The RFQ & Quote-Reading Kit

PACKOS
packos.ai

Send every supplier the same complete picture — then read every quote back the same way, line by line. Fill in Panel 1, send it unchanged to every bidder, and use Panel 2 to decode what comes back.

PANEL 1 Build your RFQ — the fields every supplier needs

Complete these and the quotes come back faster — and comparable.

1 Product & format

The product, and the structure that holds it — carton, pouch, label, bottle, jar. Sets the manufacturing route.

2 Exact spec & dimensions

Real dimensions; material or substrate (board grade, film, face stock); construction and closures. Who owns the dieline?

3 Decoration — colors & finishes

Print method if known; color count; spot vs process; finishes — varnish, soft-touch, foil, spot UV, opaque white.

4 Quantities & tiers

Price a few quantities, not one — it reveals the breaks. Add an annual estimate if you have one.

Qty A | Qty B | Qty C | Annual est.

5 Artwork status

Not finished is fine — just say where it stands, and who is producing it.

☐ Final ☐ In progress ☐ Not started

Produced by

6 Compliance & certifications

Food-contact, child-resistant, tamper-evident, retailer/market standards, sustainability claims. Rules vary by product and market — confirm the exact requirements with the governing authority or retailer.

7 Delivery

Destination, Incoterms, case pack, pallet preference — freight and casing shape landed cost.

Destination | Incoterms | Case pack

8 Target in-market date

When it must be on shelf or in the warehouse, plus any hard deadline — so a supplier can say if the run is feasible.

Target date | Hard deadline?

9 Contact & quote format

Who receives the quote, in what format, by when — removes a round-trip.

10 Notes & attachments

Files you are sending with the RFQ — artwork, dieline, photos of the current pack — and anything a bidder should know.

PANEL 2 Decode the quote — line by line

One-time costs vs the per-unit price. Read both halves, then check what is excluded.

LINE ITEM	WHAT IT IS	WATCH FOR
Tooling / die	The custom cutting die (or mold) built for your specific shape. A one-time cost, paid once and reused on future runs.	Do you own the tool? Who stores it? Does a redesign force a new one?
Printing plates	The image carriers a press prints from — typically one per color. One-time cost that rises with the number of colors.	Quoted per color? Reusable? What does a color change cost?
Setup / make-ready	Labor and material to mount the tool and plates, load stock, and match color before good units come off the line.	Charged per run or per color change? Does it repeat on reorders?
Per-unit price	The cost of each finished package, quoted at one or more quantities. The number that scales with your order.	Every quantity priced on the same spec — and which quantity the headline number refers to.
Quantity breaks	Per-unit price at each tier. It steps down as quantity rises because fixed costs spread over more units — amortization, not a discount.	Where the next break sits — and whether reaching it means ordering more than you can actually use.
Freight	Moving finished goods from the plant to your dock. Sometimes quoted, sometimes left off entirely.	Included, estimated, or excluded? What delivery point does the price assume?
Terms & minimums	Payment terms, the minimum order to run at all, lead time, and the overrun / underrun policy.	The minimum quantity, the payment schedule, and how over- or under-runs are billed.

OFTEN LEFT OFF THE QUOTE — ASK BEFORE YOU COMPARE

- **Freight, duties & taxes** — where goods change hands changes who pays.
- **Artwork & prepress** — bundled, billed separately, or yours?
- **Proofs & samples** — may be a line you have to ask for.
- **Overrun / underrun policy** — runs rarely land on the exact count.
- **Storage & release** — held goods can carry handling charges.
- **Lead time** — a price is not a promise of speed; confirm the date.

SAME-BASIS CHECKS — BEFORE COMPARING TWO QUOTES

- **Same spec?** Material, structure, dimensions, gauge, coatings.
- **Same quantity?** Compare the same tier on both quotes.
- **Same decoration?** Colors, spot inks, finishes, coverage.
- **Same freight basis?** Same delivery point on both.
- **Same inclusions?** Excluded is not cheaper — it is incomplete.

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