

# US private equity to take stake in Russia's Kaspersky Lab

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Russian computer security provider Kaspersky Lab on Thursday announced that it had sealed a major share deal with global private equity firm General Atlantic.

After the deal, US-based GA will become the second largest single shareholder, the Moscow-based company said in a statement, adding that the financial details were not being published.

Vedomosti business daily on Thursday quoted Natalya Kasperskaya, the co-founder and chairman of the board of directors, as saying that GA was acquiring up to 20 percent the company.

Kaspersky Lab is Europe's largest producer of anti-virus software, according to its website, which says that it employs more than 2,000 people.

Last year, it was ranked 79 in the top 100 world software companies by revenue, which reached \$480 million.

In 2009, Kaspersky Lab's share of the world information security market for private computers was around 5.8 percent, executive director Yevgeny Bukyakin told AFP.

Kommersant business daily quoted a source close to the deal as saying that around 15 percent was being sold, worth between \$150 million and \$225 million.

Kasperskaya told Kommersant: "The company has grown to such a level that we need to get access to capital markets and the new investor will help us to stage an IPO."

Executive director Bukyakin told AFP that the [initial public offering](#) of shares could be held within the next three years.

"In the medium term, in the next three years, perhaps a little more, we expect to remain a private company and to concentrate on developing our business. Then the next natural step for the company will be an IPO," he said.

With this in mind, "we are counting on the help of General Atlantic," he added.

The company was co-founded in is 1997 by Natalya Kasperskaya and Yevgeny Kaspersky, a couple who are now divorced but still work together.

Kaspersky studied computer science, [cryptography](#) and mathematics at a Moscow institute used by the KGB secret services to train its staff.

He later worked at a defence ministry research institute until 1991, where he first began writing anti-virus programmes.

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