image file for display on the adaptable skin of the device, (step **1020**). In order to prevent needless signaling with a communication network, the portable electronic device determines whether a copy of the skin image file is stored locally, (step **1030**). If a copy of the skin image file is stored locally, the method advances to step **1080** where the skin image is displayed on the adaptable skin of the device. If a copy of desired skin image file is not stored locally, a request for the skin image file is sent to the skin image database, (step **1040**). The compatibility of the skin image file with the adaptable skin is determined, (step **1050**). The compatibility of the skin image file with the adaptable skin is based on skin image file parameters, that may include, author of the file, size of the file, size of the skin for which the file is designed, resolution required to display the file, and cost associated of the file.

[**0057**] When it is determined that the requested skin image file is not compatible with the requesting portable electronic device, the method **1000** returns to step **1010** and removes the requested skin from the list of available skin image files. When it is determined that the requested skin image file is compatible with the portable electronic device, the skin image file is transmitted to the device, (step **1060**). Optionally, based on device configuration and hardware availability, a local copy of the transmitted skin image file is stored at the portable electronic device, (step **1070**). Finally, the skin image file is displayed on the adaptable skin, (step **1080**).

[**0058**] Preferably, in step **1010** where the available skin image files are displayed to the user, an interactive window including a search pane for a user to search the online database, a library pane for providing a hierarchical view of the skin files in the database, a play list pane for providing a list of skin file to the user, and a channels pane providing a list of preprogrammed theme channels available through the skin database is provided. Additionally, a user may set a scheduled playtime for the selected skin selections.

[**0059**] In another embodiment, referring to FIG. **11**, a method **1100** for providing skin image files to a portable electronic device based on the device's location is shown. In this embodiment, the portable electronic device includes wireless communication functionality. When the portable electronic device enters the range of a wireless base station or access point, the device will associate with the base station or access point, (step **1110**). Various association procedures may be employed based on the type of wireless communication system used. A skin service provider is notified that an association has been made, and the location of the portable electronic device is determined, (step **1120**). The skin device provider may determine location using various methods, including physical positioning of the base station or access point, and GPS location measurements, for example. Applicable skin image files relating to the determined location are loaded, (step **1130**). Skin image files are determined to be compatible with the portable electronic device, (step **1140**). The compatible skin image files are transmitted to the device, (step **1150**). In the case where there are multiple compatible skin image files, the skin service provider may periodically update the skin image file on the portable electronic device, thereby cycling through the compatible skin image files. Alternatively, each skin image file may be given a priority, and in the case where multiple skin image files are compatible with a given device, the file with the highest priority is transmitted to the device. Finally, the transmitted skin image file is displayed on the device's adaptable skin, (step **1160**).

[**0060**] In another embodiment, the portable electronic device itself contains a skin image file database capable of maintaining a plurality of skin image files for display on a adaptable skin. Each skin image file is associated with an identifier, such as a telephone number or IP address. When the portable electronic device is paged for the receipt of an incoming communication session, the call's initiator identification will be provided. The portable electronic device displays the skin image file associated with the caller's identification on the adaptable display.

[**0061**] Although the features and elements of the present invention are described in the preferred embodiments in particular combinations, each feature or element can be used alone without the other features and elements of the preferred embodiments or in various combinations with or without other features and elements of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A portable electronic device comprising:

a memory configured to store a skin image file;

an adaptable skin substantially covering the portable electronic device, wherein the skin is configured to display a stored skin image; and

electronics configured to drive and control the adaptable skin.

2. The portable electronic device of claim 1, wherein the adaptable skin is an adaptable electrochromic skin.

3. The portable electronic device of claim 1, further comprising:

a transceiver configured to send requests for a skin image files to a server.

4. The portable electronic device of claim 3, wherein the transceiver is further configured to receive skin image files from the server.

5. The portable electronic device of claim 1, further comprising:

a display configured to list skin image files available for display on the adaptable skin of the device.

6. The portable electronic device of claim 5, wherein the list of skin image files includes skin image files stored locally in the memory of the device.

7. The portable electronic device of claim 5, further comprising:

an input device configured to select a skin image for display by the adaptable skin.

8. The portable electronic device of claim 5, wherein the display is configured to display an interactive window comprising:

a search pane wherein a user is able to search an electronic database for skin image files;

a library pane configured to display a hierarchical view skin image files stored in the database;

a play list pane configured to display a list of skin image files to the user; and

a channels pane configured to provide a list of preprogrammed theme channels available in the electronic