

Amazon Puts Alexa in Even More Things

Written by Marco Attard
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Amazon announces a lot of Alexa-powered devices at its September 2019 hardware event, with 15 devices ranging from the obligatory (such as updates on the Echo speaker range) and the somewhat weird (an Alexa-powered ring anyone?).



Front-lining the event are, perhaps obviously, the Echo device update as Amazon promises to have a smart speaker for just about everyone. Audiophiles get the Echo Studio, a take on the likes of the Google Nest Max and Amazon HomePod featuring five drivers, including a downward-facing 5.25-inch woofer, 1-inch front-firing tweeter and three 2-inch mid-range speakers aimed in different directions. It supports 3D audio and Dolby Atmos, and includes a 24-bit DAC and 100kHz power amplifier for high-resolution music playback via, of course, the Amazon HD Music service.

The regular Echo also gets an update with a new fabric options and "even better" audio, while the Echo Dot with Clock is a version of the puck-shaped Echo Dot with an LED display under the speaker mesh. Users can set the display to show the time, as well as temperatures or alarm times. Customers wanting a smart speaker with a display get the Echo Show 8, an update of the original Echo Show with an 8-inch HD display.

Amazon also gets wearables into the Alexa act-- the Echo Buds, for instance, are the first

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Amazon earbuds. They feature Bose Active Noise Reduction Technology and built-in microphones, allowing users to access Alexa hands-free for music or directions, among other functionality. The Echo Frames do the same thing, only in the shape of glasses equipped with directional speakers (but no display). In case one wants an even more discrete Alexa-capable device, the Echo Loop is a ring complete with a tiny microphone and speaker.

Last year saw Amazon release [an Alexa-powered microwave](#) , and 2019 sees the company up the ante with the Smart Oven, a combination oven, microwave, air fryer and food warmer users can pair with an Alexa-enabled device for voice control capability. The Echo Glow, on the other hand, is a voice-controlled smart lamp able to change colour and brightness on command, while the Echo Flex is a smart plug with a USB-port allowing the addition of Amazon accessories, such as a motion sensor or nightlight. It also contains a microphone and speaker for Alexa queries and commands.

Amazon acquisitions Ring and Eero also get a moment in the hardware event spotlight. Ring has a pair of new security camera additions in the shape of an update on the versatile Stick Up Cam and the compact Indoor Cam. Meanwhile Eero offers a next-generation mesh wifi router complete with Alexa capability allowing users to control the wifi with their voice.

The final Amazon offering is both cheerfully weird and rather smart-- the Fetch, a tracker customers attach to pet collars. It uses Sidewalk, an Amazon-developed wireless protocol allowing the connection of ultra-low power devices of long distances. It is based on the 900MHz spectrum, and Amazon says it works over distances up to 500m. The company adds the Fetch is but the first of a number of devices using the protocol, and hopes it will find use in anything from smart lights, weather sensors and even rain sensors one puts in the mailbox.

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