

Russian-Founded Online Search Engine Launched in Vietnam

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Nigma.ru founder Viktor Lavrenko has launched a new online search engine offering services in Vietnamese, Vedomosti reported Wednesday.

The development of the search engine — Coccoc.com, which means "knock-knock" in Vietnamese — cost Lavrenko \$15 million and two years of work. The money was used mainly for the purchase of equipment and payment of Russian software developers who relocated to Vietnam's capital, Hanoi, to work on the project.

Some 40 Russians are currently working for the search engine, the businessman said.

Coccoc.com hopes to generate revenue by selling contextual advertising tailored to the needs of small business, which is well-developed in Vietnam. Lavrenko sees potential in placing ads for cafes, gas stations and other places that may be of interest to Internet users.

The first search engine with Russian origin in Vietnam, Wada.vn, was launched in 2012. One of its founders, Igor Ashmanov, told Vedomosti he is confident about the prospects of the country's rapidly growing Internet market.

According to the Alexa.com online statistics service, the most popular online services in Vietnam are the local version of Google, social network Facebook, the English-language Google and video hosting site YouTube.

Lavrenko said Vietnam is only the first stage of his expansion strategy in the region. Eventually, his whole development team may move to Thailand, Indonesia or Malaysia to work on his greatest ambition: a search engine to serve all of Southeast Asia. By his estimates, such a project could generate up to \$1 billion per year.

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