

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin v. mohmd ramzani
Case No. D2025-2367

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin, France, represented by Dreyfus & associés, France.

The Respondent is mohmd ramzani, Denmark.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <micheliniran.com> is registered with CSL Computer Service Langenbach GmbH dba Joker.com (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on June 16, 2025. On June 17, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On June 18, 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 (Not disclosed) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on June 20, 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 amended Complaint on June 23, 2025.

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 June 24, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 14, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on July 15, 2025.

The Center appointed Philippe Gilliéron as the sole panelist in this matter on July 22, 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 is Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin ("Michelin"), a leading tire company, number 1 worldwide for tires, which is dedicated to enhancing its clients' mobility, sustainably, designing and distributing the most suitable tires, services and solutions for its clients' needs, providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels, and developing high technology materials that serve the mobility industry.

Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has more than 124,000 employees and operates 117 tire manufacturing facilities and sales agencies in 26 countries.

The MICHELIN Guide was first launched in 1920 in order to help motorists plan their trips. In 1926, the guide began to award stars for fine dining establishments, initially marking them only with a single star. Five years later, a hierarchy of zero, one, two, and three stars was introduced, and in 1936, the criteria for the starred rankings were published. For the first time, the MICHELIN Guide included a list of hotels in Paris, lists of restaurants according to specific categories, as well as the abandonment of paid-for advertisements in the guide. The guide now rates over 30,000 establishments in over 30 territories across three continents, and more than 30 million MICHELIN Guides have been sold worldwide since its inception.

The Complainant owns numerous trademarks on a worldwide basis consisting in all or in part of the term MICHELIN. It notably owns:

- European Union trademark registration ("EUTM") n° 007333834 that was registered on May 14, 2009 in classes 1, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 20, 21 and 28 with a priority date as of October 13, 2028.
- EUTM n° 009914731 that was registered on September 27, 2011 in classes 9, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42 and 43 with a priority date as of April 21, 2011.

The Complainant owns numerous domain names consisting in all or in part of the term MICHELIN, such as <michelin.com> since December 1, 1993.

On April 20, 2025, the Respondent registered the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name does not lead to any active website.

On May 6, 2025 the Complainant, acting through its legal counsel, tried to get in touch with the Respondent by using the registrar's contact form, inviting the Respondent to transfer the disputed domain name in its favor. While the disputed domain name was disabled, no transfer took place.

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 is confusingly similar to its MICHELIN trademarks as it entirely reproduces it and that the addition of the geographical term “iran” may lead users to believe that the disputed domain name is endorsed by the Complainant or that it will direct them to an official website promoting the Complainant’s products intended for the Iranian market.

The Complainant then affirms that the Respondent has no rights or interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent is neither affiliated with the Complainant nor authorized to use its MICHELIN trademark. Furthermore, the Respondent is not commonly known under that name. The disputed domain name resolves to an inactive webpage without any evidence of any reasonable and demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name.

Finally, the Complainant is of the view that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. Taking into account the worldwide reputation of the MICHELIN trademarks, it is implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant when it registered the disputed domain name. In the absence of any license or permission from the Complainant to use such widely known trademark, no actual or contemplated bona fide or legitimate use of the disputed domain name can reasonably be claimed. It is likely that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name to prevent the Complainant from reflecting its trademarks in the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules instructs this Panel to “[...] decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable.”

Pursuant to paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove each of the following three elements to obtain an order that the disputed domain name should be cancelled or transferred:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or a 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 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. The addition of the term “iran”, which is merely referring to a geographical term, does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant’s trademark. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), sections 1.7 and 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 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.

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.

Bad faith requires the Respondent to be aware of the Complainant’s trademarks. In the present case, the Complainant owns several MICHELIN trademarks, which enjoy a strong reputation. Taking into account this reputation and the composition of the disputed domain name, the Panel finds that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant’s trademarks when it registered the disputed domain name.

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.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or “coming soon” page) 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 or reputation of the Complainant’s trademark, and the composition of the disputed domain name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

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 <micheliniran.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Philippe Gilliéron/

Philippe Gilliéron

Sole Panelist

Date: July 30, 2025