



D1



P5

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Anthem is flourishing under the umbrella of Paradigm. After the critical success of the AVM 20 processor and its associated amplifiers, Anthem decided to go upmarket as it expanded its line.

Typical of Anthem and Paradigm's latest endeavors, they have made a very strong effort to deliver high feature content and audio performance for relatively little money. The Statement D1 processor is not cheap, but read on to understand why it may be worth every nickel, and perhaps more.

UNIQUE FEATURES

The Statement D1 is a truly handsome piece. Although sharing some obvious family DNA with the AVM 20, it is bigger, more substantial looking, and with a casing that looks well finished and of high quality. The green display of the AVM 20 has been

replaced by a very nice, large, bluish-white vacuum tube display, and the green lights have been replaced by the much more chic blue ones. The front panel is covered with even more buttons, but they are well labeled, fairly logically arranged and their silver finish is relatively attractive. The back panel is very well laid out, with four (that's right, four!) component video inputs, S-Video and composite inputs for every source, balanced outputs, and a pair of balanced audio inputs. There are the prerequisite 7.1 inputs for a SACD/DVD-A player, and HDMI switching is promised for the future. As with the AVM 20, the processor is fully hardware and software upgradeable, with one of the first software upgrades for Pro Logic IIx, which allows for 7.1 processing from two channels. Makes you wonder how many channels Dolby can keep extracting from plain old stereo.

The remote is the exact same unit as the AVM 20's - it has a nice rubber feel, pretty blue lighting, is fairly well laid out, but is still not up to par with a Home Theater Master MX-700. The good news is that you get two of them, which I originally thought was a mistake in packaging. This is so you can have a separate remote for a second zone. Thoughtful touch.

The Statement D1 is a true 24bit/192kHz processor. It is unique in that it upsamples everything coming in to this level (except for direct pass-through analog inputs). It has the same architecture as the AVM 20, so Anthem users will find their way around the D1 without a problem. It has all the latest and greatest formats, I believe it even had the proverbial kitchen sink thrown in! There is almost nothing missing from this unit, save component video menu output

and video upconversion. The setup menu is quite good, easy to understand and flexible. I particularly liked the ability to set crossover points for all the speakers.

“... sound is neutral — and very full ... top end is well defined ... full, clear and revealing ... mid range is also well detailed and neutral ... Bass is full and defined ... very, very impressive performance ...”

INSTALLATION/SETUP/EASE OF USE

The D1 was tested with a HALO A51 amp and with the Anthem P5 amp, a hulking brute of a piece of equipment. The P5 is a true monster, one that would not fit in my Salamander audio rack and requires two 15 amp circuits to fully feed it. It is engineered like a monoblock amp, with each channel independently mounted on the chassis. Each channel has its own transformer winding and fourteen bipolar output devices. It has balanced inputs and single ended inputs, and is rated at a powerful 325 watts/channel. Bottom line, this thing is powerful enough to light small cities.

Other equipment used was the Krell DVD Standard, Marantz DV-8400 universal player, Krell Resolution speakers, and my KEF Reference speaker system. Interconnects used were the Wireworld Silver Eclipses and the AudioQuest Pythons. Speaker cables were also the Silver Eclipses for the front three speakers.

“I can't think of a better processor, not only in the \$5K arena, but in more expensive ones. Anthem has totally hit a home run with this product ...”

Setting up the Statement D1 is very straightforward and also gives the user a lot of control over the many features of the processor. This is one of the processors that can convert the information from the 7.1 inputs to digital to provide bass management as necessary, and then back to analog again. Although this does theoretically result in some loss of resolution, it is well worth the option to get proper time delay and speaker management for DVD-Audio and SACD. Another feature that I found truly useful is the ability to set a particular crossover point for each speaker as well as the subwoofer, something that really allows you to fully tune your system.

When I first hooked up the Statement D1, I went right to two-channel performance with the Krell DVD Standard hooked up via the balanced inputs. This immediately challenges the analog section of the processor, the section that I believe is not only the toughest to get right, but also the section that really makes or breaks a processor. Right out of the box, the Statement D1 was impressive, and a different animal than the AVM 20. This processor has an excellent analog section, one that actually compares very well with my much more expensive Krell HTS 7.1. The sound is neutral, slightly laid back in its presence, and very full. The top end is well defined, and unlike the AVM 20, which has a laid back and slightly dark top end, the Statement D1 is full,

clear and revealing. The mid range is also well detailed and neutral to slightly laid back in presence. Bass is full and defined. In comparison to the Krell, the D1 has slightly less top end clarity and detail, but it comes very close to the \$8000 unit. Over the past couple of years, I have been fortunate enough to have many of the major processors on the market in my system, and my personal search for a processor ended with the Krell, as it had the best analog section. The Statement comes very close, and this is a very, very impressive performance for a processor.

Surround processing such as Dolby Digital, DTS, PL 11, etc. was performed in an exemplary manner, marred only by the occasional mild pop in picking up or cutting off a digital signal. It is hard to find a major processor that doesn't do a good job of surround processing, and with the excellent analog section, the D1 ends up right on top of the heap.

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The 7.1 analog input can be converted back to digital for bass management with little loss of resolution, but my stand has always been to spend your money on full resolution rear speakers if possible, and I continue to wonder why we just can't get a digital standard for high resolution audio.

Adding the P5 to the mix increased the impact of this pair. The HALO A51 is probably one of the best amps for \$4,000 available, and although the P5 can't quite match the smooth microdynamics of the Parasound, it comes close and it makes a case for itself via massive amounts of power and huge reserves. I was not in a position to hook up two 15 amp circuits to this beast, so my review is based on just one circuit, and I am not sure exactly what impact it had on the performance. Still, it was hard to deny the power this amp brings to the table even using only one circuit.

FINAL TAKE

I can't think of a better processor, not only in the \$5K arena, but in more expensive ones. Anthem has totally hit a home run with this product, and I am starting to wonder what the engineers can come up with if given a \$10K price point. The P5 amplifier leaves little to say. It has a tendency to leave you somewhat speechless in the amount of power and performance delivered. Honestly, it deserves much more written about it, but space limitations prevent me from doing so. Anthem is delivering such enormous performance and value for the dollar that it has to be auditioned by those serious about the performance of their multi-channel equipment. Highly recommended.