

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Boot Barn, Inc. v. CHUANGLING BI
Case No. D2025-5349

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Boot Barn, Inc., United States of America (“US”), represented by Sisun Law, US.

The Respondent is CHUANGLING BI, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <codyjames-boots.com> (the “Disputed Domain Name”) is registered with Hongkong Kouming International Limited (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed in English with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 19, 2025. On December 22, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Disputed Domain Name. On December 23, 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 23, 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 amended Complaint in English on December 24, 2025.

On December 23, 2025, the Center informed the parties in Chinese and English, that the language of the registration agreement for the Disputed Domain Name is Chinese. In the amended Complaint filed on December 24, 2025, the Complainant maintained 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 amended 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 in Chinese and English of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on December 29, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 18, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on January 19, 2026.

The Center appointed Andrew Sim as the sole panelist in this matter on January 21, 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 is a corporation registered in the state of Delaware, US in 2007. However, the Boot Barn business was started as early as in 1978, and has become one of the largest western and workwear retailers in the US, offering a broad selection of cowboy boots, work boots, western wear, workwear, western-inspired fashion and outdoor gear.

The Complainant holds registered trademarks for CODY JAMES (the "CODY JAMES Trademark") and other related registered trademarks in the US, for example:

Jurisdiction	Mark	Registration Number	Registration Date	Class Covered	Status
US	CODY JAMES	5524062	July 24, 2018	9, 14, 18, 25, and 26	Registered
	CODY JAMES	1818497	January 25, 1994	25	Registered
	CODY JAMES CUSH CORE	7560536	November 5, 2024	25	Registered
	CODY JAMES BLACK 1978	7329613	March 12, 2024	25	Registered

The Complainant has also continuously used the CODY JAMES Trademark in commerce since as early as 1993.

Furthermore, the Complainant registered the primary domain name <bootbarn.com> on March 13, 1996, and has used it as the official website of the Boot Barn business ("Official Website") where consumers could purchase, among others, western wear, boots, footwear, accessories and apparel featuring the CODY JAMES Trademark ("CODY JAMES Products"). The Complainant purchased the domain name <codyjames.us> in 2012, and during the period between 2012 and August 2025, visitors to <codyjames.us> were greeted with the statement "CODY JAMES AVAILABLE AT BOOTBARN.COM" plus a "SHOP NOW" button that redirected consumers to the Official Website. The Complainant has also used the domain name <sheplers.com> since 2015 to advertise and sell the CODY JAMES Products. After the registration of the Disputed Domain Name, the Complainant launched the domain name <codyjames.com> to list the CODY JAMES Products. The Complainant claimed that it has invested significant time, effort and resources to build the goodwill in the CODY JAMES Trademark. The Complainant's websites, as resolved from the domain names mentioned above, including the Official Website, have generated a substantial amount of Internet traffic.

The Disputed Domain Name, <codyjames-boots.com>, was registered on April 25, 2025. Based on the Complainant's evidence, upon visiting the Disputed Domain Name previously, it resolved to a website (the "Respondent's Website") that prominently displayed a stylized version of the CODY JAMES Trademark, used the CODY JAMES Trademark within the names of the products listed and featured various items of women's clothing using images, which to the best of the Complainant's knowledge, appear to be taken from the Official Website. Upon the Panel's own visit to the Disputed Domain Name, the Respondent's Website is no longer accessible, likely caused by the Registrar's decision to place the Disputed Domain Name on lock.

Little information is known about the Respondent. Available information provided by the Registrar covers only the registrant's name, postal address, telephone number, fax number, and email address.

On December 18, 2025, the Complainant filed a takedown notice with the Registrar.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the Disputed Domain Name.

First, the Complainant contends that the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark, as the Disputed Domain Name contains the entirety of the CODY JAMES Trademark. The inclusion of "boots" following the CODY JAMES Trademark does nothing to alter the overall commercial impression, as the CODY JAMES Trademark constitutes the core element of the Disputed Domain Name whereas "boots" is a common non-distinctive descriptive term used in a merely descriptive or generic way to describe the option to purchase the CODY JAMES Products. The Complainant contends that the inclusion of the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com" does not sufficiently distinguish the Disputed Domain Name from the CODY JAMES Trademark.

Second, the Complainant contends that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the Disputed Domain Name. This is based on that:

- (a) The Complainant's rights to the CODY JAMES Trademark preceded the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name;
- (b) The Respondent does not own any trademark rights in the CODY JAMES Trademark, and the Complainant has not authorized the Respondent to use or register the CODY JAMES Trademark;
- (c) The Respondent does not operate any legitimate business under the Disputed Domain Name, as the "Contact Us" page for the Respondent's Website does not list any email address, physical address or telephone number for the Respondent;
- (d) There is no evidence that the Respondent, or any associated entity or individual, has ever been commonly known by the Disputed Domain Name;
- (e) The Respondent had notice of the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark before registering the Disputed Domain Name given the Complainant extensive commercial use of the same, and therefore, the Respondent must have selected the Disputed Domain Name to exploit the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark;

(f) The Respondent cannot establish use of the Disputed Domain Name (or a name corresponding to it) in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, but is in fact (A) using it to operate the Respondent's Website which purports to provide goods and services identical to and competing with those of the Complainant and (B) attempting to pass itself off as the Complainant through the use of the CODY JAMES Trademark; and

(g) The Respondent's sole purpose for registering and using the Disputed Domain Name is to reap the benefits of confusion among consumers by diverting traffic from the Official Website.

Third, the Complainant contends that the Disputed Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith. This is based on that:

(a) The Complainant's trademark registrations and continual use of the CODY JAMES Trademark as detailed in section 4 above serve as constructive notices to the Respondent of the Complainant's rights in the CODY JAMES Trademark;

(b) The Respondent should be presumed to have registered and used the Disputed Domain Name in bad faith, given that the Disputed Domain Name is highly similar to the CODY JAMES Trademark and the Respondent's Website is used to profit from diversionary tactics;

(c) A simple Internet search at the time of the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name would have returned responses directed at the Complainant's ongoing business; and

(d) There is no evidence to demonstrate that the Respondent has ever had a bona fide intent to use the Disputed Domain Name in a manner that would avoid consumer confusion with the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1. Preliminary Issue: Language of the Proceeding

The language of the Registration Agreement for the Disputed Domain Name is Chinese. 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 proceeding 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 that the Disputed Domain Name is made up of English words, the Respondent's Website is entirely in English, and the prices of the goods sold on the Respondent's Website are listed in US Dollars.

The Respondent did not make any specific submissions with respect to the language of the proceeding. This is despite the fact that the Center had sent the notification of the Complaint which includes instructions on the language of the proceeding to the Respondent in both Chinese and English.

In exercising its discretion to use a language other than that of the registration agreement, the Panel has to exercise such discretion judicially in the spirit of fairness and justice to both parties, taking into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including matters such as the parties' ability to understand and use the proposed language, time and costs (see WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 4.5.1).

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.

6.2. Substantive Issues

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy states that, in an administrative proceeding, the Complainant must prove each of the following three elements:

- (a) the Disputed Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights;
- (b) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name; and
- (c) the Disputed Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

For the below reasons, support for the Complaint can be found due to the satisfaction of the three conditions for the Disputed Domain Name.

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 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the CODY JAMES Trademark is reproduced within the Disputed Domain Name. Although the addition of another term here, "boots", may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the Disputed Domain Name and the CODY JAMES Trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8. The gTLD ".com" is typically disregarded in the confusingly similarity test. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), sections 1.11.1.

Accordingly, the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to the CODY JAMES Trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7. 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 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 the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), 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.

From the overall appearance of the Respondent's Website as described in section 4 above, the Panel finds that the Respondent's Website is being used for illegal or illegitimate activities as the Respondent's Website is clearly intended to imitate the Complainant and to divert businesses from the Official Website. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity, such as impersonation, or other types of fraud, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

Particularly in regards to the three illustrative examples of legitimate interests in paragraph 4(c) of the Policy, the Panel finds that:

- (i) the Respondent has not used the Disputed Domain Name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods and services, as the Panel has ruled that the Respondent's Website is being used for illegal or illegitimate activities;
- (ii) the Disputed Domain Name does not correspond with the Respondent's name (i.e., "CHUANGLING BI"), and there is no evidence of the Respondent operating any business or organization with similar name as the Disputed Domain Name; and
- (iii) the Respondent's use of the Disputed Domain Name does not fall within the scope of legitimate noncommercial or fair use, as the Respondent's Website is being used for illegal or illegitimate activities.

The Panel also finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests to use the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark.

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.

The Panel finds that the circumstances of registering and using the Disputed Domain Name clearly demonstrate the Respondent's bad faith and have constituted the situation as specified in paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy:

- (a) The Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark has been used at least since 1993 and has been registered since 1994, long before the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name which is confusingly similar to the Complainant's CODY JAMES Trademark, and also similar to its domain name <codyjames.us> as registered and acquired before the registration of the Disputed Domain Name;
- (b) The Panel finds that the Respondent knew or should have known of the Complainant and the CODY JAMES Trademark at the time of registering the Disputed Domain Name, as (i) the CODY JAMES Trademark is reproduced in its entirety in the Disputed Domain Name and on the Respondent's Website, and (ii) the CODY JAMES Trademark is known to be connected with the Complainant, as a simple Internet search at the time of the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name would have returned responses directed at the Complainant's ongoing business;

(c) Panels have consistently found that the mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar (particularly domain names comprising typos or incorporating the mark plus a descriptive term) to a famous or widely-known trademark by an unaffiliated entity can by itself create a presumption of bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.1.4. Given the extensive use of the CODY JAMES Trademark by the Complainant for a long period of time and the non-affiliation between the Complainant and the Respondent, the Panel accepts that the presumption of bad faith is applicable;

(d) As earlier found in section 6.2.B above that the Respondent's Website was intended to impersonate the Complainant and to divert businesses from the Official Website, bad faith is manifestly apparent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4; and

(e) There is no reasonable connection or association between the Respondent and the Disputed Domain Name.

Inference of bad faith is also drawn in accordance with paragraph 14(b) of the Rules for the Respondent's failure to file a response as required in paragraph 5(a) of the Rules in the absence of exceptional circumstances.

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 <codyjames-boots.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Andrew Sim/

Andrew Sim

Sole Panelist

Date: February 5, 2026