

GoPro out to ride online video creation wave

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GoPro on Thursday beefed up its line of action-catching mini-cameras as the struggling company aimed to ride the growing wave of creating captivating video to share online.

"Life happens fast," GoPro chief executive Nicholas Woodman said while unveiling new cameras and a second-generation Karma drone at a media event in a planetarium in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco.

"Using a GoPro helps you capture your life, slow it down, and see it in a whole new way."

A new Hero 6 priced at \$499 was billed as the most powerful and easy-to-use GoPro model to date, capable of capturing video in ultra-high definition 4K resolution.

GoPro also showed off a new Fusion [camera](#) designed with spherical lenses to capture everything around it, letting users later choose viewpoints as they wish for videos.

"Fusion is the first of its kind," Woodman said.

"You shouldn't have to point at what you want to film; you should be able to just film what you are experiencing, and Fusion makes that possible."

Fusion cameras, priced at \$700 and set to begin shipping in November, were part of a move by GoPro to provide online content creators such as YouTube talent with cameras they will hopefully use in surprisingly creative ways, according to senior director of product management Pablo Lema.

"We are providing a bit of a shovel to the gold rush," Lema said, referring to the hot trend of online [video](#) creators finding cash and fame by amassing online audiences.

"I think the world has been asking for something like this."

The upgrade to the GoPro lineup comes ahead of the prime holiday shopping season, and as the California-based company is under intense pressure from low-cost competition in the mini-camera market.

In March, GoPro announced plans to trim another 270 jobs in a bid to become profitable.

GoPro, which soared to popularity with cameras used for social media and extreme sports photography, said the new round of cuts were part of an internal reorganization to "do fewer things better."

It followed a cut late last year of 15 percent of GoPro's staff, about 200 jobs at the time.

Woodman said GoPro last year did a "Herculean job" of rolling out cloud connect cameras, mobile editing applications, an online platform for editing or sharing videos, and a Karma drone designed to carry its cameras.

"We have shifted from a revolutionary year last year to an evolutionary year this year," Woodman said when the latest job cuts were announced.

He stressed that the company was facing no new problems, with revenue on the rise, and that the belt-tightening was motivated by a drive to become profitable.

"Competitors will come, and that validates our market," Lema told AFP.

"It is easy to make a camera. It is really hard to make a GoPro."

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