

Renault Hands Control of the Dashboard to Yandex

Yandex will provide real-time navigation and other services for locally made cars.

By [Bloomberg](#)

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The Renault-Nissan-AvtoVaz partnership has about a third of the Russian market. **Igor Ivanko / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's transition to connected vehicles is looking increasingly homegrown after the country's biggest car-making alliance handed control of its dashboards to local search engine Yandex.

The Renault-Nissan-AvtoVAZ partnership, which has about a third of the Russian market, will use Yandex in locally made cars for services like real-time navigation, voice assistance and music. The pact also opens options to gain direct access to valuable car customer data, more than Apple or Google apps obtain indirectly through smartphones.

“About 20 million Russians use our app to navigate through traffic jams, putting a phone on a window-mounted cradle,” Roman Chernin, Yandex’s head of geolocation services, said in an interview. “So we sought to build it into the head unit.”

Yandex.Auto, the search engine’s infotainment system, will be fitted into more than 2 million Renault, Nissan and Lada cars in the next five years.

While Google is still working with automakers on deploying connected-car software that works without a smartphone, Yandex technology has been installed in about 100,000 connected cars sold in Russia since 2016, including models from Toyota, Honda and China’s Chery. Yandex also has deals with Volkswagen, Hyundai and Jaguar Land Rover.

Related article: [Hyundai Signs Deal With Russia's Yandex for Autonomous Cars](#)

Yandex was the first to build up an internet search engine in Russia, remaining the largest player even after Google entered the market. In 2015, Yandex won an antitrust lawsuit allowing pre-installation of its services on smartphones powered by Google’s Android operating system in Russia. To gain users, Yandex also offers services such as ride-hailing, food delivery, online shopping and others.

Yandex will also provide a solution to connect older cars. Together with French parts-maker Faurecia’s Chinese joint venture, it developed head units with pre-installed Yandex services for 17 different models of cars, said Chernin. Consumers can fit the units at car-service stations for about 30,000 rubles (\$460) apiece. In the future, the company plans to expand into parking, insurance and fuel payment services and access driver data.

“Yandex.Auto will start integrating with car systems to collect data like wheel speed and fuel levels,” he said. “It would also allow to rethink services such as smart insurance that takes driving manner into account.”

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