

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

Imaginear, Inc. et al. v. Niantic, Inc. d/b/a Niantic Labs

Imaginear · No. 1:24-cv-01252-JDW · Decided April 7, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Delaware grants Niantic, Inc.’s motion for judgment on the pleadings under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(c). The court holds that representative claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 10,946,284, and the claims of the related patents-in-suit, are directed to the abstract idea of tailoring virtual gameplay content based on a player’s location and lack an inventive concept under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The court also denies the plaintiffs’ motion for leave to file a second amended and supplemental complaint.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Delaware
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Joshua D. Wolson
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Delaware
DECIDED	April 7, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01252-JDW
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Niantic moved for judgment on the pleadings under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(c), arguing that the patents-in-suit were invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101. ImagineAR and Imagine AR opposed the motion.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A Rule 12(c) motion is analyzed under the same standard as a Rule 12(b)(6) motion. The court views the pleaded facts and reasonable inferences in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party and may grant judgment only when no material issue of fact remains and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. Patent eligibility under § 101 is a question of law that may be resolved on a motion to dismiss or judgment on the pleadings.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court memorandum; precedential status unknown
PARTIES	ImagineAR, Inc., Imagine AR, Inc. v. Niantic, Inc. d/b/a Niantic Labs

TOPICS

patent eligibility

motion for judgment on the pleadings

patent law

civil procedure

intellectual property

PRACTICE AREAS

patent law

civil procedure

commercial litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether claim 1 of the '284 patent could properly be treated as representative of the claims in the four patents-in-suit for purposes of the § 101 analysis.
2. Whether claim 1 of the '284 patent and the claims of the other patents-in-suit were directed to patent-ineligible abstract ideas under 35 U.S.C. § 101.
3. Whether the claims contained an inventive concept sufficient to transform the abstract idea into a patent-eligible application.
4. Whether IAR should be granted leave to file a second amended and supplemental complaint after the court determined that the patents-in-suit were invalid.

HOLDINGS

1. Claim 1 of the '284 patent is representative of all claims in the patents-in-suit for purposes of the § 101 analysis because the patents share a common specification and are directed to using a player's location to tailor virtual-game content, while IAR offered no meaningful argument that the dependent claims had distinctive eligibility significance.
2. Claim 1 of the '284 patent is directed to the abstract idea of tailoring virtual-game content based on a player's geographic location.
3. Claim 1 does not contain an inventive concept sufficient to transform the abstract idea into a patent-eligible application.
4. The claims of the '284, '797, '827, and '691 patents are invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because they are directed to an abstract idea and lack an inventive concept.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“For a second time, Niantic, Inc. has demonstrated that ImagineAR, Inc. and Imagine AR, Inc.’s patents are invalid under 35 U.S.C. §101.” (Opening paragraph)

“Claim 1 focuses on tailoring content based on a player’s location.” (Section III.B.1)

“In short, if Claim 1 contains an inventive concept, it is not evident in the claim language.” (Section III.B.2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

ImagineAR, Inc. owned and Imagine AR, Inc. licensed four patents concerning the use of a player's real-world location and local elements to tailor content during virtual gameplay. Claim 1 of the '284 patent recites detecting and storing a player's geographic location, creating and retrieving a location-associated script, and modifying virtual-character statistics or plot nodes based on that location. IAR alleged that Niantic infringed the patents

through games including Pokémon GO, Pikmin Bloom, Peridot, Skatrix, Monster Hunter Now, and Harry Potter: Wizards Unite.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

ImagineAR and Imagine AR sued Niantic for direct, indirect, and willful infringement of four patents relating to location-based virtual gameplay. The court previously dismissed claims for pre-suit indirect and willful infringement and invalidated three other patents under § 101. After the pleadings closed, Niantic moved for judgment on the pleadings; the court treated claim 1 of the '284 patent as representative, held all claims of the four patents-in-suit patent-ineligible, granted judgment on the pleadings, and denied IAR leave to file a second amended and supplemental complaint.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- 935 F.3d 187, 195 (3d Cir. 2019)
- 15 F.4th 1091, 1095 (Fed. Cir. 2021)
- 110 F.4th 1280, 1290-91 (Fed. Cir. 2024)
- 404 F. Supp. 3d 1021, 1035 (E.D. Tex. 2019)
- 881 F.3d 1360, 1365 (Fed. Cir. 2018)
- 573 U.S. 208, 217 (2014)
- 1 F.4th 1040, 1043-45 (Fed. Cir. 2021)
- 134 F.4th 1205, 1211-12 (Fed. Cir. 2025)
- 792 F.3d 1363 (Fed. Cir. 2015)
- 104 F.4th 1350, 1356-59 (Fed. Cir. 2024)
- 50 F.4th 1371, 1377 (Fed. Cir. 2022)
- 475 F. Supp. 3d 1007, 1014 (N.D. Cal. 2020)
- 830 F.3d 1350, 1354 (Fed. Cir. 2016)
- 65 F.4th 698, 703 (Fed. Cir. 2023)
- 873 F.3d 905, 911 (Fed. Cir. 2017)
- 874 F.3d 1329, 1339 (Fed. Cir. 2017)
- 927 F.3d 1306, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2019)
- 139 F.4th 1332, 1338-39 (Fed. Cir. 2025)
- 879 F.3d 1299, 1305 (Fed. Cir. 2018)
- 839 F.3d 1138, 1151 (Fed. Cir. 2016)