



benefits are greater accuracy in offshore scan packing, which results in a reduction in mark-downs and/or store transfers attributable to the receipt of incorrect stock from suppliers, co-ordinated information flow on a global basis and complete inventory visibility throughout the supply chain."

Haines said his customers have the choice of a base model service starting with consignment sorting at processing centres in China through to clearance and delivery at end destination, or an optional model that includes installation of software at supplier/third party premises and appropriate training.

"Customers are continually seeking increased efficiencies and value-for-money services that meet their specific needs. The on-going evolution of offshore distribution processing services is a reflection of the highly competitive nature of the fashion garments industry," he said.

"It is wise for importers to employ a quality assurance company prior to initial shipping of product from origin."

The Trans Tasman element of DeanWako's services is provided in association with Daniel Silva in Auckland.

Pacific Network is also expanding its network in China. "Business is doing very well and we are expanding our offshore services in China," said Pacific Network's Ryan Best. "We are probably the only Australian-known independent forwarder with extensive coverage in China and we are looking forward to building upon or continuing success tailored around the rag trade. We are just about to open another office in China, this time in Ningbo, following the offices we opened in Shanghai, Qingdao and Xiamen. And we're very proud of winning the Hong Kong Business Award four times."

According to Andrew Shanahan, business is also booming for Dart Global Logistics.

"Business is expanding and we'll keep on doing what we are doing. We have just introduced a loyalty rewards program. By using Dart Express Australia as their one stop freight forwarding shop our customers' loyalty is rewarded. Claimable rewards include international and domestic flights, local cartage and customs clearance," he said. "We have also just implemented an online track and trace program called Pangaea."

Among the features Pangaea offers is the ability to place an order with a supplier and track it to delivery on the one system. This includes being automatically notified at each 'signal point' and whenever changes occur with the order ready date. In addition the system lets importers and exporters communicate with anyone in the freight forwarding supply chain and it saves documents in a functional storage stem that can be accessed at any time."

Recognising the value of a personalised approach to business, customers are assigned their own key contacts at Pacific Network. Services the company offer include: supply chain management, customs brokerage tariff consultancy warehousing, small parcels and document service freight consolidation distribution and logistics air and ocean freight forwarding.

But dealing with those overseas markets can have its hassles. Jenkar's David Smith cautioned that potential supply chain problems could be avoided by employing a quality assurance company.

"In regard to importing today - and as has been the case for many years - importers have placed orders on overseas companies dependent on receiving product that resembles 100 per cent initial samples, but, sadly this is not always the case. There can be good reason for this, perhaps the inability of the manufacturer to replicate exactly varying colours, styles or engineering from the original sample, but mostly we find a lot of the problem in Australia, or any country where the first language is English, is summed up in the old cliché - lost in the translation," he said. "To solve this problem, it is wise for importers to employ a quality assurance company prior to initial shipping of product from origin and/or employ the same to convey the exact product requirements to the overseas manufacturer (always the easiest way) prior/during production. It seems quite an easy solution but it does add additional costs of course to the purchase. Many importers sadly have not opted for this method and so have received incorrect stock or products. If the purchase is by letter of credit the money will be transmitted in most cases just on sight of documents by the bank despite the problems with the products and then ends up in messy credits or refunds or worse still, legal battles on who is responsible for the mistake - was it in the ordering or was it the manufacturer? Go into importing from new suppliers/manufacturers with your eyes wide open."

In store, retailers and wholesales are also jumping on the bandwagon to find new ways of improving and