

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Instagram, LLC v. James Aaron, YS MEDIA
Case No. D2025-5285

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Instagram, LLC, United States of America (“United States”), represented by Perkins Coie, LLP, United States.

The Respondent is James Aaron, YS MEDIA, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <myinstafollow.com> is registered with Nics Telekomunikasyon A.S. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 17, 2025. On December 18, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 22, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name, which differed from the named Respondent (Redacted for Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 26, 2025, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on December 30, 2025.

On December 26, 2025, the Center informed the parties in Turkish and English that the language of the registration agreement for the disputed domain name is Turkish. On December 30, 2025, the Complainant confirmed its request that English be the language of the proceeding. The Respondent did not submit any comment on the Complainant’s submission.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendment to the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on January 7, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 27, 2026. The Respondent sent an email communication to the Center on January 27, 2026. The case was suspended on February 2, 2026, and reinstituted on March 3, 2026.

The Center appointed Ahmet Akgüloğlu as the sole panelist in this matter on March 9, 2026. The Panel finds that 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.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant, Instagram, LLC is a world-renowned online photo and video-sharing social-networking service and mobile application launched in 2010. Acquired by Facebook, Inc. (now Meta Platforms, Inc.) in 2012, today Instagram has more than three billion monthly active accounts worldwide. The Complainant has consistently ranked among the top “apps” for mobile devices, including for iOS and Android operating systems. Instagram has received numerous awards, including “App of the Year” in 2011 from Apple Inc. Instagram is among the most downloaded apps worldwide.

The Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations in many jurisdictions around the world, including the United States trademark registration No. 4,146,057 for “INSTAGRAM”, registered on May 22, 2012, the Turkish trademark registration No. 2012 85440 for “INSTAGRAM”, registered on April 28, 2015 and the Turkish trademark registration No. 2015 95210 for “INSTA”, registered on June 27, 2016.

The disputed domain name was registered on February 25, 2018.

The disputed domain name is currently redirected to another domain name, which features the Complainant’s camera logo and INSTAGRAM trademark and content regarding selling likes and followers for the Complainant.

5. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for the transfer of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant argues that the disputed domain name wholly incorporates and is effectively identical to the Complainant’s INSTA trademark, and INSTA is also the dominant part of the well-known INSTAGRAM trademarks, and the Instagram app of the Complainant is often referred to as “Insta” for short. The Complainant submits that the generic terms “my” and “follow” are not sufficient to dispel the ensuing confusing similarity between the Complainant’s INSTA and INSTAGRAM trademarks and the disputed domain name. On the contrary, the Complainant puts forward that the addition of the generic term “follow” increases the confusing similarity as the users of the Instagram application follow friends’ and influencers’ profiles and updates.

The Complainant denotes that there is no evidence to suggest that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or has any rights in the disputed domain name independent of the Complainant’s well-known trademark rights. The Complainant sets forth that the Respondent has neither acquired nor applied for a trademark registration for “MY INSTA FOLLOW” or any variation thereof. The Respondent is not using the disputed domain name in connection with any bona fide offering of goods or services. The Complainant states that the Respondent is not a licensee of the Complainant, nor has the Respondent been otherwise authorized by the Complainant’s trademark in the disputed domain name or otherwise.

The Complainant states that the Respondent has configured the disputed domain name to redirect to another domain name, and the content within the website with the redirecting domain name targets the Complainant by offering putative sales of likes and followers on the Complainant's Instagram app as well as for third party sites such as TikTok and YouTube and prominently uses the Complainant's trademarks.

The Complainant states that the Complainant's INSTAGRAM trademark is inherently distinctive, well-known throughout the world, and has been continuously and exclusively used by the Complainant since its establishment in 2010. The term INSTA, which is protected under the Complainant's trademark rights, is a well-known diminutive associated with the Complainant's well-known INSTAGRAM trademark. Therefore, the Complainant argues that the Respondent cannot argue that they were not aware of the Complainant's INSTA trademark when they registered the disputed domain name.

The Complainant highlights that services that offer sales of likes and followers on the Complainant's Instagram platform constitute bad faith and use with the intent to profit from the notoriety of the Complainant's trademarks. The Respondent is leveraging the Complainant's well-known INSTAGRAM trademarks to target the Complainant's users in offering services for the Instagram platform alongside other third-party platforms for commercial gain.

Given the nature of the content within the Respondent's website, the Respondent intentionally attempted to attract Internet users and led them to believe that the Respondent's website, along with the unauthorized "likes and followers" services promoted therein, is affiliated with or somehow endorsed by the Complainant.

The Respondent's unauthorized likes and followers' services promoted via the disputed domain name may be used to spread malware, to enable spam, to harvest personal data from the Complainant's platform, to steal users' account credentials, or for other illegal activities.

The Complainant informed that the Complainant's agents and counsel sent to the Respondent notifications demanding that the Respondent cease all unauthorized use of its INSTAGRAM trademarks and transfer the disputed domain name to the Complainant. The Respondent did not reply yet redirected the disputed domain name to and added the following information "MYINSTAFOLLOW IS NOW FAMEVISO!". However, the checkout flow is still hosted on the disputed domain name. Failure to answer a cease-and-desist correspondence suggests that the Respondent was aware that it had no rights of legitimate interest in the domain name, thus constituting bad faith.

Finally, the Complainant states that the use of a proxy service or selection of a registrar with default proxy services suggests an attempt to prevent or frustrate a UDRP proceeding and constitutes additional evidence on bad faith of the Respondent.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules instructs the Panel to "decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable". Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires that the complainant prove each of the following three elements to obtain an order that the disputed domain name should be transferred or cancelled: (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the complainant has rights; and (ii) the respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and (iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith. The Panel will proceed to analyze whether the three elements of paragraph 4(a) of the Policy are satisfied in this proceeding.

Language of the Proceeding

The language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Turkish . Pursuant to the Rules, paragraph 11(a), in the absence of an agreement between the parties, or unless specified otherwise in the registration agreement, the language of the administrative proceedings shall be the language of the registration agreement.

The Complaint was filed in English. The Complainant requested that the language of the proceeding be English for several reasons, including the fact the disputed domain name incorporates English-language terms and the Respondent has used English on the website.

The Respondent did not make any specific submissions with respect to the language of the proceeding.

As the disputed domain name contains English-language terms and the Respondent has used English on the website, these facts demonstrate evidence that the Respondent can understand the language of the Complaint.

Having considered all the matters above, the Panel determines under paragraph 11(a) of the Rules that the language of the proceeding shall be English.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1. The Complainant has provided sufficient evidence regarding the ownership of the INSTAGRAM and INSTA trademarks.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms "my" and "follow" may bear on the assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

The Panel also ignored the generic Top Level-Domain ("gTLD") since it is viewed as a standard registration requirement and suggested as disregarded under the first element similarity test. See [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.11.1.

Aside from the gTLD ".com", the disputed domain name is composed of the phrases "my", "insta", and "follow". The term "insta" is identical to the Complainant's well-known INSTA trademark, and also such term is a prominent element of the Complainant's INSTAGRAM trademark.

For the reasons explained above, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademarks as required by the Policy 4(a)(i).

Thus, the Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of “proving a negative”, requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied with the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant’s prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The evidence presented by the Complainant demonstrates that the Complainant is the owner of multiple well-known INSTA and INSTAGRAM trademarks used prominently in the disputed domain name. There is no evidence that the Respondent has any authorization, license or permit to use Complainant’s registered trademarks.

Even though the burden of proof is always on the Complainant, the Panel recognizes and understands difficulty of proving a negativity. Therefore, the Complainant presents a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. (See *Ritual Beverage Company LLC v. Tom Tom, Tom Tom S. DE R.L. DE C.V.*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-3643](#))

Considering that the Respondent did not provide any evidence regarding its legitimate rights on the disputed domain name or any trademark registration containing INSTA term, it was made clear to the Panel that Respondent has failed to provide evidence of any Respondent’s use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the disputed domain name or a name corresponding to the domain name in connection with any bona fide offering of goods or services.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, such as phishing/identity theft, distributing malware, or unauthorized account access/hacking, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.1.

It is understood by the Panel that the Disputed Domain Name redirects to a different domain name in which the Respondent offers sales of likes and follows within the Complainant’s platform Instagram, as well as third-party platforms such as TikTok and YouTube. Based on the prior panel decisions set forth within the Complaint, it is evident that prior panels have recognized that where a respondent is misleading users or otherwise taking unfair advantage of the Complainant’s trademark offers to sell likes and followers to users on the Complainant’s platform, Instagram, do not amount to a bona fide offering of goods and services. Additionally, the Panel affirms that there is no evidence regarding legitimate noncommercial use of the disputed domain name by the Respondent.

Based on the facts presented in the Complaint, the Panel determines that the use of the disputed domain name, which integrates the Complainant’s trademark and implies an affiliation with the Complainant, does not correspond to the legitimate use of the disputed domain name under the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel considers the service that is provided within the redirected domain, offers of sales on likes and follows within various online platforms appears likely to mask illegitimate activity such as unauthorized account access/hacking and/or phishing.

For the above reasons, the Panel finds that the condition of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy has been satisfied, i.e., the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

Therefore, the Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.2.1.

The Panel concludes that the Complainant's INSTAGRAM and INSTA trademarks are widely recognized around the globe, in connection with its well-established platform, Instagram. The prior trademark registrations and continued use of INSTA and INSTAGRAM trademarks by the Complainant highlight that the Complainant's rights to the term INSTA prior to the registration date of the disputed domain name. The widespread recognition of these trademarks indicates that the Respondent cannot claim to be oblivious of the Complainant or the well-known INSTA and INSTAGRAM trademarks.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, such as phishing and unauthorized account/hacking, constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

As mentioned previously, the services provided and the use of the Complainant's logo within the redirecting domain by the Respondent seem to be attempting to affiliate with the Complainant. This further illustrates the Respondent's intention to gain unfair advantages from the Complainant's well-known INSTA and INSTAGRAM trademarks and to mislead Internet users. Furthermore, the Panel's investigation into the redirecting website revealed that to obtain likes, follows, and/or views on the Complainant's Instagram platform, it is necessary to provide personal data such as name, surname, email address, and credit or debit card information. It is determined by the Panel that the Respondent is deceiving Internet users into believing that the disputed domain name is affiliated with and authorized by the Complainant. This may lead the Respondent to collect personal information from Internet users and potentially use it for malicious activities, further indicating bad faith. (See *Twitter, Inc. v. Moniker Privacy Services/ accueil des solutions inc*, WIPO Case No. [D2013-0062](#).)

Thus, the Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <myinstafollow.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Ahmet Akgüloğlu/

Ahmet Akgüloğlu

Sole Panelist

Date: March 23, 2026