GE is making a smart ceiling light and light switch with Alexa and Google Assistant

GE is previewing two new entries to its C by GE line of smart lighting products today that are slated to arrive later this year: a ceiling light and a light switch. While they sound pretty basic on the surface, they both come with one less-than-standard feature — the ability to control Alexa and Google Assistant.

The ceiling light is a large disk with a speaker in the middle that's meant to be the primary light in a room. The light supports voice controls and feedback, so you can talk to it to control smart home gadgets and get answers from your assistant of choice. GE also says it'll have the ability to play music.



Image: GE

You probably won't want to listen to music on GE's light

switch, but it supports all the same features. It’s an in-wall switch, so it has the added benefit of controlling whichever standard (non-smart) light bulbs it’s connected to. It also includes built-in motion, temperature, and humidity sensors. It’s not totally clear what they’ll be used for right now (you’d have to link them to non-GE products to get the most out of them), but they seem to suggest C by GE products planned in other categories, like heating.

Both the switch and the ceiling light have built-in hubs that let them control other C by GE lights, too. GE also plans to add HomeKit support to all of its smart lights. That support is still expected to arrive within the next few months.

None of these products are actually coming out right away. The announcements are meant to preview what GE is bringing to its C line of lights over the course of this year. Teasing the expansion could encourage people to buy in if they like where it’s going.

That said, GE has a ways to go to prove this system out. The line is built around expensive Bluetooth-connected bulbs without a lot of options. While the line is very easy to get started with, it’s expensive and limited if you want to expand it into something more robust. With today’s announcement, GE seems to be saying that it has more serious plans for the line going forward, but it’ll still need a lot more lights before the line can be used all on its own.

https://www.theverge.com/circuitbreaker/2018/1/2/16840468/c-by-ge-ceiling-fixture-light-switch-alexa-google-assistant-homekit