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## GBox to launch - a Google and Universal backed music service

99 cent DRM-free downloads from world's largest music label in association with the world's biggest search engine

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 13 August 2007

An Associated Press news report appears to solve the mystery of the thought to be coming soon Google music service.

The forthcoming offering is not going to be a direct Google music store, but a standalone, Google and Universal backed website called gBox.

A Californian start-up, gBox will get referrals through adverts Universal will buy from Google.

The Google ads will appear when a Google user searches for relevant music related topics and will direct the user straight to gBox.

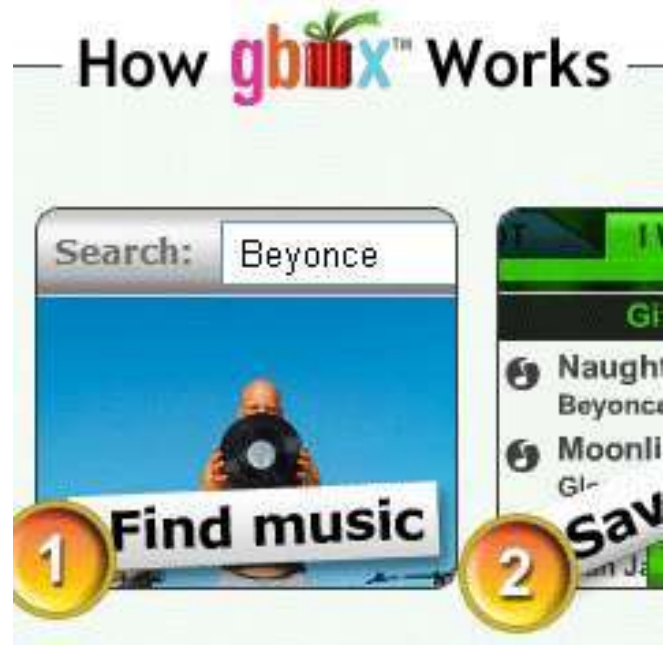
gBox works on a "wish list" basis, that AP describes as "software code that users can place on their blogs or social-networking profiles MySpace, Facebook and other sites".

This sounds similar to Apple recently announced iTune's widget - My iTunes.

The songs at gBox from Universal's DRM-free catalogue will cost 99 cents each (30 cents less than Apple's DRM-free options). Strangely, a DRM-enabled version will be available at the same price.

Universal's DRM-free songs trial is due to run from August 21st to the end of January.

Amazon.com, Wal-Mart and Rhapsody will also be selling songs from the catalogue but only gBox will get Universal's Google referrals.



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gBox hopes to offer DRM-free tracks from other major labels too, talks are said to be ongoing.

gBox will work with Microsoft's Internet Explorer and Mozilla's Firefox (from launch on August 21st) but will not work on Macs. A Mac-compatible and a mobile version are coming soon.

Without the Mac-compatibility the service can't really be seen as a full competitor to Apple's iTunes, although there will be plenty of market share for gBox to aim for until it is an all-platform service.

The fact that iTunes won't be offering Universal's DRM-free music, a strategic decision rather than a snub supposedly, will give PC-owning iTunes users a good reason to have a peek at gBox.