The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Film Distributor Develops Homegrown Alternative to IMAX

March 30, 2023



A poster for "The Challenge," the first movie to ever be shot in space. **Channel One**

A major Russian film distributor said it had developed an alternative to the high-resolution, large-format cinematic experience IMAX, the Vedomosti business daily reported Thursday.

The IMAX Corporation, a Canadian company that produces entertainment technology, left Russia in June as part of the backlash against Russia's invasion of Ukraine by Western firms. The company has since banned screenings of its films in Russia.

Central Partnership, Russia's leading film producer and distributor, which is part of the Gazprom-Media holding company, is now seeking to patent its own IMAX alternative called "Cosmax," according to CEO Vadim Vereshchagin.

"We're pushing for serious competition with IMAX," Vereshchagin told Vedomosti. "Though under the current circumstances, it would be correct to say 'alternative to IMAX'."

Cosmax provides "the clearest and richest image with deep and detailed sound,"

Vereshchagin said, and apparently cost under 5 million rubles ($65,000) to develop.

Related article: IMAX Bans Russian Film Screenings Within Russia, Chain Owner Says

The first film to be screened using Cosmax technology will be "The Challenge," a Russian film that is also the first movie ever shot in space.

The story of a surgeon dispatched to the ISS to save a cosmonaut, "The Challenge" was filmed over 12 days aboard the International Space Station (ISS) in October 2021.

If the film is released on schedule, it will hit screens before a counterpart Hollywood movie also shot in space, which has the backing of "Mission Impossible" star Tom Cruise, NASA, and Elon Musk's SpaceX.

Vereshchagin told Vedomosti that cinemas must be equipped with high-quality digital cinema projectors and sound equipment to screen Cosmax movies. He added that Cosmax also supported movies shot in "any open format" and "originally filmed in high resolution with a certain frame rate."

A court in Moscow ordered IMAX on March 22, 2023, to resume work in Russia in a ruling that the Canadian company is expected to challenge within a month, according to Vedomosti.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/03/30/russian-film-distributor-develops-homegrown-alternative-to-imax-a80660