

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Principal Financial Services, Inc. v. Ryan N Roth, prlnclpal.com
Case No. D2025-4004

1. The Parties

Complainant is Principal Financial Services, Inc., United States of America (“United States”), represented by Neal & McDevitt, United States.

Respondent is Ryan N Roth, prlnclpal.com, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <prlnclpal.com> (the “Domain Name”) is registered with Squarespace Domains II, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on September 30, 2025. On October 1, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On October 1, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the Domain Name which differed from the named Respondent (Redacted for Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email to Complainant on October 2, 2025, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on October 6, 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 Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on October 7, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 27, 2025. Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent’s default on October 29, 2025.

The Center appointed Robert A. Badgley as the sole panelist in this matter on November 3, 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

According to the Complaint:

"The Complainant is a publicly-traded (NASDAQ-PFG) multi-national financial services institution offering, through its licensees, member companies and affiliates, a broad range of services in the financial, insurance, investment, banking, retirement, global asset management, real estate, and healthcare sectors, among others. The Complainant owns the well-established and famous family of PRINCIPAL service marks in many jurisdictions throughout the world. [...]"

"Through its licensees, affiliates, and member companies, the Complainant has used its Famous Family of PRINCIPAL Marks in connection with a variety of products and services in the financial, insurance, investment, banking, asset management, retirement, real estate, and healthcare fields, since at least as early as 1985. In addition, the Complainant, via a predecessor-in-interest, has used the famous PRINCIPAL mark in connection with financial analysis and consulting, management of securities and securities brokerage services since at least as early as 1960."

Among Complainant's trademark registrations is United States Reg. No. 1,562,541 for the word mark PRINCIPAL, registered on October 24, 1989, in connection with "financial analysis and consulting, management of securities and securities brokerage services," with a July 8, 1960 date of first use in commerce.

Complainant alleges that it has spent more than USD one billion to promote its PRINCIPAL marks.

Complainant operates its official website at the domain name <principal.com>.

The Domain Name was registered on March 7, 2024. The Domain Name does not resolve to a website.

According to Complainant, and as supported with screenshot evidence annexed to the Complaint:

"The Respondent has configured MX (Mail Exchange) records for the disputed domain name, which indicates an intent to use the domain for sending and receiving email. This technical setup, particularly where the domain is confusingly similar or identical to the Complainant's famous family of PRINCIPAL marks, raises serious concerns of bad faith. It suggests a risk of deceptive email communication, including impersonation, phishing, or fraud, aimed at misappropriating the Complainant's reputation or misleading third parties."

Respondent has not disputed any of the foregoing allegations or evidence.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the Domain Name. Complainant summarizes its case in the following passage:

"The disputed domain name is a textbook case of abusive cybersquatting under the Policy. The Complainant, a well-established provider of financial services operating its official website at

<principal.com>, is the clear target of this deliberate typosquatting scheme. The disputed domain name differs from the Complainant's mark and domain only by the substitution of the letters 'i' with 'l' ('prInclpal' for 'principal'), a classic example of a deceptive misspelling designed to confuse Internet users. Such conduct squarely meets all three elements of the UDRP: the domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark, the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in it, and it has been registered and is being used in bad faith. Most troubling, technical evidence shows that the Respondent has configured MX records for the disputed domain name [...], strongly indicating an intent to engage in phishing, email fraud, or other malicious activity. Given that financial services are particularly susceptible to impersonation attacks and fraudulent schemes, the risk to consumers here is acute."

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy lists the three elements which Complainant must satisfy with respect to the Domain Name:

- (i) the Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which Complainant has rights; and
- (ii) Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name; and
- (iii) the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Panel concludes that Complainant has rights in the trademark PRINCIPAL through registration demonstrated in the record.

The Panel also concludes that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the PRINCIPAL mark. The only difference between the Domain Name and the mark is that the Domain Name replaces the letter "i" in the mark with the visually similar letter "l." In the Panel's view, the mark remains recognizable within the Domain Name.

Complainant has established Policy paragraph 4(a)(i).

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Pursuant to paragraph 4(c) of the Policy, Respondent may establish its rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name, among other circumstances, by showing any of the following elements:

- (i) before any notice to you [Respondent] of the dispute, your use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the Domain Name or a name corresponding to the Domain Name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services; or
- (ii) you [Respondent] (as an individual, business, or other organization) have been commonly known by the Domain Name, even if you have acquired no trademark or service mark rights; or
- (iii) you [Respondent] are making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the Domain Name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue.

The Panel concludes that Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name. Respondent has not come forward in this proceeding to articulate any bona fide basis for registering the Domain Name, or to dispute the plausible allegations and evidence presented by Complainant.

On this undisputed record, the Panel finds that this is a clear case of typosquatting, particularly in view of the fact that the lower-case “l” in the Domain Name is visually indistinguishable from the upper-case “I” in the trademark. This fact, coupled with Respondent’s establishment of MX records for this Domain name, raises clear suspicions about nefarious motives vis-à-vis the Domain Name.

Complainant has established Policy paragraph 4(a)(ii).

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy provides that the following circumstances, “in particular but without limitation,” are evidence of the registration and use of the Domain Name in “bad faith”:

- (i) circumstances indicating that Respondent has registered or has acquired the Domain Name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the Domain Name registration to Complainant who is the owner of the trademark or service mark or to a competitor of that Complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of its documented out of pocket costs directly related to the Domain Name; or
- (ii) that Respondent has registered the Domain Name in order to prevent the owner of the trademark or service mark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding domain name, provided that Respondent has engaged in a pattern of such conduct; or
- (iii) that Respondent has registered the Domain Name primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or
- (iv) that by using the Domain Name, Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to Respondent’s website or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with Complainant’s mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of Respondent’s website or location or of a product or service on Respondent’s website or location.

The Panel concludes that Respondent has registered and used the Domain Name in bad faith. The Panel incorporates here its discussion above in the “Rights or Legitimate Interests” section. The Panel concludes, on this undisputed record and in view of the nature of the differences between the Domain Name and the PRINCIPAL trademark, that Respondent more likely than not had Complainant’s mark in mind when registering the Domain Name.

Regarding the use of the Domain Name, the Panel notes the strong reputation of Complainant’s trademark, the nature of the Domain Name, and Respondent’s failure to submit a response. In the circumstances, the Panel concludes that Respondent’s passive holding of the Domain Name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel also agrees with Complainant’s undisputed contention that Respondent probably established MX records for this Domain Name with a view toward deriving fraudulent commercial gain. Complainant argues:

“Even absent evidence of actual emails sent, the configuration of MX records alone supports a finding of bad faith, as it enables misuse of the domain for deceptive purposes. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.4; *Principal Financial Services, Inc. v. Cong Truong*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-0648](#) (presence of MX records creates a risk that the Respondent may be using the disputed domain name for misrepresentations and/or phishing or spamming activities).”

The Panel agrees that the typosquatting afoot here, coupled with the MX records and the complete absence of an asserted legitimate interest in the Domain Name, yields the conclusion that Respondent’s probable intended use of the Domain Name would constitute bad faith use within the meaning of the above-quoted Policy paragraph 4(b)(iv).

Complainant has established Policy paragraph 4(a)(iii).

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 <prlnclpal.com> be transferred to Complainant.

/Robert A. Badgley/

Robert A. Badgley

Sole Panelist

Date: November 12, 2025