

Vendor Communication Best Practices

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Kohl's/Vendor Relationships

Kohl's teams and the vendors should discuss the below as they initiate their direct relationship.

Production Team

Production managers to send introduction email to vendor partners, introducing their team and share contacts for development, production and design

Align on communication expectations, including when to use email vs. onePLM vs. video conferencing

Review development calendar with the vendor and advise of any brand-specific inputs/outputs where needed

Review any brand-specific T&A and sampling expectations

Design Team

Design managers will introduce teams and share communication expectations, including when to use email vs. Miro vs. onePLM

Leverage Miro to communicate efficiently with Vendor Design partners (once trained)

Discuss the level of support that is expected

Align on R&D expectations, timing and resources

Share brand profiles, inspirational brand information, color palettes and design briefs

Email Guidelines

Clear, concise and organized emails will support efficiency and prompt communication with Kohl's

- Email responses are expected within **24 hours**. For situations that are complex or involve the input of additional parties, vendors should target resolution within 48 hours. On exception basis: If vendors need time beyond the 48 hours to reach total resolution, updates are expected on a daily basis
- **One daily email** per email chain should be shared with the vendor. Kohl's teams should wait to send the email until the **end of the work day** to allow for consolidation of all email points
- Be **detailed, clear and concise** in your communication with the vendor to allow them to respond thoroughly and with the answers that you need
- The **subject line** should be descriptive so the recipient can easily identify sender and main topics of discussion
 - Always include **vendor name** and **brand**
 - Include important variable information such as **category, season, "production"/ "development," urgency**, etc.

Email Guidelines | Content

Best practices for proactive communication to drive trust and confidence with Kohl's teams.

Proactively provide information

Sharing Requests

Communicate all details and needs within your initial request

Detail concerns and give explanation to what Kohls is asking the vendor to accommodate

Provide the production team with any delays to deadlines that they should be aware of.

Business Updates

Where appropriate, Kohl's will share business updates with the vendor if they need to anticipate potential chase or shift outs

Anticipate follow-up questions

Information to Include

Include PO number, style number, units, and INDC in your communication

Share Priorities

Work with production teams on priorities of the request being asked. If vendor is anticipating a delay, provide potential solutions to improve or ways to mitigate delay for POs/styles.

Additional Reminders

Email Discussion Points

Use comments underneath each email point with responder's initials and date for easy tracking (Example **AB 11/10** , **CD 11/11**).

Text color for older comments should be updated to black upon each response, and closed points can be removed from email

Always keep communication within the body of the email (or onePLM, where applicable) to avoid any missed points. Avoid communicating via attachments

Production Team Communication

Emails with the Kohl's Production teams should be organized based on **Development** and **Production**.

It's important to maintain **only these two email chains** to streamline communication and maximize efficiency

The **Development Email** is managed by the Associate Production Manager and contains style discussions **prior to line final / the passing of the buyplan**.

The content of the email will include:

- Initial T&A
- Agility needs
- Pre-development topics ie R&D costing, cost engineering, and fabric counter sourcing
- onePLM questions
- Counter sample tracking
- Fabric booking, development & consumption tracking
- Mill concerns, new mill relationships
- Chase/Cancellation requests

The **Production Email** is managed by the Production Coordinator and contains discussions on styles **post line final / after the passing of the buy plan**.

The content of the email will include:

- Production T&A/ delivery concerns
- EDI accuracy, cost discrepancies
- Quality assurance, product integrity, inspections
- Invoicing/payment issues
- Sample tracking (TOPs, Ad Samples)
- Submit and Color Run sample tracking

Your **Factory Direct partners and Vendor Relationship Manager** should be CC'd on both Development and Production emails

Design Team Communication

Design will communicate directly with vendors via Miro, Email and onePLM

Design will communicate directly with the vendor instead of Li & Fung. Design is responsible for sharing brand profile and design briefs as it relates to their brand and category. Teams should begin to integrate Miro in addition to email and OnePLM into their communication with vendor partners.

Preseason direction will be shared by the Design team directly to the vendor via Miro/email. Preseason development will help to inform brainstorm conversations with merchant teams and is an input to CPA. This communication should be organic and ongoing as development needs arise and trends emerge. The following are examples of what preseason development communication could entail:

- Seasonal Trend Direction by brand/category
- Shopping recaps
- Emerging trend/chase needs
- Specific Trim, Fabric , technique needs
- RND via one plm to specific vendors based on aligned vendor matrix

In season direction Vendors will communicate directly to Design specific questions as it relates to the following:

- Questions related to Technique/Print execution
- Placement Approvals
- BOM or Artwork updates needed

Design will also help to share CAD visuals when needed via email/Miro

Email Communication | Examples

Examples of Vendor/Kohl's Team Communication

Subject: SP24 Sonoma Men's Tops Production - VendorA

Hello Vendor,

Kohl's would like to chase 15k units of style AB24C123RS in color navy. How can we hit this delivery?

AB 10/23: We reviewed with our team, and we have good news—we are able to chase and hit Feb wk 2 in DC (XF 12/17-12/19) in partnership! We need Kohls to help provide the following in order for us to be successful:

- Update buyplan by end of day today and issue new PO by Thursday 10/26
- Approve submits by 11/6
- Help push the mill to ex-mill bulk yardage 3 days earlier than planned.

CD 10/24: See the updated BP, the new PO is # 73716549. I will work with design on approving the submit. If mill is not agreeing to the earlier date then I will engage with mill directly to support improving T&A.

AB 10/25 – Thank you for sending the updated BP! Please note that we have not received the updated EDI POs yet. Can you please help to retransmit? Noted design and material point.

CD 10/26: We retransmitted these earlier today so you should see these come through overnight.

AB 10/27 –Unfortunately, we still haven't received the updated POs, so we will engage EDI provider to troubleshoot. We need EDI by Monday, 10/30 at latest or we won't be able to order trims to hit Feb wk 2 in DC.

CD 10/30: I have reached out to Kohls EDI team, noted you reached you to your 3rd party EDI provider. I will update you as is necessary.

Thank you and have a great day,
Production Team

Subject: Nine West Sum/BTS Bottoms Development - VendorB

Hello Vendor,

We're kicking off Denim Development for Summer/BTS 24 season! See attached for styles we will be developing and note that samples will be due on **10/6**. Please send the samples to the NYDO. The merchant team will be sending me projections on 9/18 which I will pass to you but note projections are subject to change.

AB 9/14: Thanks for sharing below style list. We just received Mill fabric quality confirmation so we are working with mill to arrange the sample yardage. Also, design team requested to send thread/hardware options first prior to making samples so we will have an ETA for mock up and full samples by next week.

Also, noted that projection will be shared on 9/18. We will share the T&A upon receiving the projection and working with mill by next week.

CD 9/14: Appreciate your working with the design team and will wait for your confirmation that a 10/6 due date is workable. I want to stress that these projections are subject to change and will NOT be final until after our line final meetings at the end of October.

Should you foresee any cost challenges with any of the styles below then please identify that to us now and present cost saving options.

AB 9/14: We are working with design team in separate mail with all the design related queries. Please allow us some time to make the samples and share feedback on costing after that. Also, could you please advise if there is any due date for this?

MR 9/14: Confirming you can share cost challenges after you make samples. If you could identify any cost challenges before the 10/6 sample due date, that would be workable.

See attached link for CADs and colors:

AB 9/14: Thanks, we downloaded the attached CAD file successfully. Please also send PDF format.

CD 9/14: No problem, moving forward I will share this in PDF format.

For any design related questions pls reach out directly to the design team.

AB 9/14: Noted and we are separately working with design team on all the design related queries.

CD 9/14: Great, thank you!

Thanks,
Production Team

Subject: SP24 Womens Sonoma Knits Production - VendorC

Hello Production Team,

We have sent urgent SP24 lab dips to design's attention and need their feedback by Thursday end of day.

Submit# 762517 -102-221 PATINA PINK

Submit# 754539 - OLIVE NIGHT - PANTONE

Submit# 747555 -440-480 PINK THEME

We have sent the below color run samples today via DHL tracking: 123452131.

WS34K130RS1- MANOLO OLIV - COLOR RUN

WS34K130RS1- PNK PRFCTN - COLOR RUN

WS34K130RS1- DSTINY CRL - COLOR RUN

We are rushing our team to send the remainder asap, however, as mentioned previously, heathers need more time than solid colors and usually require at least 30 days for yarn dye stripes and heathers. I will have an ETA Thursday.

Note we can provide the 3D CADS prior to your meeting and knit downs if ETA is later than your line final meeting.

Thank you,
VendorC

Best Practices

- Your internal **relationship manager** should serve as the singular point of contact to Kohl's. Your responsibilities will include:
 - Overseeing all email communication from vendor team to Kohl's **(non-costing related)**
 - Providing key global updates to Kohl's team as-needed
 - Utilizing K-Link as a resource for forms and best practices, cascading information to team members as needed
- Clear, proactive, and transparent communication is critical as you begin working directly with Kohl's teams
- Vendors and Kohl's teams should leverage **video conferences** to resolve recurring or urgent issues
- Vendors should **review POs** for accuracy upon receipt and work with Production teams directly if inaccuracies are found
- Kohl's teams should CC their **Factory Direct partners** if they are experiencing ongoing operational challenges with a vendor for expedited resolution
 - Factory Direct email distribution lists have been established **by vendor**. Email your FD partners at: **VendorName.FactoryDirect@kohls.com**