



## Announcing Monarch PPE “Swat Team” and Meekara White Label Masks

June 11, 2020



### Executive Summary

I am excited to share with you two new initiatives that Monarch Global Strategies is pursuing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first is a new Monarch practice we have organized, which will provide expert advice and guidance to help businesses secure proven, reliable, timely, and cost-effective personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as antigen and antibody tests. The second is a new sister company we’re launching called [Meekara](#), which will produce branded fabric face coverings that will allow employers, schools, and other institutions to keep their workforce, students, and customers safe while also building a strong sense of community and reinforcing brand loyalty in the midst of a global pandemic.

### Monarch’s PPE “SWAT Team”

When the COVID-19 crisis hit, it felt like it came out of nowhere. News dribbled in about a mysterious illness in China; then outbreaks hit Seattle and the Bay Area. And the next thing we knew, we were all in quarantine. Our world was turned upside down. Schools closed; the economy ground to a halt. Nothing has been the same since.

Monarch was suddenly inundated with inquiries from clients and others concerned about the inability to access desperately needed PPE and testing services. States, cities, hospitals, and corporations providing essential services all needed an immediate supply of PPE, including products like N95 respirators to keep first responders and those on the front lines safe. **But the urgent global demand for PPE overwhelmed traditional supply chains**, incentivizing a flood of participants to enter the marketplace offering access to PPE, often at eye-popping prices and from unproven sources. Suddenly

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everyone was a PPE broker with a deal you couldn't believe. The market fell quickly into a [wild-west scenario](#) filled with piracy, money laundering, and other grave risks.

At Monarch, we decided to jump in to help bring some sort of sanity and credibility to the process. We recently launched a [PPE Swat Team](#), bringing together expert resources and our own deep experience navigating global supply chains to support both buyers and sellers of PPE and tests. **Our value proposition is simple:** we offer a **trusted partner** to ensure our clients are dealing only with vetted, trustworthy suppliers with a track record of delivering high quality products. Our team has unique strengths: former senior government executives from the White House and the Departments of Commerce, State and Homeland Security who have deep expertise and experience in international trade and global supply chains, and who understand how to help clients safely and securely navigate the often complex and difficult freight forwarding and customs clearance process, which has grown even more challenging with a range of import and export controls during this crisis. Key members of our team also have the requisite scientific, medical and public health training and experience necessary to evaluate and assess products, vet suppliers and help advise our clients in making smart and effective procurement decisions. In short, Monarch's PPE Swat Team will provide 360-degree support over the entire lifecycle of the procurement and delivery of PPE and tests, reducing the stress of dealing with unknown and potentially unreliable suppliers.

## Introducing Meekara

Three months into the crisis, with the curve flattened in many places, most communities are now beginning to reopen. Though we are still far from a vaccine or even effective therapies to mitigate the impact of the virus, there is a collective recognition that we cannot remain cloistered in our homes forever. The risk-reward calculus is being made, and most are coming out on the side of returning, slowly, to work and our new lives. But the decision to reopen, while economically imperative, is not without risks. As we return to work, to shop, to dine, and to live our lives in the "new normal," **we all will owe each other a solemn obligation to do our respective parts to protect one another. And the most effective way we can do that when we're close together, [according to the CDC](#), is to wear a cloth face covering.**



Meekara was born of the reality that face coverings are our best chance at limiting the spread of the disease. An informal call with my cousin, [Erik Jarvey](#), who owns and operates a custom clothing business, led to a brainstorming session about the need for a stylish and attractive but comfortable and reusable face covering. I knew from my work at Monarch that one of the biggest challenges in the PPE space was that many people were wanting to use regulated respirators—like the famous N95 mask—that really wasn't needed or even appropriate for the average user. This misuse was driving up demand and contributing the scarcity for the first responders who do need them. At the same time, it became clear that as the economy globally began to reopen, **there would be a massive need and demand for face coverings that are comfortable and attractive**, that everyone from white collar professionals with office jobs to students and outdoor activists would feel good about wearing. And then it occurred to us that **face coverings could and would likely become the new branding white space**. From this realization, Meekara was born.

Meekara is a new company launched with Monarch's support and investment, and we've recruited a small group of partners to help bring Erik's and my original vision to reality. The team includes [Fabio Silva](#), a seasoned attorney with both impressive design and legal credentials, and with deep experience in some of the leading fashion houses in the world, including Burberry and Giorgio Armani, and [Sarah Carson](#), a former Wall Street investment banker and now top fashion executive in New York who has scaled her own multi-million dollar fashion brand, [Leota](#), with a track record of selling into some of the most prestigious apparel stores in America. The team has quickly coalesced and is now on a mission to put a Meekara mask on millions of corporate employees, students, concert attendees, and sports enthusiasts globally.



## An Essential Product in the “New Normal” Era

Meekara’s commitment is to provide something we ourselves would feel proud to wear at work, at school, or attending a large public gathering. We looked carefully at the market and realized that most of what was offered at the retail level was, quite frankly, rather generic, unattractive, and uncomfortable. We worked hard to design a collection of beautiful face coverings, made with the highest quality fabrics and components, that would raise the standard for this new line of everyday apparel. We wanted a product that was washable and sustainable and that would help reduce waste (just imagine the amount of waste generated from 7.8 billion global residents using a disposable mask daily!). **We also understood the importance of creating a sense of solidarity through branding, recognizing that as employers brought their workforce back to the office they would need and want to convey a strong sense of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of their employees.** Most organizations are choosing to provide a face covering, and what better way to build team spirit than to give employees one that is stylishly branded with a corporate logo or trademark.

Meekara will offer two collections to start. The [Professional Collection](#) has three uniquely designed options perfect for everyone from the C-Suite to the front desk and for any person who needs a comfortable, tailored face covering they can wear all day or longer. The [Promo Collection](#) is our lower price point option that is perfect for large volume gifting, from swag bag fillers at corporate events to handouts to attendees at large gatherings like concerts, sports and stadium events. Part of the new normal will include all of us wearing branded masks at U2 Concerts, football games, and large gatherings of all kinds.

The discovery of a vaccine against COVID-19 may be many months or even years away. Until then companies owe it to their customers and employees, and we owe it to each other to keep one another safe by doing all we can to reduce the spread of the virus. Monarch is excited that its PPE Swat Team and Meekara will play important roles in achieving this goal reliably, cost effectively, and while looking stylish at the same time.

*To learn more about Monarch’s PPE Swat Team, please visit [www.monarch-global.com/covid-19](http://www.monarch-global.com/covid-19). To learn more about obtaining Meekara’s face coverings, please visit [www.meekara.com](http://www.meekara.com).*

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