

Canada top court rules Hollywood must pay to chase alleged internet pirates

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Hollywood studios must pay internet service providers to chase down Canadians who illegally download movies or other online content, Canada's Supreme Court ruled

Canada's high court on Friday ruled that Hollywood studios and other copyright holders must pay internet service providers to chase down

Canadians suspected of illegally downloading movies or other online content.

The decision will make slightly more difficult efforts to fight infringements under Canada's copyright law.

The amount that internet service providers should be reimbursed to dig up [information](#) on subscribers accused of infringing on copyrights, however, must still be determined at a future hearing.

"This is an important win for our customers and millions of internet subscribers facing open season on their personal information," David Watt, [senior vice president](#) of Canadian [internet service provider](#) Rogers, said in a statement.

The case was triggered by a group of film producers who got together to fight illegal sharing of their films.

Led by Voltage Pictures, the production company behind "The Hurt Locker" and "Dallas Buyers Club," they sought to know the identity of a Rogers [customer](#) so that they could sue that person.

Eventually they planned to sue about 55,000 more Rogers customers.

Rogers collected the information, but asked the producers to pay a fee of Can\$100 (US\$77) for it. A court order is also required for such disclosures of [personal information](#).

In court, Voltage argued that charging for the information would make it cost-prohibitive to track down tens of thousands of alleged law breakers.

Rogers says it receives more than two million requests from rights holders per year to send notices to customers alleging breaches in an

effort to discourage ongoing infringement.

Taking the additional step to identify those customers to rights holders risked multiplying its administrative costs, which were above and beyond the requirements of the act, it argued.

The Supreme Court in its ruling said Rogers is entitled to "reasonable costs" for complying with so-called Norwich orders, and sent the matter to a lower [court](#) to determine the amount.

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