

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Mercedes-Benz Group AG v. Karl Schnurch, EdenMedia
Case No. D2026-1194

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Mercedes-Benz Group AG, Germany, represented by Heumann Intellectual Property Law, Germany.

The Respondent is Karl Schnurch of EdenMedia, Seychelles.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The Disputed Domain Name <meredes-benz.com> is registered with Key-Systems GmbH (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on March 19, 2026. On that day the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Disputed Domain Name. On March 20, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response confirming that the Respondent is listed as the registrant and providing the contact details.

The Center verified that 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 paragraphs 2 and 4 of the Rules, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on March 25, 2026. In accordance with paragraph 5 of the Rules, the due date for Response was April 14, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on April 15, 2026.

The Center appointed Philip N. Argy as the sole panelist in this matter on April 22, 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 following facts, taken from the Complaint, remain uncontested.

The Complainant Mercedes-Benz Group AG is one of the largest luxury car manufacturers in the world. Its MERCEDES-BENZ trademark has enjoyed protection around the world for more than 100 years, having been first registered in Germany in 1925. The Complainant subsequently registered numerous variants of that word mark in most classes under the Nice Classification including those relating directly and indirectly to the use, repair, acquisition and promotion of motor vehicles, such as the following:

International Trademark MERCEDES-BENZ, Register No. 414857, registered on December 14, 1974.
European Union Trademark MERCEDES-BENZ, Register No. 000139865, registered on February 2, 1999.

The Disputed Domain Name does not resolve to any active website and is not in use for any purpose whatsoever. It was first registered on November 30, 2019. There has been in the past and currently is no offer of goods or services made under the Disputed Domain Name. The Respondent is not known under the Disputed Domain Name.

No information about the Respondent is available other than his name, organisation and address apparently in the Seychelles.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

In reliance upon the above facts the Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the Disputed Domain Name, namely:

- A. The Disputed Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the MERCEDES-Benz mark in which it has rights;
- B. the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name;
- C. the Disputed Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant, which accordingly remains uncontested.

6. Discussion and Findings

Despite the absence of a Response the onus remains on the Complainant to establish to the satisfaction of the Panel, on the balance of probabilities, the three elements of the Policy.

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 ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has very amply demonstrated its rights in the MERCEDES-BENZ trademark with more than 100 years of registrations throughout the world.

The Complainant submits that, as it is one of the largest luxury car manufacturers in the world, amongst other branded merchandise, the Disputed Domain Name suggests that it is a domain originating from the Complainant or there is at least cooperation between the Complainant and the domain owner. In the Panel's

view this is a classic case of typosquatting. Consistently with [WIPO Overview 3.1](#) section 1.9, the Panel has no difficulty finding that the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's famous trademark - indeed it is apparent that the sole role of the Disputed Domain Name is to hide from Internet users the fact that they may have inadvertently omitted the letter "c" from the Complainant's <mercedes-benz.com> domain name. In other words, it is intended to be mistaken for the Complainant's correctly typed domain name; the Respondent is masquerading as the Complainant.

The first element of the Policy has been made out.

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 the second element: [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

It is clear from the evidence, and the Panel so finds, that the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name. In cases of typosquatting, any such right or interest is inherently disclaimed, since the Respondent is essentially masquerading as the Complainant. In any event, absent any Response or other reply from the Respondent there has been no rebuttal of the Complainant's prima facie showing and there is no evidence before the Panel which could conceivably demonstrate that the Respondent possesses any right or legitimate interest in respect of the Disputed Domain Name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy 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 that, if found by the Panel to be present, are to be taken as evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Under the doctrine of passive holding, panels have consistently found that the non-use of a domain name cannot by itself prevent a finding of bad faith use. To the contrary, in looking at the totality of circumstances in each case, panels have found that the registration and non-use of a domain name can still constitute bad faith for purposes of the Policy: [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.3. Here the evidence is to the effect that the Disputed Domain Name has sat on the register since 2019 without ever having resolved to a website or, apparently, being used as an email domain. The Panel infers that it nevertheless was registered in anticipation of being transferred to somebody who would make an illegitimate use of it. No other inference can be drawn. Here the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's MERCEDES-BENZ trademark, and the composition of the Disputed Domain Name compel a finding of bad faith registration and use under the Policy.

The Complainant has also 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 <mercedes-benz.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Philip N. Argy/

Philip N. Argy

Sole Panelist

Date: May 7, 2026