



**Plitt** INTERNATIONAL, LLC.  
IMPORTER/EXPORTER

## Causes of Missed Delivery Dates

By Jeffrey Plitt

*Jeff & Cheryl Plitt operate Plitt International, LLC, a professional firm specializing in business relations with China. Plitt International's focus is to bring competitive advantage to small and mid-sized US companies through international trade with China. This competitive advantage is gained through importing, exporting, and the formation of joint ventures. Plitt International has developed its reputation through the successful implementation of programs across a broad range of industry segments.*

There is nothing more embarrassing to a supplier than poor customer service. Missed delivery dates are often at the center of service issues between supplier and client. Factories, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, even non-profits all desire the benefits of "just-in-time" service. That "just in time" business culture is getting more challenging for small and medium sized businesses that rely on international sourcing for all or part of their product mix.

In doing business with Chinese firms, lead times can range from 30 days to well over 120 days depending on the product being manufactured and the method of shipment. Competitive advantage is often lost if airfreight is needed to ship goods initially designed for surface shipment. The balance between the desire for low inventory levels and the benefits provided by sourcing in China are often contrasting. Proper projecting and on-time fulfillment become critical in the operations of a profitable business.

Understanding the critical importance of on-time deliveries from Chinese sources, Plitt International, LLC has put into place safeguards to ensure reduced instances of missed delivery dates. A list of potential causes for delay has been developed to help our clients plan accordingly for potential interruptions of product flow from China. Many of the causes for delay fall out of the control of either Plitt International or Plitt's clients, but knowledge of these interruptions should provide a planning team foundation for developing an international sourcing strategy with the least exposure to risk.

It should be noted that the listing expresses **potential** causes for product interruption and not **likely** causes. The list should encourage diligence in planning and an awareness of potential problems. A potential, but unlikely cause for delay would be weather bad enough to sink a container ship.

## **Potential Causes of Missed Delivery Dates:**

### **Customs/Homeland Security:**

Inspection with cause

- Missing documentation
- Incorrect Documentation
- Banned goods
- Incorrect classification of duty
- Goods are over quota limit
- Law/Rule Change
- Quarantine by USDA

Random inspection

(Duration of delay depends on Homeland Security personnel available)

### **Uncontrollable Factors:**

Government

- Geo Political Conflicts
- Terrorism – actual or threat

Shipping

- Dock worker strike
- Weather

Natural Disasters

Piracy

### **Shipping Company:**

Loss of documentation

Violation of port rules

Missed shipment

Cargo Fire

Ship to wrong address

Interruptions in

- Chinese domestic trucking or rail
- Ocean freight
- Domestic trucking or rail

Loss of shipment

### **Banking:**

- Paperwork errors
- Communication interruptions

**Postal:**

- Delay of Documents
- Loss of Documents

**Manufacturer:**

Shipping Mark

- Incorrect
- Unreadable/obstructed

Poor quality control

Production schedule interruption

Bumping for more profitable customer

Over promise

Power outage

Unable to secure raw materials

Equipment failure

Worker strike

Poor communication (fear of delivering bad news)

**Client:**

Expectations not clearly expressed

Incomplete or vague purchase order

Modification of purchase order

Change or incomplete graphics or artwork

Sample approval delayed

Change in shipping address

Insufficient lead time scheduled for project

Development

Manufacturing

Shipping

Payment complications

Insufficient warehousing space

Plitt International, LLC welcomes a discussion with your firm in the hopes of building a more secure business future through international trade with China. The question is not **if** the globalization of business is here; rather, what we need to do to prosper now that globalization **is** here.