

Pretty Poly!

Chord's new Poly module turns its Mojo DAC into a streaming device. Jon Myles finds the combination works wonderfully.

Chord certainly hit the mark with the Mojo - a DAC/headphone amplifier that turns smartphone into a high-resolution player, and can also be used in a hi-fi system for improved analogue-to-digital conversion. The one thing Mojo lacked was any form of streaming capability.

Not any more, though. Chord's dedicated Poly module brings DLNA, Airplay and Bluetooth streaming to the Mojo, as well as containing a microSD card slot so music can be loaded into it as well.

Costing £500, Poly is designed to work exclusively with the Mojo - slotting into its digital connections to form one complete unit which is not much larger than the palm of your hand. In typical Chord fashion it feels

the Poly's network discoverable and able to be connected to.

Unfortunately Chord as yet do not have a dedicated app for the Poly (although I'm told one is in the offing shortly) so a third party one such as Plex, 8 Player or MyAudioStream is needed. Once I'd negotiated this the connection was strong and I was able to stream files from a NAS drive straight into the Mojo/Poly combination.

SOUND QUALITY

As it is purely a streaming plug-in the Poly shouldn't add or subtract from the Mojo's already impressive sound quality - and it doesn't.

Listening through a set of Noble Audio K10 in-ear monitors the detail and crystal-clear quality of the Mojo shone through. The drum and bass/jazz marriage of Tim Hagans' 'Animation/Imagination' (24/96) had an expansive, full-bodied sound with instruments placed exactly in the correct space. The trumpet was bright without being harsh while bass had punch, but it wasn't so dominant as to overwhelm other instruments.

This was via the streaming option from my home network. I next loaded some high-resolution tracks onto a microSD card for use when out and about. The same level of clarity was evident, the likes of The Pogues' 'Fiesta' having infectious energy, while Sinead O'Connor's lilting 'Peggy Gordon' came over with a haunting

quality. On the latter the Chords revealed every catch in the singer's breath, as well as the delicate echo surrounding each verse.

As a final test I plugged the Mojo/Poly into a Devialet Expert 220 Pro amplifier via a 3.5mm to twin RCA's lead in place of my usual Naim NDX streamer. While the Naim had the edge in terms overall soundstage and physicality the Chords were on a par when it came to rhythmic thrust and resolving power. Considering the Mojo and Poly are battery-powered while the Naim has a full-fledged linear mains supply that's no mean feat.

All of which puts into focus just how clever this combination is. For a combined cost of around £900 you get a high-quality DAC and streaming module that can operate in a full-blown system and also be slipped into a pocket for use with headphones when outside. Intelligent stuff indeed.

CONCLUSION

For Mojo users who want extra functionality Poly is a natural choice.



The Poly's connectors slide into Mojo's digital inputs to provide its streaming functions.

extremely robust.

After connection Mojo works as usual - complete with the colour-coded buttons to signal incoming sample rate (red for 44.1kHz, blue for 192kHz etc). The Poly itself contains just two small indicator lights to denote Mojo pairing, battery life and set-up status.

I found Poly easy to pair with an iPhone 7 via Bluetooth but connecting to a home DLNA server via wi-fi required a little more time. First you have to use the supplied pin to press and hold a P-status button (similar to ones on a smartphone for ejecting the SIM card) which makes



Mojo and Poly both use a matching aluminium case and similar design to provide a seamless fit when paired together.

CHORD POLY £500



OUTSTANDING - amongst the best.

VERDICT

A compact unit that retains the sound quality of the superb Mojo DAC but adds streaming capability.

FOR

- complete streaming features
- compact
- clean, open sound

AGAINST

- no dedicated app (as yet)

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