

Press release

Nuremberg, March 3, 2020

Trend: 90% of all hearing aids powered by Li-ion batteries in 2025

This is the result of a market analysis by the meinhoergeraet.de consumer portal. Lithium-ion batteries are common today, mainly in smartphones but also in many other mobile devices. Items such as tablets, headphones or smartwatches also require these specific batteries. Those devices make use of this type batteries because of their high-energy density, long runtimes and short charging cycles.

Two years ago, Li-ion batteries first entered the hearing aid market as power source in two models. Within a short time of their market presence, they conquered the hearing aid market with around 30 models and thus capture everybody's attention.

Marco Schulz, CEO of meinhoergeraet.de: "In the midterm lithium-ion batteries may hit a 90% coverage of the German hearing aids market."

Bye bye batteries? Lithium-ion batteries - a story of success

The portal carried out a trend analysis¹ that found almost 40% of the participating hearing care professionals in Germany rate lithium-ion technology as defining for the current year. This high level of acceptance will lead to the fact that rechargeable hearing aids will be offered increasingly during their consultations. There are good reasons for this:

Lithium-ion technology has maturity in the field due to many years of production experience and the continuously increased energy output. They have been used in other industries for years. Therefore, on the user side it is a common practice, the almost daily charging of the batteries overnight or on the go.

"One aspect that was previously perceived as extra negative when buying hearing aids, namely buying expensive hearing aid batteries and their necessary disposal, has been eliminated due to the increased use of Lithium-ions. The perception and acceptance of hearing aids are once again positively influenced," Marco Schulz clarifies.

High sales share for lithium-ion batteries

The consumer portal also asked some of the leading manufacturers in Germany for a state of the art based on past sales shares since the introduction of hearing aids with lithium-ion batteries. Hence their assessment, market share is between 30 and 45 percent last year.

In addition, it can be assumed that lithium-ion batteries will available increasingly in lower price categories coming from hearing aid models in the mid-range and premium price ranges today. This will cause a dynamic effect on the part share.

This pushing change will continue, so that an annual increase in demand of 10 percent and more in pieces and value can be expected. Similar development forecasts for small-format

batteries, so-called 3C cells, are documented in a study² carried out by the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI and an analysis³ by the Association of German Machine and Plant Manufacturers e.V.

From a global perspective, this trend analysis for Germany does not mean that hearing aid batteries could become obsolete. Worldwide, the hearing aid battery market is forecast to grow 6.7 percent annually until 2025⁴.

Lithium-ion batteries also provide positive effects for hearing aids with Bluetooth

Over ten years ago Bluetooth technology had more difficulties entering the hearing aid market. The first applications required an additional accessory instead of streaming directly like today. These special remote controls were not often user-friendly, inconvenient and in some cases buggy.

In 2014 a milestone was the introduction of the first hearing aid "Made for iPhone" based on the "Low Energy Audio" protocol (LEA). Although, the power consumption was still enormous comparatively. Streaming for two to three hours a day, common batteries frequently ran out after three to five days instead of six to eight days of use.

As reported by the current GFK trade report for Germany, around 70 percent of all hearing aids make use of Bluetooth, but experts estimate the actual use of this technology in everyday life as less.

Nevertheless: Bluetooth streaming is gaining importance, in addition to an increasing demand from customers and through high-performance lithium-ion batteries. For example, even if sound, e.g. music, telephone calls or TV, is streamed 50 percent of the usage time, a battery life of 24 hours per day is still possible.

¹ Online survey meinhoergeraet.de, Germany, Dez 19 – Jan 20, multiple choice
178 participating hearing care professionals

² Energiespeicher-Monitoring 2018, Fraunhofer-Institut für System und Innovationsforschung ISI

³ Roadmap Batterie-Produktionsmittel 2030, VDMA (Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau e. V.) Batterieproduktion

⁴ Global Hearing Aid Batteries Market Report 2020, 360 reserach reports

Development of Lithium-ion batteries in comparison to Zinc-air batteries

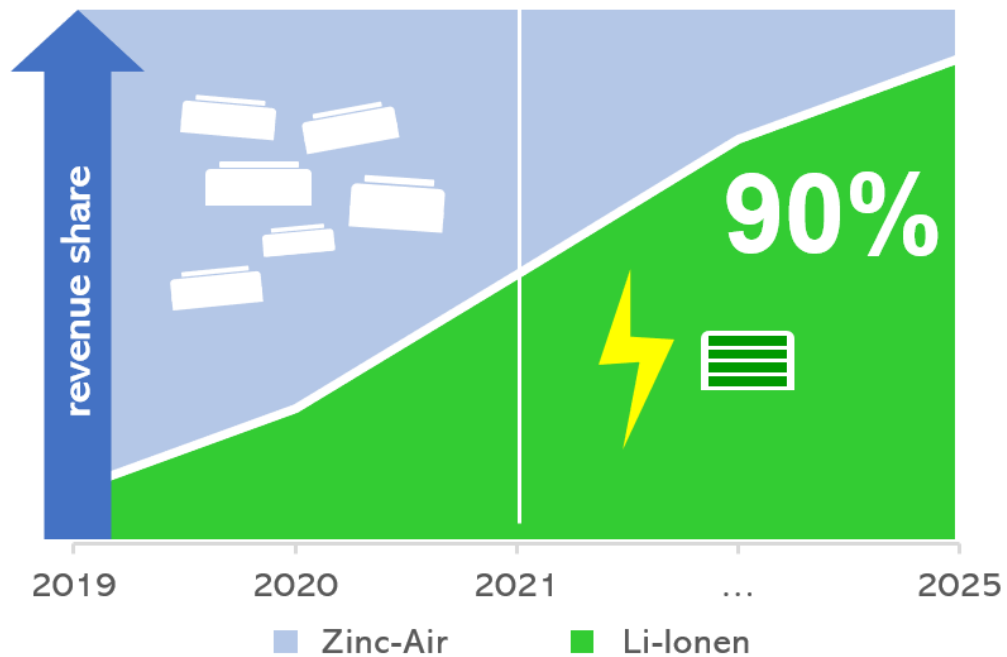


Illustration: Huge potential for Li-Ion-powered hearing aids in Germany

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