$500-$1499

Chord Electronics Mojo+Poly

Chord Electronics' popular Mojo DAC gained a new ally in the Poly add-on server/streamer. If the Mojo broke new ground, the Mojo+Poly are the portable audio world's Krakatoa!

As the Poly was meant to plug into that best-loved portable DAC, it was designed from the get-go to live in the portable audio space, controlled by your smartphone. Poly slots into the digital connection side of the Mojo, sporting its own battery; the single remaining Micro-USB slot on the Poly simultaneously charges both devices.

Poly soaks up the Mojo's lone Micro-USB digital input, meaning if you connected your Mojo direct to your smartphone via an OTG cable or an iKludge (Lightning to USB, then USB to Micro-USB), you are out of luck. This is probably not a problem, however, as Poly brings a host of wire-free communication protocols to the table. Where Mojo was limited to that one Micro-USB slot, Mojo+Poly can speak to the world via Apple AirPlay or Bluetooth, and better yet can treat your phone as a DLNA server, streaming music stored on the phone or online streamed music sources like Tidal and Spotify. It also comes with a little Micro-SD card slot, so it can be its own music server.

There are a number of DLNA-friendly control point programs. Some are paid, others free. I've had some success with Linn's Kinsky, MyAudioStream, and PlugPlayer on iOS and BubbleUPnP for Android.

The other weird thing about the world post-iDevice is 'personal dual inventory' in consumer electronics seems very out-dated. People don't carry an iPod anymore because there's an app for that on the iPhone. They don't carry a compact camera for the same reason. So, the idea of carrying a Micro-SD card-reading server that runs alongside but independently to your smartphone seems like a step backwards in time. But, then you hear just how good it sounds, and you can almost hear that switch flip in your head. Instead of being an extra box to take on the tasks your phone can already do, music on your smartphone becomes outmoded, compromised by the limitations of being just another app on a phone. The dedicated operation of the Mojo+Poly makes a vast amount of sense almost immediately. The fact you can also switch between data stored on the Poly to streamed content fed from your phone is merely more of the same wonderfulness!

This is not a small perception shift; it makes you include a Mojo+Poly as part of your everyday pocket roll-out. Keys, wallet, smartphone, Mojo+Poly, IEMs—let's go! As before with the Mojo as a standalone, the Mojo+Poly unlock a range of headphones and IEMs that would struggle to gain acceptance being played through a smartphone alone.

The Mojo+Poly simply integrates perfectly to deliver that articulate, hugely entertaining, and naturally rhythmic sound of the Mojo with greater flexibility. All that you lose is the USB cable.

In an ideal world, I'd want a thinner case, and I think the battery indicators could be rolled into the illuminated buttons of the Mojo, as the standard ones are difficult to see.

There are few 'done deals' in audio, but the Chord Mojo+Poly is just that. Once you begin to get just why the Poly is so useful, the excellent Mojo becomes almost redundant without its partner. Poly is Starsky to Mojo's Hutch, Wallace to Mojo's Gromit. Basically, once the Poly was clicked into place next to Mojo, there was never a time when Mojo was going to be seen out on its own again. Poly simply makes the Mojo so much more than just a DAC. You will use a MicroSD card, and

you will fill it with high-res files, and you will wonder how you ever listened to music on the move without the Poly. It really is that good. Headphone users of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your wires. **Alan Sircom**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Type: Add-on battery powered wireless streamer/server for Chord Mojo DAC

Inputs: Bluetooth A2DP and Wi-Fi 2.4GHz, x Micro SD card slot

Play time: 9+ hours

Charging: <4 hours, 2-amp Micro USB input. Both Mojo and Poly can be simultaneously charged via Poly's Micro USB.

Playback support: Roon, DNLA, AirPlay and Bluetooth playback

DLNA server and renderer: SMB Server (SD card); MPD player (SD Card)

Integrated Access Point: Allows configuration of connected networks (up to 32)

Hotspot mode: Poly can create its own hotspot where networks/devices/countries don't support tethering.

Files supported: ACC, WAV, FLAC, AIFF, OGG VORBIS, ALAC, WMA and MP3

PCM sample rates: 44.1kHz, 48kHz, 88.2kHz, 96kHz, 176.4kHz, 192kHz, 358.8kHz, 384kHz, 717.6kHz and 768kHz

DSD via DoP sample rates: DSD64 – DSD256 (Quad-DSD); DSD from SD card

Dimensions (WxHxD): 6.2x2.2x5cm

Price: £499, $749 US, Poly; £399, $549 US, Mojo

MANUFACTURER INFORMATION

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