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“ ... EXCEPTIONAL ...
hard to match or surpass
AT ANY PRICE.”

audio
ideas
guide

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The Statement D1 is among the most expensive home theatre processors in our experience, but offers just about every imaginable feature, as well as exceptional build quality. It will take much of this review just to outline its complement of capabilities. As their brochure claims, it is "nine high-end components in one: preamplifier, 24-bit/192-kHz precision upsampler, analog-to-digital converter, digital-to-analog converter, surround-sound processor, HDTV video switcher, multiroom/whole house entertainment control centre, built-in AM/FM tuner, and headphone preamplifier."

The rear panel is almost completely covered in RCA, Toslink and XLR inputs and outputs, with 7 coaxial digital audio inputs, 3 Toslink digital audio inputs, and an AES/EBU input, all assignable to multiple sources; there are also 7 stereo RCA analog inputs, with a single XLR balanced analog input pair. Also provided is a 6-channel analog input for DVD or SACD audio players.

On the video side, there are 4 component video inputs, assignable to multiple sources, and with bandwidth to handle

1080p high definition signals. As well, there are 7 S-video inputs, and an equal number of composite video input jacks. Outputs are also plentiful, with 10 balanced XLR outs, 10 RCA single-ended outputs, these labeled Front-L, Front-R, Centre-1, Centre-2/Zone 2L, Sur-L, Sur-R, Rear-L, Rear-R, Sub-1, and Sub-2/Zone 2-R. Like most of the inputs, these outputs with choices are assignable, so it's possible there could be quite a lot of setup involved in a complex A/V system, especially one that is multiroom.

There are 2 component video outputs, and single S-video and composite outs (I suspect anyone investing in this component will go balanced), with the possibility of using either balanced or unbalanced Zone 2 feeds, the former obviously better for long cable runs. The processor also has a stereo headphone jack, which is fed by a circuit that folds all channels into 2, which is also able to be used with the Zone 2 and 3 options. Both analog and digital recording options are also provided, including variable volume settings, and in video, S or composite outputs. Now you can understand why the rear panel is full of in/out jacks of various persuasions.

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And I haven't even gotten into the bass management functions, which include most of what you'd find in a high end subwoofer and more. These include independent crossovers by speaker group and for each subwoofer in 5-Hz steps, variable phase, and LFE crossover bypass for full range speakers. There are independent movie and music configurations, a special setting for use with surround speakers, centre channel EQ, and a room resonance filter to smooth subwoofer performance.

“... robust and pure ... precise locational accuracy ... a standard of naturalness and clarity seldom heard ... truly an audio-ophile component ... gives up nothing to the best separate stereo components ...”

The D1 has a bewildering array of surround modes: Dolby Digital 5.1, EX, Stereo Downmix (for headphones and Zones 2 and 3), DTS 5.1, ES, and 96/24, with 6.1 output in most surround modes. There are also various Dolby Pro Logic modes for movies and music, as well as DTS Neo6 Music and Cinema. And then there's THX MusicMode 7.1 Post Processing.

And if that's not enough, Anthem has developed its own surround modes: AnthemLogic-Music (no centre channel), and AnthemLogic-Cinema (up to 7.1). In addition, you can select all-channel stereo or mono.

“... bass management functions include most of what you'd find in a high-end subwoofer and more ... a level of versatility and overall functionality that I've never seen before in an audio/video component ... I liked its front panel display — tells you the basic settings ... buttons are logically arrayed ...”

The Statement remote control is, of course, a universal unit that can be programmed to read other components' codes, and in fact, two identical remotes are supplied, either as his and hers, perhaps, or to program one for another zone, or even to program separate movie and music uses. One nice feature on the remote is the ability to directly access FM stations by keying in the frequency as a 4-digit code, for example 99.9 being 0999. It also has a feature called “Lip-Sync Delay” that allows adjusting the sound to perfectly align visual and audio in cases where the display is a little slower than the sound. There's a lot more I could say about the remotes, but space really doesn't permit; just this section of the owner's manual is five pages long!



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“This preamp could run a whole house’s audio and video ... The interior is packed ... layout looks businesslike and put together to last ... sound from FM was excellent ... the foundation of an extremely good audio and video system.”

But this does illustrate that mastering the D1 will be an intensive and time consuming process, providing a level of versatility and overall functionality that I’ve never seen before in an audio/video component. In fact, it was impossible to verify every feature and function of this component, so we concentrated on the important things: functionality for the normal things we do in a hi-fi/home theatre system, and sound and video quality.

Starting with superficial things, I liked its front panel display, which tells you the basic settings for surround modes, signal path, and level. The buttons are logically arrayed, starting with AM/FM presets and tuning under the display, and below these adjustments for surround, tone controls, balance and mute. At right is the large volume control, with level/balance set buttons for all 7 channels, and individual power buttons for all 3 zones. Source and path buttons are on the left side of the front panel. This preamp could run a whole house’s audio and video.

The Anthem remote control groups its buttons quite logically with path and source at top, with numeric buttons below, with volume and preset below within easy thumb range. The cursor setup is just below, with specialized functions taking up the bottom part of the remote.

The interior is packed with circuit boards for each area of operation, with a large toroidal transformer at right isolated from the interior chassis. With computer grade wiring harnesses used between boards, the layout looks businesslike and put together to last.

I checked out the FM tuner on our outdoor Lindsay double dipole antenna and got 42 stations cleanly, the tuner able to bring in fairly difficult signals like that at 103.1 with little noise. The sound from FM was excellent, showing off the exceptional audio of CBC Radio 2.

The overall sound quality from this preamp/processor is also robust and pure, with the surround modes offering precise locational accuracy and a standard of naturalness and clarity seldom heard in A/V components. The D1 is truly an audiophile component that gives up nothing to the best separate stereo components, and unless you’re into the felicities (and distortions) of valved components, you will probably find the D1 the foundation of an extremely good audio and video system that would be hard to match or surpass at any price.

“... the Statement home theater package definitely lives up to its name ... establishes Anthem in the upper echelons of home theater design and manufacture ...”

The P2 or P5 amplifiers faithfully convey the music or soundtrack to your speakers in 2 or 5, or even 7 channels, with monoblock design with fully independent power supplies per channel, and 14 bipolar output devices driving each channel’s output stage with 325 watts rms at 8 ohms, or 500 watts at 4 ohms. This is an overkill amplifier in each case, with massive heat sinks to help them run cool. The penalty is weight, the P2 being 75 pounds (34 kg), and the P5 130 pounds. Here’s where a burly dealer comes in handy!

While not a system you’ll want to move around, the Statement home theatre package definitely lives up to its name, and establishes Anthem in the upper echelons of home theatre design and manufacture for Canada and the world.

