

1 Greg D. Andres
 2 Antonio J. Perez-Marques
 3 Craig T. Cagney
 4 Gina Cora
 5 Luca Marzorati
 6 (admitted *pro hac vice*)
 7 DAVIS POLK & WARDWELL LLP
 8 450 Lexington Avenue
 9 New York, New York 10017
 10 Telephone: (212) 450-4000
 11 Facsimile: (212) 701-5800
 12 Email: greg.andres@davispolk.com
 13 antonio.perez@davispolk.com
 14 craig.cagney@davispolk.com
 15 gina.cora@davispolk.com
 16 luca.marzorati@davispolk.com

11 Micah G. Block (SBN 270712)
 12 DAVIS POLK & WARDWELL LLP
 13 1600 El Camino Real
 14 Menlo Park, California 94025
 15 Telephone: (650) 752-2000
 16 Facsimile: (650) 752-2111
 17 Email: micah.block@davispolk.com

18 *Attorneys for Plaintiffs*
 19 *WhatsApp LLC and Meta Platforms, Inc.*

20 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
 21 FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
 22 OAKLAND DIVISION

21	WHATSAAPP LLC and)	
22	META PLATFORMS, INC., a Delaware)	Case No. 4:19-cv-07123-PJH
	corporation,)	
23)	REPLY MEMORANDUM OF POINTS
	Plaintiffs,)	AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT OF
24)	PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR PARTIAL
	v.)	SUMMARY JUDGMENT
25)	
26	NSO GROUP TECHNOLOGIES LIMITED)	Date: November 7, 2024
	and Q CYBER TECHNOLOGIES LIMITED,)	Time: 1:30 p.m.
27)	Ctrm: 3
	Defendants.)	Judge: Hon. Phyllis J. Hamilton
28)	Action Filed: October 29, 2019

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1 personal jurisdiction. *See Wages v. I.R.S.*, 915 F.2d 1230, 1235 (9th Cir. 1990).

2 **II. NSO IS LIABLE ON PLAINTIFFS' BREACH OF CONTRACT CLAIM**

3 **A. NSO Agreed to the Terms**

4 NSO contends that the “evidence is not sufficient to prove NSO agreed to the WhatsApp
5 [Terms]” because there is supposedly “no evidence” NSO had actual knowledge of the Terms. Opp.
6 3. That argument is contrary to the undisputed facts and foreclosed by controlling law. NSO’s
7 documents and testimony show that it had notice of the Terms, and of the specific provisions it was
8 violating. Moreover, the legal sufficiency of “clicking” to manifest consent is well established.

9 Plaintiffs have carried their burden of producing undisputed facts sufficient to show that users
10 must accept the Terms to create a WhatsApp account, and that NSO agreed to the Terms accordingly.
11 Mot. 6-8. After downloading and opening the Official Client, “[t]he welcome screen includes links
12 to the terms of service and the privacy policy,” and “[t]he user is then given the opportunity to agree
13 to the terms of service[] and continue with the registration flow.” Ex. 2 (Lee Dep.) at 174:4-13. At
14 that point in the account-creation process, “in order to proceed with the registration flow, you have
15 to click a button . . . to demonstrate agreement of the terms of service.” *Id.* at 180:4-12. Only “[i]f
16 the user chooses to agree to the terms of service and continue” would they be able to register a phone
17 number and create an account. *Id.* at 174:4-21.¹ NSO admits it followed these necessary steps to
18 create WhatsApp accounts, Ex. 8 (Eshkar Dep.) at 70:16-72:25, and WhatsApp’s business records
19 show at least 50 NSO employees agreed to the Terms, Dkt No. 401-3 (Andre Decl.) ¶¶ 3-8, Ex. A.²

20 These undisputed facts suffice to bind a user to the Terms under controlling case law. *See*
21

22 ¹ Plaintiffs can rely on Jonathan Lee’s Rule 30(b)(6) testimony at summary judgment. *See Plumley*
23 *v. S. Container, Inc.*, 2001 WL 1188469, at *4 (D. Me. Oct. 9, 2001), *aff’d*, 303 F.3d 364 (1st Cir.
24 2002). Lee testified to “the company’s knowledge,” *Persian Gulf Inc. v. BP W. Coast Prods. LLC*,
25 632 F. Supp. 3d 1108, 1127-28 (S.D. Cal. 2022), which Plaintiffs “will be able to prove through
admissible evidence” at trial, if necessary. *Norse v. City of Santa Cruz*, 629 F.3d 966, 973 (9th Cir.
2010). If necessary, Plaintiffs request the opportunity to do so now. *See Fed. R. Civ. P.* 56(e).

26 ² NSO’s suggestion that Plaintiffs needed to add Meghan Andre to their initial disclosures is
27 “unreasonable and burdensome (and rarely, if ever, done in practice).” *S.F. Baykeeper v. W. Bay*
Sanitary Dist., 791 F. Supp. 2d 719, 734-35 (N.D. Cal. 2011). Plaintiffs’ experts already submitted
28 declarations verifying their reports and curing any admissibility concerns. *See* Dkt. Nos. 422-3,
422-4, 422-5; *Cahill v. Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transp. Dist.*, 2016 WL 1070655, at *5
(N.D. Cal. Mar. 18, 2016) (“subsequent verification” permits use of expert reports).

1 *Berman v. Freedom Fin. Network, LLC*, 30 F.4th 849, 856 (9th Cir. 2022) (contract enforceable when
 2 “users must check a box explicitly stating ‘I agree’ in order to proceed”); *see also Laatz v. Zazzle,*
 3 *Inc.*, 2024 WL 377970, at *7 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 9, 2024) (“hyperlinks constitute reasonably conspicuous
 4 notice of terms” and “clicking a button such as the ‘Create Account’ button is sufficient to manifest
 5 assent”); *Sellers v. JustAnswer LLC*, 73 Cal. App. 5th 444, 471-72 (2021) (surveying “overall trend”
 6 that where a user is “signing up for an ongoing account,” “any textual notice [is] sufficient to bind a
 7 consumer”).³ Further, NSO’s documents show NSO’s actual knowledge of the prohibition on
 8 reverse-engineering that it breached. *Compare* Ex. 24 at -959⁴ *with* Ex. 11 at -827.

9 NSO fails to produce any *evidence* creating any material dispute about its knowledge of the
 10 Terms, which it “must” do to defeat summary judgment. *Nissan Fire*, 210 F.3d at 1103. There is no
 11 *evidence* that NSO was unaware that it was agreeing to the Terms when it followed a process that
 12 required it to agree to them in the course of creating nearly a hundred WhatsApp accounts for its own
 13 use, *see* Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 81:3-7; Ex. 17, and an undisclosed number for its customers, *see* Ex.
 14 27.⁵ In fact, in opposing summary judgment on the CFAA claims, NSO asserts it *did* agree to the
 15 Terms. Opp. 10-11. NSO cannot argue inconsistent facts at summary judgment. *See, e.g., SEC v.*
 16 *Johnson*, 2022 WL 423492, at *5 (C.D. Cal. Jan. 26, 2022) (“[T]he Court cannot consider any
 17 inconsistent facts Defendant produces to establish a genuine dispute of material facts.”); *cf. Total*
 18 *Coverage, Inc. v. Cendant Settlement Servs. Grp., Inc.*, 252 F. App’x 123, 126 (9th Cir. 2007).

19 **B. NSO Breached the Contract**

20 Plaintiffs’ Motion showed that NSO breached numerous provisions of the Terms. Mot. 8-10.
 21 NSO cannot avoid summary judgment by contorting the Terms’ plain meaning, because the contract
 22 language should be given “the meaning a layperson would ordinarily attach to it.” *Perez-Encinas v.*
 23 _____

24 ³ NSO’s cases are inapposite. *See Marshall v. Hipcamp Inc.*, 2024 WL 2325197, at *5 (W.D. Wash.
 25 May 22, 2024) (allowing users to continue using Apple or Facebook); *Jackson v. Amazon.com, Inc.*,
 26 65 F.4th 1093, 1098 (9th Cir. 2023) (addressing amended terms); *Nguyen v. Barnes & Noble Inc.*,
 27 763 F.3d 1171, 1176 (9th Cir. 2014) (browsewrap agreement); *Berman*, 30 F.4th at 856-58 (same).

28 ⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, all emphases have been added.

⁵ If NSO believed the appearance of the “button” created a genuine dispute, it could have obtained
 a publicly available screenshot and submitted it with its opposition. *See* Youssef Decl. 4-6. It did
 not, because the appearance makes clear NSO had adequate notice it was consenting to the Terms.

1 *AmerUs Life Ins. Co.*, 468 F. Supp. 2d 1127, 1133 (N.D. Cal. 2006) (citing Cal. Civ. Code § 1638).

2 **1. The Terms prohibit, “reverse engineer[ing]” and “decompil[ing], or extract[ing] code**
3 **from [WhatsApp’s] Services.”** Ex. 11 at -827. NSO has admitted it breached these terms,
4 acknowledging, for instance, that it “decompil[ed] [WhatsApp’s] code” to create a modified
5 application. Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 66:2-77:2, 225:5-227:5. And although NSO argues the term
6 “reverse-engineering” is ambiguous, Opp. 6, its corporate representative understood it when he
7 admitted that NSO engaged in “reverse-engineering.” Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 144:10-147:9. NSO’s
8 own documents show the term is not ambiguous, noting that “WhatsApp *explicitly claim against*
9 *reversing their app*” to develop a “third-party modified WhatsApp” application. Ex. 24 at -959. NSO
10 understood that this conduct violated the Terms, and subjected NSO to risk of detection. *Id.*; Ex. 6
11 (Gazneli Dep.) at 153:2-17, 231:22-25. NSO also *argues* that it engaged in reverse-engineering
12 (suggesting it does understand the term) only before it agreed to the Terms. Opp. 6. But it provides
13 no *evidence* to substantiate that claim. To the contrary, NSO said its reverse engineering was part of
14 a process “between April 29, 2018 and May 10, 2020,” and that it decompiled WhatsApp code after
15 the 2018 security updates. Ex. 6. (Gazneli Dep.) at 66:19-71:5, 246:7-247:1.

16 **2. The Terms prohibit using, “or assisting others in using,” WhatsApp (i) to “collect the**
17 **information of or about [WhatsApp’s] users in any impermissible or unauthorized manner,”**
18 (ii) to “**gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access** to [WhatsApp’s] Services or systems,” or
19 (iii) in ways that “**are illegal.**” Ex. 11 at -827. NSO argues that it never operated Pegasus itself.
20 Opp. 7. That is false, but also not a defense, because the Terms prohibit “assist[ing] others to” breach
21 the Terms. Ex. 11 at -827; *see* Mot. 23-24 (citing evidence of NSO assisting its customers).
22 “Impermissible” and “unauthorized” are not vague, as NSO claims (Opp. 7), but require WhatsApp’s
23 or users’ permission. *See Facebook, Inc. v. Power Ventures, Inc.*, 844 F.3d 1058, 1067-68 (9th Cir.
24 2016). NSO provides no evidence it had either. *See* Mot. 9-11; *infra* § III.A.1.

25 **3. The Terms prohibit sending “viruses or other harmful code”** via WhatsApp. Ex. 11 at -
26 827. NSO admits sending Pegasus code, but argues that “‘harmful code’ is a subjective term.” Opp.
27 7. It is not, and easily covers code designed to take over and extract all information from a device
28 without the user’s knowledge (and in violation of the Terms and federal and state law). Ex. 6 (Gazneli

1 Dep.) at 300:16-19; 311:13-312:15; Ex. 5 (Defs.' Supp. Resps. to Pls.' First Interrogs.) at 11.

2 **C. Plaintiffs Did Not “Waive” Any Known Rights**

3 NSO's waiver argument is meritless. Waiver requires an “intentional relinquishment of a
4 known right with knowledge of its existence and the intent to relinquish it.” *CBS, Inc. v. Merrick*,
5 716 F.2d 1292, 1295 (9th Cir. 1983). Selective enforcement is not a waiver. *See Mahoney v. Depuy*
6 *Orthopaedics, Inc.*, 2007 WL 3341389, at *9 (E.D. Cal. Nov. 8, 2007); *Martinez v. McNabb*, 2004
7 WL 103541, at *8 (Cal. Ct. App. Jan. 23, 2004). Plaintiffs could not waive before learning of NSO's
8 breaches, and NSO cites no evidence they waived after. NSO's cases concerning parties that waived
9 after learning of a breach do not apply. Opp. 8. Moreover, NSO's records show it knew Plaintiffs
10 would enforce against NSO if they became aware of NSO's conduct. *See Ex. 24 at -958-60; Ex. 6*
11 *(Gazneli Dep.) at 206:12-208:1*. The non-waiver provision, *see Ex. 11 at -832*, also precludes a
12 waiver. *See Auntie Anne's, Inc. v. Wang*, 2014 WL 11728722, at *14 (C.D. Cal. July 16, 2014).

13 **D. Plaintiffs Suffered Damages**

14 NSO's breaches damaged Plaintiffs. *See Mot. 11*. NSO does not dispute Plaintiffs incurred
15 investigation costs, but argues that they were not foreseeable or caused by NSO. Opp. 8-9. That
16 claim is meritless. NSO knew WhatsApp would remediate NSO's breaches once detected. *Ex. 37*
17 *(Gazneli Dep.) at 214:12-18*. That NSO exploited preexisting code does not break the “causal chain.”
18 *See Creative Computing v. Getloaded.com LLC*, 386 F.3d 930, 935–36 (9th Cir. 2004). NSO also
19 concedes (Opp. 9) that disgorgement “can satisfy the ‘damages’ element,” which only requires that
20 NSO “obtained a benefit they would not have otherwise obtained and profited from that benefit
21 without providing a corresponding benefit to” Plaintiffs. *Artifex Software, Inc. v. Hancorn, Inc.*, 2017
22 WL 4005508, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 12, 2017); *see Mot. 11*. Finally, even if there were “no
23 appreciable detriment” to WhatsApp (which there was), Plaintiffs would be entitled to nominal
24 damages. *Meta Platforms, Inc. v. BrandTotal Ltd.*, 605 F. Supp. 3d 1218, 1258 (N.D. Cal. 2022).

25 **III. NSO IS LIABLE ON PLAINTIFFS' CFAA CLAIMS**

26 **A. NSO Violated § 1030(a)(2) and § 1030(a)(4) of the CFAA**

27 **1. NSO Intentionally Accessed WhatsApp's Servers and the Target Devices**

28 Plaintiffs' Motion showed that NSO intentionally accessed WhatsApp's servers and the target

1 devices. Mot. 12-13. NSO offers two responses. Both lack merit.

2 First, NSO claims it lacked intent because it believed its access was authorized (Opp. 22), but
3 it provides no *evidence* that anyone had authorized such access. NSO admits it did not seek
4 permission from WhatsApp or owners of target devices, and knew WhatsApp would ban NSO if it
5 got caught. Mot. 9. NSO points to its CEO’s claim that Israel regulates NSO’s export of Pegasus,
6 but provides no evidence that Israel authorized NSO to develop, test, or use Pegasus, or could
7 authorize NSO’s access to WhatsApp’s U.S. computers. Opp. 22 (citing Akro Decl., Ex. H). NSO
8 also points to its customers’ purported agreements to use Pegasus only for law enforcement purposes,
9 *id.*, but NSO’s customers could not authorize NSO’s own development of Pegasus or use of
10 WhatsApp either. Even as to the customers’ use of Pegasus, NSO provides no contract in which any
11 customer actually agreed to NSO’s use-restrictions, and provides no proof customers used Pegasus
12 only for law enforcement (the undisputed evidence shows they did not⁶) or that any had lawful
13 authorization to access target devices. NSO’s belief that its customers would obtain such
14 authorization is not a defense. *See United States v. Christensen*, 828 F.3d 763, 794 (9th Cir. 2015).

15 Second, NSO contends there is “no evidence NSO ‘accessed . . . target devices.’” Opp. 10.
16 That contention fails. NSO admits its Pegasus software used WhatsApp to install the Pegasus agent
17 on “between hundreds and tens of thousands” of target devices that NSO did not control. Ex. 6
18 (Gazneli Dep.) at 82:14-83:11. NSO was the principal behind all those installations, and its
19 customers’ minimal role does not cut off NSO’s liability. “Numerous courts have recognized that
20 vicarious or indirect liability under section 1030(g) extends to parties who direct, encourage, or
21 induce others to commit acts that violate the statute.” *Ryanair DAC v. Booking Holdings Inc.*, 636
22 F. Supp. 3d 490, 499 (D. Del. 2022).⁷ NSO admits that “[f]rom the perspective of a Pegasus user,
23 the Hummingbird installation of Pegasus was triggered by the user entering a surveillance target’s
24 mobile telephone number into a field in a program running on the user’s laptop,” and “[i]n response,

25 _____
26 ⁶ Ex. 38 (Shohat Dep.) at 29:24-32:14, 180:6-185:16 (admitting Pegasus was used to target Dubai’s Princess Haiya, and was abused by 10 customers so severely that NSO disconnected the service).

27 ⁷ NSO relies on cases where outsiders induced insiders to obtain information from computers for
28 them. Opp. 10 n.13 (citing cases). *United States v. Nosal* (“*Nosal I*”), 676 F.3d 854, 863 (9th Cir. 2012), concluded those cases involved no CFAA violation because the insider *had* authorization.

1 *the program* would instruct a server called the WhatsApp Installation Server (‘WIS’) to install
 2 Pegasus on the surveillance target’s device.” Gazneli Decl. ¶ 4. In other words, NSO’s customers
 3 only push a button to request information from a target device; the installation and extraction process,
 4 about which NSO’s customers knew nothing, was “a matter for NSO and the system to take care of,
 5 not a matter for customers to operate.” Ex. 10 (Shohat Dep.) at 68:1-16. NSO reverse-engineered
 6 WhatsApp to develop that capability, Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 66:2-77:2, 226:2-227:5; NSO marketed
 7 that capability to customers, Ex. 31; NSO installed the technology for them, Ex. 38 (Shohat Dep.) at
 8 143:15-144:23; NSO provided the server infrastructure to install Pegasus and extract information,
 9 Dkt. No. 1-1 at 37-38, 46-47; NSO provided the WhatsApp accounts used in the attack, Ex. 8 (Eshkar
 10 Dep.) at 39:15-17, 151:3-153:8; and NSO provided technical support, Ex. 5 (Defs.’ Supp. Resps. to
 11 Pls.’ First Interrogs.) at 15-16. NSO is therefore liable for every Pegasus installation.

12 Moreover, NSO admits to directly accessing devices “under NSO’s own control.” Opp. 10.
 13 That alone suffices for liability because NSO obtained information from them through unauthorized
 14 access to WhatsApp’s servers, 18 U.S.C. § 1030(a)(2), and also obtained the use of WhatsApp’s
 15 computers through fraud, *id.* § 1030(a)(4). The CFAA “forecloses” any “defense” that NSO “was
 16 ‘entitled to obtain’ the information . . . through another method,” such as direct access to the device.
 17 *Van Buren v. United States*, 593 U.S. 374, 385 (2021); *see* Mot. 20-23; Dkt. No. 422 at 16-17.

18 **2. NSO Accessed WhatsApp Servers and the Official Client on Target Devices**
 19 **Without Authorization or Exceeded Any Purported Authorized Access**

20 NSO’s access to WhatsApp’s servers and user devices was unauthorized because NSO
 21 (i) used its own modified application, not the Official Client; (ii) circumvented 2018 server updates
 22 to carry out the May 2019 attacks; and (iii) continued using WhatsApp after Plaintiffs remediated
 23 those attacks, disabled NSO’s accounts, and filed this lawsuit. *See* Mot. 13-20. NSO provides no
 24 evidence creating a genuine dispute as to any one of these grounds, let alone all of them.

25 **a) The Terms of Service Did Not Authorize NSO’s Access**

26 Despite NSO’s contention that there is no evidence NSO agreed to the Terms, Opp. 3, it
 27 nonetheless argues that its agreement to those Terms “forecloses” any “without authorization” claim.
 28 Opp. 10. NSO cannot have it both ways. If it did not agree, as NSO claims, it had no authorization.

1 But as explained above, there is no genuine dispute NSO *did* accept the Terms. *See supra* II.A.

2 There is no inconsistency in Plaintiffs’ position that (as NSO paraphrases it) “NSO agreed to
3 WhatsApp’s [Terms] and that NSO completely lacked authorization to use WhatsApp’s servers.”
4 Opp. 10. The Terms only authorize NSO “to use our Services,” defined as “our *apps*, services,
5 features, software, or website.” Ex. 11 at -825, -828. The Court recognized that WhatsApp users
6 only have authorization to send messages “using the WhatsApp app,” Dkt. No. 111 at 37, and NSO’s
7 own documents indicate NSO understood WhatsApp banned “using [a] third-party modified
8 WhatsApp” application. *See* Ex. 24 at -959. Even on a technological level, the authentication keys
9 needed to access WhatsApp servers are created only on the Official Client when it is downloaded,
10 installed, and registered. Ex. 4 (Gheorghe Dep.) at 135:20-140:1. NSO admits it could not use the
11 WIS to access WhatsApp’s servers without those keys. Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 278:16-279:6.
12 WhatsApp’s servers were also designed to work only with the Official Client. Ex. 4 (Gheorghe Dep.)
13 at 279:25-280:10. NSO thus designed the WIS to use the same proprietary “FunXMPP” protocol as
14 the Official Client in order to communicate with the servers. Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 279:16-282:10.

15 Thus, neither NSO nor any other user ever had any “degree[] of authorization” to access
16 WhatsApp’s servers themselves. Opp. 11. The Terms only authorize users to use *the Official Client*,
17 and *the Official Client* had the technological permissions necessary to access WhatsApp’s servers.
18 NSO’s argument that its “limited” authorization to use the Official Client also authorized NSO to
19 access the servers in any other manner that NSO chose is essentially the same argument the former
20 employee made in *Nosal II* that his use of a current employee’s password only violated a “limit” on
21 that employee’s authorization. *See United States v. Nosal* (“*Nosal IP*”), 844 F.3d 1024, 1035-37 (9th
22 Cir. 2016). The Ninth Circuit rejected that argument as “ignor[ing] common sense and turn[ing] the
23 statute inside out,” because the current employee “had no mantle or authority to override [the
24 employer’s] authority to control access to its computers and confidential information by giving
25 permission to former employees.” *Id.* NSO similarly had no authority to transfer the Official Client’s
26 authorization to another application. *See Theofel v. Farey-Jones*, 359 F.3d 1066, 1073-74 (9th Cir.
27 2004) (“us[ing] someone else’s password” and “claim[ing] the server ‘authorized’ his access” is the
28 “paradigm” of what the CFAA prohibits).

1 In addition, even if the Terms granted NSO some limited authorization to access WhatsApp’s
2 servers (they did not), that authorization can be—and in fact was, *see infra* § III.A.2.b—revoked.
3 *Power Ventures*, 844 F.3d at 1067-68 (“[A] defendant can run afoul of the CFAA when he or she has
4 no permission to access a computer *or* when such permission has been revoked explicitly.”).

5 **b) NSO Bypassed the Restrictions Built Into the Official Client**

6 The undisputed evidence demonstrates that NSO circumvented technological limitations built
7 into the Official Client by using the WIS to access WhatsApp’s servers. Mot. 15-17. NSO attempts
8 to create a dispute of fact about its use of a fake client by presenting Tamir Gazneli’s self-serving
9 declaration, which claims that the “WIS created the WhatsApp messages,” but “those messages were
10 sent to the target device (via WhatsApp servers) using a genuine WhatsApp client and genuine
11 WhatsApp credentials.” Gazneli Decl. ¶ 5. Mr. Gazneli’s declaration contradicts his own sworn
12 testimony, in his capacity as NSO’s corporate representative, that Pegasus’s messages were sent by
13 “a client that *NSO developed*,” and “*not* an actual WhatsApp client.” Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 159:12-
14 162:3. Mr. Gazneli’s declaration neither addresses this contradiction, nor attaches any documentary
15 evidence—such as the Pegasus code NSO was ordered to produce (which it did not)—to support his
16 new contention that NSO in fact used an unadulterated Official Client. Mr. Gazneli’s declaration
17 therefore cannot create a genuine dispute of fact. *See Hansen v. United States*, 7 F.3d 137, 138 (9th
18 Cir. 1993) (“When the nonmoving party relies only on its own affidavits to oppose summary
19 judgment, it cannot rely on conclusory allegations unsupported by factual data to create an issue of
20 material fact.”); *Rainey v. Am. Forest & Paper Ass’n*, 26 F. Supp. 2d 82, 94 (D.D.C. 1998) (excluding
21 affidavit at summary judgment contrary to Rule 30(b)(6) testimony); *Guangzhou Yuchen Trading*
22 *Co. v. DBest Prods. Inc.*, 2023 WL 2626373, at *2 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 24, 2023) (same).

23 Even if Mr. Gazneli’s declaration were considered, it does not create any material dispute of
24 fact. NSO admits that the “WIS created the WhatsApp messages,” Gazneli Decl. ¶ 5, and that
25 “WhatsApp did not program” the Official Client to be able to create those kinds of messages. Opp.
26 14. Mr. Gazneli does not explain how the Official Client was able to send “WIS created” messages
27 that the Official Client could not create. *Cf. Akro. Decl.*, Ex. A (Palau Dep.) at 129:8-20, 131:5-23
28 (“[U]nder no circumstances” would “one of our official clients” “send something like that” and

1 “[t]his is obviously a malicious client”). Taken as true, NSO either copied parts of the Official
2 Client’s code into the WIS in order to send the messages, just as Mr. Gazneli described at his
3 deposition, Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 159:12-162:3, or otherwise modified the Official Client so that
4 NSO could insert the “WIS created” messages into the Official Client, *see* Youssef Decl. ¶¶ 6-13.
5 Either way, NSO accessed WhatsApp servers by deceit, passing off “WIS created” messages as if
6 they were Official Client messages. *Theofel*, 359 F.3d at 1072-74 (access is unauthorized if defendant
7 knew “plaintiff was mistaken as to the nature and quality of the invasion intended” (citation omitted)).

8 **c) NSO Used WhatsApp After Plaintiffs Revoked NSO’s Access**

9 Even if NSO could credibly argue that its access was authorized at some point, Plaintiffs
10 revoked that authorization no later than when this action was filed. NSO persisted to access
11 WhatsApp after Plaintiffs (i) made security updates that disabled certain NSO attacks, (ii) disabled
12 NSO’s accounts, and (iii) filed this lawsuit. Contrary to NSO (Opp. 14-15), that revocation was
13 “categorical,” “explicit,” “unequivocal,” and “particularized.”

14 Plaintiffs’ security updates categorically prevented NSO’s unauthorized access. NSO’s own
15 records show that the 2018 security updates completely disabled its Heaven Malware Vector, and
16 “after the December 2018 update, NSO customers couldn’t use the 0 click Android installation
17 vectors” anymore. Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 254:2-23, 256:16-25, 258:1-16. Similarly, NSO’s own
18 records show that the 2019 updates completely disabled NSO’s Eden Malware Vector, and again
19 eliminated NSO’s only “0 click Android solution[].” *Id.* at 262:3-265:4. Those changes are no less
20 categorical simply because they did not interfere with WhatsApp’s billions of users’ ability to use
21 the Official Client to “send ordinary WhatsApp messages,” Opp. 14, and did not anticipate NSO’s
22 “technological gamesmanship.” *See Power Ventures*, 844 F.3d at 1067.

23 Plaintiffs’ revocation was also explicit, unequivocal, and particularized. NSO does not
24 dispute that NSO itself received the “403” error associated with the 2018 updates, which indicated
25 that using the Heaven Malware Vector was “forbidden,” and the servers “refuse[d] to authorize it.”
26 Mot. 17; Opp. 15. NSO immediately understood that its Malware Vector had not “merely . . .
27 malfunctioned,” as NSO now claims, Opp. 15, but that “WhatsApp has made changes in their servers
28 that currently fail all installations.” Ex. 9; Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 254:2-23; Ex. 25 (Vance Rep.) at

1 7-10. Plaintiffs blocked NSO’s access again in May 2019, but also disabled NSO’s known accounts
2 and filed a lawsuit alleging violations of federal and state law, and WhatsApp’s Terms, and seeking
3 to enjoin NSO from “[a]ccessing or attempting to access WhatsApp’s and Facebook’s service,
4 platform, and computer systems,” and from “creating or maintaining any WhatsApp or Facebook
5 account.” Dkt. No. 1 at 14; *see* Mot. 18-19. These steps are indistinguishable from the cease and
6 desist letter and IP blocks deemed sufficient to revoke access in *Power Ventures*. *See* 844 F.3d at
7 1067 & n.3. Yet NSO continued accessing WhatsApp even while this litigation was pending.⁸

8 **d) NSO Exceeded Any Purported Authorization**

9 Even if there were a dispute of fact regarding whether NSO sent messages using the Official
10 Client, NSO still exceeded authorized access by using the WIS to circumvent the Official Client’s
11 and the servers’ technological limitations. None of NSO’s arguments to the contrary have merit.

12 First, NSO’s argument that it did not obtain information *from WhatsApp servers* that it was
13 “not entitled so to obtain” (Opp. 16) fails. There is no requirement that the information only come
14 from the servers. NSO’s contention that Section 1030(e)(6) requires the information to come from
15 the same computer accessed without authorization is incorrect. Regardless, NSO does not dispute
16 that “computer” is defined to “include[] any data storage facility or communications facility directly
17 related to or operating in conjunction with such device,” 18 U.S.C. § 1030(e)(1), and thus includes
18 “computer networks.” *Nosal II*, 844 F.3d at 1032 n.2. NSO also does not dispute that WhatsApp is
19 a communications network, and the target devices are “directly related to or operating in conjunction
20 with” the servers. Mot. 22. Thus, NSO’s admission that it obtained information from target devices
21 “via the WhatsApp servers” that “a regular WhatsApp user using the WhatsApp client app cannot
22 obtain,” Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 306:12-307:15, suffices to prove NSO exceeded authorized access.

23 NSO also obtained and altered information in the servers themselves. NSO claims it only
24 obtained information from the servers that one could obtain with the Official Client. Opp. 16. Even
25 if that were true, it is no “defense” that NSO “was ‘entitled to obtain’ the information . . . through
26

27 ⁸ Plaintiffs only learned of NSO’s continuing conduct at Mr. Gazneli’s deposition on September 4,
28 2024. If necessary, the Court should deem the complaint amended to conform to the evidence.

1 another method.” *Van Buren*, 593 U.S. at 385. And NSO does not dispute altering information in
2 the server by forcing it to add a sixth relay, and to send a directed, malformed response. Mot. 20-21.

3 Second, NSO argues it did not access areas of the servers that the Official Client could not,
4 but that is not what the CFAA requires. *Van Buren* made clear that NSO must “obtain[] *information*
5 located in particular areas of the computer—such as files, folders, or databases—that are off limits
6 to” NSO. 593 U.S. at 396. As shown above, NSO did obtain information from areas of the WhatsApp
7 network (a “computer” within the meaning of the CFAA) that were “off limits.”

8 Third, NSO argues it did not circumvent any technological limitations. NSO is wrong. NSO
9 admits the Official Client could not send the messages that Pegasus depended on, *see* Mot. 16, and
10 its contention that the Official Client did not “prohibit[] sending those messages” and was only “a
11 purpose-based ‘use restriction’” ignores NSO’s own admission that “WhatsApp did not *program*”
12 the Official Client to send those messages. Opp. 13-14; *see* Akro. Decl., Ex. A (Palau Dep.) at 129:8-
13 20, 131:5-23 (“[U]nder no circumstances” would the Official Client “send something like that” and
14 “[t]his is obviously a malicious client”). The Official Client could not *technologically* do what NSO
15 wanted to do, so NSO had to circumvent that “*technological bar on access*” (Opp. 13) for its attack.

16 NSO also circumvented technological limitations on the servers, by circumventing the 2018
17 and 2019 server changes that WhatsApp made to block NSO’s access, *see supra* § III.A.2.c, and the
18 servers’ anti-spam filters, *infra* § III.A.3. “[F]inding ‘holes in . . . programs,’ . . . amounts to obtaining
19 unauthorized access,” *United States v. Phillips*, 477 F.3d 215, 220 (5th Cir. 2007), not “compl[ying]
20 with” WhatsApp’s technological restrictions, as NSO claims. Opp. 17-18.

21 **3. NSO Defrauded Plaintiffs and WhatsApp Users in Violation of § 1030(a)(4)**

22 Plaintiffs’ Motion established that NSO violated CFAA § 1030(a)(4). Mot. 22-23. NSO
23 argues that “intent to defraud” should be construed as requiring “an intent to deceive and cheat,” as
24 in other statutes, meaning “the intent to deprive a victim of money or property by deception.” Opp.
25 22-23 (citing *United States v. Saini*, 23 F.4th 1155, 1160 (9th Cir. 2022)). NSO cites no case applying
26 that standard to the CFAA. Even if it does apply, it is easily met.

27 NSO claims its messages were not deceitful, because “WhatsApp *could* detect Pegasus
28 messages *if* it looked for them.” Opp. 12. This argument is misleading and does not create a dispute

1 of fact. NSO knew that WhatsApp searched for suspicious or malicious messages, *see, e.g.*, Ex. 24
2 at -958, and took various steps to avoid its malicious messages being flagged for review, such as
3 hiding its code in the “connecting_tone_desc” message field (which was “an old feature” that “was
4 not in use at the time of the attack,” Ex. 39 (Gheorghe Dep.) at 150:13-153:1). NSO also repeatedly
5 changed the fields in which it hid code. *See* Ex. 25 (Vance Rep.) at 8-10 (demonstrating NSO using
6 both “voip_settings” and “group_update” fields). NSO also identified ways to avoid detection by
7 WhatsApp’s anti-spam filters, *see, e.g.*, Ex. 24 at -961 (recommending limiting number of attempts),
8 some of which NSO admits it adopted. Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.) at 236:8-237:1; *see, e.g.*, Ex. 41 at -121
9 (after one “Eden installation,” “another 2 attempts can be sent in the next two hours” and referring to
10 “the limitations” in an email NSO failed to produce). And if Mr. Gazneli were credited, NSO also
11 sent the malformed messages using an Official Client to disguise their source. Gazneli Decl. ¶ 5.

12 NSO’s reliance on Meta employee testimony that they knew Pegasus’s messages were not
13 from an Official Client once they discovered them, Opp. 13, is misplaced because it ignores that the
14 messages were hidden in obscure fields and contained encrypted code “not meant to be easily . . .
15 readable by a human.” Ex. 39 (Gheorghe Dep.) at 198:13-25. NSO also mischaracterizes the purpose
16 of the XOR cipher, which was not intended to conceal the buffering messages’ *content* from
17 WhatsApp’s servers, but to “‘camouflage’ the appearance of Defendants’ packets among normal
18 network traffic, limiting the probability of detection by WhatsApp engineers and/or security
19 mechanisms.” Youssef Decl., Ex. A at 33-34; Ex. 40 at -132 (“XOR encryption obfuscated the packet
20 type and content, made attack hard for analysis.”).

21 NSO’s contention that it did not intend to take “money or property” from WhatsApp or target
22 users (Opp. 22-23 & n.22) is equally meritless. The “object of the fraud” can include “the use of the
23 computer” if the value exceeds more than \$5,000 in one year. 18 U.S.C. § 1030(a)(4). NSO admits
24 using WhatsApp’s servers was necessary to the success of its Malware Vectors, which it sold for
25 millions of dollars. *See* Mot. 11. And Pegasus’s purpose is to “Turn Your Target’s Smartphone into
26 an Intelligence Gold Mine,” by “remotely and covertly extract[ing] *all* data.” Ex. 31; Mot. 22-23.

27 **B. NSO Conspired with Its Clients to Use Its Technology in Violation of § 1030(b)**

28 NSO is liable for conspiracy because it agreed with its customers to use Pegasus and

1 supported their use. Mot. 23-24. NSO’s response that it did not intend for its customers to violate
2 the CFAA is meritless. NSO argues that it required customers to represent they would comply with
3 applicable laws and only use Pegasus to fight crime. Opp. 18-21. But NSO relies on unsubstantiated
4 form agreements, Akro Decl., Ex. H ¶ 12, and provides no evidence that *any* customer actually made
5 *any* of these representations. Even if they did, the customers do not have the unilateral right to “fight
6 crime” through illegal intrusions, and NSO does not explain how they could have installed Pegasus
7 on user devices via WhatsApp without violating the CFAA, which has no foreign law enforcement
8 exception. It is well established that the CFAA applies extraterritorially. *See, e.g., In re Apple Inc.*
9 *Device Performance Litig.*, 347 F. Supp. 3d 434, 448 (N.D. Cal. 2018) (citing cases). In either case,
10 the Malware Vectors accessed WhatsApp’s servers *in the United States*, including in California.
11 Even if NSO’s customers were foreign sovereigns (and NSO provides no evidence they are), the act
12 of state doctrine does not apply because accessing WhatsApp’s U.S. computers is not an official act
13 that they took within their own borders. *See* Dkt. No. 422 at 18-20; *cf.* 28 U.S.C. § 1605(a)(2), (5)
14 (permitting claims against foreign sovereigns for acts in the United States). NSO claims Congress
15 did not “intend[] to criminalize all such activities by foreign governments,” Opp. 20, but in fact,
16 foreign government agents are often prosecuted under the CFAA. *See* Exs. 42-46.

17 **C. NSO Trafficked in Password-Like Information in Violation of § 1030(a)(6)**

18 Plaintiffs’ Motion demonstrates that NSO is also liable for trafficking in “password or similar
19 information.” Mot. 24-25.⁹ NSO’s only argument against liability is that Pegasus is not “a sequence
20 of letters, numbers, symbols or other characters.” Opp. 21. This argument ignores that § 1030(a)(6)
21 “turns on whether a user’s credentials allow him to proceed past a computer’s access gate.” *Van*
22 *Buren*, 593 U.S. at 390 n.9. NSO has admitted that Pegasus provides access to the “same information
23 [in a target device] that you could access if you had a password to the device.” Ex. 6 (Gazneli Dep.)
24 at 247:4-17. NSO also extracted authorization keys from the Official Client, and created and gave
25 customers WhatsApp credentials to use with Pegasus to access WhatsApp’s servers. Mot. 24-25.

26 _____
27 ⁹ Plaintiffs repeatedly confirmed their pursuit of a claim under § 1030(a)(6). *See, e.g.,* Dkt. No. 163
28 at 8; Dkt. No. 236 at 12; Dkt. No. 261 at 9. If necessary, Plaintiffs request leave to amend. There is
no prejudice given the identical claim under CDAFA § 502(c)(6). Dkt. No. 1 ¶ 61.

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Respectfully Submitted,

DAVIS POLK & WARDWELL LLP

By: /s/ Micah G. Block

Greg D. Andres
Antonio J. Perez-Marques
Craig T. Cagney
Gina Cora
Luca Marzorati
(admitted *pro hac vice*)
DAVIS POLK & WARDWELL LLP
450 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10017
Telephone: (212) 450-4000
Facsimile: (212) 701-5800
Email: greg.andres@davispolk.com
antonio.perez@davispolk.com
craig.cagney@davispolk.com
gina.cora@davispolk.com
luca.marzorati@davispolk.com

Micah G. Block (SBN 270712)
DAVIS POLK & WARDWELL LLP
1600 El Camino Real
Menlo Park, California 94025
Telephone: (650) 752-2000
Facsimile: (650) 752-2111
Email: micah.block@davispolk.com

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs
WhatsApp LLC and Meta Platforms, Inc.*