

Russian Information Tactics

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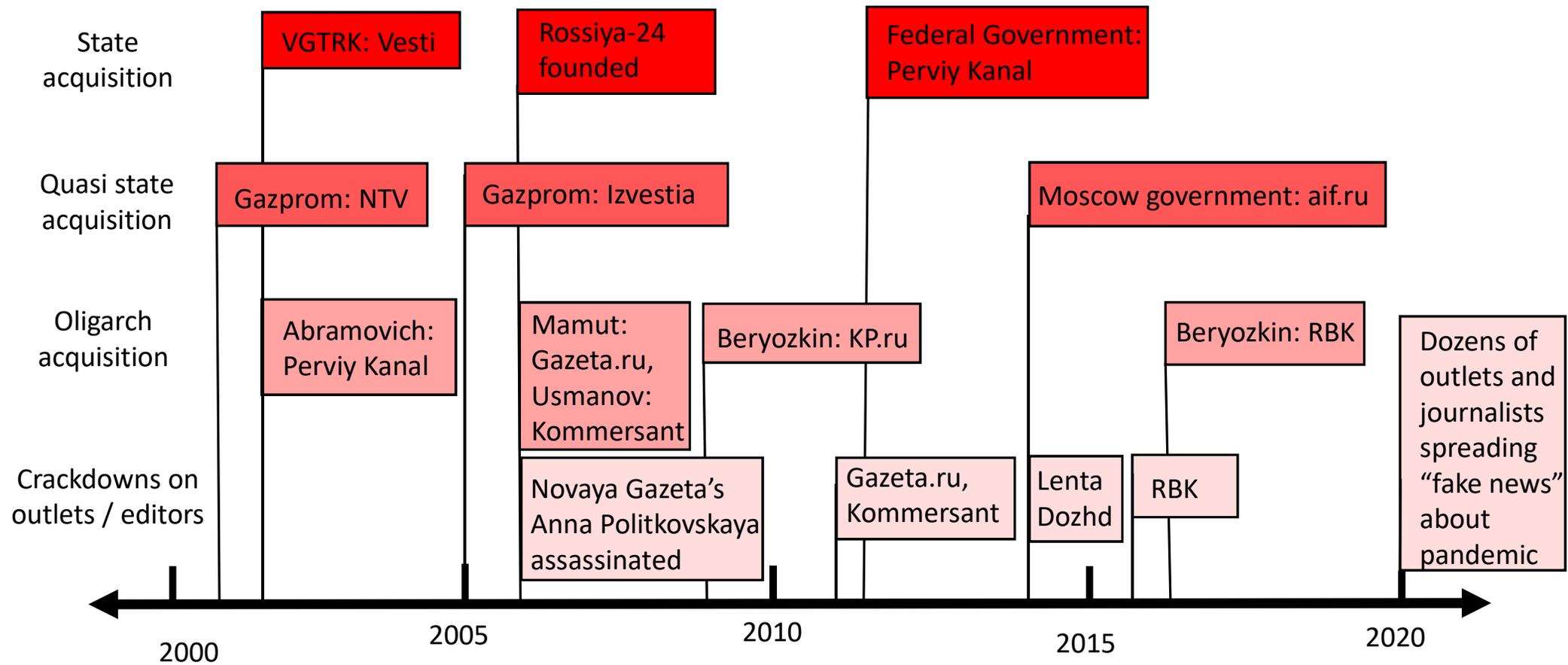
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RSI Connect: Information, War, and Ukraine

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Background: The Russian Domestic Audience



Influence Assets

Overt

State-owned outlets



Russian media personalities



Russian and DNR/LNR officials



Gray zone

War correspondents



Oligarch-owned fringe outlets



Ukrainian influencers



Covert

Intelligence-linked outlets



Anonymous accounts

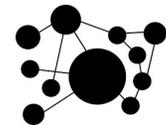
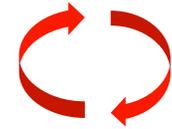
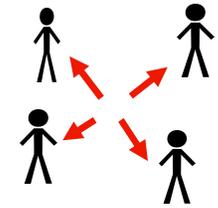


Troll farms



Characteristics of Operational Structure

- Inconsistent narratives appeal to different audiences
- Various entry points
- Self-reinforcing “facts”
- Not attributable to Kremlin
- “Organic” spread
- Slow and uncertain



Old Approach: Bottom-Up

New approach: Top-Down

STEP 1



Narratives emerge and circulate in intelligence-linked media

STEP 2



Traditional media spread narrative

STEP 3



Russian officials make a statement

Audience increases



Russian officials initiate narrative



All media assets spread narrative



On-the-ground assets substantiate narrative

Immediate large audience

Outcome of New Operational Structure

- Narratives spread immediately
- Kremlin has no plausible deniability



Effective in...

- ✓ Russia
- ✓ DNR/LNR
- ✓ Far-right Western audiences
- ✓ China
- ✗ Mainstream Western audiences
- ✗ Rest of Ukraine