iTunes leisurely pace frustrating for some
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LOCAL Apple users have been gritting their teeth each time iTunes announces a new landmark in the number of songs sold. Operating in the US and parts of Europe, the online music store sold its 100 millionth song recently.
Apple has focused on major European markets such as France, Germany and Britain, and is proceeding at a leisurely pace in the rest of the world.
Apple Australia won't comment on the delay in introducing a local version of iTunes, much to the frustration of its customers.
In Australia, you can look at the selection on the iTunes site, listen to samples or tune into internet radio, but sales to Australian credit cards are blocked.
This is at least partly the result of regional licensing restrictions placed on Apple by record labels.
However, music industry analyst Phil Tripp says he spends more than $2000 a year buying songs from iTunes using a US credit card and mailing address.
Although few Mac fans in Australia are lucky enough to hold US plastic, Tripp says he has bought iTunes gift certificates for more than 30 friends, who could then buy songs after registering a US mailing address.
None of the four audio file retailers in Australia cater for Apple users because they use Windows Media Audio player, which is incompatible with Macs, he says.
Tripp says Apple's AAC format is superior to WMA because it uses a more efficient algorithm to compress music.
Insiders are tipping that iTunes Australia will be open for business before Christmas, and possibly by September.
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