

Press release

More than 2,000,000 Phonak Receiver-in-Canal (RIC) hearing aids fitted worldwide

Survey shows: RIC models are especially attractive for people with mild to moderate hearing loss

Stäfa, Switzerland (August 27, 2013) – Receiver-in-Canal (RIC) hearing aids have been the standout growth driver of the hearing aid industry over the last years. The RIC segment is growing three times faster than the overall market and accounts for roughly one quarter of the global market today. A Phonak survey among hearing care professionals worldwide has revealed why RICs are the rising stars in the hearing aid market. And why they especially appeal to a group that is the most difficult to win over: people with mild to moderate hearing loss. The most important advantages of RIC models quoted are a discreet design and a high instant fit rate. Audéo Q, the new Phonak RIC model based on the Quest Platform, fulfills exactly these expectations and has become a huge success since its market introduction.



Audéo Q: The combination of small size and big performance is winning over more and more people with mild to moderate hearing loss.

RIC (Receiver-In-Canal) models are experiencing a veritable boom. A global survey of 1,119 hearing care professionals regularly fitting RICs shows which clients opt for this form factor: The typical RIC client generally has a lesser hearing loss, is more likely to choose an open fitting and places more importance to aesthetics. Therefore, RICs appeal especially to those who are the hardest to win over: people with mild to moderate hearing loss. As they may only experience difficulties hearing in specific situations like group discussions or dinner in a noisy restaurant, the barrier to decide for a hearing aid is higher than for people with severe to profound hearing loss.

“Convincing this group requires a really compelling value proposition,” says Maarten Barmantlo, Group Vice President Marketing for Phonak. “Audéo Q, our Quest Platform-based RIC solution for mild to moderate hearing loss offers all the benefits that first-time users are seeking in a hearing aid: a small and lightweight housing with a thin wire leading into the ear canal as well as a high instant fit rate. Furthermore with our unique Binaural VoiceStream Technology™, Audéo Q enables uncompromised sound quality. The extremely positive market response to Audéo Q shows that a sophisticated, yet convenient solution can win over even those people that often decided against a hearing aid in the past.”

Favorable market trends – RIC models ideally meet hearing aid wearers needs

In 2011, Alex Morla¹ already highlighted four market trends – convenience, size, simplicity and flexibility – that have and will continue to transform hearing aid wearers demands. As soon as a buying decision is taken, the client wants to experience the product immediately. Thanks to their design, RICs can be conveniently configured for the client’s need on the spot. The parts that sit behind the ear have been minimized, and the thin wire that carries the sound into the ear canal further adds to the discreet aesthetics of RIC models. The exchangeable receiver can grow with future hearing needs and offers maximum flexibility.

Global survey by Phonak

A global survey in 2012 of 1,119 hearing care professionals regularly fitting RICs has shown what differentiates clients who opt for a RIC model. They:

- generally have a lesser hearing loss
- are more likely to opt for an open fitting
- place more importance to aesthetics

Better understanding in challenging hearing environments

Common daily activities like conversations in a busy restaurant or on a noisy street can quickly turn into a challenge for people even with mild to moderate hearing loss. Featuring the Binaural VoiceStream Technology™, the Audéo Q offers a comfortable and discreet solution in a simple and straightforward way. The RIC hearing aid enables more signal, less noise and better understanding in even more listening situations, and practically disappears behind the ear.

¹ Morla, A. (2011). Four Transformative Patient Demands.

About Phonak

Headquartered near Zurich, Switzerland, Phonak, a member of the Sonova Group, has developed, produced and globally distributed state-of-the-art hearing systems and wireless devices for more than 60 years. The combination of expertise in hearing technology, mastery in acoustics and strong cooperation with hearing care professionals allows Phonak to significantly improve people's hearing ability and speech understanding and therefore their quality of life.

Phonak offers a complete range of digital hearing instruments, along with complementary wireless communication systems. With a worldwide presence, Phonak drives innovation and sets new industry benchmarks regarding miniaturization and performance.

For more information, please visit www.phonakpro.com or www.phonakpro.com/evidence or contact:

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Phonak – Life is on

We are sensitive to the needs of everyone who depends on our knowledge, ideas and care. And by creatively challenging the limits of technology, we develop innovations that help people hear, understand and experience more of life's rich soundscapes.

Interact freely. Communicate with confidence. Live without limit. Life is on.