



DAC OF THE YEAR B-Audio B.dac.EX

The B-Audio B.dac is the top converter in the company's range and in EX guise it incorporates a streaming module that can be controlled with a range of third party software including UPnP, Roon and MPD apps. It includes S/PDIF via wire or fibre, AES/EBU over XLR, and USB, it also receives Airplay from your iOS devices. The EX version adds an RJ45 for Ethernet connection and a USB slot for music stored on a suitable drive. The EX version has integrated cloud/UPnP server too, and plays PCM up to 32-bit/384kHz and DSD up to 256.

While a fine basic specification sheet in its own right, the B-Audio ethos doesn't end there. The B.dac EX includes custom DSP room correction and a unique jitter removal process from the Bermann bros (the 'B' in the name 'B-Audio') that combines phase lock loop and asynchronous resampling tech to

avoid the limitations of both by incorporating their own clocking for all sources and sending that to the conversion stage alongside the signal. The B.dac also has upsampling filters using a custom designed DSP engine with a linear phase filter, to reduce pre-ringing whilst preserving the transient response. Even the power supply uses separate transformers for the digital and analogue sides of the circuit with regulators for each element within those circuits.

Jason Kennedy was deeply impressed by the performance of the B.dac EX, both as a DAC and as a streamer, "You don't get so much fine detail with lesser converters, nor do you get such engaging music. This isn't just technical refinement, it's musically sophisticated too, or at least as slick as the music you choose to play." Jason also felt that, "Bass is superb on the B.dac EX; as finely rendered and distinct as any other frequency range with a great nimbleness when required. It's not the dry and slightly grainy bass you get with many D/A converters but full, juicy, ripe low end that reflects the nature of whatever instrument it's producing with ease." He concluded by saying, "It's the small gains that make all the difference; in this case delivering digital audio with the clarity and effortlessness of good analogue, and that is still very rare." +

Reviewed in Issue **201**

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