

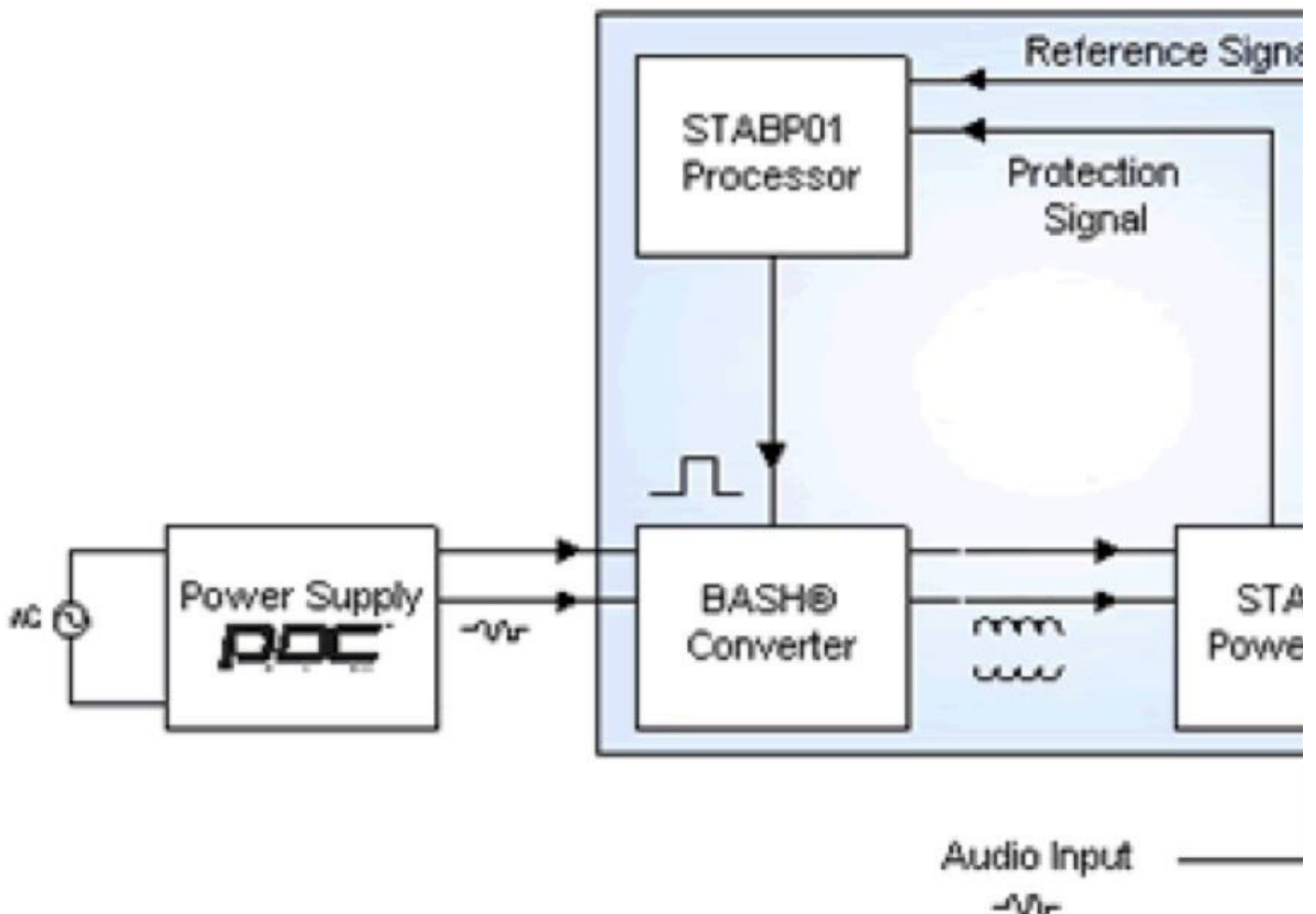
Test: DAC amplifier Elac EA101EQ-G

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For the loudspeaker-driving power amplifier, BASH relies on the analog, sophisticated Class AB principle. However, this does not work as usual with a constant supply voltage: Rather, it is fed by a switching regulator, which supplies a proportional output voltage controlled by the input signal.

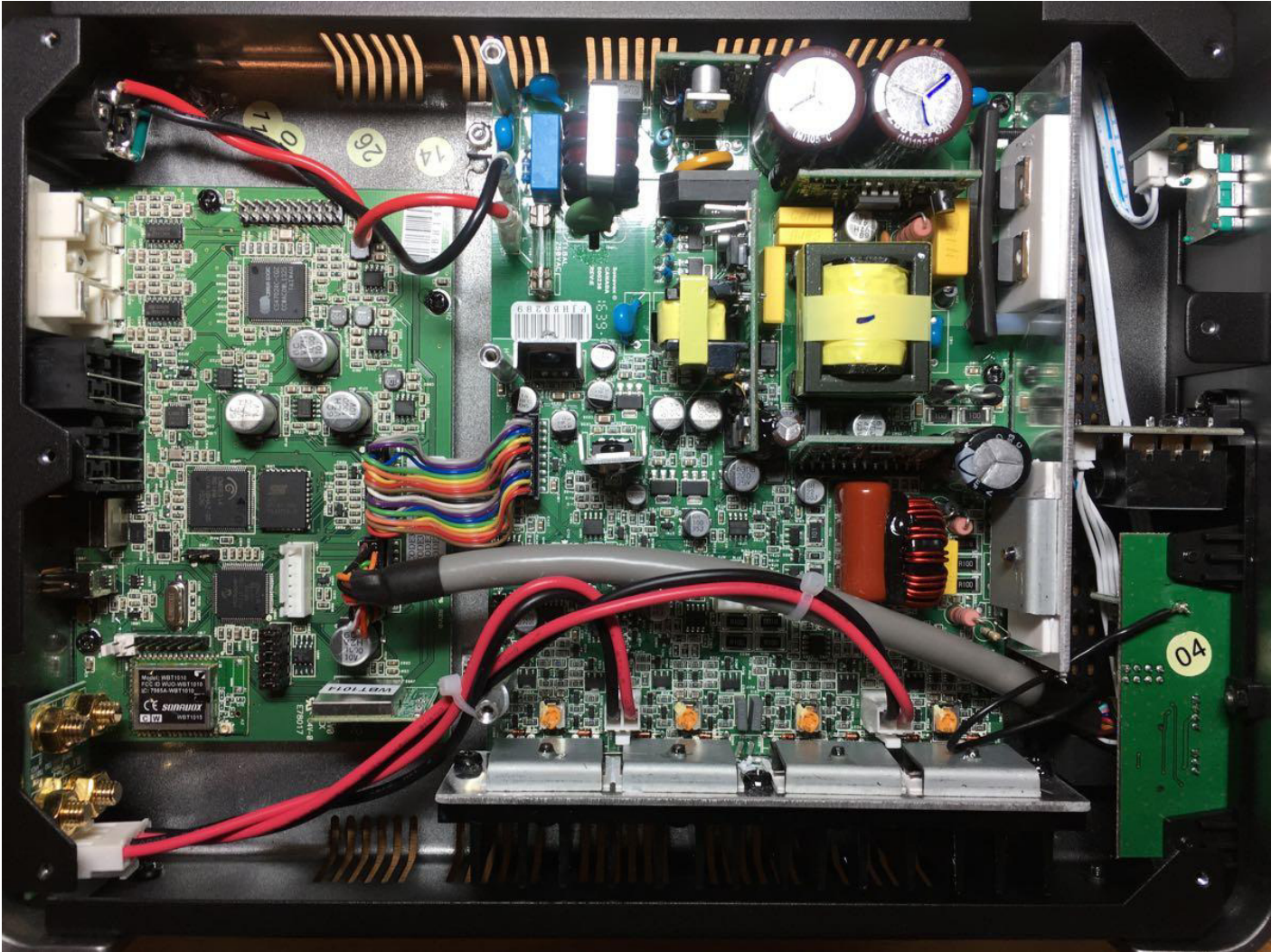
With this piggyback arrangement, BASH combines the advantages of analog and (quasi) digital operation - namely known good sound characteristics with high efficiency and concomitant, low heating.

This eliminates the large heatsinks required with traditional class AB amplifiers, making BASH amplifiers as compact as switching amplifiers. How BASH works exactly is shown in the picture gallery below.



No less interesting for amplifier techies is the small-signal processing on the Elac EA101EQ-G. Essentially, only one component is responsible for these - namely the CS47024 from the American digital audio specialist Cirrus Logic.

This highly integrated system-on-a-chip (SoC) solution combines all A / D and D / A converters, including sample rate converters, the S / P DIF interface controller and a flexible programmable controller 32bit signal processor together with the associated data memory.



Inside view of the Elac EA101EQ-G: Good to see the BASH amplifier layout (center of picture below). Above it is the switching power supply for the entire power supply. The left third of the picture shows the board for the digital and small signal processing. (Photo: J. Schröder)

Elac EA101EQ-G: Listening test

A BASH amplifier - as with the Elac as a full-range concept - you do not meet every day. That's why I was particularly curious about the hearing test, for which I used both floorstanding speakers such as the **Canton Vento 886** and compact speakers like the **Elac Uni-Fi BS U5** .

The Elac EA101EQ-G certainly had sound personality in a positive sense: with sonorous timbre in the upper bass, the compact Kieler played beautifully "punchy" and grooved on dancefloor-filling

tracks like Maceo Plex's remix of Royksopp's Sordid Affair .

He tends to paint warm sound pictures with a coating that is commonly referred to as "analog". The high-pitched range reproduced the Elac rather unobtrusive and finely durchzeichnend.

Thus, the EA101EQ-G actually hit a different sound direction than the class D circuit breakers that are common in its class: these usually play extremely transparent and airy at the top, but they sometimes miss a bit of internal, tonal substance - in this regard showed the Elac EA101EQ-G significantly down-to-earth character.

Amplifier power levels of barely more than one watt per channel are completely sufficient for loudspeakers with conventional efficiency to produce hi-fi-compliant volumes in normal living spaces. In this respect, the Elac EA101EQ-G, which is at least 2 times 80 watts in size, is already able to "alarm" dynamically - which was achieved with the above-mentioned loudspeakers even in the rather dampened **LowBeats** listening room.

But it is also clear that the Elac should not necessarily be low-efficiency and / or power-consuming speakers with 2-ohm impedance sinks should expect - then he gets at higher levels in Leistungsnot, whereupon his protection circuit puts an end to the drift.

Of course I could not resist trying the app-controlled Auto Blend & Calibrate (ABC) setup during the listening tests. To check their flexibility, I chose a powered subwoofer from another manufacturer to complement the **Elac Uni-Fi BS U5** - the Teufel T4000 designed for wall or floor mounting .

The sonic result could be heard quite well: ABC made for a seamless transition between subwoofer and the main speakers and also put in the 50-Hertz region a powerful filter to tame the actually existing **room fashion** a little - the automatic did so exactly what she should.

Sonically speaking, the speaker trio could still get a lot more out of a manual setting with a lot of tact, time and acoustic experience - the automatic, however, works faster, smarter and requires no acoustic knowledge.

Elac EA101EQ-G: Conclusion

It is fair to argue whether such a small and inexpensive device like the Elac EQ101EQ-G has to be discussed as thoroughly as the previous one. My opinion: Absolutely - because on closer inspection, you quickly realize that the EA101EQ-G is not just another, compact amplifier, but the protagonist of a new generation of hi-fi devices.

Thoughtful in concept, clever in terms of technology, smart in appearance and functional in practice - all combined with very decent sound quality and not least a down-to-earth price.