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Samsung Backs Russia's Law Against Apple

Electronics giant says it will pre-install government-approved apps on devices sold in Russia.

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Samsung is Russia's second most popular smartphone manufacturer. **Kārlis Dambrāns / Flickr (CC BY 2.0)**

Samsung will meet the requirements of Russia's controversial law requiring smartphone makers to sell their devices with government-approved pre-installed software, the company told Russian news agency RIA Novosti Monday.

"Samsung Electronics will be ready to meet the requirements of the Russian legislation provided by the regulator and adapt the company's activities in accordance with the adopted regulations," said a company statement cited by RIA.

The new rules, which have been dubbed the "law against Apple", sailed through Russia's parliament last year and are set to come into force this summer. The government is currently

finalizing the exact list of applications electronics makers will have to pre-install on all smartphones, tablets and computers sold on the Russian market.

Related article: Russia Bans Sale of Smartphones Without Russian Apps

The proposed fines for selling devices without the pre-installed applications are currently set to range from 50,000 to 200,000 rubles ($784-$3,137), although this structure is also under review by Russia's parliament.

After setting a similarly low punishment for breaches of data localization laws when they were first introduced, Russia last December significantly hiked the fines it can levy on non-compliant tech companies to a maximum of $300,000 for repeat offenders.

A Moscow court last week fined U.S. companies Facebook and Twitter $63,000 each for failing to store Russian customer data on a server located inside the country.

Samsung's position potentially puts the South Korean tech giant at odds with rival Apple, with the U.S. company having said it will not install third-party apps on its devices, and adding that the law could force it to reconsider its commitment to Russia.

In contrast, Samsung said: "The amendments to the law will not affect the company's plans to continue working in Russia." The firm also highlighted it already works with Russian app developers, having sold products pre-loaded with Mail.Ru's mail application and Yandex search functionality.

Samsung is Russia's second most popular smartphone manufacturer, with 28% of the market, news site RBC reported. Chinese maker Huawei occupies the top spot, with 33% of all sales, while Apple controls under 10% of the market.

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