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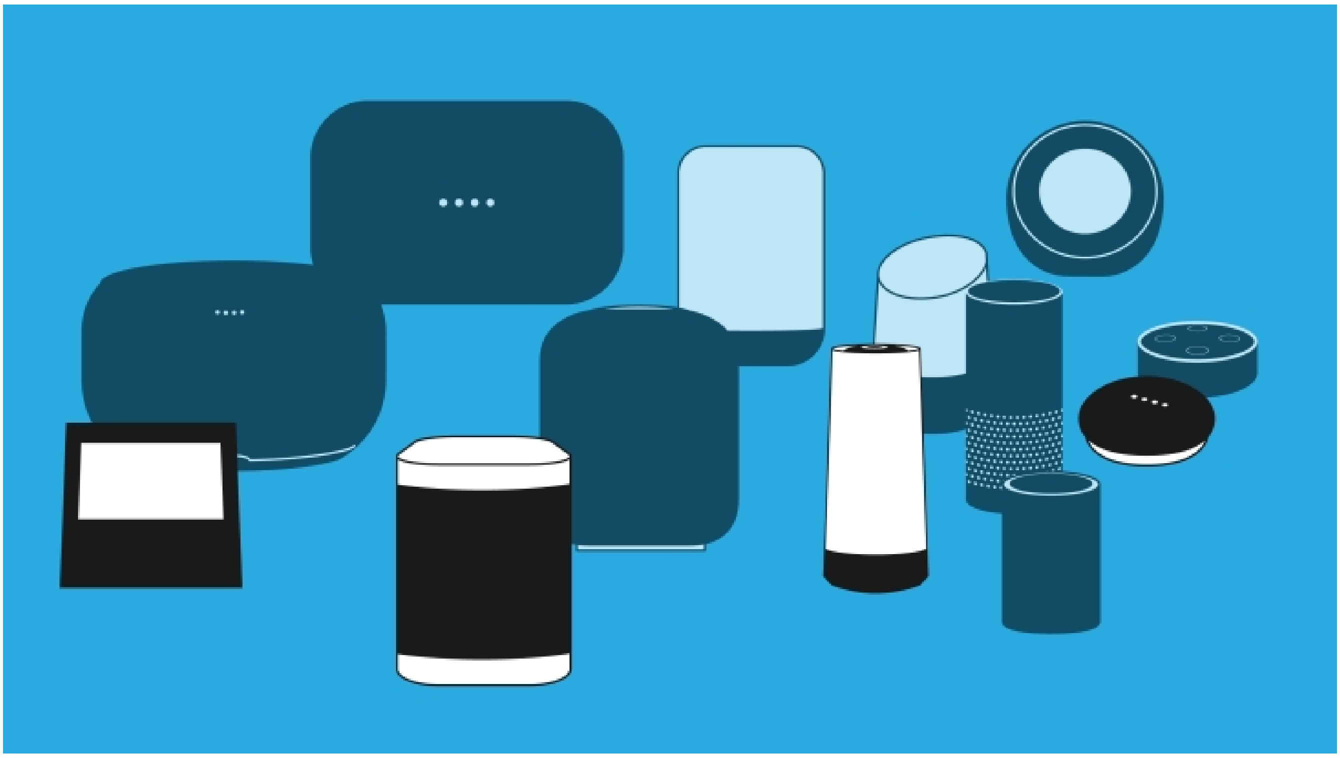
According to Juniper Research, the number of voice assistants is set to grow from 105 million in 2019 to 555m by 2024, with Chinese vendors driving the market through increased participation.



The analyst says voice assistants are an "an increasingly crucial element" in the smart home, bringing interoperability platforms to enable seamless smart home control. As one might expect, Amazon is the top vendor thanks to heavy investment from the Alexa Fund, as well as the advanced hub features in the Echo Plus and Alexa Skills enabling a vast 3rd party app ecosystem. Further bolstering the position of Alexa are high-profile Amazon acquisitions such as Blink, Ring and Eero.

In the meantime Google is capitalising on the Nest acquisition by adding Assistant in devices such as the Google Nest Hub Max. Juniper says Google investment in AI will allow it to add more intelligent and autonomous functions, making for a compelling differentiator. It should bolster such research with "heavy investment" in partnership to further build out its ecosystem.

Chinese companies, such as iFlytek, Baidu and Huawei, are building increasingly advanced voice assistants, but such offerings are limited to the domestic market. After all, the sensitive role of voice assistants makes them the centrepiece of concerns if launched in Western markets, and as such their potential is limited.

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