

Government Computers to Get Linux-Based Operating System

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The government is hoping to launch the first version of a "national operating system" for its computers as early as next year, a senior Communications and Press Ministry official said Thursday.

The operating system, for use on the computer systems of government agencies and state-run companies, will be 90 percent based on the open-source Linux operating system, Deputy Communications and Press Minister Ilya Massukh said.

He said use of the operating system would be optional for all agencies.

The operating system is part of the Information Society program, which the government is planning to implement from September. The program will receive 10 billion rubles (\$330 million) in funding per year and includes other technology-related projects such as the creation of an "electronic government."

The national operating system "may be one of the first targeted programs from the new raft that the government is going to approve," Massukh said.

The ministry is planning to hold a tender for the development of the operating system at the beginning of next year.

Massukh also said a state e-mail system, under the "electronic government" framework, could be launched next year.

The government may have even bigger IT goals in mind as well.

Vedomosti reported Thursday that the Kremlin is supporting the development of a national search engine to fuel the development of new technologies and increase competition.

The government is investing \$100 million in the program and has convinced IT companies such as Abbyy, Rostelekom, KM.ru and IBS Group to participate.

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