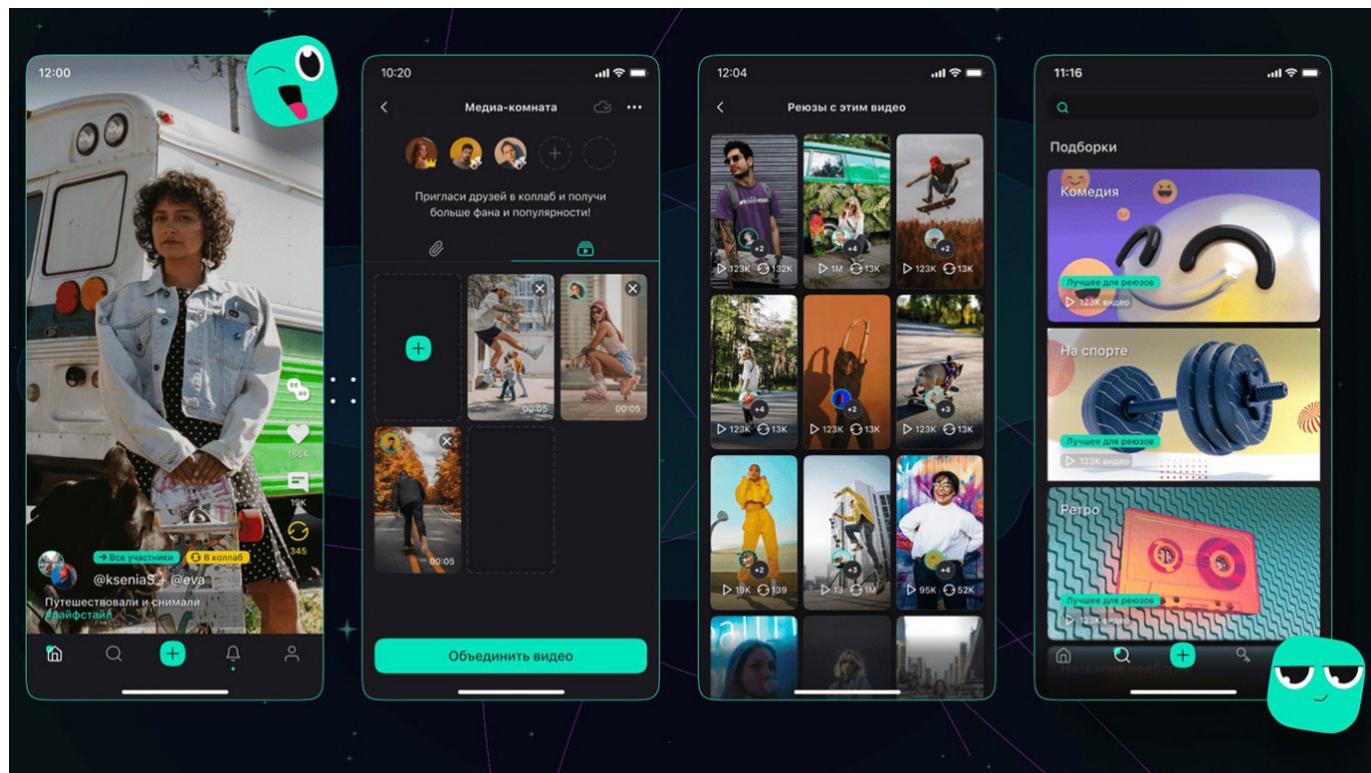


Russia Launches Homemade TikTok Alternative

State-owned media conglomerate launches new video-sharing platform as Russia ramps up pressure on foreign tech companies.

November 30, 2021



Gazprom Media has launched "Yappy," a Russian alternative to TikTok play.google.com

Russia's leading media conglomerate has launched a domestic rival to the hugely popular video-sharing app TikTok as Russia's campaign to reduce the influence of foreign websites and technology advances.

Gazprom Media, a subsidiary of state-owned gas giant Gazprom, launched the service, named "Yappy," on Monday. It is currently available to download from both the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Yappy was developed with the support of the Innopraktika foundation, an organization run by Katerina Tikhonova, one of President Vladimir Putin's alleged daughters, the *Kommersant* business paper [reported](#) last year.

The app began beta testing in September, with early access given to 300 bloggers ahead of Monday's full launch. The service has a number of similar functions to TikTok and is based on sharing short vertical video clips of up to 60 seconds in length.

Related article: [Russia's Drive to Replace Foreign Technology Is Slowly Working](#)

Russia announced its intentions to create a domestic alternative to TikTok at the end of 2020. The Chinese-made app came under fire alongside U.S. tech giants earlier this year for [refusing](#) to remove posts the Russian government said incited children to [attend](#) unsanctioned street protests in support of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Russia has since named TikTok as one of 13 international social media platforms that will be [required](#) to open an office on Russian soil by the end of 2021 — the latest law that critics say is designed to squeeze the dominance of foreign tech companies and social media platforms in Russia.

TikTok is among the five most popular social media platforms in Russia with 40 million monthly users, according to media analytics company Mediascope. VKontakte — a Russian alternative to Facebook — is the most popular social media site in the country, with 70 million monthly users.

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