

Westport Big & Tall Reviews the Impact of COVID-19 on Global Apparel Supply Chains

CHARLOTTE, NC, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As nations brace themselves and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, populations worldwide are urged to go into self-quarantine, with many offices and businesses temporarily shutting their doors to the public. A pervading atmosphere of uncertainty as well as the slowing of worldwide economic activity took its toll on financial markets. When the WHO officially declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic on March 11, 2020, major stock indexes in the United States plummeted - some officially entering a bear market for the first time since the Great Recession of 2008.

Apparel retail, sourcing, and manufacturing, like many other sectors of the economy, have faced significant disturbances in the last few months. On the retail side, as consumer spending on non-essential items such as apparel constricts, smaller businesses and emerging brands may experience problems with cash flow or meeting short-term financial obligations. These businesses must overcome major challenges if they are to survive through the uncertain times ahead until normal economic activity resumes. Some retailers that have already placed product orders for Fall 2020, are now cancelling orders or pushing delivery dates back. They must offset the impact of lost sales during the weeks of temporary store closures, as well as the apparent inventory excesses they may be faced with.

Professionals in sourcing and manufacturing with economic ties to China have felt the impact some time prior to the greater worldwide outbreak. The Chinese New Year is one of the nation's most important holidays, and begins between January and February of each year. During this time, factories close for a number of weeks as Chinese workers and professionals take time off to visit family and celebrate. It was around this time in 2020 that the public became fully aware of the danger posed by this newly discovered coronavirus strain. As the threat of the virus spread grew, the Chinese government took measures to lock down major population centers and put safety protocols in place.

One of Westport's design and sourcing partners, who works closely with Chinese apparel manufacturers, describes the situation. "The shutdown extended factories from reopening [after the Chinese New Year] until March, even then under strict hygiene and procedures," he begins. "Our own facility was up to 100% capacity very quickly trying to make up the lost weeks of production. At this time, the spread of the virus was now apparent in other countries, and many factories switched production to make protective clothing for the Chinese epidemic, and continue to make products for other countries. This has actually led to some additional product

delays as factories are not making garments for fashion but safety suits, face masks, etc.”

Westport’s partner also points out that along with the issues in manufacturing actual garments, China is a major producer of textiles and other raw materials used in garment production. China is a leading exporter of fabrics used all around the globe, and recent supply disruptions have caused issues in factories as far away as England and Italy.

Another related issue is the transportation of goods out of China. “The huge reduction of flights leaving China for the USA has led to a huge spike in air transit fees, almost 3 times [higher than] prior costs, and even limited capacity,” notes Westport’s source.

China’s strong presence in the textile and apparel industries, the globalization of modern supply chains, and the recent emergence of COVID-19 presents unique challenges for businesses in fashion worldwide. These businesses must react accordingly, even as nations and economies at large strain from the public health impact of the pandemic.

Westport Big & Tall works to provide high-caliber, stylistically relevant, and aesthetically appealing menswear to big and tall customers with discerning tastes. The [Summer 2020 menswear collection](#) is now available to view and purchase on [Westport Big & Tall's website](#). Please also visit Westport’s Facebook page, Youtube channel, and Instagram for exclusive content and behind-the-scenes footage, or read the Westport [Big & Tall Blog](#) for specialized knowledge and articles pertaining directly to dressing the big and tall gentleman.

By Stephan Belov

Bob Beausoleil
Westport Big & Tall
+1 704-333-9888

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