

•**Fujifilm X100VI in USA**

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•**Fujifilm X100VI in EUR, UK, CA and More**

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I spent a number of years working as an engineering manager in a production support role. One of my main areas of responsibility was getting new products into production. The product was not cameras, but comparable manufactured goods.

The marketing department would provide the planned launch date, estimated annual sales and planned launch volumes. That would allow my engineering group to figure out what had to happen and when the various critical dates were.

The design department would provide the drawings and specifications. The purchasing department would work with suppliers on the raw materials and quantities required for launch day. The Quality department would work with the manufacturing team to ensure that the raw materials and final goods met the product specs.

As head of the production engineering department, my staff would source the tooling and in some cases the machinery required to put the product into production, set up the production lines and work with the production managers to get everything ready on the factory floor. My group included the training department and we trained the staff on how to operate the equipment to create a quality final product.

The lead time to introduce a new product, because of the financial approvals and lead times from suppliers was the better part of a year. We would set up a pilot process to debug the production issues and then would start up producing the goods months before the product would end up in stores.

This meant, based on marketing estimates, we would have to produce enough goods to meet launch volumes, which generally meant actually starting to produce the goods 4 - 6 months before they shipped out to the retail stores. It generally took 6 - 8 weeks to solve all of the production issues and get the manufacturing staff working at the speed and quality levels.

When Fujifilm says they can produce 15,000 cameras a month, that would be what they are producing now, as they get ready to launch the camera. The reason they went to China is likely that they had the factory space to run the production there, and with a high volume product, China is also going to be less expensive to produce in than Japan. You can be quite certain that the camera has been in production since some time in Q4 in 2023 to fill up the production pipeline. At 15 000 units a month and roughly 20 working days per month, that tells me that they are producing around 750 camera bodies per day.

Shipping from China to the various markets takes time and one suspects that as these are high-value products, they are likely being shipped via air freight. This will get the products to the local country distributor in about a week, anywhere in the world. Travelling by ship to Europe or North America is likely something that would run 12 - 16 weeks (it takes some time to load / unload a container

ship and get things through customs and to the distributors warehouses. Crossing time for a ship will be measured in in the order of 10 - 15 days, depending on the port / route used).

Again, I don't know the launch volume estimates for cameras, but in the products I worked on, we would sell 80% of the annual sales within the first 3 - 4 months of a new product introduction. I suspect a new highly anticipated camera might be even more front loaded.

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