

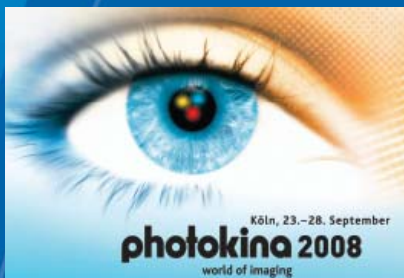
No. 2 among photo accessories

Camera bags and backpacks rank among the bestselling accessories on the photo market. According to the industry association Photoindustrie-Verband and the market researchers GfK, in Germany alone relevant figures went up in 2007 by over 30 percent against the previous year: In 2006 somewhat over 3.5 million items were sold, compared with almost 5 million camera bags and backpacks in 2007. Sales in 2007 totalled almost 85 million euros. This segment is now No. 2 on the market for photo accessories, second only to lenses. In a Western European perspective, sales of camera bags and backpacks on the "big three" photo and imaging markets Germany, France and the UK exceeded 260 million euros in 2007.

This positive development is linked with the strong demand for digital compact cameras, camcorders and digital single lens reflex cameras. But the demand for camera bags and backpacks as such is

rising, too, as these products come in ever more sophisticated types and in designs for every taste. Encouraging trends are lasting in Germany also in the present year. For the first two months of 2008, Photoindustrie-Verband and GfK state a volume growth of 10 percent and a sales increase of 15 percent, both compared with the relevant period of 2007.

Camera bags - To be on the safe side



All leading manufacturers of camera bags and backpacks will present their articles at photokina 2008 from 23 to 28 September in Cologne - with further developments of existing products and new designs. This segment equally attracts photo traders, professional photographers and other professional users, amateur photographers and videographers. This comprehensive range of photo transport systems will be on show only at photokina - World of Imaging.

The days are over when camera users had to make do with plain camera bags or backpacks which often failed to provide adequate protection for valuable equipment and were not much to look at, either. But over recent years, manufacturers have done a lot in this field, so that modern camera bags and backpacks leave very little to be desired in terms of safety and comfort. No matter whether users are mountain hiking, do-

ing a ski tour or planning a beach holiday, they can always take their laptops and compact cameras with them. Obviously, there is room for smaller items, too, such as mobile phones or wallets. Anything goes! Photoindustrie-Verband and GfK note that buyers of new camera equipment usually invest also in the safe transport of their newly purchased products. This holds true in particular for users of single lens reflex cameras, because they attach great importance both to safety and carrying comfort. Special systems were developed for nature photographers, who transport photographic equipment across large distances.

But what use is the most fascinating motif if the camera is not at hand right in time? Therefore many bags, which are carried practically like rucksacks, can swing forward easily and enable the fast retrieval of photo equipment. For safe transport in "bumpy rides", e.g. on horseback or motorcycles, camera carrying systems include special hip and shoulder straps. Extra compartments are available for some elements from the digital world: storage cards, mobile phones and laptops.

Photographers are out and about also in foul weather. For this reason, many camera bags and backpacks are made of water-repellent materials. Consumers continue to prefer camera bags over camera backpacks.

Manufacturers do not neglect the owners of compact cameras, either. Especially in this field, much thought is given to practical use and design. Alongside a wide range of classic models in elegant black or grey, bags are now on sale in almost all fashion colours. Camera bags with good margins are bestselling articles in the photo trade.

