

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Valentino S.p.A. v. matt henderson
Case No. D2025-4207

1. The Parties

Complainant is Valentino S.p.A., Italy, represented by Studio Barbero S.p.A., Italy.

Respondent is matt henderson, United States of America ("United States").

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <valentinogaravanisell.com> is registered with GMO Internet, Inc. d/b/a Discount-Domain.com and Onamae.com (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on October 14, 2025. On October 14, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On October 15, 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 (Whois Privacy Protection Service by onamae.com, Whois Privacy Protection Service by onamae.com) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to Complainant on October 15, 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 17, 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 28, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was November 17, 2025. Respondent did not submit any response.

Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent's default on November 26, 2025.

The Center appointed Gabriel F. Leonardos as the sole panelist in this matter on December 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

Complainant is a major player in the fashion industry and offers a wide range of luxury products, such as bags, shoes, small leather goods, belts, eyewear, silks and fragrances. It was founded in 1960 by the fashion designer Valentino Garavani and his business partner Giancarlo Giammetti. Currently, Complainant is present in over 90 countries, has over 1,300 points of sale, and was popular with celebrities such as Jackie Onassis, Elizabeth Taylor, Julia Roberts, and Princess Margaret.

Complainant owns trademark registrations for VALENTINO and VALENTINO GARAVANI, such as those shown below, and also owns domain names composed by said marks such as <valentino.com>:

Registration Number	Trademark	Jurisdiction	International Classes	Registration Date
001990407	VALENTINO	European Union	3, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 34, 35	September 18, 2008
7233297	VALENTINO GARAVANI	United States	9, 35, 41, 42	December 5, 2023
7313485	VALENTINO GARAVANI	United States	8, 19, 27, 36, 11, 21, 20, 42	February 27, 2024

The disputed domain name <valentinogaravanisell.com> was created on July 7, 2025, and used to redirect Internet users to a webpage that displayed Complainant's own products at discounted prices and of Complainant's competitors.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the registered trademarks, as it incorporates the VALENTINO and VALENTINO GARAVANI trademarks with the mere addition of the term "sell", which does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

Therefore, according to Complainant, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar with Complainant's trademarks VALENTINO and VALENTINO GARAVANI, fulfilling paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

Complainant affirms that it has not authorized Respondent to use the disputed domain name. Accordingly, Respondent is not a licensee or authorized agent and is not commonly known by a name corresponding to the domain name.

Furthermore, the use of the domain name to sell products that apparently are counterfeit VALENTINO GARAVANI products, in view of the low prices and information available on the website, indicates the intention to profit from the offering for sale of said products and by causing confusion.

In this manner, Complainant states that Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, fulfilling paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

Finally, Complainant urges that the disputed domain name was registered and are being used in bad faith. According to Complainant, Respondent knew about Complainant's rights and reproduced the trademarks in bad faith, especially considering the extensive use of the marks by Complaint since 1960.

According to Complainant, the commercial use of the domain name to display Complainant's marks for the offering of prima facie counterfeit VALENTINO GARAVANI branded products indicates Respondent's purpose to capitalize on Complainant's reputation and financially profit from the likelihood of confusion.

Thus, according to Complainant, the requirements for the identification of a bad faith registration and use of the disputed domain name have been fulfilled, pursuant to paragraphs 4(a)(iii) and 4(b) of the Policy. Accordingly, Complainant requests the disputed domain name be transferred to Complainant.

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

To succeed in a UDRP complaint, Complainant must demonstrate that all the elements listed in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy have been satisfied, as following:

- (i) the disputed 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 disputed domain name; and
- (iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

The burden of proving these elements is upon Complainant.

Respondent had 20 days to submit a response in accordance with paragraph 5(a) of the Rules and failed to do so. Paragraph 5(f) of the Rules establishes that if a respondent does not respond to the Complaint, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the Panel's decision shall be based upon the Complaint.

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 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.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds 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 trademark VALENTINO GARAVANI is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Although the addition of the term "sell" may bear assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds that such measures do not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the marks for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the marks for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7. Therefore, 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 Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on 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 Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to Respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on Complainant). If Respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, Complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), 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 disputed 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 disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here claimed sale of counterfeit goods, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a Respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

Based on the available record, Respondent is not entitled to any trademark, trade name, or any other right associated with the disputed domain name. Additionally, Respondent has not been authorized by the Complainant to use the VALENTINO GARAVANI trademark, and there is no commercial relationship between the Parties.

Accordingly, 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 Respondent has registered the disputed domain name that is confusingly similar to Complainant’s trademark VALENTINO GARAVANI. Also, based on the available record, it was established that Respondent has no affiliation with Complainant and its trademarks, nor has it sought authorization or a license to utilize the referred trademarks. Also, Respondent does not own any trademarks containing the term VALENTINO GARAVANI nor showed any rights over the trademark or any related terms.

Respondent evidently knew of the existence of Complainant’s prior trademark rights and domain names, which were matters of public record, before registering the disputed domain name. Considering Complainant’s activities and the form the disputed domain name was used; it may be inferred that the registration of the disputed domain name was intentionally done with plans of unduly benefiting of Complainant’s notoriety.

The disputed domain name resolved to a website that offered VALENTINO GARAVANI branded products for sale at heavily discounted prices, when compared to the prices of Complainant’s original products, as shown

in the Complaint. Previous panels have held that the comparison of prices may support a finding the products being offered are counterfeit. In this sense, see *Skechers U.S.A., Inc. II v. Client Care, Web Commerce Communications Limited*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-4182](#).

The Panel finds that the circumstances of the present case allow for a finding of bad faith in the registration and use of the disputed domain name, since Respondent intended to financially profit by passing off as Complainant through the use of a confusingly similar domain name and the reproduction of Complainant's marks to offer competing, and purportedly counterfeit, products.

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

/Gabriel F. Leonardos/

Gabriel F. Leonardos

Sole Panelist

Date: December 15, 2025