

St. Petersburg Court Throws Out V Kontakte Piracy Case

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's biggest social network, accused by the U.S. government of being a hotbed of copyright infringement, has been cleared of piracy charges over music files uploaded by users.

A lawsuit by iconic Russian record label Soyuz against the administration of V Kontakte was thrown out by a St. Petersburg Arbitration Court this week.

Soyuz sought 4.6 million rubles (\$140,000) in damages over compositions by leading Russian rockers on its label available for free listening on the social network.

But the judge ruled that the network's administration cannot be held accountable for content uploaded by users.

The ruling may set a high-profile precedent, given that copyright holders have previously

tried to sue social networks and websites in Russia over user-uploaded content.

Russia has no common law, but courts can still take preceding verdicts into account.

Soyuz did not say as of Friday whether it intended to appeal.

Vkontakte is considered the most popular social network in Russia, with a daily audience of 46 million.

It was listed by the U.S. State Department on the latest edition of Notorious Markets List in 2012 as a prime venue for pirated online music.

The network said in July it had begun talks with leading record labels about legal hosting of their content.

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