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U.S. Sanctions Block Crimeans From World of Warcraft, Diablo III

By The Moscow Times

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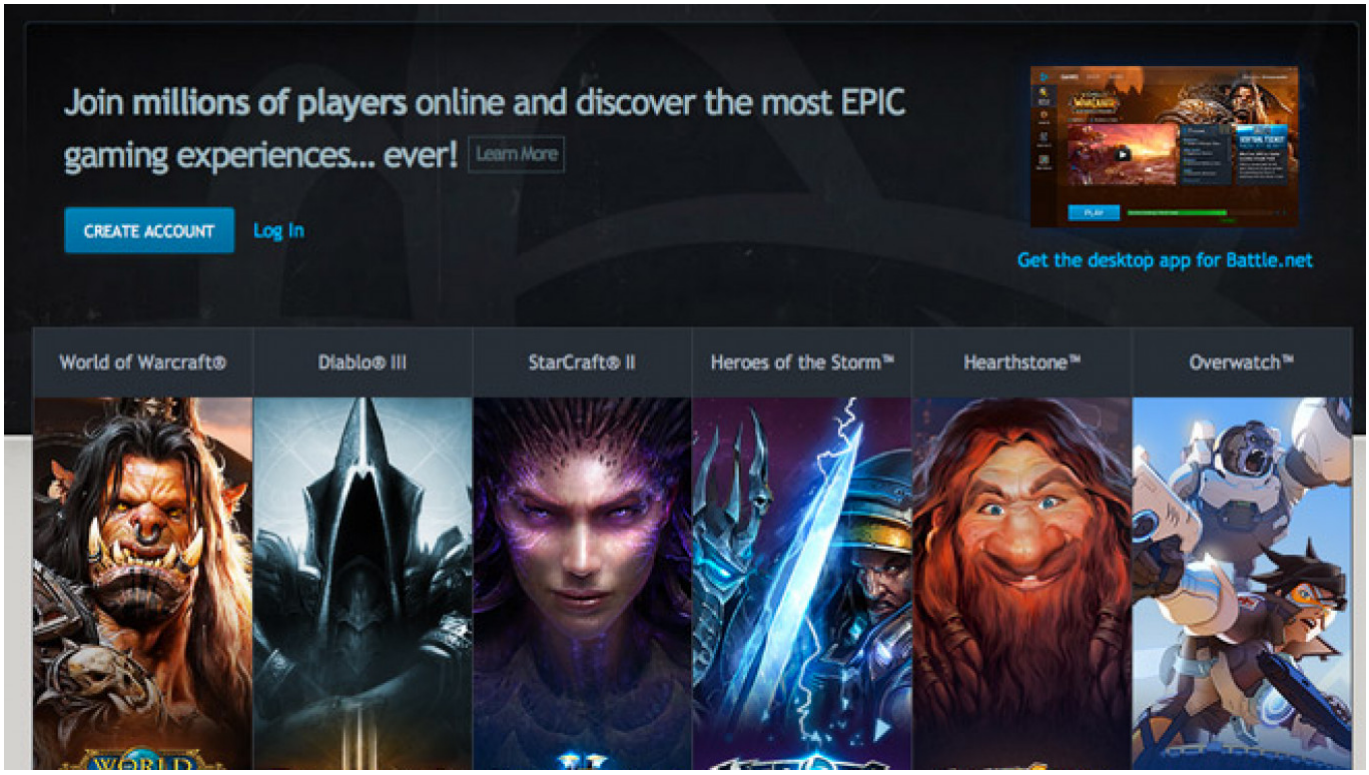

A screenshot of Battle.net, the online gaming platform developed by Blizzard Entertainment.

Crimean gamers were locked out of playing popular online multiplayer games World of Warcraft and Diablo III on Tuesday, as the games' publisher was forced to suspend the accounts in compliance with Western sanctions.

Major U.S Internet and tech companies such as Apple, Google and PayPal have suspended services to Crimean users over the last year. The United States in December barred U.S.-registered companies from investing in Crimea or providing services to companies there.

Video game developer Blizzard, renowned worldwide for smash-hit titles such as World of Warcraft and the Diablo series of video games joined the chorus on Tuesday, Russian game news site Geektimes.ru reported, citing a copy of the company's notice.

"In accordance with current trade regulations relating to the region of Crimea, we are legally

required to suspend access to your Battle.net account," the company's notice read, Geektimes.ru reported.

Blizzard's World of Warcraft is a massive online multiplayer game that has become a global phenomenon, with millions of players subscribed to the game around the world.

Another title published by Blizzard, Diablo III, is no less popular, with 15 million copies sold gaming news site IGN.com reported in February, citing data provided by Blizzard's parent company, Activision.

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