The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Businessman Buys Russian-Language RTVI Broadcaster

By Reuters

December 17, 2019



The businessman bought a majority stake in television network RTVI from its Russian owner **rtvi.com**

U.S. businessman Mikayel Israyelyan has bought a majority stake in New York-based Russian-language television network RTVI from its Russian owner and plans to expand it in the United States, the channel said on Tuesday.

The sale marks the first time the network, one of the biggest Russian-language broadcasters outside of Russia, will be majority owned by a foreign shareholder, a spokesman said.

The network was owned by Ruslan Sokolov since 2012 and Israyelyan, an entertainment industry entrepreneur and chief executive of the Muse Lifestyle Group, has bought Sokolov's entire stake, the spokesman said.

RTVI, which broadcasts in Russian in more than 50 countries including the United States, said it plans to open bureaus in Washington and California, focusing on programming for Russian

diaspora communities.

"There are nearly 7 million Russian-speaking people living in the United States today, who are interested in original high-quality content in their native language," Israyelyan, who has Armenian heritage, said in a statement.

"I see further business expansion opportunities on the West Coast, in attracting a new generation of viewers seeking to preserve its ties with the Russian culture and agenda," he added.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/12/17/us-businessman-buys-russian-language-rtvi-broadcaster-a68648