

Thriving amid tariff uncertainty

How retailers can mitigate risks—now and over the long-term

As retailers navigate the uncertain tariff landscape, addressing tariffs on US imports and exports requires a thorough strategy that goes beyond assessing immediate exposure. To safeguard financial performance, it is essential to adopt a strategic, cross-functional approach that involves key departments such as tax, trade, supply chain, merchandising, and sourcing. This strategy enables companies to manage both near-term impacts and broader strategic challenges for resilience and competitiveness in the market.

Near-term—Determine impact and approach

Retailers need to determine immediate and future exposure, including potential retaliatory tariffs. There are actions applicable to private label products sourced directly and brand suppliers.

- **Assess tariff impact and scenarios:** Analyze trade data to evaluate current and potential tariff impacts. Conduct scenario planning to develop contingency plans.
- **Regulatory monitoring:** Track trade policy changes and engage with trade associations and advisors.
- **Evaluate country of origin and harmonized tariff classifications:** Accurate assessment of duties requires correct classification and origin determination. Analyze tariff impact at the SKU level and classify/re-classify accordingly.
- **Duty Mitigation:** Explore strategies such as First Sale for Export, valuation, Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ) and other duty recovery programs to identify potential savings.
- **Reconciliation:** Use the CBP customs reconciliation program to adjust customs values post-entry, allowing time for due diligence to uncover savings.
- **Stakeholder Communication:** Keep stakeholders informed and aligned on tariff impact and strategic planning.

Medium-term—Mitigate costs

Retailers will need to mitigate direct tariff costs and those potentially passed on from exposed suppliers.

- **Duty mitigation strategies:** Implement savings solutions that generate high return on investment.
- **Supplier re-negotiation:** Suppliers exposed to tariffs may seek to re-negotiate contracts. Retailers will need a cost mitigation strategy that may involve resisting higher prices, seeking new suppliers, or looking for savings to offset margin pressure, such as reducing energy, logistics, or labor costs. Assess end-to-end costs, including freight, tariffs, and other factors. Consider both primary and secondary sourcing options to manage tariff risks.
- **Commercial strategy and product design:** Analyze current pricing to determine if higher costs can be passed on to retail customers. Evaluate product mix to optimize margins and volume. Find alternative materials or components that are subject to lower or no tariffs.
- **Tax strategies:** Mitigate tax-related costs with transfer pricing and value chain management planning.
- **Re-evaluate product designs:** Find alternative materials or components that are tariff-free or subject to lower tariffs.

Long-term—Diversify supply chains

The tariff landscape may require greater diversity in where retailers source their products.

- **Current state assessment and future state modeling:** Evaluate the current country of origin mix and cost profiles as well as future regulatory and geopolitical risks. Develop a future country of origin framework that balances cost, risk, and capacity. Create simulation models to determine the optimal mix for each product category.
- **Tax planning:** Explore tax structures that enable tariff and federal income tax savings.
- **Implementation roadmap:** Create a clear action plan to move toward optimal country of origin mix.
- **Ongoing duty optimization and compliance:** Align duty savings programs with origin strategies. Implement trade data monitoring and regular compliance reviews for continuous optimization.

How KPMG can help

KPMG can provide wide-ranging support to help adapt to tariffs

- **Interdisciplinary team:** Trade, Tax, strategy, procurement, and pricing specialists help companies determine current / future exposure and model and implement mitigation actions
- **Data & analytics:** Trade data and technology to provide better visibility into tariff impacts and mitigation scenarios
- **Industry experience:** Deep experience within the retail sector to help address the unique challenges of tariffs

Learn more: Stay up-to-date on tariff changes and how to adapt with insights from KPMG

>> Trade and Tariff Reform Insights

Case study:

Global sourcing analytics for a consumer company with over \$50 billion in revenue.



Challenge

Over 50% of client revenue on products from a single country-of-origin.



Actions

- Conducted baseline assessment of current risks
- Modeled new sourcing scenarios for optimal mix
- Developed implementation roadmap



Outcome

76%

Reduction in single-sourced products

2.7%

Improvement in net margin over 5-year horizon

Our team



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