

## Product Development FAQs

### **What is Product Development?**

It is the process of bringing a design to market. Think of your developer as an engineer. They help you create a tech pack, make a pattern, create sew-by samples, grade for different sizes if necessary, create a marker, and source materials and manufacturing labor.

### **What is a tech pack?**

A set of specifications for your product. It consists of scale drawings, dimensions, construction details, materials, and costs.

### **What is a pattern?**

Consider this the physical blueprint of your product. In addition to serving as the cutting template for your textiles, it helps determine how much fabric you need for a given run of your product.

### **What is a sew-by sample?**

It's a product made from the pattern to the specifications that are outlined in the tech pack. The sew-by is often used to show a factory the level of quality you expect.

### **What is grading?**

It's the process of decreasing/increasing the pattern size to cover the full range of your product's demographic. Ideally the product is developed from the 'medium', then sized up and down accordingly.

### **What is a marker?**

This is a cutting map of all pattern pieces in a manufacturing order. The marker can come in different formats depending on the cutting method used. Generally, markers are made for a single textile type in a given product line. If multiple styles are made from the same fabric, mixing markers and sizes can increase textile yield and minimize waste.

### **What is sourcing?**

The search for textiles, trim, and skilled labor to produce the product. A product developer can help you establish and manage these working relationships for a cost, while some designers choose to manage this part of the process themselves.

### **How much does all of this cost?**

Here are some general starting rates for creating your tech pack and patterns. Please note that these are guidelines, not guarantees. Each product is different and comes with its own set of unique challenges.

Simple bag: \$500+

Very simple garment: \$750+

Complex garment: \$1000+

Very complex garment: \$2000+

### **Why is it important?**

Without these services, production will be an uphill battle. A large part of development work is anticipating and solving manufacturing problems before they arise. Attempting to bring a product to

market without these services can be infinitely more expensive and frustrating. The only thing worse than your dream product not selling because of a fatal flaw discovered too late is your dream product selling... then returned.

### **Why is it so expensive?**

It's not. Development requires a high degree of technical skill and proficiency to be well-executed, in addition to textiles, sewing equipment, and factory-grade software. It's also a one-time cost that should be factored into the sale price of your product. Much like a home loan, multiple costs like interest and property value (development, manufacturing, textiles) are compounded together and divided over the entire duration of the loan (product lifecycle) to calculate your monthly mortgage payment (per-unit cost). In this way, development costs are another tool to determine your product's value and its ability to compete in the marketplace.

### **What does the process look like?**

Development is iterative. When you reach the pattern phase, the developer will create prototypes for testing. Feedback (fit, general usability) from those tests are then incorporated into the pattern and the cycle is repeated until you reach the desired outcome. The process can reveal unforeseen design considerations that result in changes to the tech pack.

### **Will the factory need anything else?**

If it's your first time working with them, they will likely have questions for you and your developer. Like any business relationship, the more you work together, the easier it will become.