

\$49 emails, \$100 phone calls lift cost of Nortel fight to \$838M

Fees expected to grow after settlement talks among creditors fail

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Fees from lawyers, financial advisers and consultants involved in the Nortel Networks bankruptcy case are now estimated at a whopping \$838 million (U.S.) — and growing.

The final bill is expected to balloon because crucial mediation talks among Nortel's creditors, from bondholders to retirees, collapsed this week, paving the way for more litigation.

Diane Urquhart, an independent financial analyst working with Nortel's disabled former employees, tallied the latest court filings in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

She estimates \$244 million has been paid in costs related to the Canadian case, \$386 million in the U.S. case and

\$126 million for the case in the UK.

An additional \$82 million in fees and expenses are related to Ernst & Young, which is overseeing the European bankruptcy case.

Every expense, even a long-distance phone call costing 35 cents, is carefully recorded.

Billable hourly rates can start from \$120 and easily move to more than \$1,000 an hour for a senior partner.

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