



EPOS

FROST & SULLIVAN

EPOS IMPACT SDW 5061 Headset Runs the Analyst Gauntlet

EPOS has nailed it with a comfortable, reliably-performing, true transportable DECT binaural solution that does not need any base stations or big charging stands.

About the Frost & Sullivan Analyst Gauntlet

Frost & Sullivan's Analyst Gauntlet is a structured program wherein participating vendors and service providers give industry analysts deep dives and demonstrations of their collaboration solution. The analyst then uses the collaboration solution over a period of time and provides candid feedback based on his/her user experience with the specified tool.

About the Professional Headset Market

The professional headset market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 16.3% from 2019 to 2026 in terms of unit shipments, reaching 65.7 million devices sold by the end of the forecast period. Frost & Sullivan predicts the professional headset market will witness robust growth due to the increased popularity of cloud meeting services, remote working and virtual learning practices. PC USB and UCC headset shipment, in particular, is expected to almost triple in 2026 due to the ability to enhance software communications and collaboration experiences.

About EPOS

EPOS is the independent company established upon the former successful joint venture between audio specialist Sennheiser and the leading hearing technology group Demant. Part of the Demant Group and headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, EPOS builds on more than 115 years of experience of audio and operates in a global market with offices and partners in more than 60 countries. EPOS' objective is to deliver high-end audio solutions designed for enterprises and gamers.

During 2020, EPOS co-branded the existing Sennheiser Communications portfolio as EPOS | SENNHEISER and notably invigorated the product line with the introduction of new endpoint categories, new product models, and general product enhancements.

Today, EPOS offers a wide variety of professional headsets, including the ADAPT Series advanced corded and cordless UCC (unified communications and collaboration) models for task-based workers and a vast assortment of corded and cordless multi-connectivity headsets for call-centric users under the IMPACT Series.

About the IMPACT SDW 5061 Headset

The Connected Work research team at Frost & Sullivan has evaluated the EPOS IMPACT SDW 5061 headset, an advanced digital enhanced cordless telecommunications (DECT) headset especially designed for call-centric users. As opposed to other DECT headsets that come with a base unit or a large charging stand, this binaural stereo on-ear headset top comes with a charging cable, USB DECT (not Bluetooth) dongle, and a carrying pouch. The IMPACT SDW D1 USB dongle inserts into a USB-A port on a computer for software communications. The product is ideal for both hot-desking and remote working, and works with all major unified communications and collaboration (UCC) provider software.

The product rating is specifically given in comparison to other DECT professional headset products available in the market for PC communications.

For a month, we tested the EPOS IMPACT SDW 5061 headset on a large number of audio, video and web calls, as well as for music streaming and general concentration. **Our total score for the device is 4.32 out of 5.00 or 86.4% over 100%, which is above industry average when compared to other DECT professional devices in the market.**

What follows is how Frost & Sullivan generated this score, taking into account the average rating on 10 different criteria:



EPOS IMPACT SDW 5061

Rating	Analysis
3.75	<p>Criteria: AESTHETICS</p> <p>Our first impression of the IMPACT SDW 5061 was positive. The product comes in a soft black carry pouch that includes the headset top, DECT USB dongle, charging cable, quick instruction guide, safety guide, and compliance sheet.</p> <p>The black and chrome-colored headset top looks modern, well-balanced and elegant with material that clearly demonstrates superior product design and high-quality workmanship characteristic of EPOS's audio heritage. The entire solution has the look and feel of a product that is engineered to last years.</p>
4.00	<p>Criteria: ERGONOMICS</p> <p>The on-ear headset top is very comfortable, with a headband that is easily adjustable and a microphone boom that can be oriented in both directions for wear on the right or left ear.</p> <p>The 53mm leatherette ear pads are comfortable in contact with the ears, even with long hours of usage. The pads can be easily replaced if needed.</p> <p>The headset top weights 136 grams, notably lighter than competitors' solutions, making the binaural headset easy to wear throughout a full day without strain or discomfort.</p>
4.40	<p>Criteria: FEATURES</p> <p>User Control: The IMPACT SDW 5061 headset top has easily identifiable control buttons on one side of the ear pads, including a hook button to switch the headset on/off, accept/reject calls, and verify battery life; a mute and a volume button for call and music control; and an additional mute button in the microphone boom.</p> <p>The headset is also equipped with a motion sensor that activates to turn the headset on upon wearing and off when removing the device.</p> <p>Connectivity: DECT is the primary IMPACT SDW 5061 connectivity. The headset top connects to a PC or Mac via the IMPACT SDW D1 USB Dongle inserted into a standard USB-A port. The headset can also connect to advanced IP desktop phones that offer a USB-A port. Few professional headsets in the market offer DECT connectivity to computers via a DECT USB dongle, offering users less interference, wider range of coverage, and regulatory compliance.</p> <p>The IMPACT SDW 50X1 headset family is also among the few lines in the market that uses a charging cable instead of a base unit or a charging stand. To charge the product, the headset is simply placed into the magnetic holder of the charging cable that is connected to the computer. This makes the solution perfect for individuals that value an uncluttered desk or for those that appreciate a highly portable solution. In this sense, the product offers the portability and form-factor of its advanced Bluetooth® USB headset counterparts, yet with secure and reliable DECT technology.</p> <p>Security: The IMPACT SDW 5061 has a Protected Pairing process that establishes a secure connection between dongle and headset to enable secure communication "over the air". Additionally, the secure pairing process is augmented with 128-bit authentication (DSAA2), reaching step B in the DECT security level. Step B makes this device more secure than DECT products that have only implemented the DECT security step A. By comparison, the security level of the IMPACT SDW 5061 outperforms four out of four DECT headset series of competitor 1 and two out of three series of competitor 2.</p> <p>UCC Service Integration: The IMPACT SDW 5061 is compatible with many major unified communications platforms and softphone brands. It is important to note that the product is not "certified" with Microsoft Skype for Business, Teams, or other platforms at time of our evaluation.</p> <p>Others: The headset top has an in-built busy light indicator that lights up red to notify others when the user is on calls and conferences.</p>

Rating	Analysis
4.25	<p>Criteria: AUDIO TRANSMISSION & MICROPHONE PERFORMANCE</p> <p>The IMPACT SDW 5061 offers noise cancellation via a two-microphone noise cancelling system that eliminates a notable amount of background noises.</p> <p>Microphone frequency ranges are 150 Hz-3.5kHz for Narrowband and 100Hz- 7.5kHz for Wideband.</p> <p>Equipped with EPOS voice detection technology, the headset is ideal for noisy office or home working environments. When testing the IMPACT SDW 5061 in a noisy home office environment, the microphone performed fairly well in blocking out most potentially disruptive background noises.</p>
4.25	<p>Criteria: TALK TIME & WIRELESS RANGE</p> <p>The talk-time of the IMPACT SDW 5061 is up to 14 hours on a full battery charge, which is one hour above average for DECT headsets. Battery full charging time, on the other hand, is 7 hours from 0% to 100% and 3 hours from 0% to 50%, which is a bit longer than standard DECT products. However, it is acceptable given the above-average talking time.</p> <p>The IMPACT SDW 5061 wireless coverage range is 135m for line-of-sight and 40m in a busy office. This is fair for a DECT product.</p>
4.40	<p>Criteria: AUDIO RECEPTION & EAR CUP PERFORMANCE</p> <p>The audio quality of the IMPACT SDW delivers a rich listening experience that is beyond conventional business standard for both communicaitons and multimedia.</p> <p>The on-ear headset is equipped with EPOS patented ActiveGard technology which protects headset users from hearing loss or damage from acoustic shocks and complies with European standards for protection against noise at work. While the IMPACT SDW 5061 does not offer active noise cancelling (ANC), surrounding noise for the user is fairly reduced in listening mode.</p>
4.75	<p>Criteria: END USER SOFTWARE APPLICATION</p> <p>The IMPACT SDW 5061 comes with the intuitive, free-of-charge EPOS Connect software that ensures the headset works seamlessly with the majority of conferencing soft clients and softphones in the market and provides access to the latest firmware updates and personalized settings.</p> <p>Via the EPOS Connect software, the user can change the settings for audio quality (narrowband/wideband), range, audio limiter, and USB auto audio. Personal settings can be configured when running the application for the first time of activation. After this, EPOS Connect ensures the headset interfaces with the softphone seamlessly. The desktop interface is easy to use, is supported on Windows, Mac®, iOS and Android, and is available in eight languages including English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and Simplified Chinese.</p>
4.00	<p>Criteria: PRICE</p> <p>The retail price of IMPACT SDW 5061 may be perceived as a bit high by some buyers; however, the device feature functionality, superior product quality, and its innovative value proposition (a transportable, yet highly secure DECT professional headset for heavy users of computer-based communications and collaboration) are certainly worth the investment. In general, the premium price paid for EPOS products is justified by the Company's well above average quality and technology that assures the device can last for years.</p>

Rating**Analysis**

4.75**Criteria: EASE OF USE**

On-boarding for the IMPACT SDW 5061 is extremely simple as a plug-and-play solution. Once the headset top is charged with the charging cable before its first use, the IMPACT SDW D1 USB Dongle is connected to the computer. The dongle flashes blue or goes directly into pairing mode. The computer operating system detects the USB audio device and installs the necessary drivers. For pairing with the headset top, the user presses the dongle button for three seconds to enter pairing mode, and the hook and mute button until hearing a voice prompt of "GAP pairing". When pairing is successful, the dongle LED lights up in a dimmed blue and the headset LED switches off.

The EPOS Connect desktop application easily walks the end-user through the device settings and user adjustments, as needed.

4.65**Criteria: IT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE**

The IMPACT SDW 5061 can be efficiently managed with the cloud-based EPOS Manager utility. The software tool allows administrators to see all of their company's deployed devices on a single dashboard. The tool allows IT departments to efficiently manage and update the firmware of products remotely, centralize configurations, analyze the usage of the devices, run reports, and gain additional insight. EPOS Manager supports all major computer operating systems, including Windows, Mac®, and Linux.

Conclusion

The IMPACT SDW 5061 will resonate among many users who wish for a device that can:

- 1) offer computer USB and UCC connectivity in a growing cloud-based communications and collaboration world;
- 2) accommodate the needs of all-day, call-centric users in terms of form-factor and technology;
- 3) provide a highly transportable solution and a cleaner workspace;
- 4) guarantee the highest levels of communications security, an increasingly required characteristic today; and
- 5) extend the wireless range of communications well beyond Bluetooth® technology.

Aesthetics, ergonomics, high audio quality, and functionality make the IMPACT SDW 5061 attractive among other DECT-compliant competitive products in the market. EPOS has nailed it with a comfortable, reliably-performing, true transportable DECT binaural solution that does not need any base stations or big charging stands. With our score of 86.4%, this device could only be substantially improved with a decrease in price, making it a good investment value as it is today.

Click here for additional details about the EPOS IMPACT SDW 5061.