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Russia to Install 'Spiritual' Domestic Apps – Vedomosti

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Experts forecast that the government will come up with a list of applications no earlier than April. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russian authorities will give priority to "spiritual values" when deciding which Russian-made apps should come pre-installed under a controversial law banning smartphone sales without domestic software, the Vedomosti newspaper reported Thursday.

From July 1, smartphones will be required to go on sale with pre-installed apps approved by the Russian government. Supporters defend the law, which President Vladimir Putin signed last month, as protection for Russian consumers and Russian technology against Western competition. Some electronic retailers accused the legislation's authors of passing it without consulting with them.

Russia's competition watchdog has developed three criteria the government will follow in choosing the pre-installed Russian-made software, Vedomosti reported, citing a draft resolution it said it had obtained.

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Besides popularity and security, the Russian government will reportedly have to consider whether the software "prioritizes traditional Russian spiritual and moral values."

"What will be installed is widely used domestic software that has social significance and provides security," the competition watchdog, Russia's Federal Anti-Monopoly Service (FAS), announced Wednesday. It did not mention the values outlined in Vedomosti's report.

Smartphones will be required to pre-install Russian-made antivirus, search engine, GPS, public service and payment apps, the FAS said in a press release.

Pre-installed Russian-made software for tablets will become mandatory on July 1, 2021, FAS said in a press release. Similar rules will be phased in for personal computers on July 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023, for smart TV sets, it added.

Russia's Association of Trading Companies and Manufacturers of Consumer Electronic and Computer Equipment forecasts that the government will come up with a list of applications no earlier than April, its spokesman Anton Guskov told Vedomosti.

The phone makers will need at least six months to test the apps, Guskov was cited as saying.

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