

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sanofi v. Adam Smith
Case No. D2025-2075

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sanofi, France, represented by Selarl Marchais & Associés, France.

The Respondent is Adam Smith, United States of America (“US”).

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sanofi.blog> is registered with Hostinger Operations, UAB (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on May 25, 2025. On May 27, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On May 28, 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 (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY, Privacy Protect, LLC (PrivacyProtect.org)) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on May 28, 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 amendment to the Complaint on June 2, 2025.

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 (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 June 5, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 25, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on June 26, 2025.

The Center appointed Mehmet Polat Kalafatoğlu as the sole panelist in this matter on July 1, 2025. 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, Sanofi, is a French multinational pharmaceutical company headquartered in Paris, France. The Complainant was formed as Sanofi-Aventis in 2004 by the merger of Aventis and Sanofi-Synthélabo and changed its name to Sanofi in May 2011. The Complainant is one of the world's largest multinational pharmaceutical companies by prescription sales, has consolidated net sales of EUR 43 billion in 2022, and engages in research and development, manufacturing, and marketing of pharmaceutical products. The Complainant operates in more than 100 countries and employs more than 100,000 employees worldwide.

The record shows that the Complainant owns several registered trademarks in different jurisdictions (including in the US, where the Respondent is located) consisting of or containing the word SANOFI, such as:

- the French trademark registration No. 1482708 for SANOFI, registered on August 11, 1988, in classes 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 16, 25, 28, and 31;
- the European Union trademark registration No. 000596023 for SANOFI, registered on February 1, 1999, in classes 3 and 5;
- International Trademark Registration SANOFI No. 674936, registered on June 11, 1997, designating several countries for goods in classes 3 and 5; and
- the US trademark SANOFI, No. 85396658, registered on July 24, 2012, in classes 5, 9, 16, 41, 42, and 44.

In addition, several prior UDRP decisions recognized that the SANOFI trademark is well-known (including, *Sanofi v. Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf/ SANOFI INDIA*, WIPO Case No. [D2022-2140](#); *Sanofi v. Cooper Wilson*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-3348](#)).

The Complainant notes that it owns several domain names incorporating its SANOFI trademark, such as the domain name <sanofi.com> registered on October 13, 1995.

The disputed domain name was registered on May 11, 2025. At the time of filing the Complaint, the disputed domain name was not resolving to an active website. However, at the time of this Decision, it resolves to a website displaying pornographic images and gambling content.

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. The Complainant's contentions regarding the three elements under the Policy can be summarized as follows.

Firstly, the Complainant notes that the disputed domain name is the exact reproduction of the Complainant's well-known and highly distinctive SANOFI trademark.

Secondly, the Complainant asserts that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant contends, inter alia, that the Respondent has neither authorization, prior rights, nor legitimate interests to justify the use of the already well-known trademarks and domain names of the Complainant. The Complainant further notes that the Respondent is not making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name, nor is he using it in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services.

Thirdly, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant asserts that the Respondent acted in opportunistic bad faith by registering a domain name confusingly similar to its well-known and highly distinctive SANOFI trademark. The Complainant claims that given the famous and distinctive nature of the SANOFI trademark, the Respondent is likely to have had, at least, constructive, if not actual notice, as to the existence of the Complainant's trademarks at the time he registered the disputed domain name. According to the Complainant, this suggests that the Respondent acted with opportunistic bad faith in registering the disputed domain name to make an illegitimate use of it and to make an unfair benefit of the Complainant's reputation. The Complainant notes that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name to create a likelihood of confusion or at least an impression of association between SANOFI and the disputed domain name. The Complainant adds that the passive holding of the disputed domain name indicates bad faith use under the circumstances of the case. Lastly, the Complainant claims that the lack of use of the disputed domain name is likely to cause irreparable prejudice to the Complainant's goodwill.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the 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 Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, ("[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 identical to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

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.

Moreover, the disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant's entire trademark, SANOFI, which carries a high risk of implied affiliation. [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.

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.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

Panels have consistently found that the mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar to a famous or widely-known trademark by an unaffiliated entity can by itself create a presumption of bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.1.4. In the present case, the Panel also considers the registration dates of the SANOFI trademarks and the disputed domain name; the fact that the SANOFI trademark is also protected in the US, where the Respondent is located; the well-known and distinctive nature of the SANOFI trademark; and the fact that the disputed domain name is identical to the SANOFI trademark. Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the Respondent must have been aware of the Complainant's trademark when registering the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.2.

As noted above, the disputed domain name was not resolving to an active website at the time of filing the Complaint. Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name 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 distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, and the Respondent's failure to respond to the Complaint, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the previous passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy. More importantly, the Panel notes the modification on the use of the disputed domain name between the date of filing the Complaint and this Decision. The disputed domain name now resolves to an active website displaying pornographic images and gambling content. Accordingly, the Panel finds it clear that the Respondent is using the disputed domain name in bad faith to tarnish the Complainant and its well-known trademark. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.12.

Based on the available record, 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 <sanofi.blog> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Mehmet Polat Kalafatoglu/

Mehmet Polat Kalafatoglu

Sole Panelist

Date: July 15, 2025