

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Netflix Studios, LLC v. Sanchit Sood

Case No. D2025-4485

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Netflix Studios, LLC, United States of America (“United States”), represented by Coates IP LLP, United States.

The Respondent is Sanchit Sood, Germany.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

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

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on October 30, 2025. On October 30, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On the same day, 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 RESPONDENT / Redacted for Privacy, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on October 31, 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 the same day.

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 paragraphs 2 and 4 of the Rules, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on November 6, 2025. In accordance with paragraph 5 of the Rules, the due date for Response was November 26, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on November 27, 2025.

The Center appointed Yuji Yamaguchi as the sole panelist in this matter on December 18, 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 paragraph 7 of the Rules.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant was founded on August 29, 1997, in Scotts Valley, California, United States, and officially started operating on April 14, 1998, by offering sales services and renting films “à la carte” under the NETFLIX brand (i.e. by mailing physical DVDs to consumers’ homes). Then, in 2007, soon after delivering its billionth DVD, the Complainant launched its content streaming platform, offering its members unlimited access to a library of licensed TV shows and films. The Complainant’s streaming services were wildly successful, leading to international expansion to countries throughout North and South America in 2010-2011, and then to Europe (the United Kingdom (“UK”), Ireland, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) in 2012. In 2014, the Complainant expanded further into European Union (“EU”) member countries Austria, Belgium, France, and Germany, ultimately surpassing 50 million total members. Also, during this period of expansion, the Complainant began investing in the production of original content. The Complainant released several original series and specials between 2012 and 2013, including its first flagship original series House of Cards. In 2016, the Complainant expanded its geographic scope even further, bringing its streaming services to more than 190 countries and more than 30 languages around the world, including India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia. Since then, the Complainant has enjoyed rapid growth and commercial success and now offers its streaming services on a global scale. In 2017, the Complainant’s membership reached 100 million members globally. The Complainant’s production business expanded similarly, resulting in its current vast library of award-winning original movies, TV shows, films, specials, documentaries and more, all of which are available on-demand to all members globally. The Complainant’s status as an entertainment industry mainstay was further cemented in January 2019, when it joined the Motion Picture Association (MPA), the global trade association that advocates on behalf of the film and television industry.

The Complainant is now one of the world’s leading entertainment services with over 302 million paid memberships in over 190 countries enjoying TV series, films and games across a wide variety of genres and languages. The Complainant is a pioneer in the delivery of streaming entertainment, launching its streaming service in 2007 under the NETFLIX brand. Since this launch, the Complainant has developed an ecosystem for Internet-connected screens and has added increasing amounts of content that enable customers to enjoy entertainment directly on their Internet-connected screens. As a result of these efforts, the Complainant has experienced growing consumer acceptance of, and interest in, the delivery of streaming entertainment.

On June 20, 2025, the Complainant released a film named “KPop Demon Hunters.” The film is an animated musical urban fantasy film and follows a K-pop girl group called Huntr/X, who led double lives as demon hunters, and they face off against a rival boy band called the Saja Boys, whose members are secretly demons. KPOP DEMON HUNTERS was released to critical acclaim, with praise for its animation, visual style, voice acting, writing and music. The film’s soundtrack album also saw major success, reaching number one and top ten positions on multiple music and streaming charts. On July 29, 2025, Netflix announced that KPOP DEMON HUNTERS had become the platform’s “most watched original animated film of all time.” It was then reported on August 5, 2025, that KPOP DEMON HUNTERS had become the platform’s fourth most-watched English-language film and had reached “158.8 million views” since its release on June 20, 2025. On August 12, 2025, it was reported that the film had become Netflix’s second-most popular English-language film, being viewed 184.6 million times in the eight weeks following its premiere. It is now Netflix’s most-watched original title with 325 million views, and its 2-day sing-along theatrical release was the first Netflix title to top the box office in the United States.

The Complainant has launched an online KPOP DEMON HUNTERS store, offering a variety of merchandise and clothing at “www.netflix.shop/collections/kpop-demon-hunters”.

The Complainant has filed applications for the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS trademark (the “KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark”) in various countries and some KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Marks were registered in EU and UK, such as EU Trade Mark registration No. 019226334 (filed on July 31, 2025 and registered on December 20, 2025), and UK trademark registration Nos. UK00004238112 (filed on July 23, 2025 and registered on October 17, 2025), UK00004242244 (filed on July 31, 2025 and registered on November 7, 2025), UK00004251061 (filed on August 18, 2025 and registered on November 7, 2025), UK00004264669 (filed on September 16, 2025 and registered on December 5, 2025) and UK00004267040 (filed on September 19, 2025 and registered on December 12, 2025).

The disputed domain name was registered on June 23, 2025, and resolves to an inactive website.

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’s contentions may be summarized as follows:

The Complainant has filed numerous applications for the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark and obtained common law rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark around the world prior to the Respondent’s registration of the disputed domain name. The Complainant adopted the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark in March 2021 and began use at least as early as June 20, 2025. The Complainant has common law rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark sufficient to form the basis of this Complaint. The KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film and merchandise has become immensely and quickly popular in a very short period of time since its launch on June 20, 2025. The show quickly became one of the platform’s most watched films. On July 29, 2025, the Complainant announced that KPOP DEMON HUNTERS had become the platform’s “most watched original animated film of all time”. On August 12, 2025, it was reported that the film had become the Complainant’s second-most popular English-language film, being viewed 184.6 million times in the eight weeks following its premiere. The disputed domain name completely subsumes the Complainant’s KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark. There is therefore no question that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar in appearance, pronunciation, meaning and overall commercial impression to the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark. There is no issue with priority of rights, as the Complainant announced the release of its KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film at least as early as March 2021 and established rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark at least as early as June 20, 2025, both well-prior to the Respondent’s June 23, 2025, the registration date of the disputed domain name.

The Respondent has no rights in the Complainant’s KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark, prior or subsequent, and does not have a license to offer merchandise under the Complainant’s KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark or featuring the Complainant’s copyrighted content. The Respondent provides no bona fide goods or services under the Complainant’s trademarks in commerce and is not making any legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark is a coined phrase, with no meaning in any language. It is solely related to the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film and merchandise. The Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name and has acquired no trademark or service mark rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark.

The disputed domain name was registered to prevent the Complainant from registering it. Even if the disputed domain name was to be found to not be used for fraudulent purposes, it was still registered in bad faith. The website associated with the disputed domain name is inactive, being passively held, and therefore the disputed domain name has not been used in connection with bona fide offerings of goods or services. Further, the disputed domain name has been registered to exploit the fame of the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark in a bid to attract Internet users to the Respondent’s website or provide its email legitimacy. The Respondent cannot obtain or derive any rights or legitimate interests through its passive holding of the

disputed domain name. KPOP DEMON HUNTERS is a fanciful coined term and famous trademark that is only associated with the Complainant, and it is inconceivable that the Respondent's choice in registering the disputed domain name was anything other than for bad faith. The disputed domain name is identical to the Complainant's famous trademark and movie title, with nothing to distinguish it from the Complainant.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

In accordance with paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must assert and prove the following three elements are present:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and
- (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 in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy 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. See section 1.7 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)").

The Complainant asserts that the Complainant adopted the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark in March 2021 and began use at least as early as June 20, 2025, and then has common law rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark sufficient to form the basis of this Complaint. To establish unregistered or common law trademark rights for purposes of the Policy, the complainant must show that its mark has become a distinctive identifier which consumers associate with the complainant's goods and/or services. See section 1.3 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#). Since the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film and merchandise has become immensely and quickly popular in a very short period of time, the Panel finds that the Complainant has established common law rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark even before the trademark registration for the purposes of the Policy. See *Netflix Studios, LLC v. Jas King*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-3459](#) (<kpop-demon-hunters-tiger-plushies.com>).

Currently, the Complainant owns several registered KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Marks in the EU and UK and especially one of UK trademark registrations (No. UK00004238112) was registered on October 17, 2025, before the filing of this Complaint. While the Policy makes no specific reference to the date on which the holder of the trademark or service mark acquired its rights, such rights must be in existence at the time the complaint is filed. See section 1.1.3 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Although the registration of the disputed domain name preceded the filing and registration of the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Marks, the filing/priority date, date of registration, and date of claimed first use are not considered relevant to the first element test. See section 1.1.2 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

The disputed domain name consists of the Complainant's KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark in its entirety without spaces between the words and the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com". The only differences between the disputed domain name and the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark are the deletion of the space between the three dominant terms of the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark and the addition of the gTLD,

".com", which are not significant and create no meaningful distinction. See *Dr. Rebecca Parsons, ThoughtWorks, Inc. v. Perfect Privacy, LLC / This Domain May be for Sale at <https://www.networksolutions.com>, New Ventures Services, Corp*, WIPO Case No. [D2019-0866](#). The applicable TLD in a domain name is viewed as a standard registration requirement and as such is disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. See section 1.11.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark in which the Complainant has rights.

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.

As the Complainant asserts, no evidence can be found indicating that the Respondent has any rights in the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark and a license to use the KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark. The Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name pursuant to paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy. The Respondent does not use the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services pursuant to paragraph 4(c)(i) of the Policy and is not making any legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name pursuant to paragraph 4(c)(iii) of the Policy.

Although the overall burden of proof in the proceedings is on the complainant, where a complainant makes out a *prima facie* case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on the second element in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy 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 in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy. See section 2.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds that 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.

Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel finds that the Complainant's KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film rapidly became famous worldwide after the release on June 20, 2025. The disputed domain name was registered soon after the release date. In the circumstances, the Panel is in little doubt that the Respondent, resident in Germany, must have had the Complainant's KPOP DEMON HUNTERS film in mind when it registered the disputed domain name. Furthermore, the Panel struggles to conceive of any legitimate, bona fide reason for the registration of the disputed domain name, particularly noting the composition of the disputed domain name. See *Khloe Kardashian, Whalerock Celebrity Subscription, LLC, Khloemoney, Inc. v. Private Registrations Aktien Gesellschaft / Privacy Protection Service Inc. d/b/a Privacyprotect.Org*, WIPO Case No. [D2015-1113](#).

Although the disputed domain name resolves to an inactive site and is not being used, it does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding in this case, in consideration of (i) the extreme distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's KPOP DEMON HUNTERS Mark, (ii) the failure of the Respondent to submit a response, (iii) the Respondent's concealing its identity, and (iv) the implausibility of any good faith use to which the disputed domain name may be put. See section 3.3 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Consequently, the Panel concludes that disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 <kpopdemonhunters.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Yuji Yamaguchi/

Yuji Yamaguchi

Sole Panelist

Date: January 1, 2026