Private Label Manufacturing Launch Checklist

ESTROUTE · Cost and threshold check across three routes (version 1)

The first money spent on a private label should go into deciding the route, not into tooling. This sheet sets out the thresholds, cost structure and risk points of the three routes so you can work out which one fits before moving into sampling and contracting. Fill in the blank columns with current actual quotations.

1. Comparison of the three routes

Route	Threshold	One-off investment	Minimum order	Suited to
Stock item with new label	Low, only label and packaging are changed	Label and packaging plate cost	Supplier's finished-goods MOQ	Validating the channel first, limited budget
Colour / packaging change	Medium, sample approval and process discussion required	Plate cost, printing plates, sampling fee	Usually clearly higher than stock items	Where appearance differentiation is needed
Tooling / custom structure	High, structural design and testing required	Tooling cost, development cost, testing fee	Highest, based on tooling capacity	Stable sales volume, clear patent position

2. Checks before launch

Check item	What to confirm	Conclusion
Design source and IP	Whether third-party patents, designs or trademarks are involved; can a non-infringement statement be obtained	
Ownership of tooling and plate costs	The amount, whether it can be amortised, who owns it, who pays for later maintenance and modification	
Development and sample fees	Whether they can be offset against the mass-production order, and under what conditions and quantity thresholds	
MOQ and tiered pricing	First-order threshold, repeat-order threshold, and the quantity bands behind each price tier	
Labelling compliance responsibility	Information items, language and responsible party required by the target market; who designs, who reviews, who bears the cost of errors	
Trademark status	Whether it has been searched and filed in the target market; whether platforms require a trademark or authorisation document	
Exclusivity and territory	Whether exclusive designs, exclusive territory, term and performance criteria are agreed	
Consistency in mass production	Retention of sealed samples, AQL inspection standard, and the method of comparison with the first batch	

3. What a contract manufacturer can and cannot provide

Can provide	Cannot provide
Relabelling, recolouring and repackaging of existing designs	Taking on the sales risk of your brand and channel
Processing and assembly to drawing	Completing trademark filing and product-compliance responsibility on your behalf
Trial runs in small quantities (negotiable)	Guaranteeing exclusivity for a design in the target market
Support in printing packaging and manuals	Judging for you whether a design infringes third-party rights

4. Suggested structure for the first order

Start with relabelling stock items or a small-batch packaging change to validate sell-through, and refine labels, packaging and multipacks first; only discuss tooling after a single design sells steadily through two consecutive purchasing cycles. Negotiate tooling cost and development cost separately: amortise them where possible, and where not, spread them over the forecast volume to see whether the unit economics still hold.

Compiled by ESTROUTE for self-checks and supplier communication in cross-border sourcing. Tables may be freely copied, modified and passed along with the order. For a version tailored to your category, contact sales@orientalroute.com | estroute.com