

# **Costing and Quotation Preparation: Efficiency Gains with REACH Merchandising Manager**

In the competitive landscape of the fashion and apparel industry, accurate costing and efficient quotation preparation are critical for securing orders, maintaining profit margins, and ensuring operational smoothness. Miscalculations or delays in these processes can lead to lost business opportunities, overpricing that deters buyers, or underpricing that erodes profits. REACH Merchandising Manager (RMM), a sophisticated software solution from REACH Technologies, is designed to revolutionize these aspects within the soft goods sector, including fashion, garments, apparel, clothing, textiles, and leather. By automating and streamlining costing and quotation workflows, RMM enhances accuracy, speeds up response times, and integrates seamlessly with other merchandising functions. This results in significant efficiency gains, allowing businesses to respond swiftly to buyer inquiries while optimizing resource use in a "make-to-order" environment where supply chains are dynamic and time-sensitive.

RMM stands out by automating routine tasks in sampling, merchandising, production, and quality assurance, while prompting interventions for exceptions. This management-by-exception approach is particularly beneficial for costing and quotations, where precision and speed directly impact competitiveness in markets where trends evolve rapidly.

# Challenges in Costing and Quotation Preparation in Apparel

Costing and quotation processes in the apparel industry are fraught with complexities. Internal costs—such as labor, materials, and overheads—must be calculated alongside external factors like supplier pricing and currency fluctuations. Quotations need to reference detailed specifications, including fabrics, trims, and designs, to ensure transparency and accuracy. In a typical season, businesses handle hundreds of inquiries, each requiring quick, customized responses to secure orders. Manual methods, often reliant on spreadsheets, are error-prone, time-consuming, and lack integration with other systems, leading to inconsistencies.

Global operations amplify these issues: varying exchange rates, diverse supplier costs, and multi-country teams can cause delays in quotation turnaround, potentially missing tight buyer deadlines. With millions of events to monitor annually—up to 21.6 million in large-scale operations involving 12 seasons, 200 sub-divisions, 30 items each, and 300 process steps—inefficiencies in costing can cascade into production backlogs, increased wastage, and higher expenses. Without automated tools, businesses struggle to maintain profitability amid volatile markets, where accurate pricing is key to winning contracts and fostering long-term buyer relationships.

# How RMM Streamlines Costing and Quotation Preparation

RMM addresses these challenges through its dedicated Costing Module, which streamlines and structures the entire process. The module supports both internal and external costing, incorporating a built-in library for currency conversion to handle global transactions effortlessly. This allows merchandisers to prepare buyer price quotations directly linked to product specifications, ensuring all details—like fabrics, trims, and designs—are referenced accurately without manual re-entry.

By automating calculations, RMM reduces errors and accelerates the preparation time, enabling faster responses to buyer inquiries.

The process begins with inquiry management, where all buyer requests are captured in a single, sortable sheet—filterable by merchandiser, department, or buyer—for easy access and prioritization. Once an inquiry is logged, the costing module pulls in relevant

data, such as spec sheets and trim details, to generate comprehensive quotations. This integration eliminates data silos, ensuring that pricing reflects the latest material costs and production estimates. For sampling-related quotations, RMM provides reports on proforma invoices, sales contracts, shipping, and letters of credit, further streamlining the pre-order phase.

Automation is a hallmark of RMM's efficiency gains. Routine costing tasks, like applying currency conversions or aggregating costs, are handled without human input, freeing teams to focus on complex negotiations or exceptions, such as unusual buyer requirements. The software's exception-handling mechanism prompts interventions only for deviations, such as sudden exchange rate shifts, ensuring proactive adjustments. This not only speeds up quotation delivery but also enhances accuracy, reducing the risk of costly revisions post-order.

# Efficiency Gains: Speed, Accuracy, and Cost Savings

The efficiency gains from RMM's costing and quotation features are multifaceted. By shortening quotation preparation times, businesses can respond to inquiries faster, increasing the likelihood of securing orders in competitive bids. Accuracy improves through linked specifications and automated calculations, minimizing disputes over pricing and specs that could delay production.

In high-volume scenarios, where monitoring 600,000 to 21.6 million events is routine, this precision cuts wastage and accelerates time-to-market for new collections.

Cost savings are evident in reduced administrative overheads—fewer hours spent on manual costing translate to lower labor expenses. Inventory management benefits as well; accurate quotations based on real-time data help avoid overstocking by aligning purchases with confirmed orders. Partner expenses

decrease through better supplier evaluations integrated into costing, ensuring competitive material prices are factored in. Overall, RMM impacts revenues by enabling quicker ROI through efficient processes, while lowering costs via eliminated backlogs and optimized resource utilization.

Strategically, the software provides rapid analysis of costing data for budgeting and forecasting.

Merchandisers can simulate scenarios, such as currency fluctuations or supplier changes, to refine quotations and enhance profitability. In a sector where margins are thin, these gains position businesses to adapt quickly to market changes, gaining new insights and maintaining a competitive edge.

# Integrations Enhancing Costing Workflows

RMM's costing module doesn't operate in isolation; it integrates seamlessly with other REACH tools to amplify efficiency. For instance, linking with REACH CAD allows pattern engineering data—such as fabric consumption estimates—to feed directly into cost calculations, ensuring quotations reflect minimized material usage.

REACH Fashion Studio contributes design specs, like 3D storyboards and colorways, for precise quotation referencing.

Supplier management integrations further enhance costing: vendor performance records and assessment sheets inform material pricing, while de-listing underperformers ensures reliable cost inputs. Quality assurance via REACH Quality Assurer ties inspection feedback into quotations, building trust with buyers. Broader ecosystem tools, including REACH Cut Planner for fabric allocation and REACH ERP for enterprise-wide data, create a holistic flow where costing data informs and is informed by the entire value chain.

Communication features, such as email and remote sharing of quotations with buyers and suppliers, facilitate quick approvals and revisions. This end-to-end integration ensures that quotations are not just accurate but also collaborative, supporting multi-country operations with real-time data access.

# Testimonials and Real-World Examples

Users highlight RMM's transformative impact on processes, including costing. Anoop Puri, Director of SACHIK Home Textiles, states, "REACH Merchandising Manager has helped us streamline our processes and hence the information flow. This has been a great help."

This underscores how efficient costing contributes to overall workflow improvements. Amit Prasad, Director at PETEXX, notes, "We have operations in multiple countries and RMM has helped our merchandisers, quality controllers and other work groups seamlessly work with one another and with our suppliers and buyers."

In practice, this means faster, more accurate quotations across global teams, reducing cycle times and enhancing profitability.

# Driving Efficiency in Fashion Merchandising

REACH Merchandising Manager redefines costing and quotation preparation, delivering efficiency gains that cut costs, accelerate processes, and boost competitiveness in the fashion industry. Through automation, precise integrations, and data-driven insights, RMM empowers businesses to handle complex calculations with ease, ensuring on-time, profitable responses to market demands.

As apparel trends continue to evolve, tools like RMM will be indispensable for maintaining agility and success, proving that strategic software can turn operational challenges into opportunities for growth.