

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin v. wang de e, zheng zhou
pin du dian zi ke ji you xian gong si
Case No. D2025-5406

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin, France, represented by Dreyfus & associés, France.

The Respondent is wang de e, zheng zhou pin du dian zi ke ji you xian gong si, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <taurustyre.com> is registered with Gname.com Pte. Ltd. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed in English with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 26, 2025. On December 26, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 29, 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 (Not disclosed) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 29, 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 31, 2025.

On December 29, 2025, the Center informed the parties in Chinese and English, that the language of the registration agreement for the disputed domain name is Chinese. On December 31, 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 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 January 5, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 25, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on January 26, 2026.

The Center appointed Deanna Wong Wai Man as the sole panelist in this matter on February 2, 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 Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin, a leading global tire manufacturer headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, which operates in approximately 170 countries, employs over 124,000 people, and runs 117 tire manufacturing facilities and sales agencies in 26 countries. Founded in 1889, the Complainant has continuously innovated in tire technology and high-tech materials to enhance mobility and deliver a broad range of products, services and digital solutions. The Complainant has maintained a longstanding presence in China since 1989 and, through Michelin (China) Investment Co., Ltd. established in 2001 as its regional headquarters. The Complainant also clarifies that the TAURUS tire brand has formed part of the Michelin group since 1996 and is used by the Complainant's group in connection with a range of tires for vans, passenger cars and SUVs, including product lines such as the Taurus High Performance tire.

The Complainant owns an international trademark portfolio for the TAURUS mark including but not limited to the following marks: International Trademark Registration No. 273025 for TAURUS, registered on August 20, 1963, duly renewed and designating, inter alia, Austria, Egypt and Viet Nam for goods in classes 1, 7, 9, 10, 12, 17, 20, 22, 25, 27, and 28, as well as International Trademark Registration No. 732233 for TAURUS, registered on April 17, 2000, duly renewed and designating, inter alia, Germany and Türkiye for goods in class 12. In addition, the Complainant operates domain names reflecting its TAURUS trademark in connection with its business, including <taurus-tyres.com>, which was registered on June 6, 2014.

The disputed domain name was registered on September 10, 2018. The Complainant states that, at the time of its initial investigation in 2024, the disputed domain name resolved to an inactive webpage, following which it sent a cease-and-desist letter via the registrar requesting a voluntary transfer, but received no substantive response. The Complainant further provides evidence that, at a later stage, the disputed domain name resolved to a website offering downloadable video content, primarily Chinese movies, including adult content and adult games. The Panel notes that, as at the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name resolves to an inactive error page.

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.

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its TAURUS trademark, as it wholly incorporates that mark together with the descriptive term "tyre", which directly refers to the Complainant's principal field of activity and serves to reinforce, rather than dispel, a likelihood of confusion; the Complainant submits that the TAURUS mark remains clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name, that the addition of a generic or descriptive term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity, and that the ".com" generic Top-Level Domain is irrelevant for the purpose of the comparison.

Further, the Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name, as the Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant, has not been authorized to use the TAURUS trademark, and has no prior rights in or legitimate connection with that designation, which long predates the registration of the disputed domain name; the Complainant further submits that the disputed domain name has been used to resolve to a Chinese platform offering downloadable video content, including adult material, which is wholly unrelated to any bona fide offering of goods or services or any legitimate noncommercial or fair use, and that the Respondent's failure to respond to cease-and-desist correspondence further supports the conclusion that the Respondent lacks any rights or legitimate interests under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith, noting that the relevant date for assessing bad-faith registration is the transfer of the disputed domain name to the current registrant in February 2025, at which time the Complainant's TAURUS trademark rights were well established and widely known, making it implausible that the Respondent was unaware of them; the Complainant submits that the deliberate selection of a domain name combining the TAURUS mark with the term "tyre", which directly targets the Complainant's industry, evidences an intent to capitalize on the Complainant's goodwill, and that the subsequent use of the disputed domain name to host unrelated and, in part, adult content is inherently misleading, causes confusion as to source or affiliation, and tarnishes the Complainant's trademark, thereby demonstrating bad faith registration and use.

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 names 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, and the Complainant requests that English be the language of the proceeding for several reasons, including that the Registrar's website makes its registration agreements available in both English and Chinese, that principles of fairness require consideration of the Parties' respective abilities to prepare and respond to submissions, and that the Complainant, which is located in France, has no knowledge of Chinese and would be required to incur disproportionate and significant translation costs relative to the overall cost of the proceeding if Chinese were adopted, an outcome which prior UDRP panels have found to constitute an undue burden and to risk unnecessary delay, particularly where a complainant is unable to communicate in the language of the registration agreement; the Complainant further notes that the disputed domain name consists solely of Latin characters, suggesting that the Respondent is capable of understanding languages other than Chinese, that English is the primary language of international relations and a working language of the Center, and that prior panels have permitted English to be the language of the proceeding in comparable circumstances involving the same registrar, such that, in light of all the circumstances, English is appropriate and equitable as the language of this proceeding.

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

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 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 3.0](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms here, "tyre", 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 mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

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.

Based on the evidence provided, the Panel notes that the Respondent is not licensed by the Complainant in any way and is not commonly known by the disputed domain name and that there are no elements in this case that point to the Respondent having made any reasonable and demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. Instead, according to the evidence, the Respondent has used the disputed domain name to resolve to a website displaying video content, including adult material and games for commercial gain, which is wholly unrelated to the Complainant's business or to any legitimate activity associated with the TAURUS mark, and such use cannot constitute a legitimate noncommercial or fair use under the Policy, nor does it confer any rights or legitimate interests on the Respondent.

Additionally, the Panel notes that on the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name directs to an inactive or blank webpage. In this regard, the Panel finds that holding a domain name passively, without making any use of it, also does not confer any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name on the Respondent in the circumstances of this case (see in this regard earlier UDRP decisions such as *Bollore SE v. 赵竹飞 (Zhao Zhu Fei)*, WIPO Case No. [D2020-0691](#); and *Vente-Privee.Com and Vente-Privee.com IP S.à.r.l. v. 崔郡 (jun cui)*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-1685](#)).

Finally, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name, containing the Complainant's mark in its entirety and being combined with the term "tyre" which is indicative of the Complainant's products offered under its mark, carries a risk of implied affiliation and cannot constitute fair use, as it effectively impersonates the Complainant (and the Complainant's official website at its domain name <taurus-tyres.com>) and its services or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

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.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent registered a domain name that is confusingly similar to the Complainant's well-established TAURUS trademark, incorporating the mark in its entirety and appending the word "tyre," which directly references the Complainant's products offered under that mark. The Panel further notes that the Complainant's trademark rights predate the registration of the disputed domain name by several decades, and that even a basic Internet or trademark search at the time of registration would have made the Complainant's longstanding and extensive use of the TAURUS mark apparent. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent was, or should have been, aware of the Complainant's rights, and that the registration of the disputed domain name was conducted 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 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

As to use of the disputed domain name in bad faith, the Complainant provides evidence that the disputed domain name resolved to a website offering downloadable video content, primarily Chinese movies, including adult content and adult games. The Panel concludes from these facts that the Respondent was intentionally attracting Internet users for commercial gain to such website, by creating consumer confusion between the website associated with the disputed domain name and the Complainant's trademarks. This constitutes direct evidence of the Respondent's bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. The Panel also finds that the Respondent's use of a website displaying adult content at the disputed domain name also has the potential to tarnish the Complainant's marks (see in this regard also previous UDRP decisions involving websites containing adult content such as *Barnes Europe Consulting Kft.*, and *Heidi Barnes-Watson v. jianhua Wang*, WIPO Case No. [D2022-3059](#), *Seintec Norte, S.L. v. yu Liu, wangluochuanmei*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-1815](#), and *Averitt Express, Inc. v. Protection of Private Person / Roman Emec*, WIPO Case No. [D2018-0249](#)).

However, on the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name links to an inactive, error website. In this regard, panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or "coming soon" page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the well-known nature of the Complainant's trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, and the unlikelihood of any good faith use to which the disputed domain name might be put by the Respondent, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

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 <taurustyre.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Deanna Wong Wai Man/

Deanna Wong Wai Man

Sole Panelist

Date: February 4, 2026