

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Simpson Strong-Tie Company Inc. v. Host Master, Transure Enterprise Ltd
Case No. DME2026-0003

1. The Parties

Complainant is Simpson Strong-Tie Company Inc., United States of America (“United States” or “US”), represented by Shartsis Friese LLP, United States.

Respondent is Host Master, Transure Enterprise Ltd, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <strongte.me> (the “Domain Name”) is registered with Above.com Pty Ltd. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 21, 2026. On February 23, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On February 26, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response confirming that 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 the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on March 3, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 23, 2026. Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent’s default on March 24, 2026.

The Center appointed Harrie R. Samaras as the sole panelist in this matter on April 1, 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 is a supplier of structural building products. It owns U.S. Registration No. 801188 (registered January 4, 1966) for the STRONG-TIE Mark (or the “Mark”) along with a family of registered marks using “STRONG” hyphenated to other words.

The Domain Name was registered on May 24, 2025. When this proceeding commenced, Complainant indicates that the Domain Name was parked and that: (1) the SSL certificate for it contains suspicious Subject Alternative Name (SAN) entries including adult content domains, gambling sites, and unrelated brands; (2) it utilizes multiple redirects; (3) it has multiple RTB failure handlers; (4) the website hosted at the Domain Name employs monetization scripts; and (5) it utilizes tracking endpoints that perform device fingerprinting.

At the time of this Decision, when the Domain Name is searched in different search engines (i.e., Safari, Google) it resolves to a page filled with various pop-up boxes warning: “Virus Alert 027341!!” and “Apple Security Warning!”. The warnings further indicate to the Internet searcher that their computer has been compromised, for example the notices state: “locked due to unusual activity” and “Your system has been reported to be infected with Trojan-type spyware.” There are instructions in various pop-up boxes for the Internet searcher to call, contact or provide information, for example: “Try signing in again with your Apple ID and password” and “Questions? Talk to an expert”. There are also boxes encouraging users to click to “scan now” or “scan later”.

5. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainant

Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy to transfer the Domain Name. Notably, it argues that the Domain Name is nearly identical to the last two words in Complainant’s business name, many of its federally-registered marks, and nearly identical to Complainant’s website, “https://www.strongtie.com”. Complainant notes that the only difference between its domain name and the Domain Name is that the latter is missing the letter ‘i’ and has a Top-Level Domain extension of “.me” and not “.com”. Given the strength of the SIMPSON STRONG-TIE house mark and the STRONG-TIE Mark, along with Complainant’s various STRONG-formative marks, the Domain Name is confusingly similar to Complainant’s Mark.

Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name because: (1) there is no evidence Respondent has ever used STRONG-TIE or has offered goods or services in connection with the Domain Name; (2) there is no evidence that Respondent has ever been commonly known by the Domain Name; and (3) Respondent has no relationship with Complainant and Respondent is not authorized to advertise or sell Complainant’s products.

Complainant maintains that Respondent registered the Domain Name that is confusingly similar to the Mark to “spoof” Complainant’s family of domain names employing Complainant’s STRONG-TIE Mark. A spoofed domain is a fake website or email address that imitates a legitimate one, such as Complainant’s website and business email addresses at <strongtie.com>, to deceive users into revealing sensitive information. This is a common tactic in phishing attacks to steal passwords, financial details, or download malware by tricking users into clicking malicious links or visiting fake sites that look real. Fraudsters frequently use subtle changes to valid domains (such as adding or removing letters) and visual tricks (such as changing characters like letter “1” to number “l”) to confuse users, just as Respondent has done here.

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant’s contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

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.

Complainant 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 Panel finds the Mark is recognizable within the Domain Name. Accordingly, the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the Mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7. The sole difference between the Mark and the Domain Name is that the letter "i" and a hyphen are missing in the latter.

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 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.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds Complainant has established a prima facie case that Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. 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 Domain Name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity here, claimed as phishing and distributing malware, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.1.

Although the Domain Name was parked when this proceeding commenced, Complainant marshalled information about it (described above) indicating that Respondent could use it for illegitimate and illegal purposes including spoofing to deceive users into revealing sensitive information. Indeed, also as indicated above, Respondent is currently using the Domain Name to manufacture a computer exigency for Internet users such that the victim will willingly provide sensitive information or initiate malware download allegedly to ameliorate the problem.

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: (1) Complainant has been using the STRONG-TIE Mark for well over 60 years before Respondent registered the Domain Name; (2) there is no evidence Respondent has rights or a legitimate interest in the Domain Name; (3) the Domain Name is a misspelling of the Mark that eliminates the letter “i” in the word “TIE” and the hyphen between the words “STRONG” and “TIE”; (4) the Domain Name is similar to one of Complainant’s domain names differing only in the omission of the letter “i” in the word “tie”; and (5) the Domain Name was set up for spoofing. Based on this uncontroverted evidence the Panel concludes that Respondent registered the Domain Name in bad faith.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name including a blank or “coming soon” page would not by itself prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. 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. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the long-standing reputation of Complainant’s Mark and the composition of the Domain Name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the Domain Name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy. Indeed, Complainant marshalled information about the Domain Name (described above) indicating that Respondent could use it for illegitimate and illegal purposes including spoofing to deceive users into revealing sensitive information.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity, here, claimed as phishing and distributing malware, constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds Respondent’s registration and use of the Domain Name constitutes bad faith under the Policy. As described above, Respondent is currently using the Domain Name to manufacture a computer exigency so that the victim will provide sensitive information or initiate malware download allegedly to fix the problem.

The Panel finds that 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 Domain Name <strongtie.me> be transferred to Complainant.

/Harrie R. Samaras/

Harrie R. Samaras

Sole Panelist

Date: April 11, 2026