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Finding trustworthy partnerships is key in today's apparel industry

22/04/2009

BY WENZ CHAN

Speakers at Prime Source Forum 2009 repeatedly stressed on the importance of developing strategic, trustworthy partners and streamlining the vendor base being key to survival.

Janet Fox, VP and director of sourcing for American apparel company JC Penney, outlined the criteria of how to pick trustworthy partners. "Retailers need to make sure suppliers have a sound balance sheet, their products are design-driven and they have a multiple-country production network," she explained.

Transparency is also critical to a healthy buyer-and-supplier relationship, said Jeff Streader, SVP global sourcing of Guess: "You need to look into your supply chain and ask your suppliers questions... Where do you source your zippers? How many sewers and productions do you have? Are you socially complaint? There's no surprise, no secret!"

Apart from suppliers' internal capabilities, Streader also urged buyers to investigate more on their suppliers' distribution capabilities such as whether they can deliver on time or make samples or changes within 6 weeks.



Janet Fox of JC Penney at Prime Source Forum 2009

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