

Walk this way

Add this updated wireless module to Chord's portable Mojo DAC and you have a versatile music maker, says **David Price**

Chord's Mojo/Poly portable DAC/streamer currently dominates the head-fi market, giving superb music on the move that can also be used as a table-top digital source component. At the price, this dynamic duo sounds far better than it has any right to, giving away little in sonics to more expensive products that aren't nearly as versatile.

If you've ever used this combination you'll know it's a little fiddly. One key reason for this is the setup for the Poly streamer, which until recently involved tedious button pressing and voice commands. Thankfully, this has all changed with the release of the latest firmware and the improvement is so dramatic that the company has dubbed the updated product Poly 2.

Poly 1 owners can also update theirs to the new firmware. Indeed, it's not a case of can, it's a case of should. This is because the new firmware greatly improves the usability of the product. For those who aren't familiar with the original, let's quickly recap. A bespoke module for the Mojo headphone amp/DAC (reviewed *HFC* 423 and priced at £299 for a limited time), Poly slots onto it to provide a range of sources for the DAC to play. You can

stream music via Bluetooth, network attached music devices – NAS drive or smartphone – on wi-fi, via AirPlay or commercial streaming services – plus the MicroSD card slot. It works with Android and iOS devices, and even has its own hotspot mode – enabling a connection where devices, networks or countries don't have tethering.

Its battery has up to nine hours of playback from a four-hour charge, and can be charged with a Mojo DAC docked to it. It plays hi-res music in PCM at up to 32-bit/768kHz resolution, plus DSD up to DSD256. Chord's Gofigure app – now on iOS and Android – brings full Tidal and Qobuz integration, plus Roon Ready certification. Improved Bluetooth, DLNA and wi-fi is also claimed. Internet Radio is supported, and there's a DSD rendering update and gapless playback support – providing it's compatible with the client app. Tweak types will like the inclusion of MPD (Music Player Daemon) playlist support.

Performance

The Poly 2 feels much nicer to use, but can still sometimes be a faff. At the time of writing running firmware version 2.0.4, the Gofigure app offers

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Chord Electronics Poly 2

ORIGIN
UK

TYPE
Wireless network streaming module

WEIGHT
95g

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
62 x 22 x 50mm

FEATURES
● 32-bit/768kHz and DSD256-capable streaming DAC
● Roon ready; Tidal, Qobuz streaming
● Quoted battery life: 9 hours
● Connectivity: wi-fi; Bluetooth; AirPlay

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extensive configuration options and easy ongoing firmware updates. It's simple to set up the new streaming service options, but the real boon is Roon integration that enables subscribers of the music management software to stream content to the Poly 2 acting as an endpoint. To play music from a NAS or a mobile device's storage, you'll need to download a music player app to your smartphone; Bubble UPnP works faultlessly with my network-attached Western Digital music server.

The Poly 2's indicator lights show that the unit is paired with the Mojo DAC, tell you the set-up status and what the battery condition is. It is to

The new firmware greatly improves the usability of the Mojo/Poly 2 pairing

the Mojo DAC that you have to turn, to confirm what file resolution you're playing. This only makes any sense, of course, if you can remember what sampling rate the colour of its 'lozenge light' is supposed to represent. One operational gripe is that because of the way the Poly fits into the Mojo DAC, when the two are connected, the DAC's digital inputs are obscured so you have to disconnect one from the other if you want to go back to using wired connections.

Conclusion

The idea of the new firmware update was to make the Poly more versatile and easy to use – and in this, Chord Electronics has unequivocally succeeded. It makes the Mojo/Poly 2 a more stable, usable and less frustrating pairing – while keeping the same sublime sound intact. In effect, the two are a brilliant, affordable mobile music machine, reaching parts that few other rivals can ●



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OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY



LIKE: Sound quality; ease of use; overall functionality

VALUE FOR MONEY



DISLIKE: Still not the easiest to set up or use

BUILD QUALITY



WE SAY: Long awaited and much-needed Poly update brings improved versatility to Mojo DAC

FEATURES



OVERALL



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