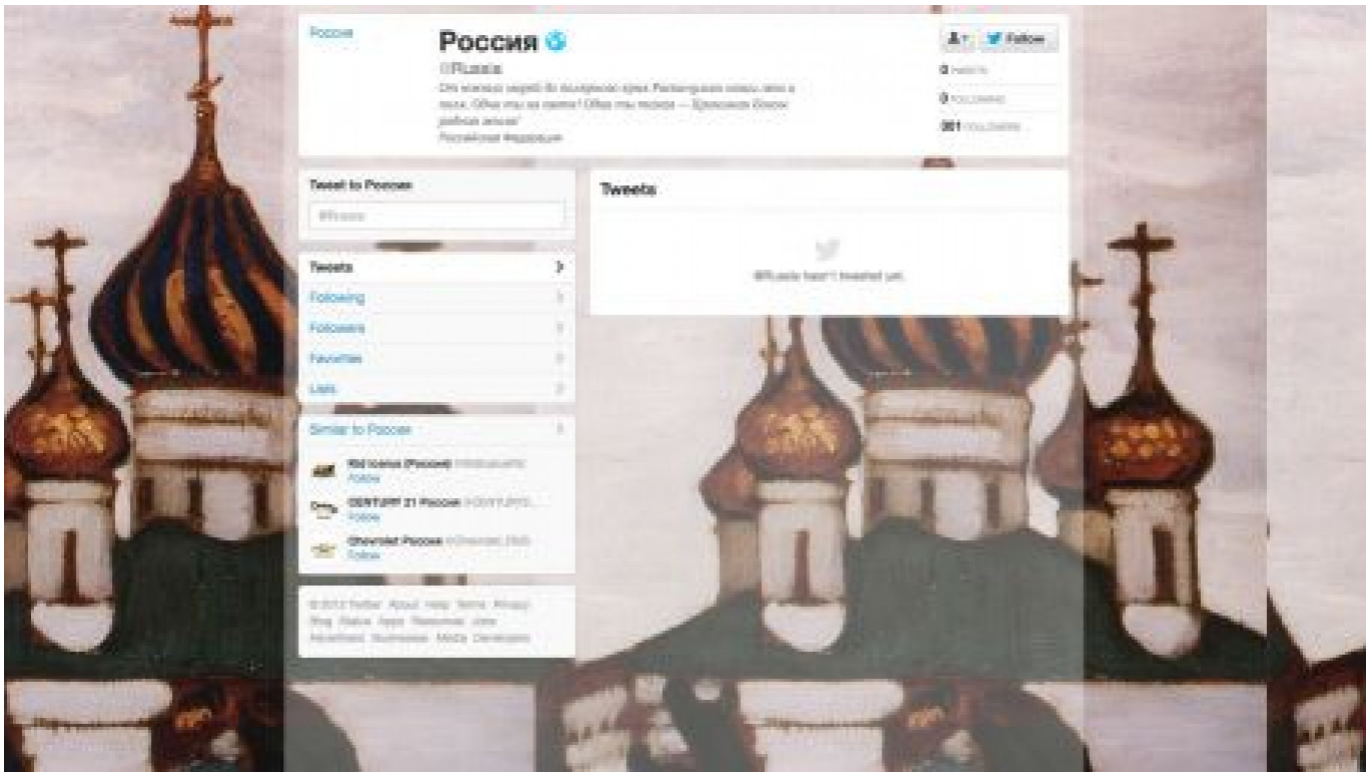
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

@Russia Stands Silent on Twitter

By The Moscow Times

November 15, 2012



A screenshot of the dormant @Russia Twitter account. Thursday's study places @Russia in a group of 30 accounts named after countries that have never tweeted.

Russia doesn't have an active Twitter handle, and it's not even clear whether the coveted @Russia account is the government's property, according to a study released Thursday.

The study places @Russia in a group of 30 accounts named after countries — out of 193 ones that the study looked at — that have never tweeted.

The account's profile features nothing but a line from the Russian national anthem and a picture of the national coat of arms.

"It is sad to see that the @Russia account is inactive and hasn't sent a single tweet," said Matthias Lüfkens, an executive at Burson-Marsteller, a global public relations and communications firm that carried out the study. "I am intrigued to know who has registered the account."

The study, which looked at country branding on Twitter, shows that only nine governments out of the 193 UN member states own the Twitter handle with their country's name. They are Britain, Israel, Sweden, Antigua Barbuda, Barbados, Lithuania, the Maldives, South Africa and Spain.

In being inactive, @Russia is similar to @Madagascar. What sets them apart, however, is that the owner of the account of the world's fourth-largest island is out in the open: It's DreamWorks Animation, the makers of the "Madagascar" movie.

Despite its complete silence, the Russian account has gained 301 followers.

Several Russian leaders and organizations are active Twitter users, including Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (@MedvedevRussia and @MedvedevRussiaE) and the Foreign Ministry (@MFA_Russia).

But attempts by the Russian Twitter community to promote the country through volunteers, like in Sweden, have hit a snag. As @We_R_Russia put it, "Unfortunately it's not so easy to find somebody who speaks English and wants to share his thoughts with the world."

@Sweden, a project co-run by the tourism agency of that country, every week puts someone in Sweden in charge of the account to recommend things to do, places to see and share diverse opinions and ideas.

Related articles:

- Internet Censorship Faces Obstacles
- Kremlin Aide Seeks Limits on Officials' Twitter Use
- Krasnodar Governor Has Raucous Twitter Session

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/11/15/russia-stands-silent-on-twitter-a19436