

## Vizio's SmartCast Crave Takes on Wireless Audio

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Vizio is the next company to present a wireless multi-room audio solution-- the SmartCast Crave, a line of standalone speakers featuring Google Cast integration over either wifi or ethernet.



Essentially, the speakers allow any audio app with Google Cast support to stream directly to the speaker, with the speakers taking care of connectivity to the streaming service in question (while the smartphone acts as controller). Bluetooth connectivity is also included.

SmartCast Crave speakers currently come in two flavours-- 360 and Pro. The 360 is a portable cylindrical number featuring 360-degree omnidirectional 2.1 audio, "custom-crafted drivers" able to output up to 95dB of sound and a battery promising up to 8 hours of use on a single charge. Construction is in stainless steel, and a leather strap allows one to easily carry it around.

On the other hand the Pro is a fixed, plug-in speaker. It carries two 2-inch drivers and 5.25-inch subwoofers, is rated at 102dB and features a chassis with a satin aluminium finish.

Interestingly, customers can pair multiple Crave speakers with each other or a Vizio soundbar to create a multi-room audio setup, with the SmartCast allowing one to either create groups or separate speakers. However the speakers cannot act as the separate channels within a surround setup, while connectivity depends on the strength of the wifi signal in the house.

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The Crave 360 is available now in the US, with the Pro to follow "soon."

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