ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Association des Centres Distributeurs E. Leclerc - A.C.D. Lec v. IT RENEW, ITRENEW
Case No. D2026-1238

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Association des Centres Distributeurs E. Leclerc - A.C.D. Lec, France, represented by MIIP MADE IN IP, France.

The Respondent is IT RENEW, ITRENEW, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <galecleclerc.com> is registered with Squarespace Domains LLC (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on March 23, 2026. On March 23, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On March 23, 2026, 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 (OK US / Redacted for Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on March 24, 2026, 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 on March 25, 2026.

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 of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on March 31, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was April 20, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on April 22, 2026.

The Center appointed Alfred Meijboom as the sole panelist in this matter on May 4, 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 French association which operates a chain of supermarkets and hypermarkets stores in France, where it has about 750 stores, as well as Poland, Spain, Portugal, the Benelux, and Slovenia. In 2023, the turnover of the Complainant was EUR 60 billion in France, and the Complainant employs more than 140,000 people.

Together with the Complainant, the Société Coopérative Groupements d'Achats des Centres Leclerc, officially abbreviated as SC GALEC, is one of the three pillars of the LECLERC organization. SC GALEC has been responsible for negotiation of the commercial terms and conditions of the suppliers for all the "LECLERC" stores since 1962.

The Complainant owns several trademark registrations for LECLERC, including:

- European Union trademark LECLERC, with registration number. 002700656 registered on February 26, 2004, for goods and services in classes 1 to 45; and
- French trademark LECLERC, with registration number 1307790 registered on May 2, 1985, for goods and services in classes 1 to 39.

In addition, SC GALEC is the owner of the registered French trademark for the combined word and device mark GALEC with number 3644736 registered on September 18, 2009, for services in class 35.

The disputed domain name was registered on March 4, 2026, and resolves to a Microsoft page inviting to download a document that the Complainant believes to be fraudulent. The disputed domain name has also be used to send out fraudulent emails on March 5, 9, 11 and 12, 2026 on behalf of "Comptabilité client GALEC" (in English, "GALEC Accounts receivable") to a supplier of the Complainant's LECLERC organization, demanding payment of substantial sums.

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 at least identically reproduces the Complainant's trademark LECLERC and the trademark GALEC, resulting in confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's trademarks.

The Complainant alleges that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name as the Respondent is not is commonly known by the name disputed domain name, and it has not been authorized, licensed, or permitted by the Complainant to use any of the Complainant's trademarks or to apply for or use any domain name incorporating the Complainant's trademark. Moreover, the Complainant contends that it exists no business relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent. According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name is also neither used in connection with a bona fide offering of goods and/or services, nor constitutes a legitimate noncommercial fair use, as it is used for fraudulent purposes.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is registered in bad faith because the Complainant's trademark LECLERC is well-known and the registration of a domain name reproducing in an identical way the trademark LECLERC, associated to "GALEC" cannot be in any case a coincidence and demonstrates that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's trademarks and business.

The Complaint further alleges that the disputed domain name is being used in bad faith because the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name identically reproducing the Complainant's trademarks "LECLERC" and "GALEC" and therefore creating confusion with the Complainant's activities, and the disputed domain name is used fraudulently for phishing and identity theft.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

The Respondent did not file a Response. However, as set out in section 4.3 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), the consensus view of UDRP panels is that the respondent's default does not automatically result in a decision in favor of the Complainant. The Complainant must still establish each of the three elements required by paragraph 4(a) of the Policy. Although the Panel may draw appropriate inferences from the Respondent's default, paragraph 4 of the Policy requires the Complainant to support its assertions with actual evidence in order to succeed in this proceeding. Paragraph 14(b) of the Rules provides that, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the panel shall draw such inferences as it considers appropriate from a failure of a party to comply with a provision or requirement of the Rules. The Panel finds that in this case there are no such exceptional circumstances.

Under the Policy, the Complainant must prove that:

(i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights;
(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.

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 3.1, section 1.7.

The Panel finds that the LECLERC trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark LECLERC for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

The Panel is satisfied that the disputed domain name consists of the Complainant's trademark LECLERC, preceded by the trademark GALEC. Where the Complainant's trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of other third-party marks (in this case, GALEC), is insufficient in itself to avoid a finding of confusing similarity to the Complainant's mark under the first element. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.12.

Based on the available record, 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 3.1, 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.

In the present case, the Complainant has demonstrated that the disputed domain name has been used to send out emails to a supplier of the Complainant asking for different significant payments while impersonating the Complainant's affiliated entity SC GALEC. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for unlawful activities, such as the fraudulent emails in the present case, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.13.1.

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 is satisfied that the Respondent must have had the Complainant's LECLERC trademark in mind when it registered the disputed domain name because the disputed domain name has a specific role in the fraudulent emails which were sent within one day after the registration of the disputed domain name. These emails impersonated the Complainant's associated entity SC GALEC, targeted a supplier of the Complainant and used the title for its name in the sent emails "[…]@galec.leclerc", apparently to create the impression that the email originated from the Complainant's organization. Under these circumstances, the Panel cannot conceive of any plausible explanation as to why the Respondent would have been unaware of the Complainant and its LECLERC trademark at the time of registering the disputed domain name.

As it remained undisputed that the disputed domain name is deployed as part of illegitimate activities, such behavior cannot confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent and is manifestly considered evidence of bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4. The Panel is therefore satisfied that the Complainant showed that the Respondent is also using the disputed domain name in bad faith as meant in paragraph 4(b)(iv) of 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 <galecleclerc.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Alfred Meijboom/
Alfred Meijboom
Sole Panelist
Date: May 8, 2026