

Import Plan

November 6, 2019

The Role of Demand Planning in Import Supply Chains

Mercado Labs hosted the second of its six-installment Global Supply Chain webinar series on 11/6/2019. Once again sponsored by the Mercado Institute of International Trade (MIIT), the second live presentation was entitled, *“The Role of Demand Planning in Import Supply Chains.”* A clear pattern is forming because we hit it out of the park in terms of attendance, length of participation, and post-webinar interest levels!

We chose Demand Planning for the second topic because all tactical import supply chain management starts with a sales forecast. From there, item-specific forecasts must be translated into purchase orders (PO’s) that will be placed on overseas vendors in different quantities and at various times throughout the year. Of course, sales forecasts are never 100% correct and it’s when actual demand starts to unfold that adjustments have to be made to both existing and future PO’s.

Two topics that we really focused on were, “Available to Promise” (ATP) and “Consuming the Forecast.” Essential to timely and accurate overseas purchasing, ATP represents the amount of available (as well as in-transit) inventory that has yet to be committed to specific customers. Conversely, Consuming the Forecast is used to offset sales forecasts with actual demand for products that are sold in stores, on-line, via catalogue, or through a national sales force.

With the stage now set for getting down to the business of buying merchandise from international vendors, Webinar #3 is appropriately entitled, *“Import Purchasing: Essential Clauses to Include in Your International Purchase Agreements and Purchase Orders.”* Scheduled for 11/20/19, we’re really looking forward to tying the entire import supply chain process together by showcasing best practices associated with negotiating Purchase Agreements and how an importer can cover all of her bases when placing an all-encompassing PO on a vendor.

Bearing in mind that the Mercado Institute of International Trade archives all recorded presentations on the Mercado website (visit www.mercadolabs.com) and offers free downloads of the presentations, interested parties have a permanent and ever-going library from which to learn. We urge the entire import community to take full advantage of Mercado’s commitment to continuous training and education in the field of import supply chain management!

Want more detail on everything we discussed during this webinar? Visit www.mercadolabs.com/webinar-series-global-trade-webinar-2-import-plan/ to watch and download the webinar material.