

[TECHNOLOGY★] AMAZON'S WEIRD NEW ROBOT SPEAKER, DADSPAINED

(P1) On Thursday, Amazon introduced what might just be its weirdest gadget yet. It's called the Echo. Essentially it's a Wi-Fi-connected speaker you can talk to, sort of like Siri or Google Now. To wake it up, just bark the activation word "Alexa."

(P2) You can ask Echo questions and issue all sorts of commands, per Amazon, like:

- Set an alarm for 8 a.m.
- How many teaspoons are in a tablespoon?
- Play music by Bruno Mars
- Will it rain tomorrow?
- Add gelato to my shopping list.

(P3) Echo syncs with a companion app in Fire OS and Android, and you can also stream other music services outside of Amazon via Bluetooth, like Spotify or iTunes. It relies on something called far-field voice recognition to hear you from wherever you are in the room, but blah blah blah—don't take my word for it. Let this Cool Dad casted by Amazon explain it in this handy video; bonus points if you make it through the whole thing:

[Video]

<http://youtu.be/KkOCeAtKHlc>

Words: 170

Source: <http://www.fastcompany.com/3038173/amazons-weird-new-robot-speaker-dadsplained>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you found the passage difficult to read or had problems understanding specific words or idiomatic expressions, please discuss them with your tutor. The following discussion questions should be answered in your own words and with your own arguments.

1. Briefly summarize the content of the article in your own words.
 2. (PI) What is Echo? What do you need to do to activate the machine?
 3. What things can you do with Echo? What things would you like to do with Echo?
 4. Do you think you'll buy Echo if it's available in your country? Why or why not?
 5. What do you think of "intelligent personal assistants" developed by different companies? What potential do you see in this technology?
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WHO/WHAT/WHERE ARE THEY?

Siri

(Software) an intelligent personal assistant and knowledge navigator which works as an application for Apple Inc.'s iOS. The application uses a natural language user interface to answer questions, make recommendations, and perform actions by delegating requests to a set of Web services.

Google Now

(Software) an intelligent personal assistant developed by Google. It is available within the Google Search mobile application for the Android and iOS operating systems, as well as the Google Chrome web browser on personal computers. Google Now uses a natural language user interface to answer questions, make recommendations, and perform actions by delegating requests to a set of web services.

Echo

(Software) An intelligent personal assistant developed by Amazon that comes in a form of speaker.

Bruno Mars

(Person) an American singer-songwriter, record producer, voice actor, and choreographer. Born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii, by a family of musicians, Mars began making music at a young age and performed in various musical venues in his hometown throughout his childhood. He graduated from high school and moved to Los Angeles to pursue a musical career. Mars produced songs for other artists, co-founding the production team: The Smeezingtons.

VOCABULARY

Gadget	(n) (작고 유용한) 도구[장치]
Essentially	(adv) 근본[기본/본질]적으로
Sort of like	(expression) informal/colloquial way to say “~like”
Bark	(v) 크게 고향치다 ((at))
Activation	(n) 작동시킴
Command	(n) 명령
Sync	(v) 동기화하다
Companion	(n) 동반자, 동행; (마음 맞는) 친구
Far-field	(adj) 원거리장(遠距離場)
Casted by	(v) 캐스팅되다
Handy	(adj) 유용한, 편리한; 가까운 곳에 있는
Make it through	(expression) ~을 통과하다