

Lawmakers Prepare to Crack Down on Spam

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Russia, known as a global stronghold of spam, will finally crack down on the unsolicited e-mails, as the State Duma will review this week a bill introducing fines and punishments for spammers.

Sending out “unsolicited electronic messages” may soon carry fines from 50,000 rubles to 1 million rubles (\$1,800 to \$36,000), or be punishable with up to two years of correctional labor, according to the draft of the bill [released](#) Wednesday on the blog of Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov.

Programmers creating software for spamming will also be subject to the new legislation, and convicted spammers will have their computer equipment confiscated. The bill defines spamming as sending out at least 1,000 daily or 10,000 weekly e-mails with “advertising, informative or political” content. A message is not spam if it has no misleading headline, clearly identifies the sender and explains how to decline further e-mails.

Lawmakers and IT industry representatives have spent six months drafting the bill, using

Australian, Canadian and American legislation as a template, Gazeta.ru [said](#). The first Duma hearing is scheduled for Friday.

Russian spammers earn 3.7 billion rubles per year plying their trade, putting the country ninth on a list of the world's biggest spammers, which is topped by Brazil, Cisco Systems [said](#) in 2009.

The country loses 14.1 billion rubles (\$510 million) a year from spam, a study by the Russian Association of Electronic Communications said in 2009, the latest year for which figures are available.

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