

Press release

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GO link

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Above iFi 'GO link' headphone dongle

Plug headphones into 'GO link' for supercharged sound

Packing in sophisticated sonic technology that outstrips other USB-C to 3.5mm headphone jack adapters, the latest addition to iFi's GO series delivers superior sound at a super-affordable price

Southport, England – iFi audio expands its GO series of ultraportable DAC/headphone amps with the GO link – a headphone dongle that delivers supercharged sound when connected to smartphones, tablets, PCs and Macs via a USB port.

Its purpose is twofold. First, to enable corded headphones and earphones to connect to digital devices that don't have a 3.5mm headphone output. Second, even if a device does have a headphone socket, the GO link delivers a big sonic upgrade. This is because its sophisticated DAC (Digital-to-Analogue Converter) and headphone amp circuitry is superior to the audio tech contained within mobile devices and computers.

Even for a company renowned for producing class-leading audio devices at affordable prices, the GO link's price is remarkable – with an RRP of just £59/€59/\$59, it's the most affordable DAC/headphone amp iFi has ever made. And yet, even at this price, iFi has delivered a device of high sophistication.

At one end of the GO link is a USB-C connector, at the other is the DAC and headphone amp circuitry, both housed in robust yet lightweight magnesium alloy enclosures. In between is a 6cm length of flexible cable – this aids practicality, allowing the DAC/amp section to be angled towards the listener and reducing stress on the USB port to which the GO link is connected.

iFi hasn't skimped on the quality of the cable, which uses silver-plated copper conductors with individual polymer insulation in a 'twisted pair' configuration. This rotational twist helps to optimise inductance and capacitance and also aids noise rejection, ensuring the GO link's sound isn't affected by electromagnetic interference picked up from nearby electrical sources.

DAC's the ticket

The GO link draws on the experience iFi has gained in developing a range of multi-award-winning DACs at a wide spread of prices. At its heart lies a power-efficient, high-performance DAC chip from ESS Technology's Sabre HiFi series – the ES9219MQ/Q – benefiting from 32-bit HyperStream III architecture. This combines with Quad DAC+ and Time Domain Jitter Eliminator technologies, plus iFi's dedicated clock circuitry utilising a specialised crystal oscillator, to deliver ultra-low distortion, excellent clarity and impressive dynamic range.

iFi has taken full advantage of the DAC chip's advanced specification, unlocking high-end features such as DRE (Dynamic Range Enhancement), plus technologies to minimise THD (Total Harmonic Distortion) and crosstalk. Users can even select between different digital filters via downloadable firmware should they wish to do so, giving a degree of personal sonic tailoring according to taste.



Left With its flexible cable linking the USB-C connector to the DAC/headphone amp, the GO link is a practical solution for great sound with corded headphones

Unlike other headphone dongles, the GO link doesn't rely on the software-based volume controls in connected digital devices, which can adversely affect audio resolution. Instead, adjusting the volume on the connected device controls the volume level in the GO link's DAC, not in the phone, tablet or computer – this hardware-based analogue volume control is another feature that helps to deliver the GO link's superior sonic performance.

The GO link's hi-res audio credentials are highly impressive given its diminutive price. PCM audio data is supported to 32-bit/384kHz, alongside DSD to 11.2MHz (DSD256) and MQA (the streaming technology used by Tidal's 'HiFi Plus' tier). An LED changes colour to indicate the incoming audio format – PCM, DSD or MQA – and the PCM/DSD sample rate.

Headphone heaven

The GO link's headphone amp feeds a gold-plated 3.5mm socket incorporating iFi's noise-reducing S-Balanced configuration, easily outclassing the headphone outputs built into phones, tablets and computers. This delivers a power output of 70mW/1.5V into 32 ohms, rising to 2V with higher impedance headphones – plenty to drive the kind of headphones and earphones with which the GO link is likely to be partnered whilst minimising drain on the connected device's battery. As well as powering headphones, the 3.5mm analogue output can be used to connect a preamp or integrated amp, or powered speakers.

Those familiar with iFi audio devices will know that the company uses discrete, high-grade components in its circuit

designs, and the same is true of the GO link despite its small size and low price. Devices such as TDK COG multilayer ceramic capacitors and inductors from Taiyo Yuden and Murata deliver qualities such as low ESR (Equivalent Series Resistance) and high linearity, paying great dividends in terms of sound quality.

Available from selected retailers from 5th December, the GO link is the ultraconvenient, ultraportable sonic supercharger that every headphone user can afford. Adapters are included to convert the GO link's USB-C connector to fit USB-A and Apple Lightning ports – whether you're using the GO link with an Android or iOS device, a Windows PC or an Apple Mac, everything you need is in the box. All of which makes the GO link's RRP of £59/€59/\$59 even more remarkable – simply plug in your favourite corded headphones or earphones and immerse yourself in powerful, dynamic and detailed sound.



Left From in-ears to over-ears, iFi's GO link is the dongle that makes headphones sound heavenly with smartphones, laptops and more

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iFi is the sister-brand of Abingdon Music Research (AMR) and is headquartered in Southport, UK. The two brands respectively design and manufacture portable, desktop and lifestyle audio products and high-end hi-fi components. Combined in-house hardware and software development teams and a 'music first' approach enable iFi and AMR to create advanced audio products that deliver new levels of design, functionality and performance at their respective price points. Since iFi's formation in 2012, its products have earned many awards around the world, helping it to become one of the fastest-growing brands in its field.

www.ifi-audio.com