



THE YANDEX STUDY CASE

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GLOBAL BUSINESS ETHICS TEACHING WORKSHOP

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YANDEX UBIQUITY IN RUSSIA

- Yandex has been known as “Russia’s Google”, It began as a search engine in 1997, (2 years before Putin) and still has a 60 percent share of the Russian search market.
- The company was founded by two mathematicians and close friends: Arkady Volozh and Ilya Segalovich.
- Yandex is an internet media portal, a music streaming app, ride hailing, taxi and food delivery platform and its touchless payment technology its used by millions of russians.



TRUE INNOVATORS

- Yandex set up its first **international office** in 2005, in Ukraine, and in the following years it expanded into Turkey, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. In 2009, it established its first toehold in America, opening Yandex Labs
- In 2018, Yandex launched what it called “**the world’s first robo-taxi service,**” in Russia’s high-tech city of Innopolis. The 4,000 or so residents of the city could hail one of Yandex’s driverless taxis free of charge.



A JOURNALIST OPINION IN THE MOSCOW TIMES

“Without any irony: Yandex is a hi-tech domestic miracle and Russians should feel proud. No lobby could have made Yandex a leading search engine if the product had been poor or fake. But in today’s Russian reality, Yandex’s capacity for success is very limited. It is a very local and conveniently managed domestic tiger. Something Putin could enjoy playing with.”

Sep. 27, 2017



Elizaveta Osetinskaya

Elizaveta Osetinskaya is a Russian editor who ran the newspaper Vedomosti, the Russian edition of Forbes and the RBC media holding. She is also the founder of the Bell and is currently a fellow at UC Berkeley.

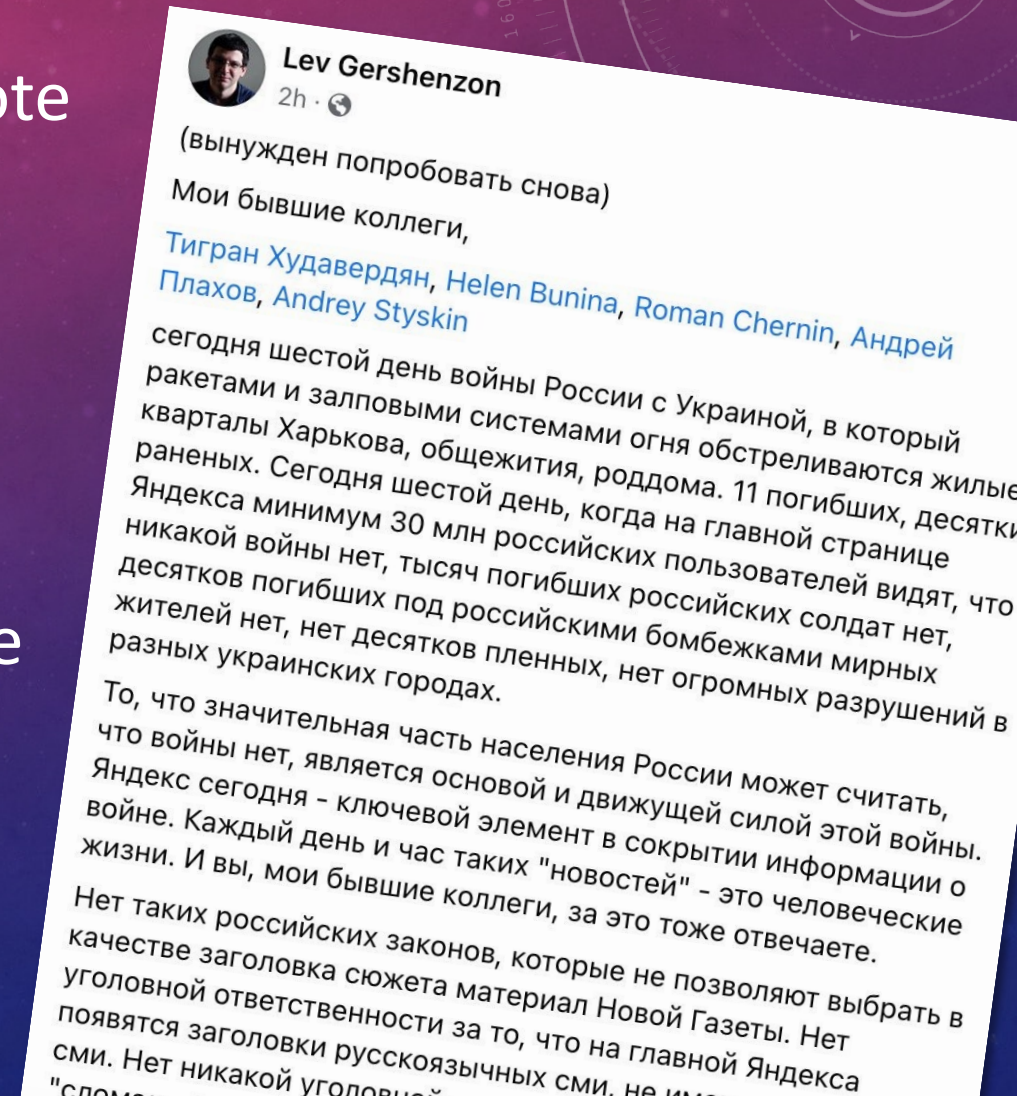
 @osetinskayaliza

- Since 2014, Yandex has had to restrict the results it shows on its news page to media which has been registered with the state's media watchdog.
- In 2019, after arduous negotiations with the Kremlin, Yandex put in place a new corporate governance structure. **The Kremlin initially demanded veto power over Yandex's entire board and control over its Dutch holding company.**
- In 2022, Russia Criminalizes Independent War Reporting, Anti-War Protests...



LEV GERSHENZON FORMER HEAD OF YANDEX'S NEWS DIVISION

- On March 1 (2022), posted an anguished note on Facebook addressed to his former coworkers. **“Yandex today is a key element in hiding information about war...”**
- **“At least 30 million Russian users” of Yandex’s “see that there is no war, there are no thousands of dead Russian soldiers, there are no dozens of civilians killed under Russian bombings.”**



My former colleagues,

[tagged]: Tigran Khudaverdyan, Helen Bunina, Roman Chernin, Andrey Plakhov, Andrey Styskin

Today is the sixth day of the war between Russia and Ukraine, a day on which residential areas, dormitories, and maternity hospitals in Kharkov are fired on with multiple rocket attacks. 11 dead, dozens injured.

Today is the sixth day that, on the main page of Yandex, at least 30 million Russian users are seeing that there is no war, that there are not thousands of dead Russian soldiers, that there are not dozens of civilians killed by Russian bombing, that there are not dozens of prisoners, that there is not huge destruction in various Ukrainian cities.

The fact that a significant part of the Russian population may believe that there is no war is the basis and driving force of this war. Today, Yandex is a key element in hiding information about the war. Every day and hour of such "news" costs human lives. And you, my former colleagues, are also responsible for this.

There are no Russian laws that forbid choosing Novaya Gazeta material as the headline of a topic. There is no criminal liability if headlines of Russian-language media that do not have a media license appear on the main Yandex page. There is no criminal liability for the service being "broken" or "hacked". Any costs you may face are not comparable with the harm that the service has been causing every day since the beginning of the war.

It's not too late to stop being accomplices to a terrible crime. If you can't do anything, quit.

Remember, you are responsible not only to thousands of your colleagues, but also to tens of millions of your users. And in front of millions of Ukrainians, too.



March 1st of 2022

Berlin, Germany

Lev Gershenzon, former
head of Yandex's news
division

Search...



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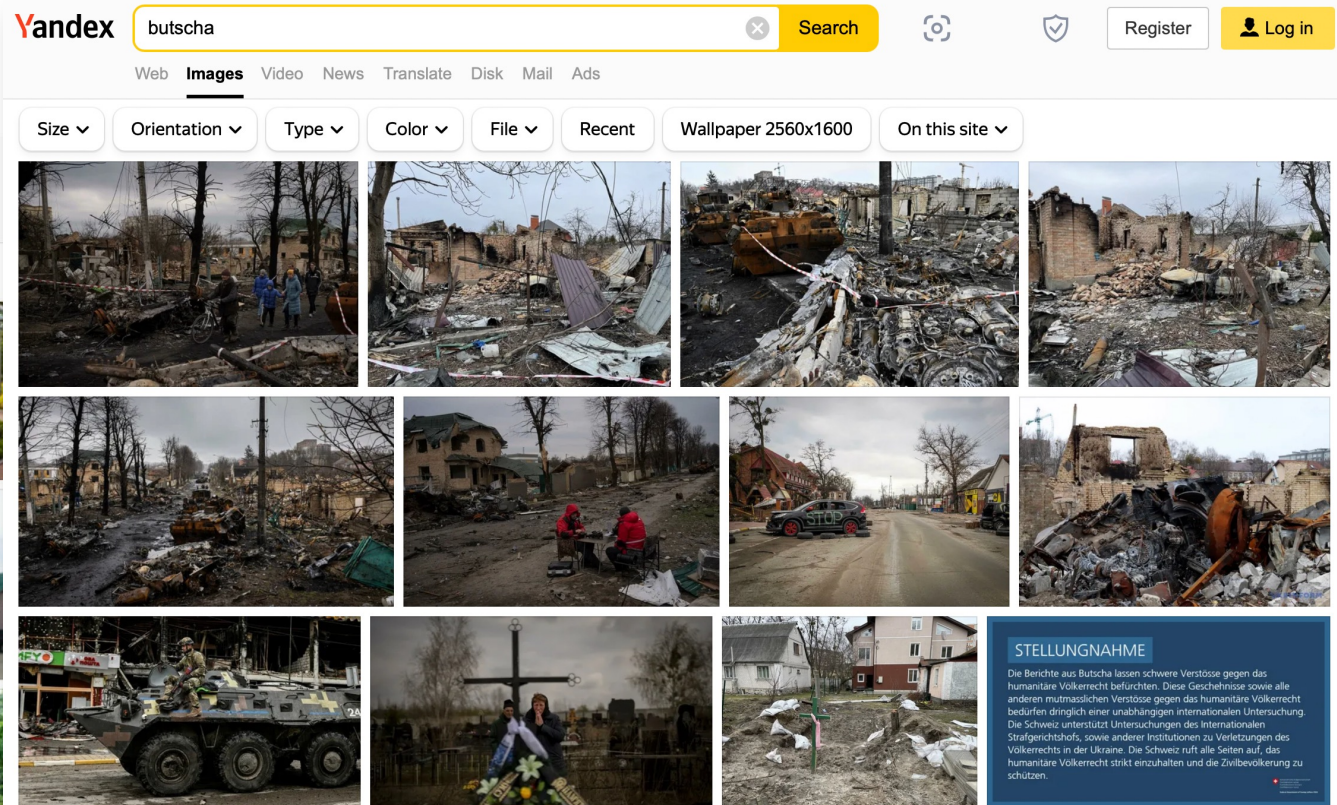
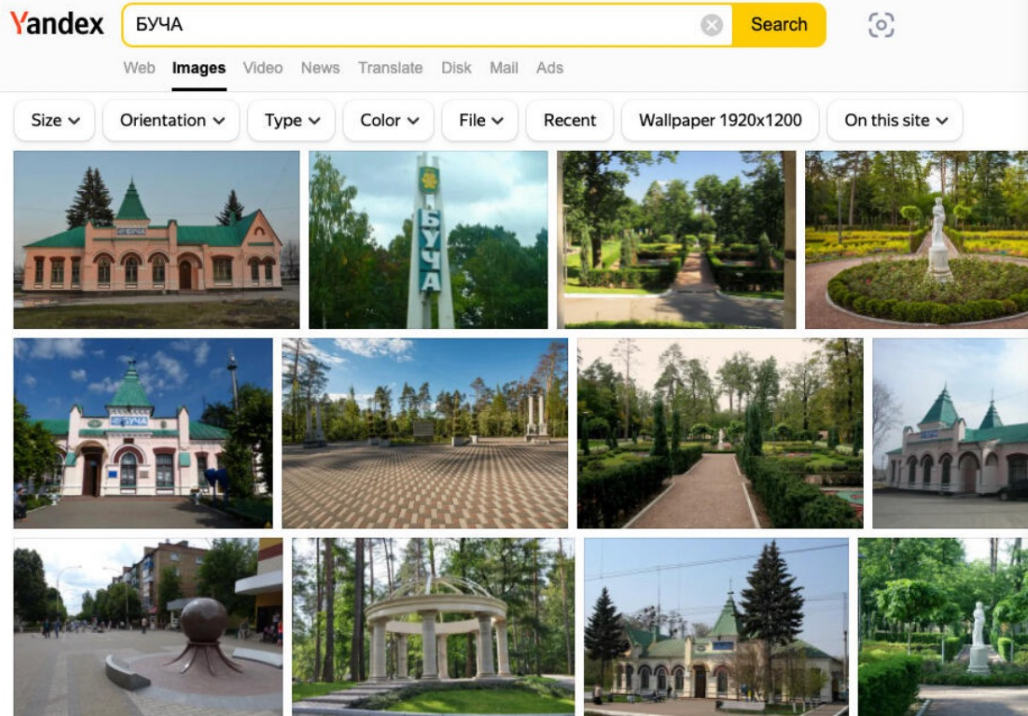
Russian search engine Yandex Hidden War

Russian users of the important Internet portal Yandex hardly notice the war in Ukraine. In the picture search, the Butscha, devastated by Russian troops, looks like an idyllic suburb, while the news portal reports on "liquidated saboteurs" in Ukraine.

04.04.2022 at 19:01 - Tomas Rudl - in public - 8 additions

Search in Russian

Search in English or German



STELLUNGNAHME

Die Berichte aus Butscha lassen schwere Verstöße gegen das humanitäre Völkerrecht befürchten. Diese Geschehnisse sowie alle anderen mutmasslichen Verstöße gegen das humanitäre Völkerrecht bedürfen dringend einer unabhängigen internationalen Untersuchung. Die Schweiz unterstützt Untersuchungen des Internationalen Strafgerichtshofs, sowie anderer Institutionen zu Verletzungen des Völkerrechts in der Ukraine. Die Schweiz ruft alle Seiten auf, das humanitäre Völkerrecht strikt einzuhalten und die Zivilbevölkerung zu schützen.

Search engine

Яндекс

Find

Search Pictures Video Maps Goods **Новости** Translator All

The main thing United States Interesting Coronavirus Politics Society Economics In the world Sport



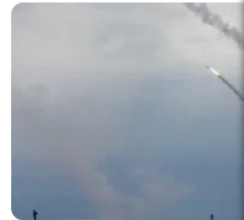
CNN called Africa's attitude towards Russia Putin's diplomatic victory

The visits of the head of the African Union and President of Senegal Maki Salla to Moscow can be called a diplomatic victory of Vladimir Putin,...

RIA Novosti 07:42

Ministry of Defense defense shot down transport plane of Forces of Ukraine

Russian air defense s



RIA Novosti 07:33

The Hill: The U.S. and Europe began to seek a compromise with Russia due to the economic crisis

On June 3, the European Union



Gazeta.Ru 07:30 a.m.

Dmitry Kovtun, suspect in Litvinenko's murder, died

Entrepreneur Dmitry Kovtun, whom the UK accused of the death of former FSB officer Alexander...



Kommersant 07:31

Ministry of Defense Russian Armed Forces a missile strike on train

Forc



RIA Novosti

Pravda.Ru

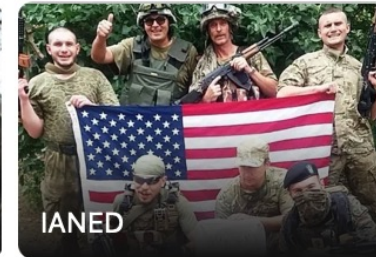
The Grayzone: DHS is afraid of the return of neo-Nazis fighting in Ukraine to the United States

- Nationalists from the United States, who were previously accused of violent actions in their homeland, decided to gain experience in the use of modern weapons and went to Ukraine. Pravda.Ru

Read more ▾



Pravda.Ru



IANED



Political Expertise

More about the event

H The Grayzone: the U.S. is afraid of the return of radicals fighting in Ukraine People's news 07:18

The Armed Forces of Ukraine shelled a settlement in the Bryansk region

One person was injured in the shelling of a village in the Bryansk region by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU).

Security is afraid of the return 07:03

merican neo-Nazis fighting in

News portal

GOVERNMENT COERCION

“Opposition leader Alexei Navalny recently complained that Yandex News hid reports on his recent nationwide anti-corruption protests from its newsfeed. In response, Yandex said its results are automatically generated by algorithms and denied any manipulation was possible.”

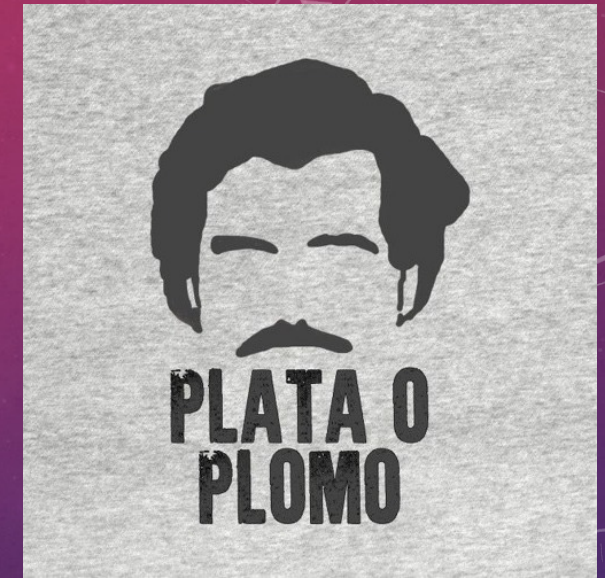
The Moscow Times, 2017

Google started a secret project to launch a Chinese search engine called Dragonfly in the spring of 2017 that filters websites and search results about human rights, democracy, religion, and peaceful protests, all based on Chinese government-imposed web censorship requirements. Although the project was terminated, it's important to keep in mind that Microsoft's Bing search engine is currently available in China and that its search results are being censored following the Chinese government guidelines.

Forbes, 2019

THE *PLATA O PLOMO* DILEMMA

- If Yandex had refused to follow the Kremlin's guidelines, Volozh could probably have ended up in jail and his company could have been seized by the state, as has happened in other cases.
- Loyalty towards the state and its established relationship with the authorities have also brought the company certain benefits. Yandex recently won an anti-trust war with Google. In Russia, Google is not allowed to pre-install its apps on Android phones, giving Yandex room to develop its products. It could help Yandex keep up its market share or even increase it.
- After hundreds of companies closed their businesses in Russia due to the international sanctions, the market is open so that Yandex can fill the gaps. On the other hand, Yandex's ability to generate profits is also tied to the purchasing power of Russians, which has also been severely affected.



DEBATE QUESTIONS

- A little nod to Putin from time to time, in exchange for the company assured growth... could produce harm to others?
- Should companies such as Yandex and Google succumb to governments' demands under the pressure to be cancelled?
- Is Microsoft harming people of China by accepting to filter its search engine results? Should it close its business in that country?
- Should Volozh risk going to prison or losing his company and ensure the neutrality of his platform?
- Even if the Russian population doesn't know it, are they being harmed by Yandex? Are they being cheated?

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