

Moscow Lawyers Complain to Prosecutors Over Windows 10 Privacy

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A display for the Windows 10 operating system is seen in a store window at the Microsoft store at Roosevelt Field in Garden City, New York.

Lawyers with the Bubnov and Partners legal practice in Moscow have filed a complaint with the Prosecutor General's Office over the privacy and data collection settings of the Windows 10 computer operating system, RIA Novosti reported Thursday, citing one of the lawyers.

The lawyers allege that the operating system illicitly collects users' browser history, passwords, location, elements of electronic messages, calendar records and even voice recordings. According to the lawyers, this could breach Russia's privacy laws, including the law on legal practice.

Last week, State Duma Deputy Vadim Solovyov sent an official request to the Prosecutor General's Office to review Microsoft, the company that developed Windows 10, for its compliance with the Russian law, Izvestia newspaper reported at the time. The deputy claimed that Windows 10 is effectively spying on its users.

A spokesman for Microsoft denied the allegations to RIA Novosti.

“The new operating system offers users the choice of how they want it to handle their data and users can change the settings at any point,” the unidentified spokesman told the news agency on Thursday.

The Russian Association for Electronic Communications said in a statement last Friday that the Windows 10 operating system has flexible settings and therefore does not breach Russian law. In its statement, the association also described how a user can turn off data collection in the system's settings.

In February, Russia's Communications Ministry proposed banning state agencies from using foreign software in an effort to help domestic developers. The proposal is still under consideration.

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