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Apple patents remote iTunes access via iPhone

Allow you to listen to your music collection at home anywhere

by Amber Maitland published on 8 August 2008

Apple could in the future allow iPhone and iPod touch users to stream music from their home iTunes library so they could listen to their favourite music on the go.

The move, discovered by AppleInsider via a patent application, could mean that Apple could make the devices not only cheaper, but smaller as all the users songs would be stored remotely in their home rather than the device in their hand.

"New versions iTunes and the iPhone Software could theoretically eliminate this problem by syncing only the metadata -- or tiny files containing the barebones attributes of each media item or playlist but not the content itself -- from a user's iTunes library to their portable devices," the patent says.

At present, iPhone or iPod touch owners must selectively sync content from their Mac or PC's iTunes library limiting the amount of tracks you can take with you.

What Apple is proposing though, is that mobile device owners could instead access their entire collection over Wi-Fi or cellular networks.

Apple currently offers a similar technology for its Airport Express networking device and Apple TV, however those are restricted to only working within the same Wi-Fi network rather than remotely over the internet or mobile networks.

As with all patent applications, this might never see the light of day.

We will keep you posted.

