

## What Customers Typically Need - Workwear & PPE

Customers buy Workwear and PPE for a mix of practical, safety and branding reasons. While every organisation is different, the same types of needs appear again and again across sectors. Understanding these patterns helps dealers recognise opportunities and talk about the category with confidence.

### Everyday workwear

Many customers start with simple, everyday clothing that helps staff look consistent and feel comfortable at work. Typical items include:

- polo shirts, t-shirts and shirts
- fleeces, sweatshirts and hoodies
- softshells, gilets and jackets
- trousers, shorts and cargo styles

These garments are used in offices, retail, hospitality, education, facilities, warehousing and field-based roles. Customers often look for:

- comfort and fit
- durability and easy washing
- availability across sizes
- simple, repeatable ranges

This part of the category is often less about safety and more about team identity, practicality and consistency.

### Protective equipment and safety-led clothing

PPE and safety-focused garments become more important where there are specific risks or site requirements. Common needs include:

- high-visibility vests, jackets and trousers
- safety footwear and boots
- gloves for different tasks
- eye protection and face shields
- masks and respirators
- hearing protection
- coveralls, lab coats and specialist garments

These items are used in logistics, manufacturing, construction, maintenance, facilities management, healthcare, laboratories and education.

Customers in these areas are usually guided by their own risk assessments or internal policies and are looking for:

- reliable, compliant products
- consistency across teams or sites

- clear suitability information
- easy replenishment for new starters

## **Branded and customer-facing garments**

Branding is a major driver of workwear demand. Many organisations want staff to present a consistent, professional image. Typical branded items include:

- polos, shirts and blouses
- hoodies, sweatshirts and jackets
- aprons, tabards and hospitality wear
- caps, beanies and accessories

These are widely used in retail, hospitality, offices, education, events and service-based businesses. Customers usually want:

- clear, high-quality logos
- garments that reflect their brand
- ranges that work across multiple roles
- reliable repeatability for new staff

## **Sector and role-based patterns**

Different sectors tend to show consistent patterns of need:

### **Logistics and warehousing**

High-visibility clothing, gloves, safety footwear and weather protection for warehouse operatives, pickers, packers and drivers.

### **Manufacturing and engineering**

Protective clothing, safety footwear, gloves, eye and hearing protection for engineers, machine operators and production teams.

### **Education**

Lab coats, aprons, hi-vis for trips and durable workwear for caretakers, technicians and maintenance teams.

### **Healthcare and care settings**

Scrubs, tunics, non-slip footwear and basic PPE for clinical staff, carers and support teams.

### **Hospitality and leisure**

Branded shirts, aprons, chef wear and front-of-house uniforms for catering teams, chefs and service staff.

### **Facilities and cleaning**

Durable workwear, gloves, basic PPE and hi-vis for cleaning operatives, caretakers and site teams.

## Office-based organisations

Branded polos, jackets and occasional PPE for reception teams, field staff and facilities teams.

This mix shows how broad the category is - and how many customer types have genuine, repeatable needs.

## How customers tend to buy

Across sectors, a few behaviours are consistent:

- Starting small: often with one team or garment type.
- Standardising ranges: creating role-based or site-based sets.
- Replenishing regularly: new starters, leavers and wear-and-tear.
- Linking to other categories: cleaning, safety, facilities and print.

Customers value suppliers who make ordering simple, keep records of what has been supplied and help maintain consistency over time.

## Key takeaway

Customers typically need a mix of everyday workwear, safety-led PPE and branded garments that support comfort, protection and a consistent image. These needs appear across many sectors and roles, creating repeatable, long-term opportunities for dealers who make the category easy to understand and simple to buy.