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Apple to Store Users' Personal Data in Russia – Report

By Howard Amos

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Most major IT companies have announced their intention to comply with the law but some international giants, including Facebook, have yet to formally state their position.

U.S. tech giant Apple will store the personal data of its Russian users at a data center inside Russia to comply with a new law, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday, citing unidentified sources.

Apple has agreed a partnership with Moscow-based data center operator IXcellerate, which already has a contract with U.S. online hotel booking service Booking.com. As part of the Booking.com agreement, the passport details of the individual making the reservation will be stored, as well as the number of the bank card used to make the purchase, Kommersant reported.

The deal appears to achieve the localization of the personal data of Apple's Russian users and will bring the firm in line with a Russian law obliging all companies supplying Internet

services in Russia, or targeting Russian users, to store such data inside the country by Sept. 1 this year.

Apple held a tender for the data center contract in July, according to Kommersant. Apple and IXcellerate declined to confirm the deal to Kommersant, and its value was also not revealed by the paper.

Most major IT companies have announced their intention to comply with the law but some international giants, including Facebook, have yet to formally state their position. Business daily Vedomosti reported last month that Facebook was reluctant to transfer its data to Russia.

There are more than 2.6 million companies subject to the law, officials at the state communications watchdog Roskomnadzor said last month.

But experts argue that even more are affected and that Roskomnadzor doesn't have the resources to monitor all of them — or even thoroughly check compliance with the new legislation.

Roskomnadzor has announced that there will be about 300 compliance inspections this year.

Under the new legislation, if companies refuse to transfer data to Russia, Roskomnadzor can restrict access to their websites. A registry of websites that violate the law will be created by Roskomnadzor, and as a last resort, the agency would have the power to block those listed websites.

The law was signed by President Vladimir Putin in December 2014.

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