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WIRELESS EARBUDS ARE CUSTOM 3D PRINTED SO THEY WON'T FALL OUT

 PUBLISHING & MEDIA

Currently seeking funding on Kickstarter, OwnPhones is enabling consumers to customize their earbuds to their own unique style and ear shape through 3D printing.

Earbud headphones come as standard with most smartphones, but they're typically prone to breaking, and their one-size-fits-all design means that they can be uncomfortable and fall out when exercising. In the past, we've seen [HeadFoams](#) make the devices more durable, especially for young users. Now [OwnPhones](#) is enabling consumers to customize their earbuds to their own unique style and ear shape through 3D printing.

Currently seeking funding through Kickstarter, the startup aims to make the best-fitting and best-sounding earphones available. Customers looking to order a pair can download the OwnPhones app and use it to take a short video of their ear, which is digitally translated into a 3D model from which the earbud can be created. Because the devices are built to perfectly fit inside users' individual ears, the buds don't fall out even if they're used during exercise, and they won't be uncomfortable. OwnPhones enables customers to choose from a range of designs — from simple to eye-catching — so they also fit with users' personalities.

The snug fit enables true noise cancellation, although the app also comes with a feature that lets certain noises through, so listeners aren't completely cut off from their environment if they choose. On top of this, an optional color-changing LED on the outside can indicate to others if they don't want to be disturbed or are ok to talk.

As well as dealing with the problem of ill-fitting earphones falling out, OwnPhones use wireless technology to avoid the problem of tangled or damaged cables. A basic pair of OwnPhones is available to pre-order through Kickstarter from USD 149, although actual retail price is expected to be from USD 299. The campaign will run until 25 August.

Could 3D printing improve individual fit and bring personalized design to other mass-produced products?

Kickstarter: www.kck.st/1p6JuZQ

17th July 2014

Website: www.ownphones.com

Contact: www.twitter.com/ownphones