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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JOHN DOE A/K/A BRIAN SAPIENT,  
Plaintiff,  
v  
URI GELLER and EXPLOROLOGIST,  
LTD,  
Defendants.

No C 07-2478 VRW  
ORDER

\_\_\_\_\_ /

This dispute concerns the copyright infringement takedown provisions under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act ("DMCA"). See 17 USC § 512(f) (2000). Plaintiff claims that defendants Explorologist, Ltd ("Explorologist") and Uri Geller ("Geller") knowingly misrepresented to the YouTube file-sharing company that one of plaintiff's video postings infringed defendants' copyrights. 17 USC § 512(f). Plaintiff seeks damages from the alleged misrepresentation, as well as a declaratory judgment of noninfringement. Doc #1. Defendants respond with a motion to dismiss. Doc ##24, 25. Defendants argue that the court lacks

1 subject matter jurisdiction and personal jurisdiction because the  
2 takedown notice that was sent to YouTube in San Bruno, California,  
3 was transmitted from outside the United States. Defendants also  
4 move to dismiss on the grounds that the complaint's allegations  
5 surrounding the content of the takedown notice are insufficient  
6 under FRCP 9(b) and FRCP 8(a). Lastly, defendants move to transfer  
7 venue to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, where a related  
8 action is proceeding. For the reasons set forth below, defendants'  
9 motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction is GRANTED.  
10

11 I

12 The YouTube internet video website is an entirely user-  
13 driven medium. Anyone with access to the internet can sign up for  
14 a YouTube account and upload any video file to YouTube's servers so  
15 that the file may be accessed and viewed anywhere in the world, all  
16 for free. For instance, a family might post a video of a child's  
17 soccer game in California so that grandparents may view it in  
18 Illinois. Or a pair of young writers might write, film and produce  
19 their own television show and broadcast the episodes in serial form  
20 online, as in the case of the show "lonelygirl15," which drew  
21 millions of viewers on YouTube. See Virginia Heffernan and Tom  
22 Zeller, Well, It Turns Out That Lonelygirl Really Wasn't, NY Times  
23 C1 (Sept 13, 2006). Politicians, social activist organizations and  
24 nonprofit groups use YouTube to spread their messages. See Jose  
25 Antonio Vargas, YouTube Creates Issues Debate, Wash Post (Aug 8,  
26 2007), at [http://blog.washingtonpost.com/  
27 youtube\\_creates\\_issues\\_debate.html](http://blog.washingtonpost.com/the-trail/2007/08/08/youtube_creates_issues_debate.html) (last visited Dec 4, 2007);  
28 Moises Naim, The YouTube Effect, Foreign Policy (Jan/Feb 2007), at

1 [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story\\_id=3676](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3676) (last  
2 visited Dec 4, 2007); Yinka Adegoke, Nonprofits turn to YouTube to  
3 raise awareness, funds, Reuters UK (Oct 19, 2007), at  
4 [http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUK119280972697.\\_CH\\_.](http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUK119280972697._CH_.242020071019)  
5 [242020071019](http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUK119280972697._CH_.242020071019) (last visited Dec 4, 2007). By nearly eliminating the  
6 cost of mass media distribution, YouTube offers its users  
7 unparalleled opportunities for free expression. See Richard Waters  
8 and Kevin Allison, How to set a course for a shooting star,  
9 Financial Times (Oct 8, 2006), at [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7261e5de-56fc-11db-9110-0000779e2340.html)  
10 [7261e5de-56fc-11db-9110-0000779e2340.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7261e5de-56fc-11db-9110-0000779e2340.html) (last visited Dec 4,  
11 2007).

12 But because digital content is so easy to generate, the  
13 potential for copyright and trademark violations is enormous. See  
14 Waters and Allison, *supra*. Claiming fair use, a YouTube user might  
15 post a homemade video that takes scenes from his favorite movie and  
16 sets them to his favorite song, using both without permission.  
17 See, for example, My Body is a Cage, at [http://www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pyp34v6Lmcc)  
18 [watch?v=Pyp34v6Lmcc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pyp34v6Lmcc) (mixing the climactic scene from Sergio Leone's  
19 Once Upon a Time in the West with the Arcade Fire's My Body is a  
20 Cage) (garnering over 550,000 hits as of Jan 29, 2008). More  
21 troublingly, a YouTube user might film his favorite musician's live  
22 performance and post the footage on YouTube, potentially  
23 discouraging other fans from purchasing the musician's live  
24 performance DVD. YouTube does not actively monitor the content of  
25 the postings on its website.

26 To address these and other concerns, Congress passed the  
27 DMCA in 1998. 17 USC § 512 (2000). Section 512(c) lays out a  
28 detailed process allowing a copyright owner who observes infringing

1 content on a website like YouTube to have the content taken down.  
2 The copyright owner must send a notification to YouTube ("takedown  
3 notice") identifying the offending video and asserting under  
4 penalty of perjury that the sender is the copyright owner and has a  
5 good faith belief that the video infringes the sender's copyrights.  
6 17 USC § 512(c)(3). YouTube then must remove the material from its  
7 servers or face infringement liability itself. 17 USC  
8 § 512(c)(1)(C). The infringing user might also suffer penalties  
9 under YouTube's terms of use, such as suspension of his account.  
10 See YouTube Terms of Use ¶7, at <http://www.youtube.com/t/terms>  
11 (last visited Dec 4, 2007). Conversely, copyright owners who abuse  
12 the takedown procedure are subject to liability. At issue in this  
13 case is the misrepresentation provision of the DMCA, which  
14 provides, in relevant part:

15  
16 Any person who knowingly materially misrepresents [in a  
17 takedown notice to an internet service provider] \* \* \*  
18 that material or activity is infringing \* \* \* shall be  
19 liable for any damages, including costs and attorneys'  
20 fees, incurred by the alleged infringer \* \* \* who is  
injured by such misrepresentation[] as the result of the  
service provider relying upon such misrepresentation in  
removing or disabling access to the material or activity  
claimed to be infringing \* \* \*.

21 17 USC § 512(f).

22  
23 II

24 Defendant Explorologist is a private company registered  
25 in London, England. Doc #1 at ¶5. Defendant Geller is a resident  
26 of England and a director and controlling shareholder of  
27 Explorologist. Doc #1 at ¶¶4, 6. Geller is also a performer who  
28 claims to have psychic powers such as the ability to bend spoons

1 with his mind. Doc #1 at ¶14. Plaintiff is John Doe AKA Brian  
2 Sapiant ("Sapiant") who, as part of his "controversial religious  
3 beliefs," is a member of the "Rational Response Squad," which is  
4 committed to "debunking what it maintains are irrational beliefs  
5 and theories." Doc #1 at ¶¶3, 12. As part of that mission,  
6 plaintiff "rel[ies] on YouTube to reach thousands of audience  
7 members and promote [his] activist messages and campaigns online."  
8 Doc #1 at ¶12. Plaintiff uses the alias "Brian Sapiant" because  
9 "he receives a substantial amount of abusive correspondence,  
10 including threats of physical harm" due to his beliefs. Doc #1 at  
11 ¶3. Given his attention to "the ongoing debate between evolution  
12 and creationism" (see Doc #30 at 2), plaintiff's choice of  
13 "Sapiant" as a pseudonym is presumably a reference to evolutionary  
14 taxonomy, or relatedly, is a derivative of *sapientia*, Latin for  
15 wisdom.

16 Plaintiff eventually set his sight on Geller. On  
17 November 15, 2006, plaintiff uploaded a video clip (the "NOVA  
18 video") to YouTube. The video originally aired on the NOVA  
19 television program and features an illusionist named James Randi  
20 challenging Geller's powers. Doc #1 at ¶¶13-14. The NOVA video  
21 includes "three seconds" of another video clip in which a man named  
22 Dr C J Hughes describes Geller's asserted psychic powers ("Hughes  
23 clip"). Doc #1 at ¶14.

24 It is that second clip - the Hughes clip within the NOVA  
25 video - that prompted the instant dispute. Explorologist owns the  
26 copyright to the Hughes clip. Doc #1 at ¶14. Plaintiff alleges  
27 that on March 23, 2007, an agent of defendants sent YouTube a  
28 takedown notice identifying plaintiff's post as infringing and

1 demanding that the video be removed. Doc #1 at ¶15. Later that  
2 day, YouTube informed plaintiff that the NOVA video had been  
3 flagged and removed in response to a copyright infringement  
4 takedown notice from Explorologist. Doc #1 at ¶16. YouTube  
5 suspended plaintiff's account for more than two weeks, during which  
6 time all his posted videos were unavailable. Doc #1 at ¶17.

7           On May 7, 2007, Explorologist filed a complaint in the  
8 Eastern District of Pennsylvania, where plaintiff resides. See Doc  
9 #29 (Notice of Pendency of other Action or Proceeding). That  
10 complaint alleges that by posting the NOVA video, Sapient committed  
11 copyright infringement under British law, commercial disparagement  
12 and appropriation of name or likeness. See Doc #26 Exh 5.

13           On May 8, 2007, plaintiff filed the instant complaint.  
14 Count I of the complaint alleges that defendants "knowingly  
15 materially misrepresent[ed]" to YouTube in the takedown notice that  
16 plaintiff's posting infringed defendants' copyrights. Doc #1 at  
17 ¶¶18-23; 17 USC § 512(f). Plaintiff alleges that his posting of  
18 the NOVA video does not infringe defendants' copyrights and  
19 therefore the takedown notice was a misrepresentation. Doc #1 at  
20 19. Plaintiff then alleges that defendants "knew or should have  
21 known" that the video was noninfringing and that defendants "did  
22 not act with reasonable care or diligence before sending" the  
23 takedown notice." Doc #1 at ¶20. Count II seeks a declaratory  
24 judgment that plaintiff's video is noninfringing under the First  
25 Amendment and under United States copyright law. Doc #1 at ¶¶24-  
26 27. Plaintiff seeks damages, declaratory and injunctive relief,  
27 attorneys' fees and costs.

28

1 III

2 In addition to defendants' challenges on the merits,  
3 defendants argue that the court lacks both subject matter and  
4 personal jurisdiction. Because the court agrees that this case  
5 should be dismissed for lack of personal jurisdiction, defendants'  
6 other arguments need not be addressed. The Supreme Court has held  
7 that if "a district court has before it a straightforward personal  
8 jurisdiction issue presenting no complex question of state law, and  
9 the alleged defect in subject-matter jurisdiction raises a  
10 difficult and novel question, the court does not abuse its  
11 discretion by turning directly to personal jurisdiction." Ruhrgas  
12 AG v Marathon Oil Co, 526 US 574, 588 (1999) (footnote omitted);  
13 consider Sinochem Intl Co v Malaysia Intl Shipping Corp, 127 S Ct  
14 1184 (2007) (holding that a district court may address a *forum non*  
15 *conveniens* plea before considering personal jurisdiction or subject  
16 matter jurisdiction).

17 No federal court has ever addressed subject matter  
18 jurisdiction under § 512(f), and the subject matter jurisdiction  
19 issue in this case is complex. Defendants argue the court lacks  
20 subject matter jurisdiction because defendants' act of sending the  
21 YouTube takedown notice occurred in England, where the fax and  
22 email were sent. That fact is significant because United States  
23 copyright laws do not apply extraterritorially. See Subafilms, Ltd  
24 v MGM-Pathe Comm'ns Co, 24 F3d 1088, 1094 (9th Cir 1994). But  
25 copyright law is especially unsettled when it comes to cross-border  
26 communications. Compare Allarcom Pay Television, Ltd v Gen Inst  
27 Corp, 69 F3d 381, 387 (9th Cir 1995) (finding no jurisdiction over  
28 a television broadcast from the United States to Canada), with Los

1 Angeles News Service v Reuters Television Intl, Ltd, 149 F3d 987  
2 (9th Cir 1998) (finding jurisdiction over a television broadcast  
3 from the United States to Africa); see William Patry, Choice of Law  
4 and International Copyright, 48 Am J Comp L 384, 462 n362 (2000)  
5 (noting the discrepancy between Allarcom and Reuters); Andreas P  
6 Reindl, Choosing Law in Cyberspace: Copyright Conflicts on Global  
7 Networks, 19 Mich J Int'l L 799, 823 n84 (1998) (criticizing  
8 Allarcom but noting that the European Community has adopted that  
9 approach); see also National Football League v PrimeTime 24 Joint  
10 Venture, 211 F3d 10, 13 (2d Cir 2000) (rejecting Allarcom and  
11 holding that "each step" in the transmission procedure can give  
12 rise to jurisdiction). It is unclear how that line of precedent  
13 would apply to cross-border communications such as defendants' fax  
14 and email. Plaintiff suggests that copyright "authorization" law,  
15 which permits jurisdiction over foreign acts that authorize  
16 violations in the United States, is instructive, but that body of  
17 case law is inapposite. Authorization law and other species of  
18 vicarious infringement depend on the particular derivative  
19 relationship between direct and indirect copyright infringement.  
20 See Subafilms, 24 F3d at 1090-93. Here, however, plaintiff alleges  
21 neither direct nor indirect infringement. Overall, copyright law  
22 does not provide a satisfactory answer whether United States courts  
23 have jurisdiction over cross-border communications in § 512(f)  
24 suits.

25           In fact, as an alleged violation of § 512(f) is not a  
26 copyright claim, copyright law may be of little help. Plaintiff  
27 raises a misrepresentation claim. Accordingly, it may be improper  
28 to import jurisdiction principles from one specific context - the



1 creation and regulation of property rights - to a very different  
2 context for which those principles were not designed. See Reindl,  
3 supra, at 824. Instead, perhaps misrepresentation law rather than  
4 copyright law should control the subject matter jurisdiction  
5 analysis.

6 Even so, treating this case as an ordinary tortious  
7 misrepresentation case does not much clarify matters. Following  
8 common law tort principles, the court might be inclined to rule  
9 that the situs of the act is the place where a fax or email was  
10 received, not sent. But the best support for that statement is  
11 found not in any recent, binding precedent but rather in the First  
12 Restatement of Conflict of Laws, published in 1934. See  
13 Restatement of Conflict of Laws § 377 (1934) (defining the "place  
14 of wrong" as "the state where the last event necessary to make an  
15 actor liable for an alleged tort takes place"); see also cmt a,  
16 illus 5, 7. The court might analogize to other federal  
17 misrepresentation statutes (see Bersch v Drexel Firestone, Inc, 519  
18 F2d 974, 988-89, 991 (2d Cir 1975) (securities fraud); 13 USC  
19 § 1343 (wire fraud)), but these too appear to provide scant  
20 guidance.

21 Suffice it to say, subject matter jurisdiction is neither  
22 clear nor definitive. Accordingly, the court is "convinced that  
23 the challenge to the court's subject-matter jurisdiction is not  
24 easily resolved and that the alternative ground [of personal  
25 jurisdiction] is considerably less difficult to decide." Cantor  
26 Fitzgerald, LP v Peaslee, 88 F3d 152, 155 (2d Cir 1996), cited in  
27 Ruhrigas, 526 US at 588.

1 IV

2 Defendants argue that the court lacks personal  
3 jurisdiction over both Explorologist and Geller because each has  
4 insufficient minimum contacts with California. Plaintiff responds  
5 that the court has specific jurisdiction over defendants arising  
6 out of the takedown notice sent to YouTube in California.

7  
8 A

9 In a motion challenging personal jurisdiction, the  
10 plaintiff, as the party seeking to invoke the jurisdiction of the  
11 federal court, has the burden of establishing that jurisdiction  
12 exists. See Data Disc, Inc v Systems Tech Assocs, Inc, 557 F2d  
13 1280, 1285 (9th Cir 1977). When the motion to dismiss constitutes  
14 a defendant's initial response to the complaint, the plaintiff need  
15 only make a prima facie showing that personal jurisdiction exists.  
16 See Data Disc, 557 F2d at 1285.

17 Sapient does not raise a general jurisdiction argument  
18 and asserts only that the court may exercise specific jurisdiction  
19 over defendants. Under California law, "[a] court of this state  
20 may exercise jurisdiction on any basis not inconsistent with the  
21 Constitution of this state or of the United States." Cal Civ Code  
22 § 410.10. Given the broad reach of California's long-arm statute,  
23 the court need only satisfy itself that its exercise of  
24 jurisdiction does not exceed constitutional due process  
25 limitations. See Haisten v Grass Valley Med Reimbursement Fund,  
26 Ltd, 784 F2d 1392, 1396 (9th Cir 1986).

27 The Ninth Circuit has established a three-part test for  
28 determining when specific jurisdiction may be exercised:

- 1
- 2 1. The nonresident defendant must do some act or consummate  
3 some transaction with the forum or perform some act by  
4 which he purposefully avails himself of the privilege of  
5 conducting activities in the forum, thereby invoking the  
6 benefits and protections of its laws.
- 7 2. The claim must be one which arises out of or results from  
8 the defendant's forum-related activities.
- 9 3. Exercise of jurisdiction must be reasonable.

10 Data Disc, 557 F2d at 1287.

11 The Ninth Circuit has since expanded the first prong,  
12 also known as the purposeful availment or purposeful direction  
13 requirement, "apply[ing] different purposeful availment tests to  
14 contract and tort cases." Ziegler v Indian River County, 64 F3d  
15 470, 473 (9th Cir 1995); see Schwarzenegger v Fred Martin Motor Co,  
16 374 F3d 797, 802-03 (9th Cir 2004). Purposeful availment in tort  
17 cases is analyzed under the effects test from Calder v Jones, 465  
18 US 783 (1984):

19 As we have previously recognized, Calder stands for the  
20 proposition that purposeful availment is satisfied even  
21 by a defendant "whose only 'contact' with the forum state  
22 is the 'purposeful direction' of a foreign act having  
23 effect in the forum state." Based on these  
24 interpretations of Calder, the "effects" test requires  
25 that the defendant allegedly have (1) committed an  
26 intentional act, (2) expressly aimed at the forum state,  
27 (3) causing harm that the defendant knows is likely to be  
28 suffered in the forum state.

29 Dole Food Co, Inc v Watts, 303 F3d 1104, 1111 (9th Cir 2002)

30 (internal citations omitted). Personal jurisdiction may flow from  
31 a single contact with the forum state if the claim "arise[s] out of  
32 that particular purposeful contact of the defendant with the forum  
33 state." Lake v Lake, 817 F2d 1416, 1421 (9th Cir 1987).

1 Plaintiff argues that defendants' single act of sending  
2 the takedown notice to YouTube in California is sufficient to  
3 establish personal jurisdiction in California courts.

4  
5 B

6 The court has its doubts whether plaintiff can  
7 demonstrate "purposeful direction" into California under the first  
8 prong of the jurisdiction test. Although defendants allegedly sent  
9 the takedown notice to YouTube in California, Sapient resides in  
10 Pennsylvania. Sapient is correct that there is no presumption that  
11 a plaintiff is harmed in his domiciliary only (see Keeton v Hustler  
12 Magazine, Inc, 465 US 770 (1984) (holding that a New Hampshire  
13 court could exercise personal jurisdiction in a libel case though  
14 plaintiff resided in New York and defendant resided in Ohio)), but  
15 the only activity that occurred in California was YouTube's act of  
16 disabling access to plaintiff's video. Other than by reciting the  
17 language of § 512(f), plaintiff has not explained how the removal  
18 of the video is an injury "sufficient" to establish personal  
19 jurisdiction over defendants in California. See Yahoo! v La Ligue  
20 Contre Le Racisme, 433 F3d 1199, 1207 (9th Cir 2006) (rejecting the  
21 "brunt of the harm" test in favor of the less-restrictive  
22 "jurisdictionally sufficient amount of harm" test). Instead,  
23 plaintiff's claimed injuries are more likely to be suffered in  
24 Pennsylvania. See Bancroft & Masters v Augusta Natl Inc, 223 F3d  
25 1082 (9th Cir 2000) (finding personal jurisdiction in California  
26 because the Georgia defendant mailed a letter to a domain name  
27 registry in Virginia thereby interfering with the domain name  
28 rights of plaintiff, who lived in California).

1 The court does not rest its decision on purposeful  
2 direction grounds, however, because that body of precedent does not  
3 apply easily to the facts here. Plaintiffs rarely claim an injury  
4 in a state other than their home state, and plaintiffs rarely  
5 allege the kind of metaphysical internet free speech injuries or  
6 electron-based injuries that Sapient alleges here. See Doc #1 at  
7 ¶¶17, 23, 26. The cases cited by both parties are all  
8 distinguishable easily on one or both of those grounds. See  
9 Keeton, 465 US 770; Calder, 465 US 783; Menken v Emm, 503 F3d 1050  
10 (9th Cir 2007); Yahoo!, 433 F3d 1199; Harris Rutsky & Co Ins  
11 Services, Inc v Bell & Clements Ltd, 328 F3d 1122 (9th Cir 2003);  
12 Dole Foods, 303 F3d 1104; Bancroft & Masters, 223 F3d 1082; Wien  
13 Air Alaska, Inc v Brandt, 195 F3d 208 (5th Cir 1999); Resnick v  
14 Rowe, 283 F Supp 2d 1128 (D Hawaii 2003); Cody v Ward, 954 F Supp  
15 43 (D Conn 1997). The court has no affirmative, binding precedent  
16 and no clear guidance. Accordingly, the court declines to rule on  
17 the "purposeful direction" prong of the jurisdiction test, either  
18 under the Calder effects test (as plaintiffs urge) or under the  
19 theory that defendants' tortious conduct occurred in California  
20 (consider Knipple v Viking Communications, Ltd, 236 Conn 602, 610  
21 (1996) (holding that "[f]alse representations entering Connecticut  
22 by wire or mail constitute tortious conduct in Connecticut"))).

23

24

C

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Instead, Sapient's case for personal jurisdiction  
flounders immediately once the court considers the third prong of  
the jurisdiction test, which is that jurisdiction must be  
reasonable. See FDIC v British-American Ins Co, 828 F2d 1439, 1442

1 (9th Cir 1987) (declining to rule on purposeful availment in light  
2 of the conclusion that the exercise of jurisdiction would be  
3 unreasonable).

4 Defendants have the burden of making a "compelling case"  
5 that exercise of jurisdiction would be unreasonable; in other  
6 words, that it would not comport with fair play and substantial  
7 justice. See Schwarzenegger, 374 F3d at 802. Defendants must show  
8 that any asserted unfairness could not be alleviated by less  
9 restrictive means such as conflict of law rules or an accommodating  
10 venue transfer. See Burger King Corp v Rudzewicz, 471 US 462, 476-  
11 78 (1985). Jurisdiction is reasonable if "under the totality of  
12 the circumstances the defendant could reasonably anticipate being  
13 called upon to present a defense in a distant forum." FDIC, 828  
14 F2d at 1442.

15 The Ninth Circuit has set out seven factors to be weighed  
16 in evaluating the reasonableness of exercising personal  
17 jurisdiction in a particular case:

18 (1) the extent of the defendants' purposeful interjection  
19 into the forum state's affairs;

20 (2) the burden on the defendant of defending in the  
21 forum;

22 (3) the extent of conflict with the sovereignty of the  
23 defendants' state;

24 (4) the forum state's interest in adjudicating the  
25 dispute;

26 (5) the most efficient judicial resolution of the  
27 controversy;

28 (6) the importance of the forum to the plaintiff's  
interest in convenient and effective relief; and

(7) the existence of an alternative forum.

1 Harris Rutsky, 328 F3d at 1132; see Insurance Co of North Am v  
2 Marina Salina Cruz, 649 F2d 1266, 1270 (9th Cir 1981) ("There is no  
3 mechanical or quantitative test for jurisdiction under the  
4 International Shoe reasonableness standard, and we shall not  
5 attempt to list all the factors that might, in a different case, be  
6 part of an assessment of the reasonableness of subjecting a  
7 defendant to jurisdiction. For purposes of the present case we  
8 conclude that the following seven factors are relevant \* \* \*").  
9 The seven factors must be balanced against one another to determine  
10 reasonableness. See Roth v Garcia Marquez, 942 F2d 617, 623, 625  
11 (9th Cir 1991). In this case, each factor suggests that  
12 jurisdiction is unreasonable.

13  
14 1

15 The extent of defendants' "purposeful interjection" into  
16 California was not substantial, comprising only the single takedown  
17 notice sent to YouTube. "Even if there is sufficient  
18 'interjection' into the state to satisfy the [purposeful availment  
19 prong], the degree of interjection is a factor to be weighed in  
20 assessing the overall reasonableness of jurisdiction under the  
21 [reasonableness prong].\* \* \* The smaller the element of purposeful  
22 interjection, the less is jurisdiction to be anticipated and the  
23 less reasonable is its exercise." Insurance Co of North Am, 649  
24 F2d at 1271, quoted in Core-Vent Corp v Nobel Industries AB, 11 F3d  
25 1482, 1488 (9th Cir 1993). In Core-Vent, the Ninth Circuit found  
26 defendant's libelous article circulated in California to be an  
27 "attenuated" contact with California - even though defendants  
28 "allegedly intended their actions to cause harm in California" -

1 and the court ruled that the purposeful interjection factor weighed  
2 in defendants' favor. Core-Vent, 11 F3d at 1487, 1488. Here,  
3 defendants' takedown notice is similar to the article in Core-Vent  
4 because it was a single communication sent from Europe. In fact,  
5 defendants' contacts with California are even more attenuated  
6 because, although the takedown notice was sent to California, it  
7 was not aimed at any California resident. Thus, whether defendants  
8 intended to create an effect in California or even if defendants  
9 committed a tort in California, defendants' purposeful interjection  
10 into California is not extensive. Accordingly, this factor weighs  
11 against personal jurisdiction.

12  
13 2

14 The second factor - the burden on the defendants - weighs  
15 against jurisdiction slightly. "The unique burdens placed upon one  
16 who must defend oneself in a foreign legal system should have  
17 significant weight in assessing the reasonableness of stretching  
18 the long arm of personal jurisdiction over national borders."  
19 Asahi Metal Industry Co v Superior Court, 480 US 102, 114 (1987).  
20 The use of an agent in the United States might alleviate a foreign  
21 defendant's burden (see Core-Vent, 11 F3d at 1488), but defendants  
22 do not have such an agent. And there is no indication that  
23 defendants or their representatives "frequently travel to  
24 California on business." Harris Rutsky, 328 F3d at 1132-33; see  
25 Doc #33-2 (discussing defendants' travel in the United States and  
26 Europe). On the other hand, modern technology has reduced the  
27 burden of litigating in another country (see Sinatra v National  
28 Enquirer, 854 F2d 1191, 1199 (9th Cir 1988)), and defendants'



1 personal involvement with the litigation is not likely to be  
2 extensive. Explorologist's claim of undue burden is far less  
3 compelling than Geller's, of course, because Explorologist has  
4 already sued Sapiient in Pennsylvania. Litigation in California  
5 would force Explorologist to fight a two-front war in the United  
6 States, but much of the burden of litigating in the United States  
7 (such as selecting and monitoring American counsel) has already  
8 been done. Because of the Pennsylvania lawsuit, defendants' burden  
9 of litigating in California is not overwhelming, but it is a burden  
10 nevertheless, and this factor weighs against jurisdiction slightly.

11  
12 3

13 "[L]itigation against an alien defendant creates a higher  
14 jurisdictional barrier than litigation against a citizen from a  
15 sister state because important sovereignty concerns exist."  
16 Sinatra, 854 F2d at 1199. The court should not dwell upon this  
17 consideration. See Harris Rutsky, 328 F3d at 1133, citing Gates  
18 Learjet Corp v Jensen, 743 F2d 1325, 1333 (9th Cir 1984) ("If [this  
19 factor were] given controlling weight, it would always prevent suit  
20 against a foreign national in a United States court.").

21 The court may presume that England has a sovereign  
22 interest in adjudicating a claim against a British corporation and  
23 a British resident. See Harris Rutsky, 328 F3d at 1133. Moreover,  
24 the video clip at the heart of the dispute was filmed in England  
25 (see Doc #26 Exh 5 at ¶7) and features Dr Hughes, whom defendants  
26 claim is British (see Doc #26 Exh 2). Defendants' lack of an agent  
27 in the United States is also relevant to sovereignty  
28 considerations. See Core-Vent, 11 F3d at 1489; Roth, 942 F2d at

1 623-24. Accordingly, this factor weighs against jurisdiction  
2 slightly.

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5 The fourth factor - the forum state's interest in  
6 adjudicating the dispute - weighs against personal jurisdiction.  
7 Sapient resides in Pennsylvania, not California. "Because the  
8 plaintiff is not a California resident, California's legitimate  
9 interests in the dispute have considerably diminished." Asahi, 480  
10 US at 114. Sapient alleges no violations of California law. See  
11 FDIC, 828 F2d at 1444. YouTube is a California company but is not  
12 a party to this litigation. California has little interest in the  
13 outcome of this case. See Corporate Inv Bus Brokers v Melcher, 824  
14 F2d 786, 791 (9th Cir 1987).

15 Sapient's only argument to the contrary is that  
16 "California has an abiding interest in protecting YouTube videos  
17 from improper takedown notices" (see Doc #30 at 12 n7), citing the  
18 free speech clause in the California constitution and a California  
19 statute banning the use of lawsuits to chill free speech. See Cal  
20 Const art I, § 2(a); Cal Code Civ Proc § 425.16(a). Those  
21 provisions apply to California residents, not Pennsylvania internet  
22 users, inanimate computer files or lawsuits filed by British  
23 residents against a Pennsylvania resident in Pennsylvania federal  
24 court asserting claims under British law. California is not the  
25 worldwide regulator of free speech in the digital age.

26 The Supreme Court held in Asahi that courts violate due  
27 process when they adjudicate lawsuits with no connection to the  
28 forum state. See 480 US at 113-16. In Asahi, a Taiwanese auto

1 parts manufacturer sued a Japanese auto parts manufacturer in  
2 California state court, seeking indemnification arising out of a  
3 motorcycle accident in Solano County. 480 US at 105-06. The Court  
4 held, in a near-unanimous section of a notoriously splintered  
5 opinion, that jurisdiction over the Japanese defendant was  
6 unreasonable even though the key factual event - the motorcycle  
7 accident - occurred in California. The Court reasoned that  
8 California's interest in enforcing its automobile safety standards  
9 was too attenuated and "overly broad" when applied to non-  
10 California residents in a claim that did not affect safety  
11 directly. 480 US at 114-15. Here, neither party is a California  
12 resident, and plaintiffs have not shown that the outcome of this  
13 lawsuit will impair the free speech of Californians.

14           Plaintiff's case for jurisdiction leads to unreasonable  
15 (even if unintended) consequences. If plaintiff's theory of  
16 jurisdiction were upheld, then the Northern District of California  
17 could assert jurisdiction over every single takedown notice ever  
18 sent to YouTube or any other company in Silicon Valley. Citizens  
19 around the world - from Indonesia to Italy, Suriname to Siberia -  
20 could all be haled into court in the San Francisco Bay area,  
21 California, USA, for sending off a fax claiming that a video clip  
22 is infringing. Federal courts sitting in California could assert  
23 personal jurisdiction over foreign defendants in wholly foreign  
24 disputes. Consider, for example, Erik Jensen, Boy dupes YouTube to  
25 delete videos, Sydney Morning Herald (Apr 14, 2007), at  
26 <http://www.smh.com.au/news/technology/boy-dupes-youtube-to-delete-ideas/2007/04/13/1175971361981.html> (last visited Jan 3, 2008)  
27  
28 (reporting that a 15-year-old boy in Australia pretended to

1 represent the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and "succeeded in  
2 having more than 200 clips removed" from YouTube using bogus  
3 takedown notices). Such broad jurisdiction, premised solely on the  
4 happenstance that many internet companies that are not even parties  
5 to § 512(f) litigation have offices in Silicon Valley, is  
6 unreasonable. The Northern District of California is not an  
7 international court of internet law.

8 California's interest in Sapient's case is "slight" (see  
9 Asahi, 480 US at 114), and this factor weighs against jurisdiction.

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12 The fifth factor - the most efficient judicial resolution  
13 of the controversy - weighs against jurisdiction. In this case,  
14 the most efficient resolution of the controversy is in the Eastern  
15 District of Pennsylvania. Count II of plaintiff's complaint, which  
16 seeks a declaratory judgment of noninfringement, is the mirror  
17 image of Explorologist's copyright infringement claim pending in  
18 Pennsylvania. Explorologist Ltd v Sapient, No 07-1848 LP (E D Pa).  
19 Judge Pollak has already denied a motion to dismiss for lack of  
20 subject matter jurisdiction and has granted in part and denied in  
21 part a 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss. Doc #31 Exh V. Discovery is  
22 underway. See No 07-1848 Doc #42, 44. Judge Pollak requested  
23 additional briefing on various intricacies of British copyright  
24 law, and Sapient responded with a motion for partial summary  
25 judgment on the British copyright law claim. See No 07-1848 Doc  
26 #45. Many third parties including the American Association of Law  
27 Libraries, the American Library Association and Google have moved  
28 for leave to file an amicus brief in support of Sapient. See No

1 07-1848 Doc #46. Duplication here of those complicated proceedings  
2 would be a waste of the parties', the attorneys' and the court's  
3 resources. And count I of plaintiff's complaint here becomes moot  
4 if Explorologist prevails on its infringement claim in  
5 Pennsylvania. Accordingly, Sapiient's claims can be resolved most  
6 efficiently by the court that is already familiar with the  
7 underlying facts.

8           This factor also requires the court to evaluate where the  
9 witnesses and evidence are likely to be located. See Core-Vent, 11  
10 F3d at 1489. Plaintiff claims vaguely that he will need to call  
11 YouTube employees as witnesses, but he neither identifies any  
12 specific witnesses nor describes the subject matter of their  
13 testimony - and its relevance or importance to this lawsuit - with  
14 any reasonable specificity. See Doc #30 at 17; compare Carolina  
15 Casualty Co v Data Broadcasting Corp, 158 F Supp 2d 1044, 1049 (N D  
16 Cal 2001) (Walker, J). And in any event, the convenience of  
17 witnesses is "no longer weighed heavily given the modern advances  
18 in communication and transportation." Panavision Intl, LP v  
19 Toeppen, 141 F3d 1316, 1323 (9th Cir 1998).

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22           California does not appear to be important to the  
23 plaintiff's interest in convenient and effective relief. In fact,  
24 quite the opposite: "[N]o doctorate in astrophysics is required to  
25 deduce that trying a case where one lives is almost always a  
26 plaintiff's preference." Roth, 942 F2d at 624. Sapiient is already  
27 litigating in his home state against Explorologist regarding the  
28 NOVA video. Sapiient "has not shown that the [claim] cannot be

1 effectively remedied in [Pennsylvania] or [England]." Sinatra, 854  
2 F2d at 1200. Sapient fails to articulate any concerns that paint  
3 California as "important" to his claim.

4 The court acknowledges that internet users in Sapient's  
5 position will not always be able to establish jurisdiction in their  
6 home states (or in the United States) over defendants in § 512(f)  
7 cases. The sender of a takedown notice may not know where the  
8 target of the takedown notice lives, and therefore the sender does  
9 not purposefully direct his actions at any specific individual  
10 state. Hence, in some cases, California (the state to which the  
11 takedown notice is sent) might be the only plausible state in which  
12 to bring a § 512(f) claim over a foreign defendant. The court need  
13 not decide the implications of that fact here because Sapient is  
14 already a party to related litigation in his home state.

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17 The last factor - the existence of an alternative forum -  
18 also weighs against jurisdiction. "The plaintiff bears the burden  
19 of proving the unavailability of an alternative forum." Core-Vent,  
20 11 F3d at 1490. Sapient has made no such showing that he would be  
21 precluded from suing in Pennsylvania or England. See Harris  
22 Rutsky, 328 F3d at 1133-34. "Doubtless [Sapient] would prefer not  
23 to [litigate in England], but that is not the test." Roth, 942 F2d  
24 at 625; see Core-Vent, 11 F3d at 1490; Sinatra, 854 F2d at 1201.

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27 The court's "balance" of the above factors weighs against  
28 jurisdiction. It is "unreasonable and unfair" for this court to

1 assert jurisdiction over British residents in a suit brought by a  
2 Pennsylvania resident over an allegedly tortious fax sent to a  
3 third party in California. See Asahi, 480 US at 116 ("Considering  
4 the international context, the heavy burden on the alien defendant,  
5 and the slight interests of the plaintiff and the forum State, the  
6 exercise of personal jurisdiction by a California court over Asahi  
7 in this instance would be unreasonable and unfair.").

8 It is true that jurisdictional difficulties should "be  
9 accommodated through means short of finding jurisdiction  
10 unconstitutional," such as venue transfer. Burger King, 471 US at  
11 477 & n20. That admonition is relevant if the issue is the  
12 defendant's burden of litigating in the forum state. See Burger  
13 King, 471 US at 477 ("[A] defendant claiming substantial  
14 inconvenience may seek a change of venue."). Here, by contrast,  
15 the glaring flaws in plaintiff's case for jurisdiction are  
16 California's lack of an interest in this dispute and the lack of  
17 any stopping point to this district's jurisdiction over foreign  
18 defendants in § 512(f) cases. Accordingly the court declines to  
19 find jurisdiction and transfer venue to Pennsylvania.

20 Accordingly, defendants have made a "compelling case"  
21 that personal jurisdiction in the Northern District of California  
22 is unreasonable.

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25 Plaintiff's attempt to establish personal jurisdiction  
26 through physical service of process must fail. Doc #30 at 13-15.  
27 Defendants waived service of process, thereby mooting the effect of  
28 any subsequent physical service in the state of California. See

1 Fed R Civ P 4(d)(4) (2007) ("When the plaintiff files a waiver,  
2 \* \* \* these rules apply as if a summons and complaint have been  
3 served at the time of filing the waiver.") (emphasis added).

4 Plaintiff advances no support for his theory of double service.

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6 VI

7 The court concludes with three final notes. First,  
8 Sapiient will suffer no actual prejudice as a result of the court's  
9 ruling. Sapiient will be able to raise his § 512(f) claim against  
10 Explorologist as a counterclaim in the Pennsylvania action. See  
11 Fed R Civ P 13(a), 13(f), 13(b); AJ Indus, Inc v US Dist Court for  
12 Central Dist of Cal, 503 F2d 384, 387-89 (1974). And although  
13 Geller is not a party to that action, Sapiient will be able to bring  
14 his claims against Geller using either a regular jurisdiction  
15 analysis or the federal long-arm statute. See Fed R Civ P 4(k)(2).

16 Second, the court's ruling does not require a per se bar  
17 against personal jurisdiction in California over foreign defendants  
18 in § 512(f) cases. In some instances, jurisdiction might be  
19 appropriate and reasonable based on all the circumstances. If a  
20 defendant relies regularly and consistently on YouTube's takedown  
21 procedures, then the purposeful direction or purposeful  
22 interjection inquiries might be different. Here, had defendants  
23 never sued Sapiient in the United States, or had they sued him in a  
24 state other than his residence, then the analysis might be  
25 different as well. Vindication of plaintiffs' rights must be  
26 weighed against defendants' interests in a fair trial and the  
27 legitimacy of the judicial system (see Asahi, 480 US at 113), and  
28 on the facts of this case, the balance tips in favor of defendants.



1 Third, the DMCA provides explicitly that internet users  
2 such as Sapiant who wish to rebut a takedown notice must consent to  
3 the jurisdiction of a federal district court (see 17 USC  
4 512(g)(3)(D)), but the statute does not require copyright owners  
5 who send takedown notices (such as defendants here) to consent to  
6 personal jurisdiction (see 17 USC 512(c)(3)). That difference must  
7 be viewed as intentional. See The Adeline, 13 US 244, 253 (1815).  
8 If that result seems asymmetrical and unfair, then the problem  
9 should be resolved by Congress, not this court.

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VI

Even assuming plaintiffs can demonstrate subject matter jurisdiction and purposeful direction, personal jurisdiction over the defendants would violate due process because jurisdiction would not be "reasonable and just according to our traditional conception of fair play and substantial justice \* \* \*." See International Shoe Co v State of Washington, 326 US 310, 320 (1945). Defendants' motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction is GRANTED.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



VAUGHN R WALKER  
United States District Chief Judge