

## **What if Consumers Interfered in their Fashion Product Design, via Internet?**

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Internet offers the opportunity of a direct link between the garment maker and the garment customer. This direct contact could lead to a modern tailoring: the client could make up his garment on line, choosing between various options of fabrics, shapes, measures, details and ornaments. The garment would be made on request and delivered some days later to the customer's place. Moreover, the reduced distribution margin and absence of finished product stocks would enable the manufacturer to develop extra services, higher quality, or even make local manufacturing competitive.

This sales system first relies on the consumer's degree and type of motivation for a customized garment.

In the European Community, 27% to 41% of women (depending on countries) declare they have many difficulties to find their size in shops, and 27% to 31% of them say they struggle to find clothes they like\*. Beside this lack of adapted offer, consumers express their desire for customized garments, either for themselves -as a game or a requirement- or in relation to others -to look one's best.

Some companies already offer the opportunity to design one's unique product, either via a boutique or via Internet. The concerned fields, their evolution and the way they aim at their clients are significant of today's trends. Interviews\* of manufacturers and distributors confirm the growing success of such offers over the past two years. Eventually, a research\* conducted first term of 2006 in France aims at measuring the potential of this kind of offer on a specific market: which consumers and how many of them would be interested in buying customized clothes on Internet? And for what level of expenditures?

Understanding on the one hand consumers' unsatisfied demands and expectations on fashion products, and on the other hand their motivations for purchasing clothes on Internet, helps anticipating how Internet may affect the fashion business.

\* IFM European market researches, 2003 to 2006