Report: Google Wifi 2 is half Wi-Fi router, half Google Home

Enlarge / The first-gen Google Wifi.

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With Google’s big 2019 hardware event set for October 15, we’re starting to zero in on what exactly to expect from the show. Besides the heavily leaked Pixel 4, we’re also expecting a new Google Home Mini, maybe a new Pixelbook, and today’s subject: a sequel to Google’s mesh Wi-Fi router, the Google Wifi.

A report from 9to5Google claims that the new Google Wifi will be the long-rumored hybrid device, combining a Google Wifi’s mesh router capabilities with a Google Home’s microphone and speaker that integrates the Google Assistant for voice commands and music playback. Rather than call this device the “Google Wifi 2,” the Wifi line will reportedly fall under Google’s reworking of Nest into a Google-wide smart home sub-brand. Thus, it will be called the “Nest Wifi.” It’s also going to come in a selection of three colors, which would be in line with the Google Home Minis.

Unlike the current generation Google Wifi, which uses multiple identical devices, the report says the new Nest Wifi will have a larger primary router and smaller satellite routers that

extend the mesh network. The primary router won’t have any Assistant features, according to the report—only the smaller satellites would have speakers, microphones, and the Google Assistant. For users of the current Google Wifi, you’ll be able to mix and match new and old hardware.

The report doesn’t say if the new Nest Wifi will support the new 802.11ax “Wi-Fi 6” protocol, but we have to imagine that’s half the justification for this new product.

Google currently asks consumers to put multiple Google Home devices and multiple Google Wifi devices throughout their house, so it makes sense to combine your mesh Wifi router with your mesh voice command and music system. You’ll get one easy box that does everything, and in Google Home’s constant rivalry with the Amazon Echo line of devices, Google will have a form factor that Amazon hasn’t tackled yet. People who haven’t bought into the Google way of life, though, might be hesitant to buy a Wi-Fi router that comes with a cloud-connected microphone, especially with the slew of voice command privacy issues that have popped up lately.

We have just under one month to go before Google’s big hardware show on October 15. Ars will be on scene, of course, but there will probably be a lot more leaks between now and then.

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