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# Discovering advancement in technology and mass media influence on gen Y male fashion consciousness

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#### **Abstract**

The growth of fashion development among male consumers in Indonesia is not supported by the increasing study on the male fashion segment. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the Generation Y male buying intention towards fashion products since Gen Y is the most prospective market. This study aims to investigate the factors that influence fashion consciousness among males in Indonesia by using self-identity, social media influence, changes in work practices, advancement in information technology, mass media influence variables, and the impact of fashion consciousness on buying intention. By employing quantitative research, the data collected uses a self-administered online questionnaire. The samples of this research are 227 respondents of Gen Y males with their profile data. This study uses partial squares structural equation modeling analysis with the smart PLS application to test the hypothesis. The findings of this study show that self-identity, social media influence, and mass media influence have a significant impact on fashion consciousness. Also, fashion consciousness has significant results on buying intention.

#### **Keywords**

fashion consciousness; buying intention; media influence; mass media influence; gen Y male fashion consumer

#### INTRODUCTION

The development of men's fashion continues to increase and grows faster than women's clothing over the past decade. In the last 10 years, data shows that global sales of men's clothing have exceeded the sales of women's clothing. The development of online sales in men's fashion products globally is the highest compared to other categories, and men's fashion remains the most frequently purchased category in online sales (Ladhari et al., 2019). The online sales of men's fashion have developed in Indonesia since 2018. Men tend to shop for fashion products rather than gadgets or electronics, with numbers up to 51% (Ipsos, 2018). This fact indicates that become fashion has an important commodity for male consumers in the world and Indonesia with a great amount of consumption (Jain, 2020).

Indonesia is one of the top 3 countries with the most significant growth ratio for men's fashion sales in the world which is 7.2%, and it is the highest in Southeast Asia

(O'Connell, 2019). From 2011 to 2018, the demand for fashion products in Indonesia continues to increase. The fashion market with male consumers has experienced growth immense due to fashion consciousness. Fashion consciousness shows the level of individual intention in the style of dress (Nam et al., 2007). There is a strong demand in the men's fashion industry since men are more willing to spend money to buy clothes. A 2018 study by Nectar and American Express explains that 43% of men spend more on clothes than women each month (Davis, 2018).

Previous research has shown that several factors influence consumer fashion awareness (Lam & Yee, 2014). Male have considered their consumers appearance as a necessity and it not only satisfies their pride, but also conveys various social messages to others, including their status and professions (Pellegrin, 2009). intends conceptually This study to investigate the potential factors that influence male consumer fashion awareness, including self-identity, social media, changes in work practices, and how fashion awareness influences their intention to buy. Buying intention is an important study since marketing managers use consumer buying intentions as an action to forecast sales and determine the effect of these consumers in the future. Consumer buying intention is the main input for buying behavior (Morwitz, 2014). Fashion-conscious individuals are more likely to make a purchase (Lam & Yee, 2014).

The male demographic is a potentially lucrative market for fashion retailers and marketers as they contribute more than 20% of total consumer spending (Jain, 2020: Ladhari et al., 2019). Therefore, men's fashion retail entrepreneurs are required to maximize the potential of these male who are stimulated consumers appropriate marketing and communication strategies so that they are expected to achieve maximum profits. The target audience of this research is Generation Y as the most attractive market and a new target segment for marketers advertisers due to their purchasing power (Hendriyani & Chan, 2018). Therefore, it is likely that Generation Y men have socialized to view fashion more positively than previous generations. The combined effect of the changing influence of household and media roles has shaped new norms in which fashion is something Generation Y men know and do (Yan Sun et al., 2021). Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook are sources of information for Generation Y in the multimedia world. They show a general preference for purchases and have more time to shop. This is a great opportunity for retailers and marketers to target this market (Wallop, 2014). Thus, Generation Y was chosen as the object of research because it has purchasing power supported with their fashion consciousness.

The main importance of this research is the limited study on male consumer fashion awareness. Previous studies on men's fashion awareness focus on developed countries; while studies on consumer fashion awareness in developing countries are still limited (Chi & Chen, 2019). Second, high profitability and high competitiveness are opportunities for marketers and researchers to develop the fashion industry (Cho & Lee, 2017). Third, there are only a few examples of strategies targeted at men currently (Yanshu Sun & Guo, 2017).

Fashion companies need to have better understanding on fashion awareness of male consumers (Lam & Yee, 2014). As a result, this research provides retailers with valuable insight into the main factors influencing fashion awareness among male consumers. This will help retailers to adjust in having a better understanding of men's fashion awareness and appropriate marketing communication strategies that will reach the men's fashion consumer market.

# LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Fashion awareness refers to a person's level of involvement with clothing style (Nam et al., 2007). Consumers who already know fashion can also be interpreted as potential consumers because they have a tendency and intention to follow early fashion trends. These consumers will seek more information about fashion, try new fashion items more often than others, and shop more frequently (Bertrandias & Goldsmith, 2006; Iver & Eastman, 2010). Also, they want to stay updated with fashion and change styles frequently (Ladhari et al., 2019). Therefore, fashion companies need to have better understanding on fashion awareness of male consumers (Lam & Yee, 2014). Men's fashion retailers are required to maximize the potential of these male consumers which are stimulated by the right marketing strategies so that they are expected to achieve maximum profits.

Buying intention is a combination of consumer interest in a brand or product and the possibility of consumers in buying the product (Dabbous & Barakat, 2019). It can be concluded that buying intention is the last stage consumers choose to buy a product or service from a related brand. In addition. purchase intention is a condition where consumers expect to buy a product or service (Hui, 2017). Buying intention is important to study because marketing managers use consumer buying intentions as a measure to forecast sales and determine the effect of these consumers in the future. Consumers consider buying intentions as the main input for buying behavior (Morwitz, 2014). Thus, it has become an important point for marketers to study consumers' buying intentions.

# Self-identity

Self-identity is a way of developing throughout life at various ages, and youth is a stage of rapid development (Aparicio-García, 2017). It deals with the desire for equality, the need to 'fit,' and the goal of differentiation. Consumers form positive attitudes toward things that help them define their identity by expressing who they are, what they want, and how they want others to see them (Summer et al., 2006). Fashionrelated items, as well as clothing, may be a useful product category in terms of defining personal identity (Chahal & Rani, 2017). Fashion and clothing preferences show a person's self-concept or how one's desires are seen by others. Self-identity is another potential factor influencing fashion awareness (Lam & Yee, 2014). If consumers already have fashion awareness, they will believe that fashion is a form of self-identity and will be more consumptive in shopping. Self-identity is very important for young people (Lam & Yee, 2014). In this stage of life, young people tend to use products to define their identity, such as fashion items Prabowo, (Hendraningrum & 2015). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Self-identity has a positive effect on fashion awareness.

### Social media influence

Social media are applications, platforms, and online media that aim to facilitate interaction. collaboration, and content sharing (Gunawan et al., 2020). One industry that is considered suitable for social media is the world of fashion (Ahmad et al., 2015). Social media influence is a marketing term that describes the ability of a person or institution to influence the thoughts of others in online social communities (Rouse, 2019). such as the influence of fashion awareness among male consumers. Men are placing more emphasis on their appearancse, driven by the rise of social media, and a softening of dress codes for men globally (Rolland, 2018). Facebook. Linkedin. Twitter. Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and Google Plus are the types of social media sites that are usually used for fashion (Siddique et al., 2015). Consumers' dependence on social media to know the latest trends is high as social media affects consumers' fashion awareness (Schivinski et al., 2022). Thus, this study hypothesizes as follows:

H2: Social media have a positive effect on fashion awareness.

# Changes in work practices

Recently, there is a significant shift in the work experience of men, with accompanying implications for their health and well-being (theworkfoundation.com, 2018). Likewise, with women, automation in housework allows women to freely work outside the home (Stromguist, 2019). There is also a growing trend toward the 'masculinization' of women and the 'metro sexuality' of men in society. Such patterns lead to changes in men's perceptions of gender and their roles, thereby leading to changes in their work practices (Lam & Yee, 2014). This tendency causes changes in men's attitudes towards gender and its functions as well as in their work practices. For example, men can do tasks that are considered women's property, such as shopping and doing housework (Mintel International Group Limited, 2010). As male consumers increase their chances of shopping, their awareness of fashion also increases (Lam & Yee, 2014). Therefore, this study proposes:

H3: Changes in work practices have a positive effect on fashion awareness.

# Advances in information technology

Technology is changing the development of the world rapidly. Most industries are facing drastic transformations due to technology, including the fashion industry (Ricci, 2018). The fashion industry is always moving fast, but in the digital era, it can change even faster (Marshall, 2017). With the shift away from shopping at physical retail stores, the impact of technology is hard to ignore especially with the presence of e-commerce. One of the most fundamental advancement the development of information technology, with internet access available anywhere, anytime, and also supported by the sophistication of various devices such as smartphones (Shamir, 2018). Through information technology, consumers can easily find information about the latest fashion styles and trends, as well as make

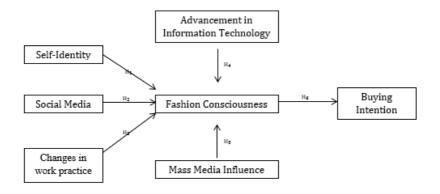


Figure 1. Research model

purchases via the internet (Lam & Yee, 2014).

Data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2018 showed that the percentage of female internet users in 2018 was only 37.49%, while male users reached 42.31% (Sutarsih et al., 2018). In Indonesia, men are more open to information technology than women (Kusnandar, 2018). In addition, many fashion retailers offer mobile applications and websites to convey information to their customers, coupled with the rise of e-commerce that connects customers with the products they are looking for. As a result, consumers have more opportunities to obtain information through the internet. In line with these reasons, male consumers in Indonesia tend to receive more fashion information through advances in information technology. This can increase the level of fashion awareness among male consumers (Lam & Yee, 2014). So, this research hypothesizes:

H<sub>4</sub>: Advances in information technology have a positive effect on fashion consciousness

#### Mass media influence

Mass media is a source of information available to both the general public and certain community groups (Lawlor, 2018). It is also considered a major source of influencing individuals, culture, social structures, and political policies, and reflects on social, political, intellectual views and attitudes. Since cultural, political, and religious norms differ from country to country - and often, from region to region within the country - the transmission of modes through the mass media can be affected. In the world of fashion, the mass media that are often

used include printed media: magazines, newspapers, billboards, posters, catalogs; as well as broadcasted media, such as TV, radio, video, and films. The transmission and types of mass media are considered capable in influencing men's fashion awareness (Lam & Yee, 2014).

Advertisements that can increase fashion awareness for men are the use of male advertising models such as in fashion magazines that emphasize appearance. Furthermore, the assumption that men must be stylish and look like the model can characterize men as stylish and successful (Rajput et al., 2012). With the presence of male models, advertising can change the norm that men are encouraged to see social value and appeared to be succeed. So, mass media can be used as a tool to transmit men's fashion culture (Lam & Yee, 2014). Previous studies have also proven that mass media has a positive effect on fashion awareness in men (Lam & Yee, 2014; Shephard et al., 2016). So, the resulting hypothesis is as follows:

H5: Mass media will have a positive effect on fashion consciousness.

# Fashion awareness affects buying intention

Fashion-conscious individuals are more willing to take part in consumption practices (Lam & Yee, 2014). Fashion-conscious male consumers have more definite intentions to buy fashion products that help them showing their status and wealth to others (Vazquez et al., 2020). Fashion awareness has a significant effect on buying intention and is a substantial factor for millennials to buy fashion products (Chi & Chen, 2020).

Table 1.
Demographic profile

Variable	Description	Frequency	%
Type of Work	College Student	154	67.84
	Private Workers	33	14.54
	Civil Worker	8	3.52
	Businessman	19	8.37
	Others	13	5.73
Income/month	<1.000.000	82	36.12
(IDR)	1.000.000-2.000.000	66	29.07
	>5.000.000	33	14.54
	2.000.001-3.000.000	17	7.49
	3.000.001-4.000.000	16	7.05
	4.000.001-5.000.000	13	5.73
Budget for fashion	100.000-300.000	124	54.63
monthly (IDR)	<100.000	54	23.79
	>300.000	49	21.59
Purchasing	Once a month	129	56.83
frequency	1-3 times per month	80	35.24
• •	>3 times per month	18	7.93

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H6: Fashion consciousness has a positive effect on buying intention

Based on the literature study and hypothesis development that have been carried out, the research model is presented as shown in Figure 1.

#### **METHODS**

The first step in conducting this research is to identify the problem that will examine the industry issues. Men's fashion, as priorly discussed in the introduction part, grows, and can surpass the sales of women's fashion. However, there is only few studies on men's fashion awareness currently. Descriptive research design is used to describe the situation, especially the specific characteristics of the market. This study was included in a cross-sectional descriptive design, which in this study was to answer research questions, and data were collected only once. This study uses a non-probability sampling technique as the probability of selecting a sample is unknown, and all elements in the sample do not necessarily have the same opportunity to be taken as samples. Specifically, this research employs purposive samplings based on the following research criteria: male respodents, active user of social media, and fashion literate. The sample size is determined at least as many as 200 respondents and data collection were done in three months, starting from March to May 2022. Based on these provisions, it was stated that the sample used was truly represented by the needs of the research objectives.

After the data from the respondents were collected, the data were analyzed using partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) data analysis technique software. SEM consists of two parts: the structural model and the measurement model. As the first step, the measurement model is done by testing the reliability and validity of the constructs. The second step is to test the structural model to how each construct find out interconnected (Malhotra et al., 2017). In this test, the significance value of the relationship between constructs should not exceed the cut-off value of 0.5 (Malhotra et al., 2017).

This study applied structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) for data analysis while putting aside issues of abnormality and small sample size (W. W. Chin et al., 2008; Hair et al., 2017). PLS-SEM requires two stages of analysis, measurement, structural model, and taking place subsequentially (Hair et al., 2017). Firstly, the measurement model aims to ensure the qualities of indicators in terms of reliability and validity. It considers as acceptable if the analysis generates results factor loadings, Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , and composite reliability CR larger than 0.7, AVE greater than 0.5, and having discriminant validity as based on Fornell Larcker criteria. To qualify the

Table 2. Loading, CR, and AVE

Variable	Construct	Loading	CR	AVE
Fashion Co	onsciousness (FC)		0,783	0,547
FC1	Have one or more clothes with the latest styles	0,692		
FC3	Smart dressing is important	0,720		
FC4	People should try to dress in style	0.802		
Self-Identity (SI)			0.816	0,599
SI 1	My self-image is very important	0.859		•
SI 3	Always try to get other people's acceptance	0,771		
SI 4	Able to identify themselves in the group	0,680		
Social Med	lia Influence (SMI)		0,873	0.633
SMI 1	Aware of fashion clothing ads on social media	0.824	•	
SMI2	Online fashion clothing advertisements			
	influence the purchase of fashion products	0,707		
SMI3	Check out social media platforms to know	,		
	about the new fashion offers	0.827		
SMI 4	Compare fashion products from social media	0.818		
Changes in	n Work Practices (CWP)		0,849	0,653
CWP 1	Thinking a lot about what it means to be a man	0.857	,	,
CWP 2	Very self-conscious about being a man	0,840		
CWP 3	Usually aware of how to be a man	0,721		
Advances in Information Technology (AIT)		,	0,825	0,544
AIT 1	Able to find fashion information on the Internet	0,641	•	•
AIT 2	Shopping through the online channel	0,640		
AIT 3	Have at least one app related to			
	fashion/shopping on mobile	0.801		
AIT 4	Innovation in retail technology has a			
	sophisticated sense of fashion	0,845		
Mass Medi	a Influence (MMI)		0.910	0,717
MMI 1	Watching TV or movies or reading magazines			
	leads to a fashionable dressing	0,782		
MMI 2	Compare outfits with movie stars, famous			
	singers, or celebrities	0.851		
MMI 3	Want to have a style similar to a public figure	0.881		
MMI 4	Try dressing like actors and actresses in			
	movies and television programs	0.870		
Buying Intention (BI)			0,865	0,618
BI 1	Buying fashionable clothes	0.814		
BI 2	Loves to talk about fashion/clothing	0,805		
BI 3	Realize some clothes for men are more			
	fashionable than others	0,849		
BI 4	Usually, notice that some men are fashionable	0,665		

structural model, this study scrutinized the predictive power (R2) and the predictive relevance (Q2). Multigroup analysis of gender, as the additional analysis, was also performed in this study using PLS-SEM. The significant result exists if the p-value is less than 0.05 or more than 0.95 at the margin of error of 5% (Hair et al., 2018; Sarstedt et al., 2011).

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, there are 227 male respondents with the age range of 20-40 years. The demographic description of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Most research respondents are college student with the income of around 1 million rupiahs. Their average fashion budget is around 100-300 thousand rupiahs for their monthly shopping routine.

This study uses convergent and discriminant validity tests. First, factor loading is used for convergent validity. Meanwhile, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is used for discriminant validity. All loading and AVE values had thresholds of about 0.4 and 0.5 or higher (Table 2).

The calculation of Goodness of Fit (GoF) was carried out to ensure the suitability of the structural model (Tenenhaus et al., 2005). The result shows 0.490 as the GoF

Table 3. Goodness-of-fit, R2, Q2

Variable	AVE	R2	Q2
Self Identity	0,599		
Media Social Influence	0.633		
Changes in Work Practices	0,653		
Advancement in Information Technologies	0,544		
Mass Media Influence	0,717		
Buying Intention	0,618	0,364	0.209
Fashion Consciusness	0,547	0,416	0.205
Mean Score	0,616	0,390	
AVE x R2		0.240	
$GoF = (AVE \times R2)$		0,490	

value in this study. This means that the data is very suitable to explain the proposed model (Hair et al., 2014). Based on the R square value, it shows that Self Identity, Social Media Effects, Changes in Work Practices. Information Technology Advances, and Mass Media Effects can predict 41.6% (R2 = 0.413) of Fashion Awareness, and 36.4% (R2 = 0.364) of Buying Intentions. Stone-Geisser's Q2 is often used to provide evidence that values have been detected correctly, and the model has high predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2014). Furthermore, to assess the relevance prediction, Henseler et al. (2009) stated the value of Q2 is greater than 0 (zero). Based on Table 5, Fashion Consciousness, and Buying Intention got a score of 0.205, and 0.209 proved to have a satisfactory relevance. So that the predictions achieved from the proposed model are fit.

Based on the results of path analysis, self-identity towards fashion awareness is significant at 0.00 and support H1 ( $\beta$  = 0.296). Then, the social media influence also has a significant effect on fashion awareness ( $\beta$  = 0.278 and p<0.01). Thus, H2 is accepted. The significance of the indirect effect of self-identity and the influence of social media on buying intention was also proven ( $\beta$  = 0.162 and p<0.01; = 0.168 and p<0.01). There is also a significant influence of the influence of mass media on fashion awareness ( $\beta$  = 0.273 and p<0.01) while the indirect path of the influence of mass media has a significant effect on buying intention (β = 0.165 and p<0.01). As a result, H5 is supported. H3 and H4 investigate the relationship between changing practices and advances in information technology on fashion awareness. The effect of changing work practices and advances in information technology on fashion awareness rejects direct and indirect effects ( $\beta$  = 0.081 and p>0.05; = -0.034 and p>0.05). Finally, the results also show that fashion awareness has a significant effect on buying intention ( $\beta$  = 0.603 and p<0.01). In summary, the following hypotheses are supported: H1, H2, H5, and H6.

This study found that self-identity has a positive effect on fashion awareness. These results align with previous research from Lam & Yee (2014) and Leung (2015). Research has found that men's self-identity is relevant to the determinants of purchase intention towards fashion. Men realize that identity can be reflected in how they dress. Men can show their personality through fashion. The consumption of certain fashion brands is used to communicate the personality and character of (Hokkanen, 2014). Consumers buy brands to build their self-concept and personal identity ((Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Ma et al., 2012; Perez et al., 2010; Power & Hauge, 2008).

Structural relationship analysis shows that social media also significantly impacts fashion awareness. This finding is in line with previous research conducted by Gul & Shahzad (2014) and Michaela & Orna (2015). Gen Y men are currently very close to social media, so they can quickly find information related to fashion or find out about fashion developments themselves.

This study also confirms that the influence of the mass media has a significant relationship with fashion awareness. The results of previous research by Lam & Yee (2014) and Shephard et al. (2016) show that men become more fashion-conscious through media exposure. Male consumers pay attention to styles and media related to

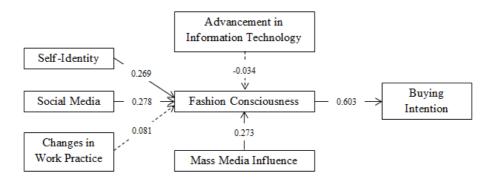


Figure 2.
Results of the theoretical framework tested

fashion. In addition, this shows that the influence of the mass media has the most significant impact on fashion awareness.

What is interesting is that changes in men's work practices and advances in information technology have not had a positive impact on fashion consciousness. This contrasts with previous research by Lam & Yee (2014), which showed a positive relationship between changes in men's work practices. advances in information technology, and fashion awareness. The conditions of different countries allow this to happen because previous research was conducted in developed countries, namely Hong Kong, while this research was conducted in Indonesia. So, Gen Y men in Hong Kong tend to be more open to changes in male work practices. Men in developed countries tend to apply more metrosexual styles than those in developing countries. Men in developed countries shop more and pay more attention to their appearance than those in developing countries.

Other findings in the study reveal that fashion awareness can affect purchase intentions. These results confirm similar findings in the studies of Lam & Yee (2014), Michaela & Orna (2015), and Vuong & Nguyen (2018). The results show that Gen Y men in Bandung, Indonesia, have high fashion awareness and have the intention to buy fashion products. The significance of the three determinants (self-identity, social media, and changes in work practices) through fashion awareness shows an important role in purchase intention, especially for mass media influence, because these variables mediate the relationship between fashion awareness and purchase.

## **CONCLUSION**

investigates factors This study the influencing fashion awareness and their impact on customer purchase intentions. Specifically, we conducted empirical research to understand how self-identity, social media, changes in men's work practices. advances in information technology, and mass media influence the intentions of Gen Y men's consumers. The research results show that Gen Y men's perceptions of fashion awareness and purchase intention are high. The research findings state that social media and mass media are categorized as factors that significantly influence the fashion awareness of Gen Y men. Men in developing countries like Indonesia are starting to pay attention to appearance, especially the types of goods or products used as a form of their fashion aspirations. Various information received through social media and mass media related to fashion makes it easier for male consumers to choose and determine the preferred fashion product according to their style and character based on their identity. Gen Y men in developing countries like Indonesia make fashion a taste that is easy to explore, especially in style variations heavily influenced by urban lifestyles thick with self-identity, such as character and personality. Social media and mass media triggered gen Y Fashion. Hence, various styles emerged, such as Korean/Japan-like, casual, sporty, classy, or elegant, which men could adopt according to their character and personality.

Meanwhile, advances in information technology and changes in work practices experienced by men were found not directly significant to fashion awareness. Male customers do not carry out specific activities in searching for information about fashion via the internet, websites, or special fashion applications. This is also supported by the fact that male consumers prefer to seek information and shop for fashion products by directly visiting offline stores or based on information they get through social media. Male consumers believe

buying products directly will be more aligned with what they expect. This is because men have characteristics that pay more attention to benefits, are quick to seek, focus, efficient, selective in choosing, and rational. So, advances in information technology and changes in work practices only sometimes affect men's fashion awareness.

The implications that arise from the results of this study are in the form of actual information that can be used by marketers and retailers in the fashion industry to understand male consumer behavior and increase the intention to purchase fashion products for men. Fashion awareness possessed by consumers will be able to influence their behavior in many ways. This is one of the most reliable drivers influencing and motivating their intention to buy fashion products. From the results of this study it is known that to increase awareness of male consumer fashion, an integrated marketing program is needed between social media and mass media to convey information and even to create men's fashion trends. Fashion retailers can extensively use social media and mass media to deliver creative promotions through advertisements, brand promotions and celebrity endorsements, which will encourage consumers to follow the latest trends and fashions of fashion products. Then to create fashion awareness and increase purchase intention for Gen Y men's fashion products can be done through unique marketing campaign. The campaign can be carried out by involving men's self-identities such as providing knowledge about tips and tricks for mixing and matching clothes according to men's character, body shape, color, and certain events.

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