

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

HNI Technologies Inc. v. Gomez Gladys

Case No. 2026-0855

1. The Parties

Complainant is HNI Technologies Inc.¹, United States of America ("United States"), represented by Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, United States.

Respondent is Gomez Gladys, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <honfurnitureshop.com> is registered with Gname.com Pte. Ltd. ("Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center ("Center") on February 26, 2026. On February 27, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On March 2, 2026, Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name that differed from that in the Complaint (e.g., the Complaint named "Redacted for privacy Gname.com Pte. Ltd" as Respondent). The Center sent an email communication to Complainant on March 2, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by Registrar and inviting Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on March 2, 2026.

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 ("Policy"), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy ("Rules"), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy ("Supplemental Rules").

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on March 6, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 26, 2026. Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent's default on March 27, 2026.

¹The Panel uses "HNI Technologies Inc." (with no comma after "Technologies") because that is the trademark owner identified in the registrations supplied by Complainant.

The Center appointed Debra J. Stanek as the sole panelist in this matter on April 15, 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

Complainant and its affiliates are in the furniture industry. They use the HON mark for commercial furniture and office equipment.

Complainant owns a United States Registration (No. 606,714), registered May 31, 1955, for HON (in a stylized form) for office equipment.

In addition, Complainant and its affiliates have a website at <hon.com>, which it has been used since 1997.

The disputed domain name was registered on March 21, 2024. At the time the Complaint was filed and the time of this decision, it resolves to an e-commerce site offering office furniture.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

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

In particular:

- The HON mark has been used in the United States since 1954 and is well-known and distinctive for furniture and office equipment.
- The disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the HON mark because:
 - it consists of the HON mark plus a hyphen [sic] and the generic terms "furniture" and "shop."
 - its relevant portions "consists [sic] solely of" "(a) the HON trademark, the HNI CORP. trademark or a typo-squatting plural variation thereof (i.e. HNI CORPS)[sic], and a shortened version of the HNI CORPORATION trademark [sic], and (b) the generic terms "furniture" and "shop."
- Respondent has not been authorized to use the HON mark and Respondent's website does not disclose that there is no relationship between Respondent and Complainant.
- Nothing in the Whois information for the disputed domain name indicates that Respondent has become known by "hon" or "honfurnitureshop."
- The website associated with the disputed domain name is a "lookalike" of Complainant's site, purporting to sell HON furniture, and using Complainant's "official marketing images".
- Respondent provided false contact information to the Registrar. Complainant's investigation disclosed that the address in the registration corresponded to undeveloped land.
- Respondent's bad faith is demonstrated by its use of the well-knowns HON mark, the resemblance of Respondent's website with that of Complainant, and the use of Complainant's content, among other things.

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

To prevail under the Policy a complainant must prove, as to the domain name at issue, that: (a) it is identical or confusingly similar to a mark in which the complainant has rights, (b) respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect to it, and (c) it has been registered and is being used in bad faith. Policy, paragraph 4(a). A respondent's failure to respond does not automatically result in a finding for the complainant; the complainant continues to have the burden of establishing each element. Rules, paragraphs 5(f) and 14(a); see also WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 4.3. The Panel may, however, draw appropriate inferences from the default. See Rules, paragraph 14(b).

The Panel determines that "Gomez Gladys" is the appropriate Respondent. See [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 4.4.5 (in cases involving a privacy service, panel has discretion to determine appropriate respondent).

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 Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Complainant² 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 disputed domain name is not identical to Complainant's mark. However, the entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name, and the HON mark is recognizable within it. 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 the terms "furniture" and "shop" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of those 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 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 Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in proceedings under the Policy 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

² Only a few of the registration certificates provided, and only one in English, identify Complainant, see Rules, paragraph 1, s.v. "Complainant" (i.e., "the party initiating a complaint concerning a domain-name registration") as the owner of the registration; other certificates name "HNI" entities; however, the Complaint does not explain the relationship between the Complainant and the owners of these other registrations.

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 remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

The Panel finds Complainant has established a prima facie case that Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. Respondent is not affiliated with Complainant. Respondent has not rebutted 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 otherwise³.

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.

Complainant's evidence shows: registration of the HON mark long predates registration of the disputed domain name⁴. Respondent knew of Complainant's mark as evidenced by the fact that Respondent's website features Complainant's stylized HON mark in a green color that closely resembles that used on Complainant's website and Respondent offers (or purports to offer) HON office equipment and furniture; This reinforces, rather than dispels, a connection with Complainant. It appears that Respondent provided false contact information to the Registrar, and Respondent failed to respond in these proceedings. The Panel finds that Respondent used the HON mark to target visitors who would believe the website was Complainant's. Under these circumstances, the Panel finds Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds the third element of the Policy has been established.

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 <honfurnitureshop.com> be transferred to Complainant.

/Debra J. Stanek/

Debra J. Stanek

Sole Panelist

Date: April 27, 2026

³ For example, while such an argument might not have been successful, Respondent could have presented an argument that, under the circumstances, use of "furniture shop" was a fair use.

⁴ The statement in the Complaint that the disputed domain name was registered on February 14, 1997 is incorrect.