Netflix cracks down on proxy streaming

Video-streaming giant Netflix has said it is going to stop subscribers from using internet proxies to view content not available in their home countries.

Due to licensing agreements, Netflix content varies between countries – many users have a virtual private network (VPN) or other proxy to get round this.

The firm said it would increase efforts in the next few weeks to block the use of such proxies.

Netflix expanded streaming services to more than 130 countries last week.

But some countries have more content than others – for example, the Australian Netflix catalogue has only about 10% of the content available to its US subscribers.

David Fullagar, vice president of content delivery architecture, said in a blog post on Thursday that the US firm was in the process of licensing content around the world.

But he said it had a long way to go before it could offer viewers the same films and shows everywhere.

“If all of our content were globally available, there wouldn’t be a reason for members to use proxies or ‘unblockers’ to fool our systems into thinking they’re in a different country than they’re actually in,” he said.

“In the meantime, we will continue to respect and enforce content licensing by geographic location.”

Subscribers that currently use proxies to view content outside their countries will only be able to access the service in their own countries in the coming week, the company said.

Those members that do not use VPNs will not be impacted by the crackdown, it added.

The move is a reversal of Netflix’s denial last week after reports had surfaced that they would be restricting VPN access to their content.