



unique high end audio

Press Release

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High End Quality Music from a PC

At the High End trade fair in Munich, MBL is introducing its USB MCMI interface technology. It enables music stored on a computer to be played on MBL systems in a quality never achieved before - and the USB interface is the simply key.

For purist audiophiles, high end quality music playback, and saving and playing music on a computer have always been two worlds that have nothing to do with one another. The music is usually stored on the computer in a mutilated state, such as MP3 – something that would never satisfy true music lovers. But even playback of high-resolution formats - for example through the sound card of a PC – often sounds terrible.

That is all going to change. The development team at the Berlin high tech master MBL has introduced an innovation, the USB Master Clock Mode Interface (USB MCMI), an interface to be used in the company's D/A converters. It allows bit-precise and timing-accurate playback of standard and high-resolution media. This occurs at a sampling rate of up to 96 kHz and a word length of up to 24 bit, directly from the computer's hard drive via the MBL systems – in the highest, unadulterated quality.

This is MBL's reaction to the trend that more and more music lovers do not compress their files and save their music on the hard drive in high-resolution format. With the new technology, the music files can find their way into the high-quality MBL systems – without loss and without detouring via CD.

All that is needed is conventional playback software such as Foobar, iTunes, J. River, Media Monkey, WinAmp or Windows Media Player on a PC or a Mac. The connection to the D/A converter is made via the computer's USB interface. No special driver need be installed, the operating system's USB audio driver takes care of integration. Besides playing high-resolution music, playback in CD quality with 16 bit and a sampling rate of 44.1 kHz is of course also possible – once again, with no adulteration or distortion whatsoever.

MBL chief developer Jürgen Reis is excited about the results: "The sound experience is breathtaking. Until now, we have never been able to see such blackness between the notes. The bass is extremely powerful, but is still solid enough. The high and middle notes are clear and concise without sounding sterile."



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The secret of the brilliant quality is in part the virtually absence of jitter. While most suppliers apply an "Asynchronous Sample Rate Converter" (ASRC) to reduce jitter – which in turn distorts the sensitive audio stream – the new MBL interface ensures that the data stream remains unchanged, while still reducing jitter to almost nothing.

Another property that increases quality: Time precision of the output signal is not determined by the imprecise oscillators of the computer. Instead, two highly precise crystal oscillators specify the exact time of data transfer in the USB MCMI (Master Clock Mode). In addition the D/A converter cannot be disturbed by pulses from the computer's switching power supplies, because the interface electrically isolates the computer from the D/A converter and thus from the hi-fi system.

MBL has announced that its D/A converters mbl 1611 and mbl 1511 will be standardly equipped with the new USB MCMI beginning in Summer 2009. A retrofitting kit for existing units is in the works.

Summary:

- Playback of high resolution audio files with 24 bit and sample rates of up to 96 kHz
- Native driver support
- 1:1 Bit true without ASRC
- Master Clock Mode instead Slave Mode
- Jitter free signal

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