

XENA'S PROMO BATTLE TIPS

A Sales Warrior's Guide to Getting the Most
from your Promotional Product Dollar



The Rising Price of Cotton

What That Means To Your Promotional Products

Issue 45

October 2010

Forward this newsletter
to a friend



How high is the price of cotton these days?

Cotton-pickin' high!

In the last year cotton prices have soared more than 80%. And it's not going down anytime soon.

Last month I wrote about the [changes in China](#) that are causing massive delays with product orders and price hikes that could throw anyone's yinyang off balance.

One of those changes is the escalating price of cotton due to droughts, floods and a worldwide lack of supply.

Next to retail, the promotional products industry is a major player in the selling of cotton products. Everything from tote bags to apparel will be affected by this rise. We'll really feel it by the beginning of 2011, when your event t-shirts will no longer be the cheap give-away you always counted on.

What are your alternatives to cotton products if you don't want to be slapped with a bigger bill?

Plenty.

The early 90's trend of natural and synthetic fiber blending to create new fabrics is making a timely come back. Now we're looking at more textile choices that could actually reduce our heavy dependence on cotton.

Links

[The Xena Tips Archives](#)

[Image Group Inc.](#)

[MRSI Consulting](#)

"Achieving Greatness Starts with Asking The Right Questions. What's Holding You Back?"

Tara Landes, Principal
604.345.0424

Sign up to receive
Xena's Promo Battle Tips

Here are a few alternatives to cotton:

Polyester - "[Yeah Baby](#)", we've come a long way from the stiff, flammable suits of [Tony Manero's](#) disco groove days. The new polyester is a lighter, more flexible and, thankfully, much safer fabric. Still, it's synthetic, so for the natural fibers lovers, it's not a first choice. And because fossil fuels are needed to make the groovy new poly, in its raw stage, it's not the cheapest to produce. But as a "drip and dry, easy-care" fabric, polyester is more cost effective over its lifetime than cotton.

Blend it with cotton and you get cotton/poly; a wrinkle resistant, better fitting garment, that to some degree, still allows the wearer to enjoy their cotton comfort feel.

PET is [recycled polyester](#) from sorted, stripped, washed, chopped, and melted down plastic bottles. Once melted, the PET pellets are converted into fibers that are then crimped, cut, stretched and baled. From there, they grow up to be happy little messenger bags, umbrellas and apparel for all the world to enjoy, including the earth.

For the natural fibers die-hards, here are some non-synthetic fabrics:

Bamboo - It's one of the world's best sustainable resources because it grows like a weed - fast and plentiful *and* is drought resistant. It absorbs nearly five times the amount of greenhouse gases while producing 35% more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees - what [horseweed](#) can pull that off? On top of that wonder, it doesn't need pesticides and when made into textile fibers, it's softer than the softest cotton.

The jury is still out on whether this is the new savior crop, but in the form of bamboo totes, golf towels, polos and hoodies it offers alternatives that are better for everyone and *everything* involved.

Organic Cotton - Also called "the cleaner cotton" because it has minimal impact on the environment and runs on a crop system that actually *replenishes* the soil.

But the cost to grow this raw material is more than many market sellers are currently willing to pay. Organic cotton acreage, to date, makes up **less than 1%** of that of global conventional cotton. That means limited supply at fairly high costs.

Choosing organic cotton now is more a matter of principal than budget responsibility.

Hemp - Poor old hemp, stuck with the stigma as the tree-hugging-pot-smoking granola garment of choice. But there's so much more to hemp, particularly in the strength and inherent performance of its fibers.

The natural oil in hemp repels pests. No pests, no pesticides! Its deep roots aerate the soil and practically draws heavy metals from the earth *into* its

fibers, *cleaning* the soil. Little to no irrigation is needed, whereas cotton is one of the largest water sucking crops in the world. And to top all that, hemp fibers are naturally resistant to mould, mildew and UV rays.

I'm betting that soon we'll all be sporting earth-loving, promotion-enhancing hemp tees, choking back that stigma we once laughed about.

Yes, cotton prices are taking off, but the good news is that textiles are evolving, bringing us virgin and blended fabrics that are as effective for our marketing and promotions as any cotton tee.

Maybe it's time for a hike in the price of cotton so we'll climb out of our old habits and start playing nice with this planet we're all grooving our way around on.



About Xena Sales Warrior

As your **Marketing and Promotional Products resource and creative consultant**, my goal is to give you outstanding value, inspired choices and economically sound solutions to your promo-needs.

To go the distance to communicate your message and have you stand out among your peers with warrior-inspired promotional products.

Bottom Line: Making you look great everytime.

Copyright ©2010 Jenn Forgie

Don't even think of copying this e-newsletter unless you are extremely adept in the art of sword fighting in an iron dress or have received the exclusive written permission to do so from Jenn. However, you may forward, share, rave about this newsletter with everyone you know, even reprint it provided you take an oath to link it back to me.

jf@imagegroupinc.ca