

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sennheiser electronic GmbH & Co. KG v. Host Master, Njalla Okta LLC
Case No. D2025-4829

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sennheiser electronic GmbH & Co. KG, Germany, represented by Bettinger Scheffelt Partnerschaft mbB, Germany.

The Respondent is Host Master, Njalla Okta LLC, Saint Kitts and Nevis.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sennheiser-partners.com> is registered with Tucows Domains Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on November 20, 2025. On November 20, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On November 21, 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 (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY, REDACTED FOR PRIVACY) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on November 25, 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 November 25, 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 November 26, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was December 16, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on December 17, 2025.

The Center appointed Erica Aoki as the sole panelist in this matter on December 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 a German company founded in 1945 by Fritz Sennheiser, originally under the name "Laboratorium Wennebostel".

The Complainant is an independent family-owned enterprise and a globally recognized manufacturer of premium audio products. Its business activities include the design, production, and commercialization of microphones, headphones, wireless transmission systems, monitoring solutions, aviation and office headsets, telephone accessories, and integrated audio systems.

The Complainant operates manufacturing facilities in Germany, Ireland, and the United States of America, and maintains sales subsidiaries and research laboratories worldwide.

The Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations for the trademark SENNHEISER in jurisdictions around the world. These include, *inter alia*:

- International Trademark Registration No. 670839, SENNHEISER, registered on March 6, 1997, covering goods in Class 9 and designating multiple jurisdictions;
- European Union Trademark No. 000370122, SENNHEISER, registered on August 27, 1999, covering goods in Classes 9, 10, and 16;
- European Union Trademark No. 001594308, SENNHEISER, registered on August 21, 2001, covering goods and services in Classes 3, 9, 18, 21, 25, 28, 38, 41, and 42.

All of these trademark registrations predate the registration of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant also owns and operates numerous domain names incorporating its SENNHEISER trademark, including sennheiser.com, sennheiser.net, and sennheisershop.com, which it uses to promote and sell its products worldwide.

The Complainant maintains a significant online presence through its official website and through social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube.

The disputed domain name was registered on October 21, 2025. At the time of filing of the Complaint, the disputed domain name resolved to an English-language website headed "Sennheiser Partners". The website invited Internet users to "join the Sennheiser Partners program" and to "collaborate with the world's leading audio brand", promising exclusive access to professional audio equipment for content creation. The overall presentation of the website suggested the existence of an official partnership or ambassador program associated with the Complainant.

The website made prominent use of the SENNHEISER mark. It did not clearly identify any entity independent from the Complainant, nor did it contain a clear disclaimer indicating a lack of affiliation with the Complainant. The presentation of the website conveyed the impression that it formed part of the Complainant's official partner or reseller ecosystem.

The Complainant has confirmed that it has no relationship with the Respondent, has not authorized the Respondent to use the SENNHEISER trademark, and has not approved the operation of any website at the disputed domain name.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied all three elements required under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy for the transfer of the disputed domain name.

First, the Complainant asserts that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to its well-known SENNHEISER trademark.

The Complainant emphasizes that it owns numerous trademark registrations in multiple jurisdictions worldwide, all of which significantly predate the registration of the disputed domain name.

According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name incorporates the SENNHEISER trademark in its entirety, and any additional terms do not dispel confusing similarity.

Second, the Complainant submits that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant states that the Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant in any way, has never been authorized or licensed to use Complainant's trademark, and is not commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The Complainant further argues that the Respondent has not made, and cannot demonstrate, any bona fide offering of goods or services or any legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name.

Third, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant submits that, given the longstanding global reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the Respondent must have been aware of the Complainant and its rights at the time of registration.

According to the Complainant, the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes an intentional attempt to take unfair advantage of the Complainant's trademark by creating a likelihood of confusion as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement.

Based on the foregoing, the Complainant requests that the disputed domain name be transferred to it in accordance with paragraph 4(i) of the Policy.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a mark in which the Complainant has rights;
- (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name;
- (iii) the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element under 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 WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0"), section 1.7. The Panel finds that the Complainant has demonstrated rights in the trademark SENNHEISER through multiple registered trademark rights in numerous jurisdictions worldwide. These registrations significantly predate the registration of the disputed domain name and are sufficient to establish trademark rights for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant's trademark in its entirety. The Panel finds that the Complainant's trademark is clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name. Where a disputed domain name contains a complainant's trademark in full, the domain name will normally be considered confusingly similar to that trademark for the purposes of the Policy. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

To the extent that the disputed domain name contains additional terms, such additions do not prevent the finding of confusing similarity where the trademark remains clearly recognizable.

The Panel notes that such additional terms here "partners" may be relevant to the assessment of the second and third elements under the Policy but do not dispel confusing similarity under the first element. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's SENNHEISER trademark and that the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy sets out circumstances in which a respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof rests with the complainant, panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests may involve the difficult task of proving a negative.

Accordingly, where a complainant makes out a *prima facie* case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence to the contrary. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

In the present case, 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 is not affiliated with the Complainant and has not been authorized or licensed to use the Complainant's trademark. There is no evidence in the record that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy.

The record further does not support a finding that the Respondent has used, or made demonstrable preparations to use, the disputed domain name in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services. Nor is there any indication of a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. Rather, the use of the Complainant's trademark on the website without authorization to purportedly offer a collaboration program supports the inference that the disputed domain name was selected to take unfair advantage of the Complainant's trademark.

Panels have consistently held that the use of a domain name in a manner that impersonates or passes off as a trademark owner, or otherwise misleads Internet users, cannot confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.13.1.

The Respondent did not submit any response and has therefore failed to rebut the Complainant's *prima facie* case or to provide any evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and that the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Under paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, the Complainant must establish that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of circumstances that may constitute evidence of bad faith registration and use.

In the present case, the Panel finds that the Respondent registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith.

The Complainant's trademark is distinctive and has been widely used and protected internationally for many years prior to the registration of the disputed domain name. Given the longstanding reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the Panel finds it implausible that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name without knowledge of the Complainant and its trademark rights.

The record further shows that the Respondent used the disputed domain name in a manner that took unfair advantage of the Complainant's trademark. The disputed domain name resolved to a website that purported to offer a partnership program associated with the Complainant's products, creating the false impression that such offerings were authorized, endorsed, or provided by the Complainant.

Such use is particularly problematic given the nature of the website. By presenting a partnership program under the Complainant's trademark, the Respondent is asking Internet users to "visit the payment center and fill out information") which creates the potential of phishing or unauthorized collection of personal data.

This conduct supports the conclusion that the disputed domain name was registered and used with the intent to create a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademark as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement, for commercial or other illegitimate gain, within the meaning of paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

The Panel further notes that the Respondent's failure to submit any response reinforces the inference that the disputed domain name was registered and used to exploit the Complainant's trademark. Panels have consistently held that the intentional targeting of a well-known trademark to attract Internet users constitutes bad faith. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.1.

Considering all of the circumstances of the case, including the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, the nature of the Respondent's use, and the Respondent's lack of any rights or legitimate interests, the Panel concludes that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

Accordingly, 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 <sennheiser-partners.com> be transferred to the Complainant

*/Erica Aoki/
Erica Aoki
Sole Panelist
Date: January 5, 2026*