

## Case study

### Product development

#### a. Background and objectives

The client – an international fashion retailer – had its own product design studio and outsourced its manufacturing, managing this either from the UK or from its Far East office in Hong Kong. MCL had already implemented the client’s in-house CAD design function.

The processes and systems it used to run the processes had evolved over a period of time. However, they were not suited to the distributed design and manufacturing model that the retailer was adopting and this had resulted in a long, costly product development cycle.

Objectives included fewer samples, reduced design-to-store times and less administrative work for Buying teams.

#### b. What we delivered

MCL used its own project management methodology (ADAIR) to help the client to create the right structure for its project. This included engaging a Board level sponsor and then convening a team that comprised key decision-makers and members who represented each key area affected.

To make the project “work”, the client created a steering group comprising, among others, the IT director and the Board-level sponsor, meeting once a month, with project team meeting weekly.

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MCL worked with the project team to analyse the objectives and background of the project and develop a project plan that reflected them. From this, MCL implemented a bespoke product development system that allowed the client to:

- Specify each product more comprehensively
- Link the relevant digital designs, measurement drawings and grade rules held in the image library previously implemented by MCL
- Provide direct access to these for its suppliers
- Manage the evaluation of samples
- Manage product costings and pre-orders
- Clarity of the critical path by season, product ranges and supplier

**c. Results**

- Reduction of samples for each new product
- Continuity of business during the SARS outbreak in 2003
- Basis for a streamlined, end-to-end business process
- Reduced administrative work for Buying teams because of the re-use of existing data and collaboration with suppliers

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