



Styletto: Exceptional Hearing Technology Meets Modern Design

2018-08-27

Christina Hakvoort, MBA & Pamela Burton, Au.D.

8 out of 10 consumers prefer these high-tech hearing aids with a cutting-edge form factor

Source: 84% chose the hearing center offering Styletto

Today's consumers rely on their technology more than ever. They want their devices to be connected, rechargeable, and enhance their lives overall. Just consider the growing use of smartphones, smartwatches, and even earbuds. Hearing aids are no exception.

From crystal clear sound, to ease-of-use via rechargeability, and sleek design, Signia's Styletto delivers a hearing aid that meets the most demanding consumer needs. It also includes all the audiological benefits of the acclaimed Signia Nx platform for superior hearing – including a more natural sounding own voice for higher first fit acceptance.

With Styletto, Signia improved upon the positively received Styletto hearing aid, combining Bluetooth® connectivity with the one-of-a-kind SLIM-RIC form factor. This unique shape looks nothing like the traditional hearing aid and even won two renowned international design awards, the Red Dot Award for Product Design and the iF Gold Design Award.

It also stands out for consumers who wouldn't otherwise wear hearing aids, offering them the latest hearing technology in a modern-looking device. As you'll learn below, Styletto does more than just allow you to give your patients an exceptional listening experience. Simply having it in your portfolio can help you attract new patients and influence their purchasing decisions.

Enhanced audiological features

Styletto offers the features most important to hearing aid wearers today: rechargeability, direct streaming, connectivity, and – with Signia's signature Own Voice Processing (OVP™) – hearing themselves naturally.

Rechargeability

The benefits of rechargeability in hearing aids are numerous, from eliminating the cost of batteries and concern about them running out of power, to being more in line with other modern consumer products. But Styletto takes the promise of rechargeability to a new level. Not only does its sleek and small charging case deliver a full day of wearing time including five hours of streaming, but the tiny case can also power the hearing aids for an additional three days without having to be plugged in. As many patients are always on the go, this gives them a new level of independence.

OVP

A common issue among hearing aid wearers is a displeasure with how their own voice sounds while wearing the devices. Many report their own voice sounding tinny or mechanical. While previous solutions focused on using open fittings, this can affect hearing performance, especially in noise. Signia's OVP, included in Styletto, is the first genuine solution to this challenge, by processing the wearer's voice separately from the rest of the soundscape.

OVP leads to greater patient success, as it was found to improve spontaneous acceptance of own voice for 80% of dissatisfied hearing aid wearers.¹ Another study on own-voice satisfaction revealed that 86% of participating hearing aid wearers were either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the sound of their own voice with OVP, compared to just 58% and 37% who were satisfied with two competitive offerings.²

Connectivity

Just as people who wear earbuds love to stay connected to their devices wirelessly, hearing aids should do the same. Styletto delivers full Bluetooth connectivity, allowing patients to stream phone calls, music, and TV audio directly into their hearing aids and at the perfect volume. The hearing aids can also be controlled via an easy-to-use app, enabling users to change programs and settings discreetly from their phones.

Tip: If patients wonder how this uniquely shaped hearing aid will perform, remind them that it has all the same features and audiological benefits as Signia's other high-performing devices!

Unique design drives consumer preference

In addition to its enhanced hearing technology and other features, Styletto stands out to consumers due to its unique shape. To gauge how potential hearing aid wearers would respond to the Styletto form factor, Signia launched a survey with more than 500 consumers in the U.S. aged 40 to 65 with mild-to-moderate hearing loss; 92 percent of these consumers did not wear hearing aids.³

With a large-scale sample size of patients from this age group, the study provides crucial insights to the preferences and intentions of your target demographics. The findings from the study reveal that the Styletto SLIM-RIC is both attractive and memorable compared to other hearing aid models, while influencing consumers' intent to purchase.

Finding #1: Patients remember Styletto

The participants first viewed two different photos of hearing aids – one included Styletto, and the other contained Signia's Motion® product. The respondents were then shown a third photo with eight hearing aids of different styles, including both Styletto and Motion. The respondents' task was to identify which hearing aids they had seen before. Styletto was recognized by 88% of the participants, whereas the Motion was only recognized by 47%.

Finding #2: Patients prefer Styletto

In a related experimental task, the participants were shown two photos, each showing five different hearing aid styles on display at a practice. The difference between the two photos was that in one, the middle instrument shown was Signia Motion, and in the other photo, the Motion product was replaced with Styletto.

While viewing these two photos, the participants were asked: "Which one of these two hearing centers would you most likely go to, to consult with them about hearing aids?" An overwhelming 84% chose the hearing center offering Styletto. This means its unique design is preferred by 8 out of 10 people, and simply having it on display can help get more consumers in the door and make a practice more distinguishable from competitors.

Tip: Styletto is proven to attract attention. Consider putting a Styletto display in your lobby, outside-facing window, or wherever it can attract the most views and drive people in.

Finding #3: Patients are more likely to buy when offered Styletto

Styletto was also found to influence intent to purchase for prospective hearing aid users. Given the choice between the Signia Pure® and the Signia Motion, or none, the majority of participants chose the Pure product (57%), while 24% chose the "none" option.



When presented with a choice, 84% of the survey participants reported that they would visit the office that included Styletto in their display.

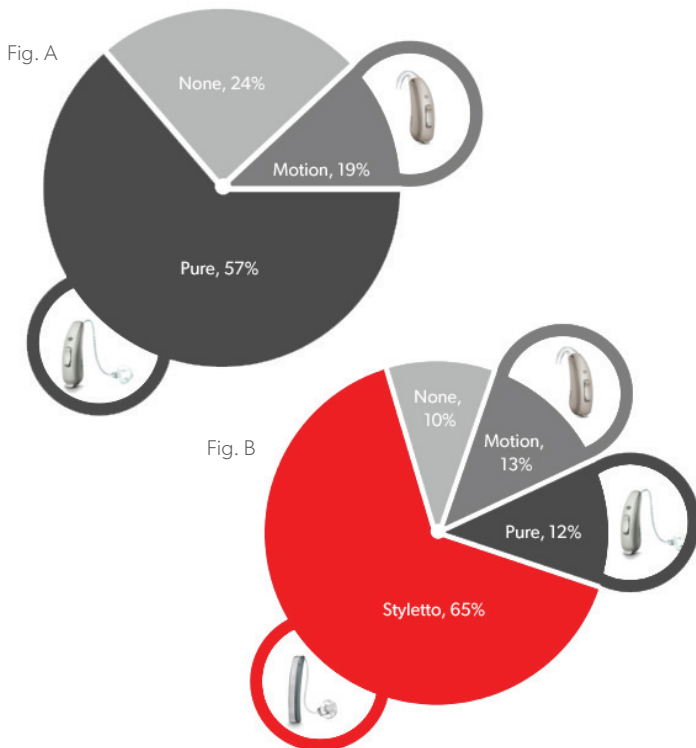
The participants were then shown a different photo displaying Pure, Motion, and this time, Styletto was added. They were asked which they are most likely to buy, or none at all. By far, the overwhelming favorite was Styletto (65%), picked by many who previously had selected the Pure instrument. Importantly, however, the number of individuals who said "none" dropped from 24% to only 10%, meaning simply offering Styletto can help you convert another 14% of patients who wouldn't otherwise select a hearing aid.

Furthermore, 23% of the 65% who selected Styletto had chosen "none" when Styletto was not an option. These data reveal nearly 90% of consumers would select a hearing aid when Styletto is among the offerings, showing its impact on purchasing decisions and increased market penetration.

Tip: Consider the monetary aspect of offering Styletto. If simply having the device can convert another 14% of patients into hearing aid wearers, think about the revenue you may be missing out on by not including Styletto in your portfolio.

Patient and practice satisfaction

Since its launch in March 2019, Styletto has received a great deal of attention across the hearing aid industry and beyond. More importantly, the feedback from consumers – actual Styletto wearers across all ages – shows a high level of satisfaction with this product.



When participants were presented with Signia Pure RIC, Signia Motion BTE, or no hearing aid at all, nearly a quarter selected the no hearing aid option (Fig. A). However, 9 out of 10 people selected a hearing aid when Styletto was included, and the majority chose this option (Fig. B).

Consider Darren, a 42-year-old police officer and volunteer firefighter who relies on Styletto on the job and at home with his family:

“When I started using the Styletto, my hearing drastically improved. It assists while I’m on patrol, answering fire calls and especially at home in conversing with my three young children. When I go out to dinner, I can hear the conversations at other tables in the surrounding areas. My hearing is now on the same level as my colleagues, if not better.”

There’s also Mat, a 24-year-old physical therapist assistant and YouTuber who is always on the go:

“The rechargeability of it is amazing. That the case itself holds multiple days of charge is phenomenal. I like camping and without electricity I can just pack them up in the case – and not have to throw away batteries every week. Before Styletto, there were times at work when the battery died, and I’d go the rest of the day without hearing aids. No one else is doing what Signia is doing!”

While Styletto’s modern look might make you think it’s just for young people, consider Peter, a 72-year-old with 10 years of experience wearing hearing aids:

“It is absolutely transformational. In terms of not just improving my hearing, but improving the quality of my life. The quality of sound is far beyond anything else I have encountered with other products.”

It’s not just patients who recognize the benefits of Styletto. Hearing care professionals across the country are having enormous success fitting patients with these hearing aids. See what your peers have to say about Styletto:

“I wear these and have several patients who wear them. All are very pleased with the connectivity, sound quality, and sound quality while streaming from the phone or TV unit.”

– Audiologist, Myrtle Beach, SC

“The style of the hearing aids and also the charger is really unique. This style has been highly sought after in my practice but the technology is also really great.”

– Audiologist, Wausau, WI

“Of the first 3 fittings with the Styletto all three first time users are actually excited to be wearing them & enthusiastic about using the APP! And telling their friends about their positive experience! The plus is that they don’t show.”

– Hearing Instrument Specialist, Harwich, MA

Help more patients hear with confidence

Styletto was designed to disrupt common patient beliefs about what a hearing aid can be. Rather than the traditional, bulky device, Styletto’s slim shape and modern colors make it look more like that hottest new technology than a hearing aid.

And with advanced audiological features like rechargeability, OVP, and direct streaming, it is a powerful solution for patients reluctant to wear hearing aids – and experienced wearers looking to upgrade to the latest technology. You can meet the needs of both groups with Styletto – a high-tech, modern-looking device with the power to help patients hear and live their lives with confidence.

References

1. Høydal, E. H. (2017). A new own voice processing system for optimizing communication. *Hearing Review*, 24(11), 20-22. Further details: www.signia-pro.com/ovp-study.
2. Powers T, Froehlich M, Branda E, Weber J. Clinical study shows significant benefit of own voice processing. *Hearing Review*. 2018;25(2):30-34.
3. Hakvoort, C. & Burton, P. (2019). Increasing Style, Reducing Stigma: The Styletto Solution.

The Bluetooth® word mark and logos are owned by the Bluetooth SIG, Inc. and any use of such marks by Sivantos is under license. Other trademarks and trade names are those of their respective owners. Copyright © 2019 Signia GmbH. All rights reserved. Part # SH201919 11/19 V11011083 10K. Signia is a registered trademark of WSAUD A/S. SIV-14193-22



Christina Hakvoort, MBA

Christina Hakvoort, currently heading the Premium Segment at Sivantos Product Management, has more than 10 years of experience in the hearing instrument business. Prior to joining Sivantos, she worked in the consumer good industry. Christina holds a degree in

mechanical engineering and has an MBA from the European School of Management and Technology.



Pamela Burton, Au.D.

Dr. Burton is the Vice President of Customer Care for Signia hearing instruments. Dr. Burton received her Au.D. from Central Michigan University in 2006 and has been focused on hearing instrument technology and customer focused roles throughout her 33-year career with the company.

She has authored numerous articles and a book chapter on amplification and has been a lecturer at local, state and national meetings on amplification topics.