



SENNHEISER MKE 2 ELEMENTS ACTION MICROPHONE

INTERVIEW WITH ACHIM GLEISSNER, COMMERCIAL MANAGER, BROADCAST & MEDIA, SENNHEISER

Achim, your new MKE 2 elements GoPro microphone is available from April 24. You told me that this is the very first GoPro-verified microphone; when did you start collaborating with GoPro?

Sennheiser has been a participant in GoPro's Developer program since it launched in April 2016, as we had a longstanding interest in developing an audio solution for GoPro cameras. Immediately upon joining the program we began working on a microphone to eliminate the compromises that GoPro users have to contend with when capturing sound in extreme conditions. What made the program especially attractive for us was the "Works with GoPro" verification. All third-party developed solutions for the GoPro are intensively tested by the company before they are able to receive this seal of quality. Sennheiser is currently the only audio manufacturer to have joined the program, and the MKE 2 elements is the very first external microphone to have received GoPro verification.



Achim Gleissner,
Commercial Manager,
Broadcast & Media, at
Sennheiser

You said that the MKE 2 elements microphone eliminates all compromises when recording audio outdoors. Can you give examples, and explain why the camera's built-in microphone may not be sufficient?

Built-in microphones have difficulties recording sound outdoors, simply because it's not possible to shield them from wind noise. And it doesn't even have to be particularly windy for the sound to be drowned out by wind noise! In addition, the HERO4 camera is most often used



in a protective housing to guard it against water, rain, scratches, dust and so on. This effectively puts the microphone in a can and closes the lid. It's hardly surprising that the sound suffers and cannot match the quality of the pictures. The MKE 2 elements, however, is an external microphone that is waterproof and optimally protected against wind noise. That makes it possible for it to add great audio to the GoPro footage, as its design is based on a professional-quality miniature microphone developed for musical and broadcasting applications.

The MKE 2 elements microphone was designed specifically for the GoPro HERO4. When can we expect a model for the GoPro HERO5?

You are correct – we developed the MKE 2 elements action cam microphone specifically for the legions of HERO4 users out there, but in parallel we have also been working on solutions for the HERO5. While I cannot yet confirm a launch date, I can tell you that Sennheiser will continue to develop audio solutions as the GoPro product range evolves.

Do other audio suppliers offer microphones for the GoPro HERO5?

The market situation currently is very much like it is with the HERO4. There are adapters available but no audio solution that is waterproof or has the same wind protection properties that the MKE 2 elements offers. This microphone is the first solution that is really suitable for sports, especially extreme sports.

What is special about the MKE 2 action microphone? How does it differ from other external microphones?

The MKE 2 elements will be a sound revelation for HERO4 users. Besides being the only GoPro-verified microphone, it is also the only mic on the market that is waterproof. Its protection rating is IPX7, which means it's waterproof to 1 bar, which is the equivalent to recording at 1 metre or 3 feet for 30 minutes. It's even capable of recording the gargling of your wakeboard under water! The capsule of the microphone is protected against moisture by an 'Umbrella Diaphragm', which stretches across the acoustically active membrane like an umbrella. Also, the connection to the camera housing is watertight. And there's the newly developed windshield, which retains its wind protection properties even when wet. Standard windshield materials just can't achieve that. In addition, we have given the mic a performing elastic suspension to make it insensitive to structure-borne noise.



How did you beta test the MKE 2 elements microphone?

We not only had an array of test users ourselves – but the microphone also went through GoPro’s rigorous testing. We delivered microphone samples to GoPro at the end of 2016, and their athletes put the microphone through its paces. Surfers, kite surfers, motorsport racers, mountain bikers, snowboarders – you name it. After this intensive test phase the MKE 2 elements received “Works with GoPro” verification.

Where will the MKE 2 elements microphone be sold?

The MKE 2 elements will be sold through key online retailers and via the Sennheiser website.

The price of the MKE 2 elements mic is half the price of the camera, which may be quite an investment for hobby users.

I was hoping you would bring this question up. Audio for video is still largely underestimated but we are slowly seeing this change. Audio is what gives a video its atmosphere, instantly sets the scene and grabs our attention. Investing in good audio will always pay off. No matter whether you do action sports or are filming on your travels – the MKE 2 elements will deliver great sound and help you capture the unique moments of your life.