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The LRO can transmit 461GB everyday. That would cost \$231,883 on AT&T.

by Matt Burns on August 20, 2009

NASA already has [major budget issues](#) so it's a damn good thing the agency didn't turn to AT&T to provide the wireless data coverage for the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter. Because [AT&T charges](#) \$0.0195 per kilobyte over a 5GB cap, it would cost roughly \$231,883 for the daily data transmission of the 461GB. That's \$83,709,763 per year assuming AT&T didn't come up with some charge for interplanetary roaming. All joking aside, this Moon satellite has [an impressive data transmitter](#).

Somehow electrodes in a vacuum tube boosts microwave signals to high levels that are idea for transmitting large amounts of data. This amplifier can send data at a 100 megabytes a second back to Earth, more than 238,800 miles away. Similar designs were used on Kepler and Cassini, but the [LRO's](#) system is the most powerful. And it has to be if it's taking [high-res photos](#) of the Moon's surface.

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