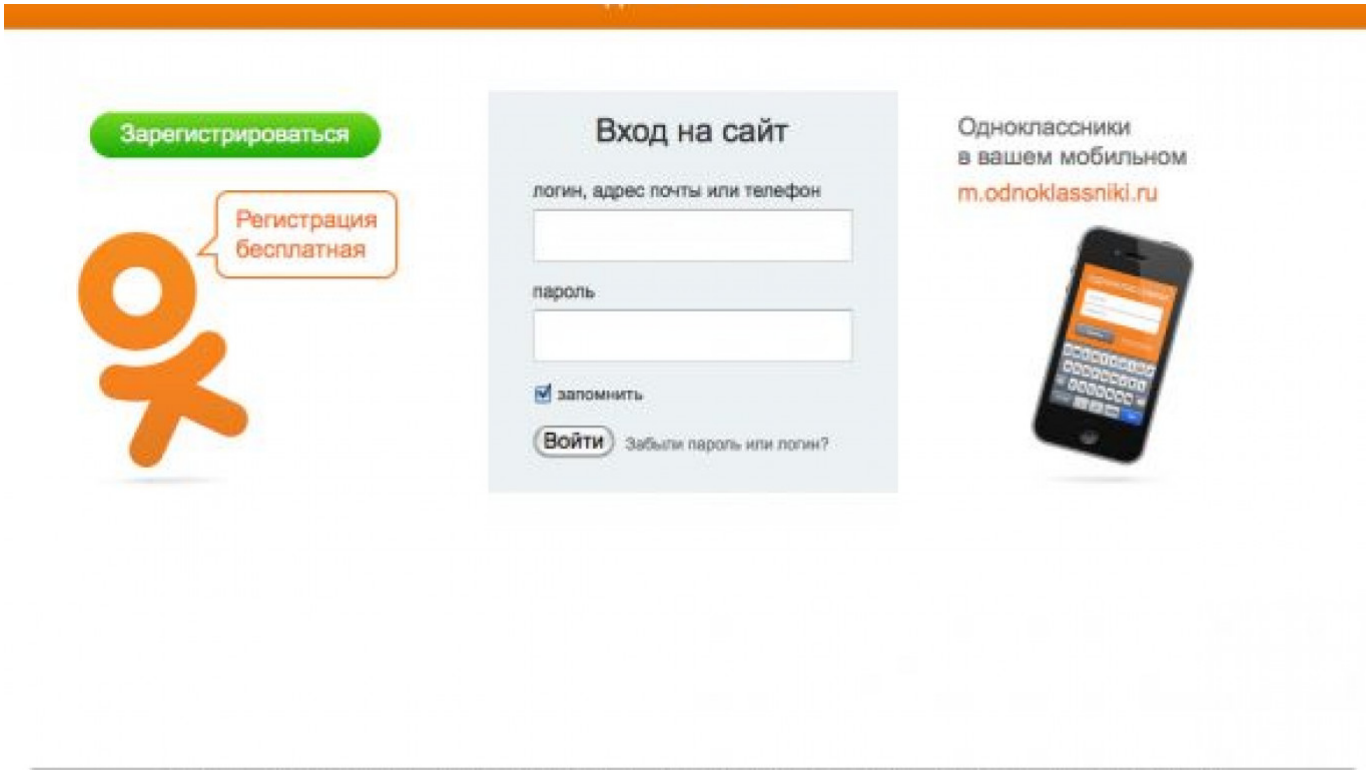
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2nd-Largest Social Network Starting English Version

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Social networking site Odnoklassniki said it is launching an English version for its global audience.

Russia's second-largest social network Odnoklassniki is starting an English version of its site, the company said.

"People in 229 countries use the Odnoklassniki social network. Pitcairn Islands [in the Pacific] is the only territory we have not registered a single visit from," the company said in a statement. "Therefore, we decided to translate Odnoklassniki into English."

Odnoklassniki, which means "classmates," was launched as part of Mail.Ru Group in 2006 to help people connect with former school friends.

The statement said the company's user base includes people in North Korea, 1 million users in the United States, and a single person from Vatican City that visits the site using a mobile phone.

Odnoklassniki is not the first Russian social networking site to attempt expansion abroad.

Russian market leader Vkontakte already has an English version, and it moved to a more globally friendly .com address in January.

According to statistics from LiveInternet, about 29 million people visit the Odnoklassniki site daily, putting it slightly behind VKontakte's 33 million daily visitors. As of March 2012, Odnoklassniki had 87.5 million registered users. Facebook, the world's largest social network, has over 900 million users.

Odnoklassniki has plans to open branches in several former Soviet republics, including Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Uzbekistan, having announced the opening of an Uzbek-language version of the site in April.

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