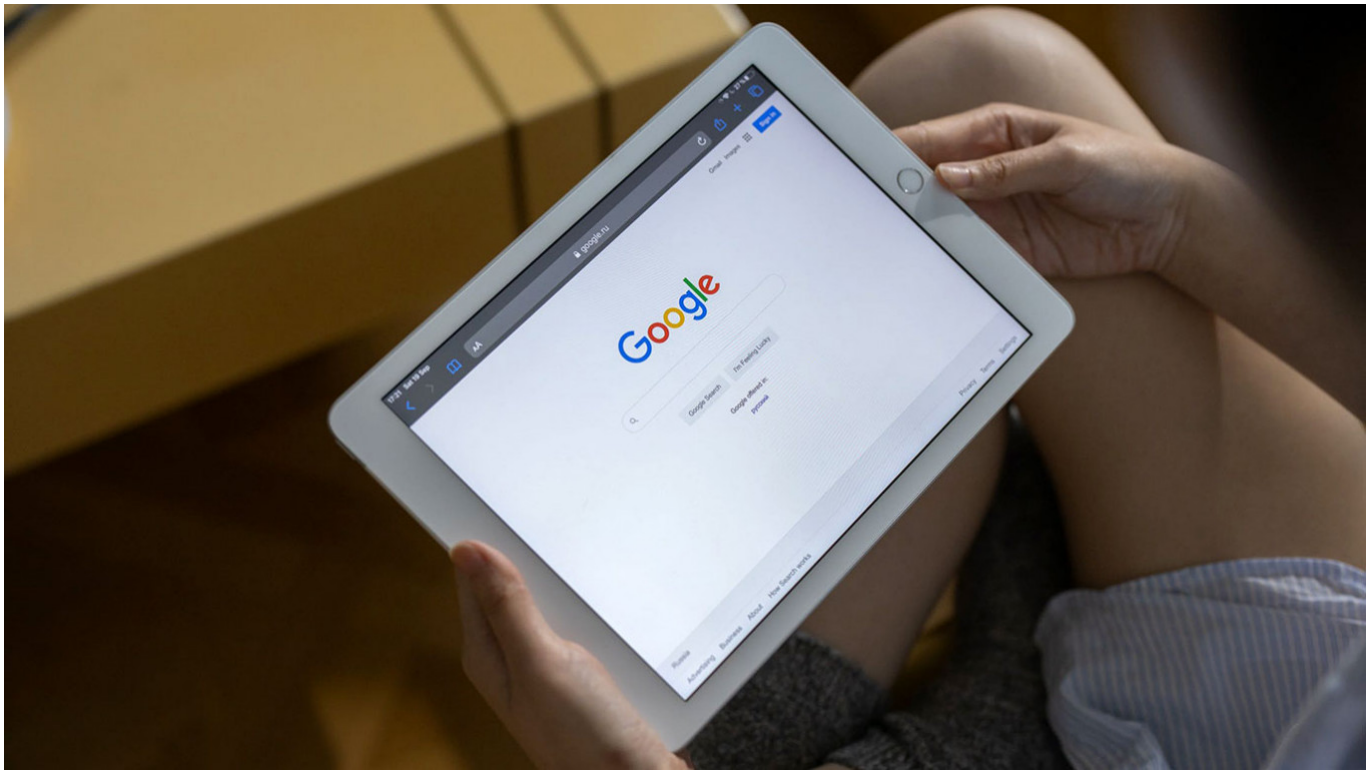
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Google Disconnects From Russian Servers Boosting Local Internet Speeds

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Google has disconnected its services from Russian servers designed to boost internet speeds, the RBC news website reported Thursday.

Google Global Cache (GGC) allows local providers to offer Google content, including YouTube videos, from their own networks, lowering waiting times for customers. Without GGC, Russian users would experience slower access to Google content directly from the U.S. giant's servers.

Google's Irish subsidiary notified two Russian GGC providers — MFTI Telecom in the Moscow region and Radiosvyazi in the southern city of Orenburg — that their contracts would end on May 19, according to RBC.

A representative from Orenburg's Radiosvyazi speculated that the cut-off could be linked to their servers' relatively low level of traffic.

But in comments to RBC, MFTI Telecom linked the decision to its ties to Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, which is currently under U.S. sanctions.

Major Russian internet providers, including state-owned Rostelecom and mobile operators MTS and Megaton, said they saw no disruptions in traffic through GGC servers.

Cogent Communications, a major U.S. provider that carries around 25% of worldwide internet traffic, cut off Russian customers from its high-capacity internet service days after Russia invaded Ukraine in late February.

But the U.S. State Department Tuesday called against constraining access to the internet for Russian users.

"It is our goal to do everything we can responsibly to see to it that the information environment in Russia is not further constrained," spokesman Ned Price said Thursday at a press briefing.

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