

Tips on Working with Vendors

Applicable - Residential – furniture, accessories & kitchen showrooms

Author – Karena Auset, CCIDC, Interior Director – Chu+Gooding Architects

1. Request cut sheets (1 copy for office record, 1 copy for client reference)
 - a. Verify seat height, back height, arm height, overall dimensions, moving clearance (doorway, elevators etc.)
2. Finish & upholstery options
 - a. Wood and/or metal and/or other material and finish choices
 - b. Fabric choices
 - i. Standard fabric displayed in showroom
 - ii. Custom fabric offered by manufacturer, request a cutting for approval
 - iii. COM, (customer's own fabric) verify how many yards are needed for the desired layout of fabric pattern on the furniture, where to ship the fabric and amount of price reduction, request cutting for approval
 - iv. COM leather options. Leather is not ordered by the yard but by square inches per hide. This can be complicated, make sure you understand what fraction of a hide (typically whole or half) you will have to buy in order to fulfill the upholstery need. Make sure you understand and anticipate defects and ragged edge conditions that will affect layout.
3. Pricing & Payment
 - a. Verify any "to the trade" discounts offered
 - i. Often a re-sale number is required and forms need to be filled out
 - ii. Confirm that the trade discount is still applicable if the client pays directly
 1. Is both credit card and check payment acceptable?
 - b. Ask for the deposit amount required before order can be placed
 - c. Confirm if invoice price includes delivery to the client's /fabricator's address
 - i. Some showrooms only include shipping/freight. This only gets the pieces to a warehouse in the local area.
 - ii. Delivery is sometimes handled by a third party and additional fees & timing need to be discussed.
4. Timing
 - a. Showroom will always giving you production time and delivery as a best case scenario so more questions need to be asked.
 - i. Where is the product shipping from? If Europe, does the timing include the 4 weeks the factory is closed in August? There are always possibility for strikes.
 - ii. Does the time frame include shipping or just fabrication time at the factory?
 - iii. How much longer should be added for shipping?
 - iv. How soon after deposit is received will fabrication begin?
 - v. Be sure to add more time of fabric is COM. Verify fabric shipping with appropriate vendor
 - vi. If item is shipped to warehouse and needs separate delivery, add more time.

***** FOLLOW UP is the key to this process working smoothly. If you don't ask all the questions above, sales representative may not think to volunteer most of the information. You may then learn about extras in the middle of the process when orders cannot be canceled. Always call the showroom to check on the process on a regular basis.**