



Classé Audio's new SSP-800 Preamp/Processor has a separate DSP module to permit upgrades.

New Reference Preamp from Classé

Not content with the performance of its award-winning SSP-300 and SSP-600 preamp/processors, Canada's Classé Audio has upped the ante by releasing an SSP-800. **David Nauber**, EVP at Classé, says the new flagship processor not only improves on previous technologies, but adds ones that have only just been developed. *'In recent years the development of high definition audio and video has accelerated, rendering many relatively new home theatre components incompatible or obsolete,'* he said. *'The early adopter's quest for the latest technology is never cheap or without risk. But those who have sought out the highest quality components have been able to relax and enjoy them. They know that the latest technology is rarely a threat to genuine quality.'*

The SSP-800 is a ten-channel preamp/processor, offering balanced and single-ended connections for all channels. A 64-bit double-precision Texas Instruments-based platform handles all the DSP, using floating point arithmetic to ensure the most accurate results. The SSP-800's bass management filters, level adjustments and parametric filters also benefit from the added precision. This time around, Classé's design team has future-proofed the DSP engine by building it as a replaceable module, and is already in the process of planning future upgrades.

Unlike older surround processors that typically are equipped with largely analog inputs, the SSP-800 mostly uses digital connectors. The four HDMI 1.3a inputs for audio/video sources are supplemented by standard SPDIF (coax) and EIAJ (optical) digital inputs for audio. Nauber told *Australian Hi-Fi* that Classé elected to use HDMI 1.3a primarily to support the component's long life in an evolving market. *'As new sources emerge, the SSP-800 offers the potential for transferring more information into and through its circuitry,'* he said. *'For example, the video signal path supports 36-bit Deep Colour video even though Blu-ray Discs are only 24-bit video sources. In general, the bandwidth of components and circuitry in the SSP-800 is sufficient to accommodate all current and proposed next-generation sources.'*

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