, even in smaller boutiques this can be a useful system. The image below depicts an example of this style of merchandising.

In this image, the boutique has developed a display system that allows them to display all their cushions on the same wall. In this way, potential customers can view all the available products in an instant.

Using this system, different ranges of products such as garments, home-wares, lighting, cosmetics and others can be displayed together to reflect a theme and how these products could be used to add value to a buyer’s home or lifestyle.

Helping buyers to visualize how merchandise would look in their homes can help to facilitate a sale. Presenting products in this manner can also increase the perceived value of items that normally would seem unconnected with any other merchandise.
When deciding how you want to display your products, keep in mind:

- Needs of the store;
- Lifestyle of your regular customers/market;
- What can be seen from the street
- Lighting and ventilation
- Budget; and
- Type of merchandise the store sells.

It is important to notice which part of your store is the most profitable.

For example, it may be at the entrance for larger items; perhaps it is at the counter for smaller items.

It is important to notice which parts of the shop space are also not so profitable and address why that is so. Ask yourself:

- Is it well lit enough?
- Are display materials are inadequate?

If merchandising and developing displays for your store seems daunting, then perhaps just keep to these three easy rules until you feel more confident.

1. Make it bold, colourful, and simple;
2. If all else fails, use colour blocking (keeping all the same colours together);
3. Keep the display balanced
4. Remember the lighting: Light can create impact, and hide mistakes at the same time, making the job of the visual merchandiser easier.
Good lighting can guide the customers' eyes, reveal the colour and cut of the merchandise, show the styling and tailoring details, and emphasize the good qualities of the item.

Exercise 1:
Review your shop space:

- Walk around the display on a daily basis, reviewing the merchandise presentation and display as a prospective customer would;
- Face merchandise toward the main traffic aisle, reorganize those lifestyle settings, and make sure all signs are in good condition. Ask yourself “If I were shopping in this store, would I be enticed to buy?”;
- Maintain store presentation of desirable products that are clean, orderly, easy to find and friendly service from sales staff. This provides a shop that customers will return to.

Exercise:
Displaying Scarves

Scarves are one of the best-selling fashion accessory items. Therefore, it is valuable to know how to display them effectively. In large shopping centres and fashion boutiques, there are several systems that are commonly used for scarf displays. These are:

- Displayed on the top-most level of a glass counter;
- Hung up on the wall; and
- Draped on a free standing fixture such as a mannequin.

Using mannequins and forms can be extremely helpful when developing displays and systems for showing customers how to wear them.

The images below are some examples for display on mannequins.
Display a scarf as a ladies summer wrap top.

Follow these steps to make a top from a scarf:

1. Lay scarf flat, with wrong side facing you. Make a small knot about four inches above the centre of the scarf.
2. Pick up scarf so that the wrong side faces the body.
3. Tie the upper ends (near knot) around neck and lower ends around the back.

Exercise: Trying new scarf display systems
Exercise:
Display a scarf as a headdress

1. Follow the basic fold as shown above.

2. Drape the folded scarf around the neck, cross ends behind the neck.

3. Bring the ends forward and tie in simple knot Do not forget to pass it around the scarf.

4. Tie into a double knot.
On completion of this section of the manual, readers will gain a better understanding of:

1. The steps required to prepare before a trade fair attendance including:
   a. Clarify Objectives
   b. Representing your Business
   c. Understanding the Customers
   d. Know the Detail & Resources Needed
   e. Trade-Fair Budget
   f. Promotion & Advertising
   g. Stand Location
   h. Stand Dressing Plan
   i. Staff Selection & Training

2. During the Fair
   a. Engaging the Customer
   b. Investigating & Networking

3. After the Fair
   a. Review Trade Fair Success
   b. Analysis & Evaluation
   c. Confirmation of Sales
   d. Conclusion of Sales
   e. Write Report
Preparing your Business for a Successful Trade Fair

This document outlines and reviews the topics relevant to trade fairs and trade-fair preparation. By reviewing these main topics, a business can aim to achieve planned, efficient appearances at trade fairs for a more financially rewarding outcome. This document is intended for all businesses who are responsible for trade fair preparation and would like to plan, organize and present their trade fairs with optimum results.

A list of several pertinent trade fairs is also included at the end of this document for reference and investigation.

The following steps make it easier to plan your fair attendance. This list is not exhaustive and should be developed to suit your organization’s specific needs. There are many aspects to consider for trade-fair preparations. We will discuss them in three steps.

1. Before the Fair
   - j. Clarify Objectives
   - k. Representing your Business
   - l. Understanding the Customers
   - m. Know the Detail & Resources Needed
   - n. Trade-Fair Budget
   - o. Promotion & Advertising
   - p. Stand Location
   - q. Stand Dressing Plan
   - r. Staff Selection & Training

2. During the Fair
   - c. Engaging the Customer
   - d. Investigating & Networking

3. After the Fair
   - f. Review Trade Fair Success
   - g. Analysis & Evaluation
   - h. Confirmation of Sales
   - i. Conclusion of Sales
   - j. Write Report

Additional: General International Trade Fair Information.

Before the Fair

A. Clarify Objectives

Before you go to a trade fair, be sure you know why you are going there, and how to make the most of your presentation and time. For example, before committing yourself to the high cost of a trade fair, you must determine your purpose. The main reasons for attending a trade show are to:

- Build connections in the industry, and
- To develop a customer base.

Use the following list of trade fair objectives as a starting point. It offers you suggestions for the formulation of your own trade fair objectives.

It is important to coordinate the objectives with the management, and to convey these to the stand personnel prior to the fair.
Ai) Quantitative Objectives

- Increase number of sales
- Increase turnover (either through increase in sales or new conditions and/or prices)

Aii) Qualitative Trade Fair Objectives

Objective: Contacts

- Making contact with potential buyers
- Acquiring new clients
- Strengthening existing client relations
- Acquiring partners
- Acquiring distributors and supplier

Market Information Objectives

- Information about your market
- Observation of the competition (information about price and product policy of competitors)
- Reactions of your target group to new products
- Information about innovations and market trends
- Export opportunities

B. Representing your Business

Buyers first impressions are often the strongest, and once formed, are difficult to alter. These first impressions are formative as to how a buyer will perceive your business and products.

As a buyer is looking for an investment opportunity, they are looking for responsible, responsive, and creative partners with whom to enter into a business relationship. For this reason, first impressions are critical.

It is vital that when a business is presented at a trade fair, the staff are able to answer all the buyer’s questions. Therefore, staff sent to represent and sell the business must be articulate and trained prior to appearing at a trade fair.

The questions underneath the subheadings are questions buyers are likely to ask. It is essential that the staff responsible for selling the range at the trade fair has a good understanding of, and can communicate the following information.

Know your prices

- How much do the single items cost?
- Do the prices vary if you buy larger quantities or buy in sets?

Know your business demographics

- General information about the make-up of your organization/business
- How many producers are working with you?
- Are you a ‘fair trade’ company?
- How long has the business been in operation?
Part 4vii

Know your product

- What is the product made of?
- Who is it made by?
- What is it filled with?
- Have any of the fibers been treated with chemicals?
- Was the product made under fair trade conditions?
- How many ranges are developed in a year?
- Is there something special about them?
- Does the product have a story to tell?

Know your production capacity

- How many pieces of each product can you produce in one month?

Know your lead times

- How long is the full lead-time of the product from date of order?
- How long does it take to produce raw materials?
- How does the availability of raw material impact on your lead times?

Know your shipping and transportation and cost

- Who are the agents that can facilitate the shipments?
- What are their contact details?

Be prepared to let buyers know about your business's limitations and possibilities.

For example: production capacity must be honestly and accurately represented to your potential buyers. If your production capacity is 1000 units per month and the buyer needs 10,000 units in two weeks, you will NOT be able to fill their order! The buyers also need to know your limitations (timing, communication, etc) so that they can effectively work with you.

In these regards, it is certain that buyers will appreciate your honesty. The more they know about you, the more appropriately they can work with you to ensure their order is produced the way they need it. It is certain that with all the competition in the market place, a disappointed buyer will never come back to your business.

C. Understanding your Customer

Target groups

Target groups are the wholesalers, retailers, and sales agents that, through your research, you have identified as your potential buyers. The communication (advertising messages, advertising material, and composition of the sales team) should be designed to respond to the needs of that target group of buyers.

It is a good idea to attend a trade fair as a spectator and put yourself in the customer's place. Take note of which booths attracted the most attention. And why.
Knowing your target client means you can tailor your appearance and your business to their needs. This includes preparing appropriate:

- Market research;
- Product development;
- Marketing and advertising;
- Pricing; and
- Trade fair appearance that will be attractive to a specific buyer.

Before you begin to plan your range, the designer/product development person must have carried out market research regarding the buyers you want to reach and their specific needs.

Similarly, as you prepare to attend a trade fair, you must have a clear idea of your target market so you can prepare a presentation based on what may attract them. Once you have gathered the previous information, the following steps are necessary before going to the fair.

There are many details to be addressed before you attend the fair. These include:

- **Staffing:**
  - Which trained staff will attend the fair, and what are their responsibilities?
  - Who are the back-up and relief staff?

- **Transport:**
  - How will everything and everyone arrive at the fair?

- **Advertising:**
  - Produce relevant advertising material which will be used during and after the fair. Depending on your budget, this may include:
    - Website development;
    - Order forms;
    - Flyers; and
    - Business cards.

- **Email:**
  - Email out to buyers BEFORE THE FAIR: advertise to existing clients, national and internationally. For example, send an email to current buyers offering a 5% discount off all orders made at the fair as an incentive;

- **Presentation:**
  - How will your booth be presented, including the product presentation?
  - This includes information such as electricals (where will the power points need to be in your booth?)

- **Deadlines:** meet all the deadlines given by the event organizers. This includes lighting plans, trade fair webpage advertising, and other relevant items. These will be different according the event you are attending.

- **Budget:** See below.
E. Trade Fair Budget

The trade fair budget serves as the basis for subsequent monitoring of success. Some of the basic costs of preparing for the fair include:

- Stand;
- Props;
- Advertising;
- Staff;
- Couriers; and
- Lighting.

You will also need to consider:

- Accommodation; and
- Food.

For example: To attend some Australian trade fairs, a stand can be very expensive. A booth at a biannual fair such as the REED Sydney fairs can range in price from $230.00 – $560.00 per square meter.

Overall costs of attending one of these fairs can be anywhere between $5000 and $10,000 Australian dollars. This is a significant investment, a highlights the value of appropriate preparation.

There are ways of cutting, or splitting costs when appearing at a fair. This may be achieved by teaming up with other businesses or members of an association of businesses to represent a sample of your business's products.

For more information on this type of group presentation, it is worthwhile enquiring with member organizations that have undertaken such group appearances for their advice and feedback.

F. Promotion & Advertising

Targeted Marketing

Through the market research process, your business will have identified your target buyer. When you have identified potential buyers, you can focus on HOW to sell to them.

- Think of unique ways to tell these buyers about your organization and products;
- Are you selling the stories of the people who make your products?
- Is there a website that advertises the trade fair? Is your business’s website and contact details on it?

Advertising must promise the buyer a unique experience or product. At this stage, you must consider which advertising materials (website, brochure, leaflet, photos of workers and exhibited products, etc.) you will use at a trade fair. The content and look of the chosen advertising material should meet the requirements of your target group and reflect the nature of your organization.

The most cost-effective advertising is a website. Distribution of an inexpensive flyer inviting buyers to visit your website for more information regarding your business and products is more cost effective than glossy catalogues.

CD catalogues are also a cost effective way of marketing your business and products to interested buyers. CD catalogues are also more convinient for the buyers, as it is less cumbersome to carry.
For a certain number of hours, a trade show is a village. As in every village, there are good locations and bad locations. Often, the best positions go to the attendees who've been coming the most years, or booking the biggest booths. Take careful note of the position when you are offered a booth.

Many trade shows have their own websites. Information on these sites will likely include a show floor map. Never accept a booth assignment without first researching what businesses will be located near you.

Optimally, you will be on, or as close to a main aisle as possible. A corner is optimal. Research indicates that attendees tend to turn right after entering, so the first position on the right inside the main entrance is usually the best.

If you have to take a back-of-the-room position, ask where the bathrooms are. Select a spot nearby and you can be sure that traffic will flow past your booth. Another excellent location is near the food or coffee spots.

An example of a Sydney REED International Trade Fair can be found below.
H. Stand Dressing Plan

All your display systems will be based on the research you did to better understand your target market, and what kinds of products will suit their needs in this coming season. Your booth display is an integral part of your marketing plan and therefore must be carefully considered and executed.

Well-planned booth preparation and display can help the buyers to:

- Understand what your business sells;
- Understand what your business represents (e.g. fair trade, your values);
- Understand what you want them to know about the product and target market; and
- Come off the aisle and into your space.

For more information on the concept of display and visual merchandising, see section 4v, Visual Merchandising – Product Display.

The images below outline some of the more-recent booth displays from the London Top Drawer Trade Fair in London, January 2005.

Case Study 1: What does this display tell us about the product and the target market?

The Look

To the western observer, the old fashioned furniture, old photographs and use of country colors such as the red and white-checked wall cover reflect the notion of old-fashioned values, and good-quality products.
The Target Market

Their display is set up to remind the buyer of an old-fashioned shop front, perhaps even a pharmacy, reflecting that the products, and the people who sell and buy it, are healthy, wholesome and stable.

The Products

The products are well set out individually, not clustered together. This allows the buyer ample room to look through all the products and take their time selecting the products most interesting to them.

As the products are grooming and health products, it is essential that testers of the product are available for the potential buyer to investigate what may interest their retail buyers.

Case Study 2: What does this display tell us about the product and the target market?

The Look

The designers have selected just three colors to accentuate the range and draw the buyer’s eyes to their display. This display was directly across from a coffee shop. As their display is so open, they took advantage of the fact that the buyers sitting drinking coffee would be able to see clearly into the display, and then would most probably come inside to inspect products that caught their attention.
The Target Market

The bright pink mixed with the pale green indicate that this is a very fashion-conscious supplier who sells to similarly fashion-conscious wholesale and retail buyers. The styling and the lower prices of the product denotes that the products tend to be bought in ranges rather than as individual pieces, and therefore the buyers are more likely to be chain stores rather than small boutique buyers.

The Products

The range is homewares, but also very young, inexpensive and fashion conscious. In this way, they are more likely to target younger female buyers who are price and fashion conscious.

Below are some other images from the same trade fair.
I. Staff Selection and Training

The staff selected to represent your business at any trade fair must be:

- Outgoing enough to approach potential clients;
- Well presented;
- Articulate and well informed about the nature of your products and business.

Depending on the size of your booth and the size of the fair you are attending, more than one staff member may be required. It is beneficial to have more than one staff member attend a trade fair. This way, if one staff needs to leave the booth for any reason, there will always be another staff member in attendance.

As part of planning, staff who will attend the fair must be aware that their role does not finish on the last day of the fair. There are several important steps after the conclusion of the fair that will consolidate the success of your investment. For more information on this follow-up, see section 3 ‘After the Fair’

2 During the Fair - Engaging

Now that most of the preparation has been done, you can focus on promoting your products to interested buyers.

There are several important tactics that are essential to good preparation for the time that your business will be at the trade fair. These include:

- Having well-trained, articulate staff at the stand who are comfortable to approach and talk to the potential buyers. This includes being able to take orders, to communicate the message and values of your business, and essentially advertise your business;
- Having prepared advertising and visitor information, including traditional style information (business cards and flyers), and more detailed information for interested prospective buyers (printed catalogue, CD-Rom catalogues, additional information about the business, pricelists);
- Having a press kit for the press centre. A press centre is usually part of most professional trade fairs. This centre provides information to the media regarding participating businesses. This is a valuable source of free publicity for your organization.

Once you have attended to these three important tactics, you are in a better position to sell your business to prospective clients. However, the ‘selling’ has only just begun, as now you must begin to get commitments from the buyers. How to do this? The following systems are useful

A. Engaging the Customer

Listen to customers!

More sales are accomplished by listening to customers’ needs and ensuring you can fulfill those needs than by talking about products. After buyers have stopped, impressed by the sight of your amazing stand, you must find a way to keep them there. For this reason, if you don’t feel comfortable talking with people, to be successful at this fair, you must send someone who is!

Stand staff can begin by initiating a conversation, or suggesting that you are providing a special discount during the fair. Some businesses supply ‘giveaways’ or gifts; however, these can be expensive and this may not guarantee a sale.
Trade fair attendance is not just an opportunity for your sales person to tell the world about your organization or business; it is an opportunity for your business to collect valuable information about potential buyers and what they are seeking. Good listeners make good sales.

Listen to the buyers. Invite them to sit down, and ask open-ended questions such as:

“Your business is based in California? Could you tell me a little more about the home wares market there?”

Encourage all staff members attending the fair to think carefully about what customers have said. Note and share what they have learned from customers.

At many modern trade fairs, before entering the fair visitors are required to fill out their business profile information. For example, where it is located, wholesale or retail, and general contact details. This information is then transferred onto a credit card-like badge that staff at the trade fair stand can “swipe” through a data collection machine. This collects all the information the business has previously provided onto a data base that can be printed out after the fair. This information can be very useful when doing the post-fair “follow-up”.

When these cards are not used, for example, in Top Drawer Trade Fair in London, it is important that the stand staff be more resourceful about collecting information from prospective buyers.

Have a note book ready where all the business cards collected can be made into a contact book, and notes regarding each buyer can be written down next to their card.

This ensures you have a specific note of each potential buyer and what they were looking for. By pursuing this form of referencing, your post-fair communications with the buyer will be more personalized and more likely to be successful.

For example: “Hello, Mrs. Brown. We remembered you were interested in silk scarves. This season we have great collection of scarves, etc.....”

Here is an example of the information your sales person should note down about potential buyers:

- What did the potential buyer think of your stand?
- Does this buyer visit this fair every year?
- Why do they come?
- Where did they come from?
- What products are they looking for?
- Did they find it?
- What price range?
- What kind of business do they operate?
- How did they find your business?
- Did they already know of you?
Scribbling notes will not engage the buyer!

While talking to buyers about what they are looking for, DO NOT write notes in front of them. This is the moment when you can try to engage them. Write down a few notes about them after they leave.

All feedback provides an opportunity for your business to grow.

B. Investigation & Networking – Producers/Buyers

The fair is an opportunity to research what competitors are offering, and to network with similar organizations to your own.

While at the fair, take the time to research your competitors’ products and pricing. If your prices are not competitive, then you must have an exclusive product. Then notice the details! Your products must also be packaged and marketed accordingly.

At trade fairs, there is usually the opportunity to go to seminars about costing, product development, and a wide variety of relevant information. It is in your interest to attend these seminars. Information about the timetable for these events will be available from the press centre.

NOTE: Product development: never copy other products, but you can use other people's ideas as inspiration.

3 After the Fair - Follow Up

A. Assessing Trade Fair Success

1. Analyze and evaluate the trade fair reports and contacts;
2. Confirmation of Sales. Send emails of order confirmation. Alternatively, if the buyer is local, arrange a follow up meeting;
3. Conclude sales;
4. Write a comprehensive report incorporating lessons learnt, sales and contacts made.

B. Analysis and Evaluation

Who to contact?

At the fair, the staff will have collected a great deal of potential buyer-contact information in the form of business cards or ‘swiped’ details. The staff will have made notes about the buyers and their businesses. With this information, you can follow up on this initial contact with an email, providing that buyer with more information on the products that interested them.

This log book of information will also be utilized by your designer and marketing people to develop appropriate products that respond to the suggestion of the buyer at the fair.
C. Confirmation of Sales

Send emails of order confirmation. Alternatively, if the buyer is local, arrange a follow-up meeting.

According to research of buyers at various international trade fairs, an appropriate time to contact buyers met at the fairs is about two weeks later. This gives the buyers time to arrive home, consolidate all their information, and begin to consider which exhibitors they will place orders with.

Remember to contact the buyers who placed an order FIRST! Send an email CONFIRMING that you are processing their orders and will get back to them as soon as possible with further information regarding their order.

Some of the buyers you met may need information or samples more quickly than the others. It is important to prioritize these buyers.

If there was a specific request from a potential buyer, send them an email straight after the fair letting them know their request is being addressed and you will contact them as soon as you have more information. This will create an impression of your business as professional, responsive, responsible and communicative.

When sending the initial email, include a logo and image of your products or stand from the fair. If you have a website, add the site link to the mail. Adding an image can be useful as a survey of buyers who received emails after the REED Sydney Gift Fair indicated that they often deleted plain emails, as they could not remember all the exhibitors to whom they gave their contact information.

D. Conclusion of Sales

It is the responsibility of the marketing or sales officer to follow up the sales and orders that were made at the fair. Following up includes ensuring that orders are placed with the producers in a timely manner, and that the buyers have a clear understanding of the delivery procedure, for example:

- who is their contact
- when the deliveries will be made
- how and when payments are to be made.

E. Write Reports

One last important aspect of following up for the trade fair is a group discussion of team members involved in the fair to investigate how the next fair participation can be improved.

This can include the strength and weakness of the team, specific lessons such as budgeting, lessons learnt and general feedback about your business’s experience of the fair itself. All of this information should be compiled into a report for reference.

Parting advice: Pack your own lunch, wear comfortable shoes and drink lots of water. When the body is tired, the brain stops working. So take care of yourself! Then get down to business.
General Trade Fair Information

The following is a list of most of the major international fairs and costs associated with them. Also listed is Top Drawer, which is a boutique fair (top quality, top price, low production) but appropriate for some of the producers that are currently working out of Cambodia.

Below is a list of general information regarding some of the largest International Gifts and Homeware Products Trade Fairs

**Ambiente Frankfurt**

**Frequency:** Twice a year

**Stand Costs**

1- side open
  - EUR 156.00 / sqm,
  - plus environment-protection charge of EUR 2.00 / sqm plus AUMA fee of EUR 0.60 / sqm
  - plus VAT

2- side open
  - EUR 185.50 / sqm,
  - plus environment-protection charge of EUR 2.00 / sqm
  - plus AUMA fee of EUR 0.60 / sqm
  - plus VAT

3- side open
  - EUR 197.00 / sqm,
  - plus environment-protection charge of EUR 2.00 / sqm
  - plus AUMA fee of EUR 0.60 / sqm
  - plus VAT

4- side open
  - EUR 199.00 / sqm,
  - plus environment-protection charge of EUR 2.00 / sqm
  - plus AUMA fee of EUR 0.60 / sqm
  - plus VAT

**Supplementary level**

- EUR 95.00 / sqm,
- plus environment-protection charge of EUR 2.00 / sqm
- plus VAT

**Obligatory media entry**

- EUR 152.00 plus VAT
**United Kingdom**

**London Top Drawer**

*Frequency:* Twice a year

*Space only:* min 24m sq, 162 pounds + vat per m square

*Shell scheme:* min space 6 m sq, 194 pounds + vat per m square

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**Birmingham Home and Gift Fair**

*Frequency:* Twice a year

*Space only:* 30 m sq, 175.60 pound + vat

*Shell scheme:* 9m sq, 223.25 pound + vat

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**AUSTRALIA**

**Reed Sydney Home and Gift Show**

*Frequency:* Twice a year - September and April

*Stand:* $220 per m sq including GST - up to $450 per m sq depending on location.

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**FRANCE**

**Maison & Objet - Paris**

*Frequency:* Twice a year - September and January

2004 Total number of attendees 60220 (number of foreign attendees)

2004 Total number of exhibitors 3000 (number of foreign exhibitors)

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**USA**

**New York International Gift Fair**

*Stand:* 10 x 20 feet = US $8000 with expenses

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**Other costs (subject to change) to consider**

The following quotes are from the Sydney Trade Fair and are in Australian dollars

- Lights: $300
- Advertising: $300 (placement only)
- POS Material: from $200
- Tracker: $372
- Costs of furniture and display product: $500. *This cost may not occur every time. It may be an initial investment in some collapsible shelving or something that can be more or less easily packed down and moved.*
- Staffing Costs: per staff, $20 an hour per day
- Accommodation: $50-100 per night
- Travel Expenses: $100
- Insurance: variable
- Freight: variable
- Food: per staff, $50 per day
1i. Team Building


1ii. S.W.O.T. Analysis


2i. Market Research Process


2v. Trend Research

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3i. Developing a Corporate Identity

Logo images taken from
http://www.trainingsoft.co.uk/Logos%20-%20A9.jpg

4i. Color Theory

Johannes Itten, The Art of Colour. Colour Logic and Colour
Logic for Web Site Design www.colourmatters.com

Graphics and text © (Copyright) 1995-2002, J.L.Morton,
All rights reserved


4iv. Costing

Costing Information Source:
The Business Link Business Service Centre

Web site: http://www.cbsc.org/alberta
This manual was developed during the Artisans Association of Cambodia (AAC) 'Next Step' Project with the support of the International Labor Organization.

The manual outlines a step by step approach to addressing some of the practical challenges that small and not for profit businesses face as they begin to work with wholesale export and local retail markets.

This manual is also available online via the following link:
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/infoecon/iebrowse.home