HP’s new Thunderbolt 3 USB-C dock has a modular Bang & Olufsen speaker on top

Alongside HP’s new EliteBooks that were announced today, the company also unveiled a new Thunderbolt 3 dock to go with them. They come with an interesting twist: a modular, Bang & Olufsen speakerphone attachment that can be mounted on top of the dock for conference calls (or, in theory, as a regular speaker if you’re not a business-obsessed drone).

Since it’s a USB-C dock, the most important features are the ports you’ll have access to, and the Thunderbolt Dock G2 has plenty. The side of the cube has a powered USB 3.0 port and a 3.5mm combo audio jack, while the back packs a Thunderbolt 3, a USB-C DisplayPort, two regular DisplayPort ports, a VGA port, two USB 3.0 ports, and an Ethernet jack.



Image: HP

Of course, there’s the Audio Module, which will be sold separately and attaches to the top of the device. More and more laptops are switching to USB-C, so it’s easy to see how a company could simply install the audio-enabled Thunderbolt Dock G2 into a conference room. It would allow workers charge their laptops, connect to Ethernet, and run presentations on a display by just attaching a single cable, while also getting improved audio for remote attendees.

Personally, I’m hoping HP takes the modular nature of the dock and runs with it. Why not have a version with a regular Bang & Olufsen speaker for music? Or one with Google Assistant or Alexa integration? What about a wireless Qi charger module? The sky’s the limit here, if HP is willing to look past more practical, enterprise-focused solutions.



The dock, sans speaker.
Image: HP

Neither the HP Thunderbolt Dock G2 nor the Audio Module have prices or release dates yet, but presumably the company will have more to announce soon.

https://www.theverge.com/circuitbreaker/2018/2/7/16984786/hp-thunderbolt-3-g2-usb-c-dock-modular-bang-olufsen-speaker