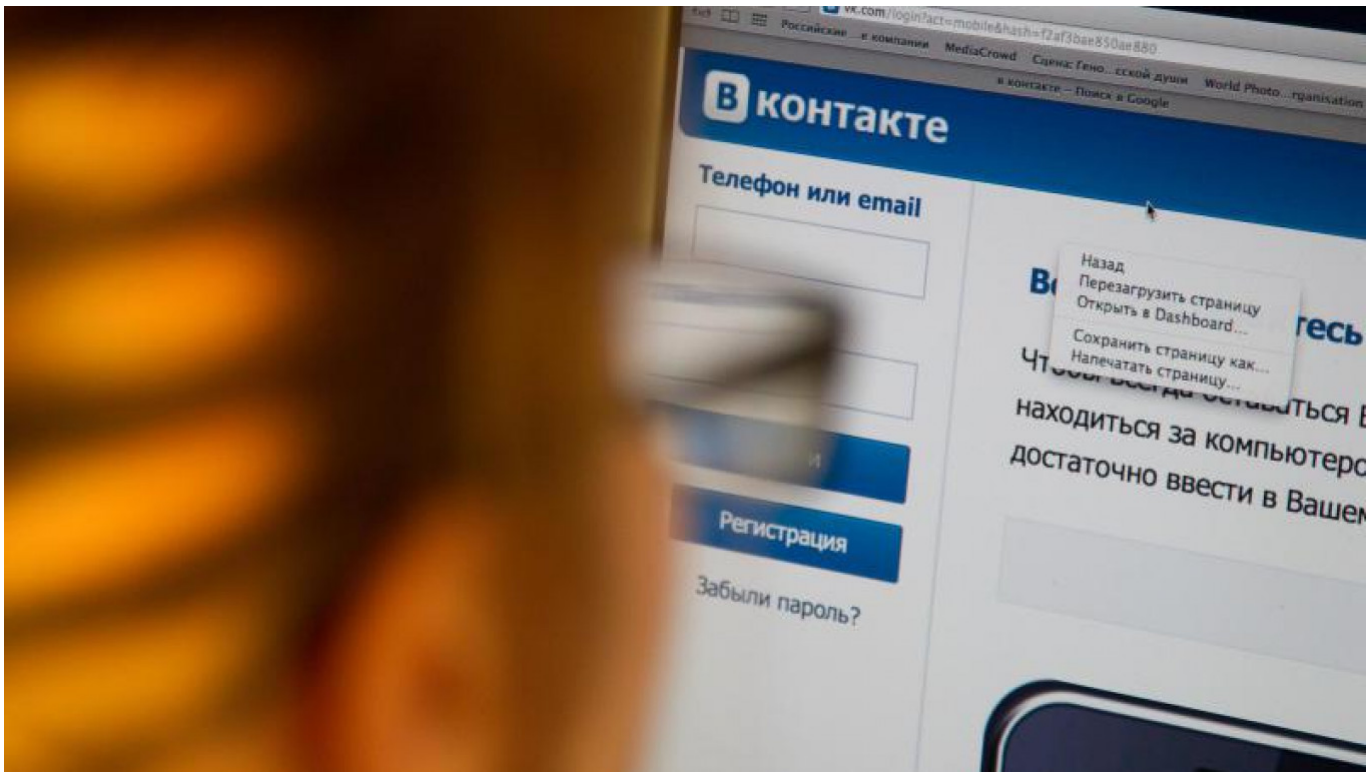
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Russian Social Network Vkontakte Sues Data Mining Companies

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Denis Abramov / Vedomosti

Russian social network Vkontakte is suing two data-mining companies who used its website to gather information on users without permission.

The two companies, Double Data and the National Bureau of Credit Histories, will appear in the case at Moscow's Arbitration Court.

Double Data collects information on users' place of work, study, and friends from their social media page in a bid to compile a credit history, according to court documents. The company mines this publicly-available data without permission from Vkontakte or the users' themselves.

Vkontakte claims that Double Data's work slows the speed of their site, and is demanding symbolic compensation of one ruble ($0.02).

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Double Data's General Director Maxim Ginzhuk has said that his firm will fight the case, accusing the social network of launching the law suit to eliminate the company as a competitor. The company behind Vkontakte, the Mail.ru Group, recently began to invest in big data analysis software designed to assess credit risk, the Kommersant newspaper reported Tuesday.

With more than 88 million registered users in Russia and 143 million worldwide, Vkontakte remains the most popular social network in Russia, with more than eight times the daily users of leading international social network Facebook.

It is the second popular website in Russia in terms of daily visitors, out ranked only by Russian-language search engine Yandex.

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