



(Hong Kong Office)

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Case No.	HK-18010190
Complainant:	Paul Smith Group Holdings Limited
Respondent:	Gou Lan
Disputed Domain Name(s):	<salespaulsmith.com>

1. The Parties and Contested Domain Name

The Complainant is Paul Smith Group Holdings Limited, of The Poplars, Lenton Lane, Nottingham, NG7 2PW, GB.

The Respondent is Gou Lan, of 142 DES Vouex Rd, Hong Kong, 999077, Hong Kong.

The domain name at issue is <salespaulsmith.com> (“Domain Name”), registered by Respondent with GoDaddy Operating Company, LLC, of 14455 North Hayden Rd, Suite 219, Scottsdale, AZ 85260, USA (“Registrar”).

2. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the Asian Domain Name Dispute Resolution Centre (the “Center”) on November 16, 2018. On November 16, 2018, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification for the Domain Name. On November 17, 2018, Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the Domain Name, which differed from the named Respondent and contact information in the Complaint and disclosing that the language of the Registration Agreement is English.

The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on November 19, 2018 providing the Respondent’s contact information disclosed by the Registrar and inviting the Complainants to submit an amendment to the Complaint.

The Center verified that the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the ADNDRC Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy effective from 31 July 2015 (the “Supplemental Rules”).

Under Paragraphs 2 and 4 of the Rules, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on December 4, 2018. Under Paragraph 5 of the Rules, the due date for filing a Response by the Respondent was December 24, 2018. The Respondent submitted no response by this deadline date.

The Center appointed Olga Zalomy as the sole panelist in this matter on January 24, 2019. The Panel finds it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

3. Factual background

The Complainant is a holding company, which, through its subsidiaries, owns multiple trademark registrations for the word and word and design PAUL SMITH trademarks and uses them in connection with clothing and accessories.

The Respondent is an individual named Gou Lan. The Respondent registered the Domain Name on July 24, 2018. The Domain Name resolves to an online store, offering for sale goods under the PAUL SMITH trademark at a fraction of the prices of the original PAUL SMITH goods. The look and feel of the website “salespaulsmith.com” creates an impression of a store affiliated or authorized by the Complainant. The “Home” page of the website prominently displays the word and design PAUL SMITH mark.

4. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant’s contentions may be summarized as follows:

- i. The Complainant asserts that the Domain Name is identical and/or confusingly similar to the PAUL SMITH trademarks, which belong to the Complainant. The Complainant contends that the generic top level domain (“gTLD”) “.com” should be disregarded from the likelihood of confusion analysis due to its purely technical function. The Complainant argues that the second level domain “salespaulsmith” is confusingly similar to the Complainant’s trademark because it incorporates the Complainant’s PAUL SMITH trademark in its entirety.
- ii. The Complainant alleges that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. The Complainant claims that it has never granted to the Respondent authorization or license to use the Complainant’s PAUL SMITH trademarks. The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights in the PAUL SMITH trademark.
- iii. The Complainant asserts that the Domain Name has been registered and is being used by the Respondent in bad faith. The Complainant claims that it is highly unlikely that the Respondent did not know about the Complainant and its goods at the time of the Domain Name registration because the Complainant’s PAUL SMITH trademarks were registered before the Domain Name’s registration.
- iv. The Complainant claims that the Respondent is using the Domain Name in bad faith because the Respondent is using the Domain Name to divert Internet users the Respondent’s website, where consumers may purchase counterfeit PAUL SMITH products.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

5. Findings

The ICANN Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy provides, at Paragraph 4(a), that each of three findings must be made in order for a Complainant to prevail:

- i. Respondent's domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which Complainant has rights; and
- ii. Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the domain name; and
- iii. Respondent's domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

A) Identical / Confusingly Similar

Under the first UDRP element, the Complainant is required to prove that the Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights.

Pursuant to section 1.2.1 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0"), "[w]here the complainant holds a nationally or regionally registered trademark or service mark, this prima facie satisfies the threshold requirement of having trademark rights for purposes of standing to file a UDRP case." Here, The Complainant has proved that it has standing for the purposes of this proceeding by submitting copies of registration certificates for the PAUL SMITH marks, such as the International Registration No. 755406 for the PAUL SMITH trademark registered on March 20, 2001 and the U.S. Registration No. 1306038 for the PAUL SMITH registered on February 25, 1983.

The Complainant has also demonstrated that the Domain Name are identical or confusingly similar to its PAUL SMITH trademark. "Where a domain name incorporates the entirety of a trademark, [...] the domain name will normally be considered confusingly similar to that mark for purposes of UDRP standing"¹. "Where the relevant trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise) would not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element"². The addition of the gTLD ".com" is disregarded under the confusing similarity test³.

Here, the Domain Name consists of the word "sales", the PAUL SMITH trademark, the and gTLD ".com". The Domain Name incorporates the Complainant's trademark in its entirety. The addition of the descriptive term "sales" to the Complainant's trademark does not prevent finding of confusing similarity.

¹ Section 1.7, WIPO Overview 3.0.

² Section 1.8, WIPO Overview 3.0.

³ Section 1.11.1, WIPO Overview 3.0.

Thus, the Panel finds that the Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark and the Complainant satisfied the first element of the UDRP.

B) Rights and Legitimate Interests

Under the second UDRP element, a complainant must make a *prima facie* case in respect of the lack of rights or legitimate interests of the respondent⁴. Once the complainant has made out the *prima facie* case, the respondent carries the burden of producing evidence demonstrating it has rights or legitimate interests in the domain name⁵. Where the respondent fails to do so, a complainant is deemed to have satisfied paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the UDRP⁶.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name because the Complainant has not authorized the Respondent to use and register the Complainant's PAUL SMITH trademark or to register any domain names incorporating the PAUL SMITH mark. Previous UDRP panels have found that in the absence of any license or permission from a complainant to use a complainant's trademarks, generally no bona fide or legitimate use of the domain name could reasonably be claimed. See, *LEGO Juris A/S v. DomainPark Ltd, David Smith, Above.com Domain Privacy, Transure Enterprise Ltd, Host master*, WIPO Case No. D2010 -0138.

The Complainants also claims that the Respondent is using the Domain Name to direct to websites offering for sale counterfeit PAUL SMITH goods. "Panels have categorically held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity (e.g., the sale of counterfeit goods ...) can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent⁷". While "[p]anels are generally not prepared ... to accept merely conclusory or wholly unsupported allegations of illegal activity"⁸, "circumstantial evidence can support a complainant's otherwise credible claim of illegal respondent activity"⁹. While the evidence on file does not show whether the clothing and footwear sold on the Respondent's websites are counterfeit, the Panel notes that they are offered for sale for a fraction of the price of genuine PAUL SMITH goods, which may indicate that the goods are counterfeit.

Even if the goods sold on the Respondent's website are genuine, resale of such goods did not create rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name for the Respondent. Generally, unauthorized resellers might have legitimate interests in a domain name containing complainant's trademark if their activities comply with the following cumulative requirements (the "Oki Data Test"):

- “(i) the respondent must actually be offering the goods or services at issue;
- (ii) the respondent must use the site to sell only the trademarked goods or services;
- (iii) the site must accurately and prominently disclose the registrant's relationship with the trademark holder; and

⁴ Section 2.1, WIPO Overview 3.0.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Section 2.13, WIPO Overview 3.0.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

(iv) the respondent must not try to ‘corner the market’ in domain names that reflect the trademark¹⁰.”

The evidence on file shows that the website connected to the Domain Name appears to be used only for sales of purported PAUL SMITH clothing and footwear, the website contains no disclosure of the Respondent’s lack of any relationship with the Complainant. Instead, the website’s design creates a misleading impression of an affiliation between the Complainant and the Respondent by displaying the Complainant’s word and design mark PAUL SMITH and copies of the images from the Complainant’s official website. Because the Respondent’s use of the Domain Name did not comply with the requirements of the *Oki Data* Test, the Respondent’s use of the Domain Name did not create for him rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name.

The Panel therefore finds that the Complainant has made out a *prima facie case* in respect to the Respondent’s lack of rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. Since the Respondent has failed to rebut the Complainant’s case, the Panel holds that the second element of the UDRP has been satisfied.

C) Bad Faith

Under the third UDRP element, the Complainant is required to prove that the Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Panel finds that the Respondent registered the Domain Name in bad faith because at the time of the Domain Name registration he was aware of the Complainant and its PAUL SMITH trademarks and registered the Domain Name without consent from the Complainant, to confuse and mislead visitors to his websites. The evidence shows that the Respondent is using the Domain Name incorporating the Complainant’s PAUL SMITH trademark, to resolve to the website displaying the Complainant’s word and design PAUL SMITH trademark and copies of images from the Complainant’s official website. The Respondent’s website offers for sale unauthorized goods bearing the Complainant’s trademark. Therefore, it is likely that the Respondent knew about the Complainant and its trademarks when he registered the Domain Name.

The Panel also finds that the Respondent is using the Domain Name in bad faith. The bad faith can be found where a respondent, by registering and using a domain name, intentionally attempts to attract, for commercial gain, Internet searchers to its website or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant’s mark as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website or location or of a product or service on the website or location. *See* UDRP, paragraph 4(b)(iv).

Here, the evidence on file shows that the Domain Name resolves to the website offering for sale purported PAUL SMITH products at a much lower price than the price of genuine PAUL SMITH goods. The Respondent’s website is designed to look like it is either an official Complainant’s website or it is endorsed by or affiliated with the Complainant. The “Home” page of the website displays the word and design PAUL SMITH trademark and images from the official website of the Complainant. The Respondent’s website contains no information about its true owner. Nor does it display a disclaimer disclosing lack of any relationship with the Complainant. Therefore, Internet users may have been misled on the source, sponsorship,

¹⁰ *Oki Data Americas, Inc. v. ASD, Inc.*, WIPO Case No. D2001-0903

affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website, which supports finding of bad faith use of the Domain Name.

Further, the Respondent is using the Domain Name to resolve to the website offering for sale unauthorized copies of the Complainant's goods. Previous UDRP panels found that similar use of domain names in connection with websites offering for sale unauthorized copies of complainants' goods, was in bad faith. See, *Philip Morris USA Inc. v. Samurai Kapok and I*, WIPO Case No. D2016-2179 ("The Panel, therefore, concludes that the sale of purported, grey market goods or counterfeit cigarettes as well as promoting the brands that compete with Complainant under a domain name incorporating Complainant's mark indicate use in bad faith.") Similarly, this Panel finds that the Respondent's use of the Domain Name linked to the website selling unauthorized copies of the Complainant's goods is in bad faith.

Therefore, the Panel finds that the Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The third element of the UDRP has been satisfied.

6. Decision

Under paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the Domain Name <salespaulsmith.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

Olga Zalomiy
Sole Panelist

Dated: February 8, 2019