



*A look at some of the most popular technology gifts this Christmas
Feel free to share this document with your friends and colleagues
Happy Holidays!*

Email us at info@triella.com • Call us at 647.426.1004 • More articles www.triella.com

Day 12 - Virtual Home Assistant

Google and Amazon go head to head in this cutting edge product category

One of the hottest new types of technology for the home is the Virtual Home Assistant – a voice activated smart device that can answer questions, interact with your digital information, and even manage “smart” appliances like lighting, thermostat and stereo systems, all while providing a space age experience of talking to a computer that seems to know you and exists to serve your whims. Currently, there are two main options for virtual assistants: Google Home and Amazon Echo. Let’s take a look at the two and see how they stack up.



The Amazon Echo was the first virtual assistant to hit the market, and with that head-start has built up an impressive range of third party devices with which it can interact, include NEST

{00041304.DOCX:}

smart thermostats, Philips LED lighting, smart kitchen appliances and others. In addition to the cylindrical echo unit pictured here, there are also smaller “hockey puck” sized units called Echo Dot that can be linked together and placed throughout the house, expanding the range and capability of the device.



Google Home is quite similar in capabilities to Amazon Echo, but with a slightly different personality. In reviews and head to head comparisons, Google Home has proven to be smarter in its ability to parse questions and deliver answers about factual information (unsurprising, considering Google is the clear world leader in search, data analytics, and AI.) However, due to its more recent entry into the market, it supports fewer third party peripherals and smart home devices compared to the Echo. Google Home also supports streaming integration with Google Chromecast, which might make it an appealing choice if you already use a Chromecast to stream video on your television. Unfortunately, Google Home is not yet for sale in Canada, but will hit the shelves in early 2017.

Google Home and Amazon Echo can both hear and respond to questions and commands, play music from your library, inform you about emails and appointments, and interact with a range of Smart Home peripherals. Amazon Echo has an edge in the range of devices it supports, while Google Home has smarter search, and integrates with Chromecast.



Approximate Prices:

Amazon Echo - **\$139.99** USD

Amazon Echo Dot - **\$39.99** USD

Google Home - **\$129.99** USD (Launching in Canada Q1 2017)

Sean Kirby is a Client Support Specialist at Triella, a technology consulting company specializing in providing technology assessments, consulting, maintenance services and CIO-related services to small and medium sized firms. Sean can be reached at 647.426.1004. For additional articles, please visit <http://www.triella.com/publications>. Triella is a Citrix Partner, VMware Partner, Microsoft Small Business Specialist, Microsoft Silver Partner, Dell Preferred Partner, BlackBerry Alliance Partner and Authorized Worldox Reseller.

© 2016 by Triella Corp. All rights reserved. Reproduction with credit is permitted.