

# Kapica's Cyberia Blôg

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## Roaming in Copacabana

Jack Kapica, April 30, 2008 at 1:54 PM EDT

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I walked into a Rogers Wireless store the other day as a customer, and was blown away by the honesty of one sales clerk. To do that, he said one word: "Revenue."

Let me back up. I had just returned from a holiday in Brazil, where I had brought my Blackberry so I could stay in contact with family and friends in a cheaper fashion than with a cellphone or with a hotel's exorbitant telephone service charges. Which is why I didn't shut down my e-mail accounts before I went.

When I came back, I got a bill from Rogers, covering the data charges I incurred over about half of the time I spent in Rio (I'll get a bill for the other half later).

The damages: 5,151 kilobytes — about 5 megabytes — for a total of \$241.11. I expect it to double when the next bill comes, adding up to about two days in a four-star hotel room with an all-you-can-eat breakfast of pastries and tropical fruits. This is the real measure of how Canadians pay the highest data rates in the world: Just under \$50 per megabyte.

I've learned my lesson: Don't incur roaming charges. Don't stay in touch. Forget productivity. Forget the convenience promised by modern technology. Don't even think of working while abroad. Just suffer, and let your company, family and friends suffer. Rogers' shareholder demands trump anything you might want to use your cellphone for.

It was my fault, of course. I knew Canadians pay the world's highest data rates, but I had no idea how much I was incurring while on the road.

So I went to a Rogers store and asked the sales clerk how I could have calculated the charges as they occurred. I expected there to be some website that could tell me what I routinely learn from taxi cabs: a real-time fare update. So where do I look?

I can't do it, I was told by the sales clerk. It's not possible.

Why not?

"Because Rogers tells all of its cellphone manufacturers to disable that feature in our cellphones," he said in a manner that suggested I was the last person to learn this. Perhaps I was.

And why does Rogers do that?

That's when he dropped the one-word bomb: "Revenue."

Talk about honesty.

So Rogers won't keep a running tally of my roaming data charges because it consciously made a decision not to tell me; if I knew, I might cut back on my use of e-mail or using that neat WorldMate Live application that tells me if my flight is on time, what I can expect in terms of weather and what the currency exchange rate is.

I was hit with this bill coincidentally with Rogers's news that it would be releasing the Apple iPhone some time later this year, which is relevant because the iPhone is a notoriously heavy user of data traffic. **Catherine McLean's story in the Globe and Mail** pointedly mentioned that Rogers was looking at the iPhone as its "next moneymaker" and that users will probably have to pay a minimum of \$80 a month for the iPhone instead of the \$72.39 average for other cellphones. And that's just in Canada — if you're a real glutton for punishment or have money to burn, get an iPhone and schlep it with you when you travel.

Unless of course you don't care because your company is picking up your roaming tab and not complaining about it. And that brings up yet another question: If corporations are really interested in efficiencies as they say they are, why aren't they complaining?

"Speculation about the delay [in releasing the iPhone] includes the possibility that Rogers may be less than keen on changing its data rate plans as other carriers have done," Catherine McLean wrote. She went on to note that Rogers "reported that monthly bills for cellphone subscribers on contracts jumped \$4.75 to \$72.39 due to greater data service demand."

Well, I'm really happy for Rogers' shareholders. But I can't say I'm a very happy customer.

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**andy c from Canada writes:** sounds like you had quite the time in Brazil. i will be hitting mexico in a few weeks and have decided not to bring my laptop. i figured my wifi phone running fring (fring.com) and skype (\$10/month unlimited calls to 35

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## Kapica's Cyberia Blôg

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Jack Kapica has been writing on technology for the past 15 years for The Globe and Mail, and has been working exclusively for the on-line Globe since 2001. In his Cyberia blog, he writes news, makes comments, looks at rumours, and offers opinions on culture and developments in technology.

### Blog ROLL

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javax.servlet.ServletException: Processing template "tgamv3/v5/story/wBstory.html" with config "null"
    at GIS.Servlets.HTMLTemplate.processRequest(HTMLTemplate.java:231)
    at GIS.Servlets.HTMLTemplate.doGet(HTMLTemplate.java:137)
    at GIS.Servlets.StoryHTMLTemplate.doGet(StoryHTMLTemplate.java:96)
    at javax.servlet.http.HttpServlet.service(HttpServlet.java:126)
    at GIS.Common.Servlet.service(Servlet.java:106)
    at javax.servlet.http.HttpServlet.service(HttpServlet.java:103)
    at com.caucho.server.http.FilterChainServlet.doFilter(FilterChainServlet.java:95)
    at com.caucho.server.http.Invocation.service(Invocation.java:291)
    at com.caucho.server.http.CacheInvocation.service(CacheInvocation.java:132)
    at com.caucho.server.http.RunnerRequest.handleRequest(RunnerRequest.java:341)
    at com.caucho.server.http.RunnerRequest.handleConnection(RunnerRequest.java:271)
    at com.caucho.server.TcpConnection.run(TcpConnection.java:136)
    at java.lang.Thread.run(Thread.java:662)

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Nested exception: GIS.Common.GICheckedException: Other exception in file: '/opt/GIS/HTML_Templates/tgamv3/v5/story/wBstory.html' while processing select element with added params:()
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:1511)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:782)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:945)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:782)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.parse(HTMLTemplateParser.java:751)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:476)
    at GIS.Servlets.HTMLTemplate.generate(HTMLTemplate.java:316)
    at GIS.Servlets.HTMLTemplate.processRequest(HTMLTemplate.java:222)
    at GIS.Servlets.HTMLTemplate.doGet(HTMLTemplate.java:137)
    at GIS.Servlets.StoryHTMLTemplate.doGet(StoryHTMLTemplate.java:96)
    at javax.servlet.http.HttpServlet.service(HttpServlet.java:126)
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    at com.caucho.server.http.FilterChainServlet.doFilter(FilterChainServlet.java:95)
    at com.caucho.server.http.Invocation.service(Invocation.java:291)
    at com.caucho.server.http.CacheInvocation.service(CacheInvocation.java:132)
    at com.caucho.server.http.RunnerRequest.handleRequest(RunnerRequest.java:341)
    at com.caucho.server.http.RunnerRequest.handleConnection(RunnerRequest.java:271)
    at com.caucho.server.TcpConnection.run(TcpConnection.java:136)
    at java.lang.Thread.run(Thread.java:662)

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Nested exception: GIS.Common.GICheckedException: Other exception while processing transformation element with added params:(cacheTime=5000, type=xsl1, url=http://local/web_htdoccs/tgamv3/v5/includes/content/blogs/blogroll-gam.opml)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:1625)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:782)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.parse(HTMLTemplateParser.java:751)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:476)
    at GIS.Jel.JELSelectProducer.emitChoiceNode(JELSelectProducer.java:48)
    at GIS.Jel.JELSelectOneProducer.generate(JELSelectOneProducer.java:92)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:1502)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:782)
    at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:945)
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Nested exception: java.lang.ClassCastException: org.apache.xerces.dom.ElementNSTmpl cannot be cast to com.caucho.xml.QElement
    at com.caucho.xsl.Generator.getXslLocal(Generator.java:2141)
    at com.caucho.xsl.Generator.generate(Generator.java:294)
    at com.caucho.xsl.AbstractStylesheetFactory.generate(AbstractStylesheetFactory.java:819)
    at com.caucho.xsl.AbstractStylesheetFactory.newTemplates(AbstractStylesheetFactory.java:437)
    at com.caucho.xsl.AbstractStylesheetFactory.newTransformer(AbstractStylesheetFactory.java:312)

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countries) should be sufficient. it could be an option for you next time you travel instead of roaming with rogers. I've got a nokia e61i  
Posted 30/04/08 at 4:09 PM EDT | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to Comment](#)

**Jim Lynn from United States writes:** we should have a Rogers Roaming challenge as last year at the time I like you wanted to stay connected when I travelled for 10 days in Costa Rica ---- when I returned to the Great Whites North later that month and my bill arrived -- cha ching \$ 1800 dollars. Outrageous --- I was so mad I went to 3 Rogers stores --- well they have the name on the front but thank gog they don't sell food as we would all be dead if it was a food recall and you went there for compensation. I went corporate to all the 1 800 wait for me music and learned all the top 10 songs as well as two operas arriving at the right person who told me " That is what you pay" and pay up. I disconnected my phone for two months in protest --- really only hurting myself unfortunately. After living in the US for years I think back of my \$ 99.00 a month plan with Mexico included with free roaming. Lets hope the airwaves get open instead of just our wallets / Jim L  
Posted 30/04/08 at 5:03 PM EDT | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to Comment](#)

**Derk Schaupmeyer from Edmonton, Canada writes:** Happy to hear you are back. Rogers are not the only member of the "forty thieves", most if not all hear the magic "Ka Ching" as soon as International Roaming Rates rears its golden mane. Get your roaming rates in writing, don't trust some minimum wage CSR to tell them to you over the phone, they wont lie to you, they will only tell you the absolute minimum that the head office tells them to.  
Posted 30/04/08 at 11:34 PM EDT | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to Comment](#)

**Neale Gifford from Toronto, Canada writes:** I am experiencing a similar problem with Rogers. I have internet, cable and phone service. The Toronto Community Housing Company terminated a contract, January 1, 2008, with Rogers to include basic cable in the rent. That was \$23.50. My January bill , with the \$23.50 added seemed reasonable. But, over the next three months I've seen bills of \$151, \$138, \$142, and \$166. I made no changes to the services up to just recently. I cut back from Hi-Speed Extreme to Lite when advised of the new throttling deal. I'm not into the downloading of HD movies etc. Because of the many US-based telemarketing calls using "private number" I added the feature for rejecting those. I did have a service called MeTV which included the History Channel which I have enjoyed. Suddenly, without notice, that was shifted into a level at \$26 a month extra from \$48 to 61. \$26 for only one of 16 channels I really want, so I balked. As a CPP recipient, I can't afford these wild fluctuations. I want some cost certainty so I can budget. Trying to navigate their customer service telephone lines is an exercise in frustration. 90 minutes or more waiting for a humanoid? I tried at their local store. The clerk appeared to have deleted and reconnected by accident because they were having computer problems. That might explain the nearly \$40 charge on my latest bill. The 8-page bills are a nightmare to figure out. Suddenly through "nickel and dime" charges and fees a "\$10 expense becomes \$30". No warning of that on the pricing. All I want to know is what the service is going to cost me on a regular basis so I can budget. Is that too much?

Posted 01/05/08 at 8:28 AM EDT | [Alert an Editor](#) | [Link to Comment](#)

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at GIS.Universal.XMLTransformer.transform(XMLTransformer.java:262)
at GIS.Universal.XMLTransformer.transform(XMLTransformer.java:166)
at GIS.HTMLComments.HTMLProducers.XSLProducer.generate(XSLProducer.java:85)
at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:1615)
at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.generate(HTMLTemplateParser.java:782)
at GIS.Common.HTMLTemplateParser.parse(HTMLTemplateParser.java:751)
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at com.caucho.xml.AbstractStyleSheetFactory.generate(AbstractStyleSheetFactory.java:819)
at com.caucho.xml.AbstractStyleSheetFactory.newTemplates(AbstractStyleSheetFactory.java:437)
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