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New: US technology company Sandvine has quietly exited the Russian market after making major deals there in recent years to supply deep packet inspection equipment, a controversial technology that can be used to censor the internet: <https://t.co/XBG64ZOB4D>

During meetings in Moscow in 2018, Sandvine reps told prospective clients that its tech could be used to block or slow access to specific websites, discover the location of particular people & support local law enforcement, according to company documents & people familiar.

The company ultimately struck deals to sell its equipment to two telecommunications providers: Megafon, Russia's second-largest mobile operator, & Tele2 Russia, a company controlled by the Russian government, according to internal records.

A Sandvine spokesperson said the company's equipment was used in Russia for billing & "quality of service" & not to censor the internet.

Before Sandvine pulled out of Russia & even since then, some Sandvine employees have expressed concerns during internal meetings that the company's technology could be used in the country to enable censorship, according to three people familiar with the discussions.

At least three articles detailing some of Sandvine's business ties to Russia were removed from the company's website following the invasion of Ukraine, according to the people.

Researchers say Russia has built a national internet censorship apparatus using deep packet inspection technology, which enables the government to blacklist more than 100,000 websites.

.@natynettle, legal counsel for the digital rights group @accessnow, said it's difficult to monitor how Russian-controlled businesses use technologies such as Sandvine's. "Sandvine put its trust in a Russian state-controlled company not to abuse the equipment," she said.

The government of Belarus previously used Sandvine's equipment to restrict access to outside news & social-media websites during the country's disputed presidential election.

The company's equipment has also been used to block an LGBTQ website in Jordan, independent news sites in Egypt, in addition to being deployed for a social media blackout in Azerbaijan.

Full story here:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-03/sandvine-pulls-back-from-russia-as-us-eu-tighten-control-on-tech>

Update: Rights group @AccessNow calls on Sandvine to withdraw all technology from Russia that could be used for censorship & surveillance, says US government should launch investigation into Sandvine's business in Russia & other repressive countries <https://www.accessnow.org/sandvine-russian-censorship/>