

The L-Mount Alliance: a strategic cooperation between Leica Camera, Panasonic and Sigma

Cologne, 25 September 2018. At the company's press conference prior to the opening of photokina 2018, Leica Camera AG, Panasonic and Sigma announced a strategic partnership. The 'L-Mount Alliance' is a previously unparalleled form of collaboration that will particularly benefit the customers of all three partners. The collaboration enables Panasonic and Sigma to make use of the L-Mount standard developed by Leica for their own developments and to offer both cameras and lenses utilising this lens mount. As a joint effort of all three partners, this alliance will increase the importance of the L-Mount technology to the world of photography even further.

Due to their numerous interchangeable components, system cameras are extremely versatile and can be individually configured for a wide range of photographic needs. Here, the bayonet is the most important interface, because the lens makes a decisive contribution to imaging performance and, in turn, to the quality of the final results. Thanks to the strategic partnership between Leica, Panasonic and Sigma, customers will be able to choose from a much wider selection of cameras and lenses without having to limit themselves to a particular brand, as all three brands will share the same proprietary bayonet mount.

Dr. Andreas Kaufmann, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Leica Camera AG and majority shareholder: "For photographers, the ability to choose from a wide range of lenses for their system of preference is extremely important. Especially in the strongly growing market for mirrorless system cameras, users seek increasingly greater product diversity to fulfil a wide range of different photographic needs. We have therefore decided to work together with prominent partners in the photographic segment as an immediate response to these needs. Our long-established partnership with Panasonic is a collaboration based on mutual trust, and the company's expertise in the area of electronics is unquestioned. Sigma is also a highly respected company that has become firmly established especially in the areas of optical design and lens manufacturing and is able to perfectly complement our existing portfolio of L-Mount products. We are convinced that we and our partners can realise mutual and sustainable growth for all our products."

Mr. Tetsuro Homma, Senior Managing Executive Officer, Panasonic Corporation: "Panasonic has always focused on revolutionising the camera sector to make the lives of photo enthusiasts easier, more sophisticated and more enjoyable. Our longstanding partnership with Leica has brought many high-performance and high-quality digital cameras to the market; fusing Leica's superior optical technology with Panasonic's digital technologies. Our partnership has enabled us to accelerate the development of excellent digital camera products, and the L-Mount alliance with Leica and Sigma is a great example of such acceleration. This is an alliance of growing players, which will make a fundamental difference to the future of the imaging industry. We have always been a challenger, bringing innovation to the industry under the slogan of "Changing Photography" to meet the high expectations of professionals. Our partnership with Leica and Sigma will create additional business opportunities for our businesses, but more importantly will advance our customers' joy of photography."

Mr. Kazuto Yamaki, Chief Executive Officer, SIGMA Corporation: "As cameras evolved into digital and mirrorless, requirements from users and systems introduced by each brands diversified. Currently, there are overwhelming choices for users, but in terms of extensibility and possibility, the system truly meets user's needs is not yet available. SIGMA is joining this alliance to develop mirrorless cameras benefiting from a short flange back. As SIGMA strives to develop high performance, high quality and innovative products, this alliance will strengthen the level of completion and the extensibility of our camera system and provide greater user benefits. Leica is a magnificent company that has been contributing to photographic cultures for more than 100 years, and Panasonic is leading the industry by developing reliable technologies across various fields. Together with SIGMA's unique, high performance and high quality products, the L-Mount will evolve as an extremely attractive system for users."

About the L-Mount

The L-Mount was developed by Leica Camera under the proviso of providing customers with a future-proof, flexible, robust and precise bayonet mount that would fulfil even the most demanding photographic needs. Since its initial appearance in 2014 within the Leica T, development of the L-Mount was continued by Leica as well as by its strategic partners, which led to significant improvements and therefore an effectively new and more polished L-Mount technology.

To ensure maximum product diversity, the diameter of 51.6 millimetres was chosen to make the L-Mount suitable for use not only with full-frame cameras, but also on cameras with APS-C sensors. The short register of only 20 millimetres enables a short distance between the lens and the sensor, which in turn enables considerably more compact construction - which is particularly helpful for developments in the wide-angle lens segment. To ensure resistance to even the most extreme stresses, and to guarantee customers maximum reliability in many years in intensive use, the camera bayonets are manufactured from wear-resistant stainless steel and with four flange segments that prevent canting and ensure particularly secure and precisely positioned lens attachment. The standardised L-Mount contact strip ensures trouble-free communication between the electronic components of the lens and the camera - including the possibility of installing future firmware updates for lenses to react to technological advances and exploit the full performance potentials of the lens.

The lens mount is currently used in the Leica SL full-frame camera system and the Leica CL, TL2 and TL APS-C camera models. All lenses made for the various different systems can be used on all cameras without adapters and without any functional limitations - this illustrates only one of the numerous benefits the common bayonet brings for customers. In the near future, not only Leica Camera AG, but also Panasonic and Sigma will be announcing further products that use the common standard.

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