

Russian Smartphone Maker Yota Bought by Chinese Firm

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 21, 2015



Yota's chief executive Vladislav Martynov said REX Global would inject \$50 million into Yota to fund a third generation model of its phone.

The Hong Kong company REX Global Entertainment Holdings has bought a 65 percent stake in Russia's Yota Devices, the maker of a two-screened smartphone, for \$100 million, the company's chief executive said.

Launched in 2013, the YotaPhone, which has an LCD screen on one side and an e-ink screen similar to the one used on Amazon's Kindle on the other, was Russia's first entry into the global smartphone market. It received strong backing from officials, who are keen to foster Russian technology and wary, following revelations by U.S. intelligence leaker Edward Snowden that U.S.-made phones could be bugged by American spies.

Yota's chief executive Vladislav Martynov said REX Global would inject \$50 million into Yota to fund a third generation model of its phone, and the company's knowledge of the Chinese

market would help boost sales in the country, the RBC news agency reported. The YotaPhone 2, launched last year and sold in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, costs around \$500.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev was an early YotaPhone user, and President Vladimir Putin gave one to Chinese leader Xi Jinping when the two met in Beijing last year.

Ramzan Kadyrov, the strongman leader of Chechnya, earlier this year ditched his iPhone for a Yota, publishing a picture of himself with Russian rapper Timati playing on their YotaPhones.

“Do not buy an iPhone,” Kadyrov wrote on Instagram. “Patriotism and love for your country come through deeds.”

He was reportedly later photographed back on his iPhone.

The remaining shares in Yota devices are owned by Rostec, a state-owned defense and technology conglomerate (25.1 percent), and managers including Martynov (10 percent).

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/10/21/russian-smartphone-maker-yota-bought-by-chinese-firm-a50391>