

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Macmillan Publishers International Limited v. Asif Maruf
Case No. D2025-2554

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Macmillan Publishers International Limited, United Kingdom (“U.K.”), represented by NORDEMANN, Germany.

The Respondent is Asif Maruf, United States of America (“United States” or “U.S.”).

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <macmillanbookspublishing.com> is registered with CloudFlare, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on June 30, 2025. On July 1, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On July 2, 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 (Unknown) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 2, 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 July 4, 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 July 7, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 27, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on July 28, 2025.

The Center appointed Karen Fong as the sole panelist in this matter on August 7, 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 a global book publishing company. It publishes a broad range of award-winning books for children and adults in all categories and formats under the brand MACMILLAN. The Complainant owns a large number of trade mark registrations around the world for MACMILLAN including the following:

- United Kingdom Trade Mark Registration No. UK00001102865 for MACMILLAN registered on October 12, 1978;
- European Union Trade Mark Registration No. EU000066225 for MACMILLAN registered on March 18, 1998;
- German Trade Mark Registration No. 1001188 for MACMILLAN registered on April 24, 1980.

(individually and collectively referred to as the “Trade Mark”).

The Complainant offers its products online on the website at “www.us.macmillan.com”. The Complainant also owns other domain names comprising the Trade Mark including <macmillanlearning.com> and <panmacmillan.com> which direct to the websites of the Complainant.

The Respondent, who appears to be based in the United States, registered the disputed domain name on December 23, 2024. The disputed domain name resolves to a website that imitates the Complainant’s official website. The Complainant’s Trade Mark is prominently displayed on this website, which purports to offer writing and book publishing services (the “Website”). The Website also adopts a similar colour scheme used by the Complainant in connection with the Trade Mark.

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 the Trade Mark, that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests with respect to the disputed domain name, and that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant requests transfer of the disputed domain name.

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 trade mark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ([“WIPO Overview 3.0”](#)), section 1.7.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trade mark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds the entirety of the Trade Mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Trade Mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

While the addition of the other terms here “books” and “publishing” after the Trade Mark in the disputed domain name may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Trade Mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

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.

While 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 often impossible 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. 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 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 nature of the disputed domain name is inherently misleading as it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

Based on the available record, 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 the Respondent must have been aware of the Trade Mark when he registered the disputed domain name given the fact that the Trade Mark was registered many decades prior to the registration of the disputed domain name, the reputation of the Trade Mark, the use of the Trade Mark in a similar colour scheme as the Complainant on the Website and the offering of identical/similar services to the Complainant on the Website.

It is therefore implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant when he registered the disputed domain name.

In the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.2 states as follows:

“Noting the near instantaneous and global reach of the Internet and search engines, and particularly in circumstances where the complainant’s mark is widely known (including in its sector) or highly specific and a respondent cannot credibly claim to have been unaware of the mark (particularly in the case of domainers), panels have been prepared to infer that the respondent knew, or have found that the respondent should have known, that its registration would be identical or confusingly similar to a complainant’s mark. Further factors including the nature of the domain name, the chosen top-level domain, any use of the domain name, or any respondent pattern, may obviate a respondent’s claim not to have been aware of the complainant’s mark.”

The fact that there is a clear absence of rights or legitimate interests coupled with the Respondent’s choice of the disputed domain name without any explanation is also a significant factor to consider (as stated in [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1). The disputed domain name falls into the category stated above and the Panel finds that registration is in bad faith. The addition of the terms “books” and “publishing” after the Trade Mark further reflects that the Respondent had the Complainant in mind and was targeting it when registering the disputed domain name as the Complainant is well known in the book publication business.

The disputed domain name is also being used in bad faith. The Website prominently displays the Trade Mark, without any disclaimer disclosing (the lack of) relationship between the Parties. The content of the Website is calculated to give the impression it has been authorized by or connected to the Complainant when this is not the case. The Website is set up to deliberately mislead Internet users into believing that it is connected to, authorised by, or affiliated with the Complainant. From the above, the Panel concludes that the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, by misleading Internet users into believing that the Respondent’s Website is, and the services offered on it are those of or authorised or endorsed by the Complainant.

It is highly likely that Internet users when typing the disputed domain name into their browser or finding it through a search engine would have been looking for a site operated by the Complainant rather than the Respondent. The disputed domain name is likely to confuse Internet users trying to find the Complainant’s official website. Such confusion will inevitably result due to the fact that the disputed domain name comprises the Trade Mark in its entirety.

The Panel therefore finds that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Based on the available record, 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 <macmillanbookspublishing.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Karen Fong/

Karen Fong

Sole Panelist

Date: August 21, 2025