

Mail.Ru Launches U.S. Networking and Games Venture

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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WASHINGTON — A leading Russian Internet company owned by billionaire Alisher Usmanov on Tuesday unveiled its U.S.-based mobile communications and games venture, saying Russian technical expertise can help it gain a foothold in the U.S.

"Russian developers tend to have outstanding backgrounds in mathematics, physics and engineering, which have propelled Russian companies to the forefront of the domestic Internet market," Mail.Ru Group chief executive Dmitry Grishin said in a statement. "Now we will use all the skills and experience we have earned to enter the U.S. market."

The startup, called My.com, will offer e-mail, social networking, games and messaging products. Mobile apps offered by the company will be developed in Russia, while the venture has set up a marketing and sales office in Silicon Valley, the Financial Times reported Tuesday.

My.com on Tuesday announced the release of three products: a mobile e-mail service called myMail, a mobile text, voice and video messaging service called myChat, and a free mobile games service called myGames.

Mail.Ru Group owns a bevy of online services popular in Russia, including its eponymous mail service, the Odnoklassniki.ru social network and instant message service ICQ. The London-traded company has a staff of 3,000.

Usmanov, Russia's richest man according to Forbes, sold a 7.4 percent stake in Mail.Ru Group in February for \$532 million, reducing his ownership to 17.9 percent. He retained 58.1 percent of voting rights after the sale, however.

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