

Apple "Invents" Wireless Charging

Written by Marco Attard
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Apple claims it just invented wireless charging as it files the patent for a system powering devices over the air at up to 1m of distance. But is such a system as revolutionary as the iPhone maker says?

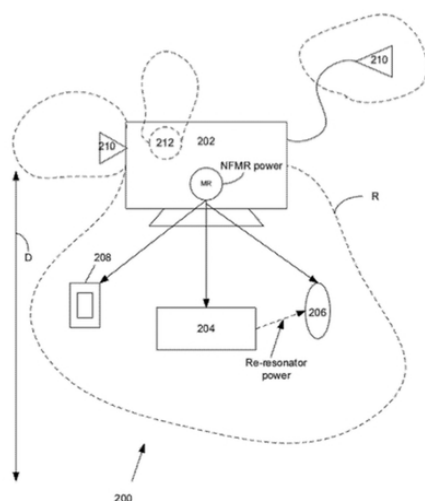


Fig. 2

The patent, titled "Wireless Power Utilisation in a Local Computing Environment," makes use of near-field magnetic resonance (NFM) to juice multiple devices equipped with an NFM resonator circuit. All without the need of putting the device(s) in question on top of a wired charging base (like to one the Nokia Lumia 920 requires).

However such systems are not new-- the Alliance for Wireless Power (A4WP) released a "flexible" wireless power specification back in October 2012. A4WP members include Qualcomm and Samsung, and its design supposedly even "extends wireless power applications beyond the accessory or add-on market."

Wireless power startup WiPower also owns a patent on wireless charging, called "System and method for inductive charging of portable devices." Apple filed its patent on November 2010, while WiPower did so on May 2008.

What does this mean? Possibly another twist on the already convoluted patent wars Apple is involved in, at least once wireless charging gain in popular. In the least, we are sure A4WP will take a very close look at the technology it owns...

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