

## *User Experiences and 5-Star Reviews for the Essence HDACC II-4K HDMI Hi Res Audio DAC / Preamp / Headphone Amp for 4K Sources and TVs*

“Bob has been great. He communicated everything to me very well before I made the decision to purchase the HDACC II-4k. Once I got it, he answered all my questions on how to use it properly. I primarily bought it to listen to my SACDs properly because my Blu-ray player had no analog output that I can plug into my Vintage Technics System. What I love about the HDACC II-4k is the options that it allows me.

I can listen to my old system as-is, but I can also add newer components that use HDMI, coaxial and optical digital cables. It doesn't hurt that it also has a headphone amp and an analog input. This is like the Swiss Army Knife of DACs. I highly recommend it. It serves a great purpose and does not disappoint you once you get the hang of all the options. The build quality is great as well. I love the aluminum body. The pictures do not do it justice”. Sheldon L. Audiophile Consumer, Dec 2024.

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“I received my HDACC II here in Hungary and today I installed it into my system. For first look/hear everything is working (USB and HDMI input tested, until now). Finally I can hear SACD DSD sound from my UHD Blu-ray player in full high resolution!” Sandar Toth, Audiophile Consumer May 2024

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“The main driver for buying the HDACC II-4K was to stream Qobuz from my laptop but it quickly became the control center for my vintage system: Quad ESL 57's, Hartley 24” subwoofer, Bryston preamp and amps.” Larry Hunter, Audiophile Consumer, April 2024

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“I must give a HUGE shout out to Bob Rapoport from Essence for Hi Res Audio who sold me his infamous and beautiful HDACC II-4K HDMI DAC. Yes, your latest Sony Blu Ray player with this DAC will totally fulfill your needs. It truly brings life out of my studio setup.

I have this Joe Jackson Body and Soul as a Canadian pressing on vinyl but also a unique audiophile version of this on translucent vinyl. To be honest?? (Yes, I did compare) This SACD/DSD knocks them both out of the park. I love my vinyl to death, but I am so excited to explore the SACD/Blu Ray Audio world.

Thank you to Bob and others in the SACD/ Blu Ray community who have shown me the way. I'm so excited. Darrin Crawford, Canadian Audiophile, Jan '24

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"I'm mostly a classical music guy but I have music in many formats (see above) , which is why I chose the HDACC II. The sound quality was uniformly superb, but the biggest surprise was the Blu-ray disc of Let It Bleed by the Stones. It was superior—even to the SACD version".

Ron L., Audiophile Consumer Dec '23

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"Best DAC, Preamp, HDMI switcher, balanced output, remote. It can't be touched at its price of \$649". Ron Bufford, Audiophile Consumer, July 2023

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"Audiophiles and HDMI just don't seem to play well together, especially with 2 channel audio systems. I recently purchased the Apple TV4K AV Streamer for Hi-Res Audio and Video but then encountered 2 problems. The Apple TV4K doesn't have an optical output so I couldn't integrate it with my older McIntosh Home Theater Control Center which only supports HDMI version 1.3.

My 2nd Rotel 2 channel system with a new Reference Preamplifier doesn't have a HDMI input. I've used a Binary Audio Extractor but still wasn't satisfied with the performance from 2 different streaming devices using Amazon Music HD. It was also important to me to be able to view the music lyrics when streaming. The HDAAC II 4K solved both problems. I purchased a unit for both systems. The customer support was top notch! Bob Rapoport was very quick to respond to my questions and provided expert advice. He suggested bypassing the McIntosh Control Center and using the HDAAC II 4K as a Preamplifier. I AM BLOWN AWAY BT THE SOUND QUALITY! I appreciate all the Technical Support. How Sweet the Sound!"

Brian C. Audiophile July 2023

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"Everything works great on the HDACC II-4K. The Volume is as good as I could have wanted, even when listening to Blu Ray Discs of some older movies where the volume was not loud enough. Turning the headphone impedance up to 300 or 600 Ohms takes care of that.

Being able to plug the HDMI sources directly into the HDACC II-4K, rather than through an extractor, and then through a DAC is a big plus. The Remote is very convenient, too. Sound quality using HDMI is outstanding, with music sounding better than ever. Stronger, fuller, deeper, and richer!" Robert Wong, Audiophile Consumer, Dec 2022

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“When EAN reviewed the HDACC II-4K HDMI v2.0b DAC Preamp a few years ago, we loved everything about its ability to decode hi-res PCM audio from its 4 HDMI inputs as well as USB in, and Optical/Coax inputs and outputs. It features upsampling, headphone amp, analog input, remote control, native 4K UHD video pass-through to your 4K TV. It’s a bargain at \$649!

We wondered aloud to Essence whether the factory could activate the DSD-over-HDMI decoding feature and eventually, low and behold, the native DSD decode process was finally turned on in a firmware update. So now audiophiles with SACD/DSD player capability, via the HDMI, can connect their player to the HDACC II-4K. The HDACC II-4K is one of the few DACs that has HDMI connectivity, and adding the SACD/DSD support compatibility is just icing on the cake.” John Gatski, EAN Feb 2022. Product of the Year Award 2021, Best Update.

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“It started out as needing a solution for converting Apple TV HDMI to an Analog signal for my NAD T778. By the end, I got so much more. I spoke to Bob about my concerns, and he assured me that this was easily done..... along with all my other HDMI connections. Easily programmable with the Harmony Remote.

Oh, and one more thing. With the DAC portion of the Essence, I’m hearing sounds I’ve never heard before. Now I have to listen to all the music ever recorded (that’s a lot) all over. Simply put, a richer, warmer and crispier sound. All in all, I give the HDACC II-4K an A+ for meeting and exceeding all my goals. Thanks (and Bob’s tech support is top notch)” Allen Carpenter, Audiophile Consumer, August 2022

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“In combination with the Lyngdorf Amp and Paradigm speakers, the whole thing just sings with the HDACC II-4K, it’s like my speakers don’t even exist”. Garrett Shelton, Audiophile Consumer, Sept 18, 2020

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“The Essence HDACC II-4K packs a lot of power in a small package, and punches \*well above\* its weight sonically – I’m very satisfied with its clear and transparent sound. Using a high-end ESS D/A chip, and with loads of useful connectivity options unique to this unit, this is exactly the DAC I needed for my main A/V listening system – great work, Essence!” Andrew Dewar, PhD, Professor of Interdisciplinary Arts at New College & School of Music, University of Alabama, August 2020

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“I just want to say that the HDACC II-4K works brilliantly and I’m very pleased with the sound it produces. Thank you for offering this amazing product!” Jake Ross, Audiophile Consumer, Jan 2020

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“I’m happy to report that I got extremely lucky with the Essence HDACC II-4K. Having upgraded to a universal 4K player with SACD capabilities, the next step was integrating my stereo system into a home theater setup for more immersive and detailed sound, and finally getting to hear the Super Audio layers on my hybrid SACDs. Not being too enthused about the prices of DACs or the prospect of replacing my receiver, I thankfully stumbled onto exactly what I was looking for, and dealing directly with Bob Rapoport made it easier every step of the way. The HDACC II-4K was delivered within 48 hours, and Bob provided a lot of helpful information that supplemented what was in the manual, which made for a straightforward setup process. I did have a few troubleshooting inquiries that he answered promptly via e-mail, even looking into specs regarding my specific player to make sure that I was getting the most out of the HDACC II-4K’s capabilities.

Having now listened through both speakers and headphones, use of the HDACC II-4K has revealed layers left to explore within my library of music and movies, and the clarity and depth of sound already have me geared up for dedicated listening to albums that I thought I was overly familiar with. Going from having mainly heard ancient CD or worn-out vinyl editions of classics like The White Album, There’s A Riot Goin’ On, and White Light/White Heat to high-resolution PCM and DSD at a quadrupled sample rate really ups the mileage that I continue to get from them. Just hearing and seeing that the HDACC II-4K is accurately processing the 192kHz audio track on Neil Young’s Rust Never Sleeps concert Blu-ray is a testament to the potential of home audio and feels awfully close to the ideal way to experience this timeless music.

I’m more than satisfied with the HDACC II-4K as a solid long-term investment for getting the most out of the ongoing abundance of high-resolution media, allowing one to appreciate both the finer details of recorded music and the crucial role that audio plays in the film viewing experience. (I haven’t quite dove into testing out movies yet, but getting a taste of the audio on the 4K UHD disc of Beverly Hills Cop through my headphones was quality-wise far beyond anything that I’d ever heard through them before”. 😊 Garret Kriston, Musician / Writer Jan 2022

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“From a practical standpoint, having no perceivable noise and low latency makes this the best “soundcard” I’ve ever plugged into a machine, and I regret throwing money at ASUS and Creative Labs in the past. The headphone amp and available connections gives me a sense that I’ll continue using this piece of hardware for many years to come, so even though I ended up spending more than I initially wanted to on a DAC for my computer, I think the extra investment was worthwhile. The small footprint is also very nice. I was having a hard time finding anything that would fit on my computer desk that had all the inputs and outputs I was looking for that wasn’t a full-blown A/V receiver.” Brandon Kim, Computer Audiophile, Feb 2020

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