

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Abdi Nazemian, et al. v. NVIDIA Corporation

Nazemian · No. 24-cv-01454-JST · Decided December 4, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California addresses several motions to seal materials filed in connection with a dispute between Abdi Nazemian and other plaintiffs and NVIDIA Corporation. The court applies the compelling-reasons standard to most materials, grants sealing of one declaration and portions of certain exhibits containing confidential business information, and denies sealing of references to publicly discussed pirate databases and related allegations.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jon S. Tigar
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	December 4, 2025
DOCKET	24-cv-01454-JST
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Order resolving several administrative motions to seal materials filed in connection with plaintiffs' motion to modify the scheduling order, motion for leave to amend the complaint, and related briefing.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court applied Civil Local Rule 79-5 and the common-law presumption of public access. It required compelling reasons supported by specific factual findings for materials attached to motions affecting the merits, and applied the good-cause standard under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c) to materials only tangentially related to the merits.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; nonprecedential
PARTIES	Abdi Nazemian, et al. v. NVIDIA Corporation

TOPICS

civil procedure

motions to dismiss

motion to amend

trade secrets

commercial litigation

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

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intellectual property

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the parties satisfied Civil Local Rule 79-5 and overcame the applicable presumption of public access sufficiently to seal or redact the challenged materials.
2. Whether references to publicly available pirate databases, allegations concerning the use of those databases, and related public information constituted sealable confidential business information.
3. Whether materials concerning genuine product development and confidential business decision-making warranted partial sealing based on competitive harm.
4. Whether the court should grant or deny the motions to seal at ECF Nos. 192, 200, 203, 207, 210, and 211.

HOLDINGS

1. A party seeking to seal court-filed materials must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5 and rebut the strong presumption of public access. Materials attached to motions affecting the merits require compelling reasons supported by specific factual findings, while materials attached to motions only tangentially related to the merits may be sealed upon a showing of good cause under Rule 26(c).
2. NVIDIA failed to establish compelling reasons to seal or redact references in the proposed amended complaint and related briefing to Anna's Archive, Books3, LibGen, Sci-Hub, and Z-Library, as well as allegations that NVIDIA attempted to pirate copyrighted works.
3. NVIDIA sufficiently demonstrated that Exhibits D, E, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, and R contained genuine product-development and confidential business-decision information whose disclosure could foreseeably cause competitive harm; the motion was therefore partially granted as to those exhibits.
4. Documents covered by denied sealing motions would not be considered unless the filing party filed them on the public record without redaction within seven days of the order.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The Court will grant the motions to seal in part and deny them in part.” (at 1)

“A party seeking to seal a document filed with the court must (1) comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5; and (2) rebut the “a strong presumption in favor of access” that applies to all documents other than grand jury transcripts or pre-indictment warrant materials.” (at 1-2)

“The Court is not persuaded. For one thing, reliance on “conclusory statements that publication of the information ‘could pose significant commercial harm to [the party seeking to maintain information under seal]’ . . . does not come close to establishing compelling reasons to conceal this material from the public.”” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs sought to file an amended complaint and related briefing containing references to Anna's Archive, Books3, LibGen, Sci-Hub, Z-Library, and allegations that NVIDIA attempted to pirate copyrighted works. NVIDIA also sought to seal materials concerning its product development, confidential business decision-making, and a declaration submitted in opposition to amendment. The court found that the references to publicly discussed pirate databases were not confidential, while certain internal product-development and business materials could foreseeably cause competitive harm if disclosed.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs and NVIDIA filed competing motions and oppositions concerning the sealing of documents and portions of filings. The court granted the motion concerning a confidential NVIDIA declaration in part, denied sealing of references to publicly known pirate databases and related allegations, and partially granted the motion concerning exhibits containing genuine confidential product-development and business-decision information.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Kamakana v. City & County of Honolulu, 447 F.3d 1172 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Pintos v. Pacific Creditors Association, 605 F.3d 665 (9th Cir. 2010)
- Nixon v. Warner Communications, Inc., 435 U.S. 589 (1978)
- Center for Auto Safety v. Chrysler Group, LLC, 809 F.3d 1092 (9th Cir. 2016)
- Apple Inc. v. Psystar Corp., 658 F.3d 1150 (9th Cir. 2011), cert. denied, 132 S. Ct. 2374 (2012)
- Skillz Platform Inc. v. AviaGames Inc., No. 21-CV-02436-BLF, 2023 WL 7678649, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Nov. 13, 2023)
- Corvello v. Wells Fargo Bank N.A., No. 10-cv-05072-VC, 2016 WL 11730952, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 29, 2016)
- Kadrey v. Meta Platforms, Inc., 23-cv-03417-VC, ECF No. 373 at 1 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 8, 2025)
- Rodman v. Safeway Inc., No. 11-cv-03003-JST, 2014 WL 12787874, at *2 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 22, 2014)
- Bartz v. Anthropic, 787 F. Supp. 3d 1007, 1015 (N.D. Cal. 2025)
- Kadrey v. Meta Platforms, Inc., 788 F. Supp. 3d 1026, 1041 (N.D. Cal. 2025)