

United Russia Wants to Create PC Games

By [Alexandra Taranova](#)

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United Russia intends to team up with the country's computer gaming community to create educational and social games, the party announced on its web site, and it has the support of a cybergaming group.

"I think it is time for interaction between the party and the gaming community," said Sergei Shirokov, president of the National Professional Cybersport Leagues.

"We believe that the party can begin to communicate with a huge audience of gamers across the country and conduct various competitions for computer games," he said in a [statement](#) published on United Russia's web site.

Shirokov suggested computer games based on the "historical reality" of World War II battles.

"At least to some extent, players will be able to feel what our people had to go through to

protect their homeland," Shirokov said in the statement, which was titled, "The Game: It's Serious."

His comments also were posted on the [web site](#) of the Young Guard, United Russia's youth wing.

United Russia will be a developer and inspirer of the games, said State Duma Deputy Robert Shlegel, a party member who sits on the Duma's information technology committee.

The computer games "will combine education and patriotic features," the 25-year-old deputy said, adding that the first game will be dedicated to Russia's history.

The reaction from other corners was mixed. Oleg Kozlovsky, a member of the democratic opposition group Solidarity, said by telephone that the United Russia initiative was an "extravagant" idea to promote the party and to absorb money from state coffers.

"Neither gamers nor United Russia will get any benefit from this," said Kozlovsky, 26, a civil rights activist and political blogger.

A Just Russia Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov, 35, who also is on the Duma's IT committee, said he saw no problem with United Russia's plans but noted that the games would need to be designed by professionals to be effective.

Nadezhda Nedova, deputy editor of gamer magazine Igromania, voiced skepticism about the likelihood of an effective alliance between United Russia and gamers — starting with the fact that many gamers are under 18 and cannot vote.

"The most active gamers are 14- to 18-year-olds, and they are keen on action and bloodthirsty games," she said.

Nedova was cautious about the party's chances of attracting gamers. "It will require huge financial resources and PR efforts to convince gamers that playing those games is a cool and fashionable thing to do," she said.

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