

The Need For Speed:

How to Swiftly & Effectively Meet the Speed to Market Challenge



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Computer Generated Solutions, Inc.
200 Vesey Street
Brookfield Place
New York, NY 10281-1017
212-408-3809
www.cgsinc.com

Fashion and consumer goods companies are constantly challenged to meet fast-changing and seemingly ever-increasing customer demand for more innovative products, more frequent new product releases, and higher quality and value in their purchases. These and other market and competitive forces serve to compress time in the already high velocity fashion and consumer goods industries. Moreover, the demand for speed in all aspects of the business requires brands, manufacturers and retailers to improve, streamline, and synchronize the way they develop, produce, and deliver products.

Fast-tracking the Customer Experience

In recent years, "speed to market" has become the industry's mantra for reducing new product development times. As historically unstructured processes, reducing design, product development and sourcing cycles continues to present the most significant business improvement opportunities for the fashion, apparel and consumer goods industries. But the need for speed does not stop with the development stage.

Supply chain management, distribution, and order fulfillment are also key elements of the overall time to market challenge. Companies must execute faster and more effectively manage the entire product fashion lifecycle to meet those fast-changing demands. In the end, it's all about keeping up with the end-consumer—the driver of the "time to market" initiative.

This is why companies now require a scalable solution that will support the processes they require to react quickly and provide the benefits they need to gain a competitive edge. Many companies have turned to all-in-one, enterprise systems to accelerate critical processes while also reducing product costs, enhancing team and vendor collaboration, and focusing more on product innovation.

The Single System Approach

This new breed of fashion software combines the power of PLM, supply chain management, production, distribution and other mission-critical processes to provide companies with the control and visibility they need to efficiently and effectively operate at a level of speed and accuracy that they simply could not achieve through manual processes or with older technologies.

This approach eliminates the functional and visibility gaps that have historically plagued traditional, best-of-breed solutions. It also saves time, reduces costs, and eliminates the complexities of deploying and maintaining independent and traditionally integrated systems.

By managing all key fashion processes and tasks, these systems are helping a wide range of companies streamline business processes, reduce errors and delays, and speed products through the entire concept-to-consumer lifecycle.

In addition to providing core product data management (PDM), bill of materials (BOM), technical specifications (tech pack) and other commonly available PLM tools, these systems are delivering a broader set of line planning, design, product development, and sourcing capabilities. These and other 'extended PLM' capabilities better equip retailers and wholesalers to streamline front-end processes, gain greater visibility and control over their collections, and enhance collaboration across the teams and suppliers that work together to bring new products to market.



Accelerating Concept-to-Delivery

Shrinking the time required to progress from design to sale is often the most complicated but critical part of the business. Supply chain management, distribution, and order fulfillment are also important to the meeting the time to market challenge. For fashion and apparel companies, it is critical that every store receives the correct shipment, correctly and on time.

Leveraging an all-in-one system provides benefits that address these concerns by enabling better collaboration with vendors, integrated development and sourcing, and automated shipping. Speed and agility in responding to consumers' fashion demands have been key drivers behind the success of fast fashion and other responsive companies.

Measurable Results

Sleepwear, intimates, and childrenswear wholesaler Komar, Inc. has implemented the **BlueCherry**® Enterprise Suite across its portfolio of nearly 100 lifestyle brands and licenses. In addition to leveraging the more traditional product development capabilities of the system, the New York-based company also uses the system to support a network of factories in fourteen different countries across the globe.

Ellery Homestyles, a leading supplier of branded and private label home fashion products to major retailers, was in need of an enterprise solution that could offer realtime analytical tools and they required to reduce data entry and allow their design and development teams to complete tasks more quickly and efficiently.

A 30% improvement in overall productivity while significantly increasing process visibility and control has been achieved at Ellery Homestyles. It has also helped them eliminate redundant data entry and improve communication; both internally and with their overseas suppliers.

Conclusion

The powerful combination of PLM and ERP capabilities enables fashion, apparel and consumer goods companies to more effectively speed products to market and manage the entire lifecycle process from concept to consumer.

The combination of this new systems approach and other innovative new technologies enables fashion and consumer goods companies to streamline and consolidate the entire lifecycle process into a single system. With these and many other benefits, it is clear that breaking down the traditional barriers between PLM and ERP capabilities can unlock greater value for apparel retailers, brands, and manufacturers and help them meet and exceed today's speed to market demands.