The new Apple TV could have a built-in mic and a remote with a speaker

The latest rumors are that the new Apple TV will have a built-in microphone, while the upgraded remote will get a speaker. The mic would let users control the set-top box using Siri without having to speak into the remote or a connected HomePod device. That could also let the Apple TV serve as a simple smart home hub – controlling thermostats and locking doors – without the need to hunt for the remote.

If you happen to misplace the remote, the new integrated speaker should make it easier to track down. It could play an audio alert to guide you to its location, whether it got carelessly kicked under the couch or a child mischievously hid it in a drawer.

This is on top of the upgrade to an A19 chip that will power Siri AI. The Apple TV is expected to start shipping on October 30th, alongside the refreshed HomePod Mini.

https://www.theverge.com/tech/1009397/apple-tv-refresh-built-in-mic-remote-speaker

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NASA dumped over 800GB of

Artemis II data online

If you thought you'd seen all there is to see from the Artemis II mission, you're wrong. This week NASA posted over 800GB worth of science data, images, and videos on the Artemis II: Sights & Sounds of Science site. The archive includes over 11,000 photos and videos, over 8.5 hours of audio, and crew-annotated images, such as the one marking where they saw impact flashes on the dark side of the Moon. Together, they offer an unprecedented view inside a historic space mission.

One of the more exciting reveals was footage of the Artemis II team telling the ground team back in Houston about its observation of impact flashes. Impact flashes have been seen before, but these ones on the dark side of the Moon could have been the faintest observed with the human eye, and everyone's excitement is palpable in the clip.

https://www.theverge.com/science/1009379/nasa-800gb-artemis-ii-data

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George A. Romero's Season of the Witch is a slow-burn feminist occult drama

George A. Romero is obviously best known as the father of the

modern zombie movie. But between inventing the genre with *Night of the Living Dead* and his outbreak horror, *The Crazies*, Romero made two much lesser-known films: *There's Always Vanilla*, which I'll admit I've never seen, and *Season of the Witch*, or, as it was originally titled, *Hungry Wives*.

Hungry Wives was supposed to be an exploitation film. The studio marketed it as a softcore porn, but it failed to find an audience – probably because the movie features minimal nudity, just one sex scene, and lots of talking. It was an undeniable flop upon its release in 1973. It was eventually rereleased as *Season of the Witch* after Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* sparked renewed interest in his work.

While sadly, Romero's original 130 minute cut of the film has been lost, parts of it have been recovered and restored, expanding the 89 minute original release to 104 minutes. An obvious reason for its failure, beyond the distributor butchering it it by cutting 40 minutes, is that, what Romero made wasn't a softcore porn, instead it's a slow-burn feminist drama where the occult is almost incidental.

Protaganist Joan Mitchell is trapped in an abussive marriage and unhappy with her role as submissive housewife. She eventually turns from therapy, to witchcraft in an attempt to escape her humdrum life.

Season of the Witch has its issues, for sure. The production value is quite low – apparently the movie was made for just $100,000 (around $800,000 adjusted for inflation). The acting is also wildly uneven. While star Jan White turns in an excellent performance, others appear to be reading off cue cards or chew scenery with Pachino-levels of camp.

Still, there's something compelling about Romero's directing and his, for the time, boldly progressive take on feminism. For all of its reliance on dialogue over action, *Season of the Witch* still manages a tense and, at times, halucinatory

atmosphere. And it all leads to a somewhat predictable, but still extremely satisfying ending.

Season of the Wich *is available to stream on Mubi and Kanopy.*

https://www.theverge.com/entertainment/1009346/george-a-romero-season-of-the-witch-feminist-horror-review

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What to expect from Apple's 'Welcome Home' event

We are quickly coming up on Apple's "Welcome Home" launch event, where we expect a host of smart home-related announcements. We are expecting refreshes to Apple TV and HomePod Mini, as well as a brand new smart home hub. We could also see the debut of a new platform called homeOS, and some partner devices from LG.

What we probably won't be seeing is the long-rumored touchscreen MacBook, which Cupertino whisperer Mark Gurman says will debut later this month.

"Welcome Home" will officially kick off in New York on October 13th at 9AM ET. Here's more about what to expect.

A proper smart home hub

Until now, Apple has primarily relied on the …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/tech/1009317/apple-what-to-expect-welcome-home

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Vurt wants you to look at vertical videos as a genre of their own

From Disney Plus to HBO Max, almost every major established streaming service is experimenting with ways to get into vertical content. It’s clear that these companies see video-focused social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram as existential threats. In this arms race for viewers’ attention, it has often felt like everyone is trying to find new ways to exist on people’s phones. But a new startup thinks that the next step in vertical series’ evolution is going to take place on our wide-screen televisions.

Unlike most vertical microdrama / series streaming platforms on the market that have focused on mobile viewing experiences, Vurt ha …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/entertainment/1008720/vurt-microdramas-verticals-interview-hilmon-sorey

Horror is big business

This is The Stepback*, a weekly newsletter breaking down one essential story from the tech world. For more on how pervasive horror has become, follow Andrew Webster.* The Stepback*, arrives in our subscribers' inboxes on Sunday at 8AM ET. Opt in for* The Stepback *here.*

How it started

Resident Evil has been around for 30 years, but the survival horror series is more popular than ever. The most recent game, *Resident Evil Requiem*, has sold 8 million copies since it launched in February, already making it the 14th best-selling game that Capcom has ever made. At the same time, a reboot of the *Resident Evil* film series from *Weapons* director Zach Cre …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/column/1008432/horror-popular-widows-bay-resident-evil

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Why the LeapPad couldn't

survive the iPad

For multiple years, the hottest toy in the United States was a book. But not just any book: a smart book that could play sounds and respond to taps and help kids learn to read. It was the kind of gadget seemingly any parent could get behind, but it came with a high price — and some unexpected parenting questions.

On this episode of *Version History*, David Pierce is joined by *The Verge*'s Andru Marino and Jennifer Pattison Tuohy to explain how the LeapPad worked, why it was so enticing to both kids and adults, and why the company that made it could never quite follow it up.

We're almost finished with our fifth season of *Version History*, all …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/podcast/1008578/leapfrog-leappad-technology-version-history

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Learning to use local AI is exciting, overwhelming, and

frustrating

Baby’s first local AI agent. | Photo: Antonio G. Di Benedetto / The Verge
I’m embarking on a journey I’ve so far been hesitant to go on: actually using AI on the regular. Giving my most personal data to cloud services has been a major hold up for me, but it’s increasingly possible to run powerful models locally to see what they’re capable of. Is this tech so useful that it’s worth throwing gobs of money at a computer or a laptop with lots of overpriced RAM? I’ll try to help you find out. I’m not an AI expert, it’s going to be a journey for me, but maybe I can help you see if that journey is worth taking — and I’ll be posting my way through it.

A big part of Apple’s pitch for its new Mac desktops is how good they …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/ai-artificial-intelligence/1008484/learning-local-ai-hermes-qwen-model-mac-studio-testing-diary-progress

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Satya Nadella says we should assume all AI models are

‘compromised’

In a lengthy post on X, Microsoft’s CEO laid out his views on the dangers posed by highly advanced AI models and how to confront those risks. Nadella says we can no longer accept a world where AI is treated as a “set of nested black boxes” whose advice and actions we simply accept or reject. He calls for building a more transparent system where models can be contained, observed, and leaves behind “tamper-proof human readable evidence.”

Many of his recommendations align with what we’ve heard from others in the industry: timely incident disclosure, independent audits, verifiable data, and containment. It’s on that last point that he appears t …

Read the full story at The Verge.

https://www.theverge.com/ai-artificial-intelligence/1009337/satya-nadella-says-we-should-assume-all-ai-models-are-compromised

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Insider Cyber Extortion Plot Against Industrial Firm Lands Engineer in Prison

The former core infrastructure engineer deleted admin accounts, reset hundreds of passwords, and demanded 20 bitcoin

to spare the company’s servers.

The post Insider Cyber Extortion Plot Against Industrial Firm Lands Engineer in Prison appeared first on SecurityWeek.

https://www.securityweek.com/insider-cyber-extortion-plot-against-industrial-firm-lands-engineer-in-prison/