

Technology

## Apple Headset Looks Sleek in Person But Battery Pack Stands Out



Gift this article

By [Edward Ludlow](#)

June 6, 2023 at 12:48 AM GMT+2



Listen 3:33

Apple Inc.'s new \$3,499 Vision Pro headset looks just as sleek in person as in its promotional videos, but the device's external battery pack undercuts its otherwise uncluttered design.

Apple gave the first real-world glimpse of the long-awaited product after its unveiling at the Worldwide Developers Conference on Monday, putting the ski-goggle-like device on display at its headquarters in Cupertino, California. The long cord leading to the battery pack is the one of the most noticeable elements. The component resembles a hard drive and makes the headset feel tethered in a way that rival models don't.



Apple Vision Pro *Photographer: Philip Pacheco/Bloomberg*

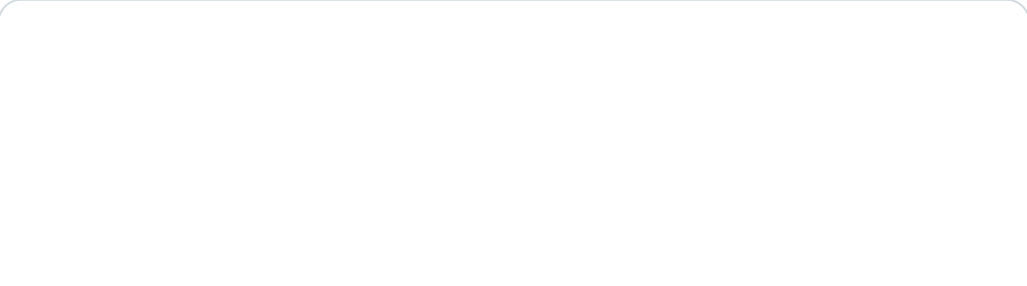
The headset itself has a slight pearlescence on its outer screen and feels less dense or chunky than models from Meta Platforms Inc., which currently dominates the virtual reality market. The Vision Pro is a mixed-reality device – or what Apple calls “spatial computing” technology – meaning it combines augmented and virtual reality.

In a key distinguishing feature, the Vision Pro displays a user’s eyes on the outer screen whenever another person is nearby. Meta’s Quest headsets, in contrast, have a blank front, making the wearer seem less engaged with the outside world.

**Bloomberg**    
 @business · [Follow](#)

Move over Oculus Quest, Apple has entered the VR chat — and so can you for \$3,499.


[@EdLudlow](#) breaks down the company's new VR headset, the Vision Pro [trib.al/0XiPIOK](https://trib.al/0XiPIOK)






Europe Edition

Account

- Live Now
- Markets
- Economics
- Industries
- Tech
- AI
- Politics
- Wealth
- Pursuits
- Opinion
- Businessweek
- Equality
- Green
- CityLab
- Crypto
- More

11:15 PM · Jun 5, 2023 

---

 78  Reply  Share

[Read 16 replies](#)

Apple Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook introduced the product earlier Monday in a video presentation that was broadcast to a crowd at the company’s campus. He later joined the masses in the Steve Jobs Theater, wearing a bright-blue polo shirt and pausing for selfies with Apple developers and fans.

The Vision Pro headsets were arranged in a loop in the center of the underground atrium of the theater. The devices were displayed at varying heights, and their

battery-pack appendages lay flat on the table surface.

Hundreds packed the theater – including developers, analysts, VIPs and media – fighting to get a closer look of the headsets. Security guards and other staffers urged attendees to stay back from the devices and occasionally would wipe smudges or condensation from the white display stands.

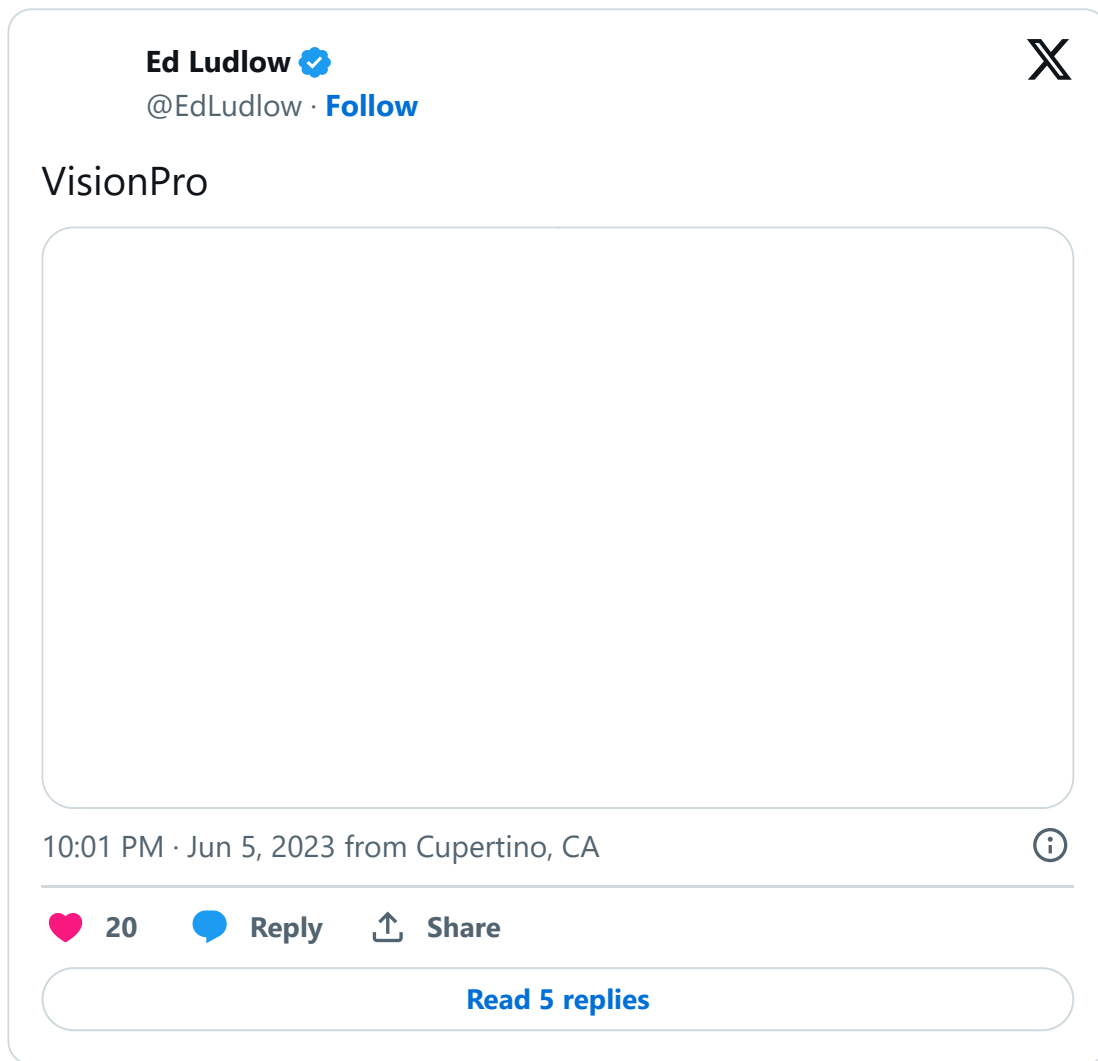


Founders  
THE JOHN MCAFEE STORY  
Bloomberg

John McAfee helped create an industry. Then he self-destructed.

Listen to the podcast

It was the tech giant’s biggest product launch since the Apple Watch in 2014, and the company sought to build the kind of buzz that was reminiscent of the Steve Jobs era. Purposefully stationed Apple staff cheered and whooped as attendees entered key sections of the Apple Park campus. Cook even used the famous Jobs catchphrase “one more thing” during the presentation, drawing cheers from the assembled crowd.



It may be a bigger challenge convincing people outside Apple's campus to give the headset a try. The device, set to go on sale early next year, drew jeering on social media for its price tag and dystopian vibes.

Even with far lower prices, Meta has struggled to turn its headsets into mainstream products. It hopes to make fresh inroads this year with the latest version of its Quest lineup, the Quest 3. Bloomberg's Mark Gurman got the first hands-on test of that device and came away impressed 🙄. Moreover, the product is slated to cost just \$500 when it goes on sale this fall.

## The Competitive Field

Companies have spent years trying to find the right formula for mixed reality

### APPLE VISION PRO



●Release date

**Early  
2024**

Apple's device will run on a new operating system, vision OS, with a dedicated app store and interactive video from Walt Disney Co.

●Market price

**\$3,499**

### HTC VIVE XRELITE



**March  
2023**

HTC's virtual reality headset can operate on its own or connected to a PC. It also uses pass-through video to combine physical and virtual worlds.

**\$1,099**

### PLAYSTATION VR2



**Feb.  
2023**

Sony's headset was designed to work with its PS5 console. It plugs into the device with a cord long enough to walk around the living room.

**\$550**

### META QUEST PRO



**Oct.  
2022**

This self-contained VR headset serves as a portal to the company's metaverse. Meta cut the price just months after its initial release.

**\$1,000**

### MAGICLEAP 2



### MICROSOFT HOLOLENS 2







**Sept.  
2022**

**\$3,299**

The second generation of the Magic Leap headset is firmly aimed at business customers, after its initial model failed to catch on with consumers.

**Nov.  
2019**

**\$3,500**

An early AR leader, Microsoft has scaled back its HoloLens ambitions. A big military contract went sour, and it hasn't released a new version in years

Source: Bloomberg research

The Vision Pro has a unique interface, relying on hand and eye motions – and voice commands – rather than a handheld accessory like the Quest. But customers will be able to use traditional gaming controllers with it for games. It's also not the only device with an external battery pack: The Magic Leap relies on a similar design.

Wall Street remains wary of Apple's Vision Pro. The company's shares, which had been in record territory earlier in the day, slipped after the headset was announced. Cook emphasized that the device was just the "beginning" of a journey, signaling that future models may overcome some of the obstacles facing the Vision Pro.

But for now, the price tag – and the cumbersome battery pack – may make it a hard device for consumers to love.

– *With Mark Gurman*

Follow all new stories by **Edward Ludlow**

Get Alerts



Gift this article

Have a confidential tip for our reporters? **Get in Touch**

Before it's here, it's on the Bloomberg Terminal

Up Next

**Alphabet's \$118 Billion Cash Pile Poses a New Problem**