ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin v. Ho1a Metrocarrier, HO1A INNOVACION
Case No. D2025-4953

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Compagnie Générale des Etablissements Michelin, France, represented by Dreyfus & associés, France.

The Respondent is Ho1a Metrocarrier, HO1A INNOVACION, Mexico.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <michelinparty.com> is registered with Hosting Concepts B.V. d/b/a Registrar.eu. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on November 27, 2025. On November 27, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 11, 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 (Not disclosed) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 11, 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 December 15, 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 December 15, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 4, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on January 13, 2026.

The Center appointed Daniel Peña as the sole panelist in this matter on January 26, 2026. 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 tire company recognized as the number one worldwide in the tire industry. The Complainant is dedicated to enhancing mobility sustainably, designing and distributing tires, services, and solutions tailored to client needs, while also providing digital services, maps, and guides to enrich travel experiences and developing high-technology materials serving the mobility industry.

The Complainant, headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, operates in 170 countries, employs more than 124,000 people, and maintains 117 tire manufacturing facilities and sales agencies in 26 countries. Since its founding in 1889, the Complainant has consistently innovated to facilitate the mobility of people and goods, contributing to human progress. The MICHELIN brand is one of the top-selling tire brands worldwide and is recognized as the leading source of innovation in the global tire industry.

The Complainant has received numerous accolades, including being named No. 1 Best Large Employer in America by Forbes in 2018, and earning 88 awards for initial quality from J.D. Power & Associates, four times more than all other tire manufacturers combined, as well as ranking highest in the "original equipment tires" category in the United States of America ("U.S.") in 2018. The Complainant is also renowned for the MICHELIN Guide, first launched in 1920 to assist motorists in planning trips, which evolved into a globally respected authority on fine dining. Today, the Guide rates over 30,000 establishments in more than 30 territories across three continents, with over 30 million copies sold worldwide.

The Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations for MICHELIN, including;

- International Trademark No. 771031, registered June 11, 2001, designating multiple jurisdictions and covering goods and services in classes 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 39, and 42, and

- U.S. Trademark No. 892045, registered June 2, 1970, covering goods in class 12.

The disputed domain name was registered on August 1, 2025. Initially, it resolved to a site presented as an online store for party articles. Later, it directed to a parking page displaying commercial advertising links related to the Complainant's field of activity, and then it directed to a security page alerting that a phishing attempt has been detected. At the time of filing the Complainant, the disputed domain name directed to an error page.

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 identical or confusingly similar to its well-known MICHELIN trademark, in which it has longstanding rights.

The disputed domain name reproduces the MICHELIN mark in its entirety, and the addition of the generic term "party" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity. The generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com" is likewise irrelevant.

The Complainant further submits that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant, has not been authorized to use the MICHELIN mark, and is not commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The Respondent has not made any bona fide use of the disputed domain name; instead, it was initially directed to a page intended for party articles and later to a parking page with pay-per-click ("PPC") links related to the Complainant's activities, likely generating revenue. The disputed domain name now resolves to an error page, further evidencing the absence of legitimate use.

The Complainant argues that the Respondent registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith. Given the worldwide reputation of the MICHELIN trademark, it is implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant's rights when registering the disputed domain name. The composition of the disputed domain name, reproducing MICHELIN in its entirety, shows that the Respondent had the Complainant's mark in mind.

The MICHELIN trademark registrations significantly predate the disputed domain name registration, and the Respondent's failure to conduct even a basic trademark or search engine check further supports bad faith. Registration of a domain name so obviously connected to a well-known trademark by someone with no relationship to the mark constitutes opportunistic bad faith. Initial research showed that the disputed domain name resolved to a page titled "Michelin Party," intended to be an online store for party articles. An email server was also configured, raising the risk of phishing.

The Complainant attempted to resolve the matter amicably by sending a cease-and-desist letter via the registrar and online form, requesting transfer of the disputed domain name. Despite multiple reminders, no response was received. Monitoring revealed that the disputed domain name later directed to a parking page with commercial advertising links related to the Complainant's field of activity, likely generating PPC revenue. Notifications sent to the Registrar and hosting provider requesting blocking and deactivation were unsuccessful. Subsequently, the disputed domain name directed to a security page warning of a phishing attempt, and it now resolves to an error page.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

To succeed, the Complainant must demonstrate that all of the elements listed in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy have been satisfied: (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; (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. Considering these requirements, the Panel rules as follows:

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

Paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy requires the Complainant to show that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights.

The Complainant has provided evidence of its rights in the MICHELIN trademarks on the basis of its multiple trademark registrations in several countries. The Panel finds that the Complainant has shown rights in respect of the trademarks for the purposes of the Policy (see WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0"), section 1.2.1). It has also been established by prior UDRP panels that incorporating a trademark in its entirety into a domain name is normally sufficient to establish that the domain name is confusingly similar to a trademark (see section 1.7 of WIPO Overview 3.0).

The Respondent's incorporation of the Complainant's mark in the disputed domain name is sufficient to establish that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's marks. The addition of the term "party" to the Complainant's trademark MICHELIN does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity with the Complainant's marks. Furthermore, the gTLD ".com" is typically disregarded under the first element.

The Panel is satisfied that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark and the Complainant has satisfied the requirement of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

The Complainant argues that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant bears the burden of proof in establishing this requirement. In view of the difficulties inherent in proving a negative and because the relevant information is mainly in the possession of the Respondent, it is enough for the Complainant to establish a prima facie case which, if not rebutted by sufficient evidence from the Respondent, will lead to this ground being set forth.

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.

The Complainant claims that the Respondent has no connection or affiliation with the Complainant and has not received any license or consent, express or implied, to use the Complainant's trademarks in a domain name or in any other manner.

The Complainant also contends that the Respondent is not known under the disputed domain name. Furthermore, the disputed domain name directed to a website for party articles, and then directed to a website that displayed various PPC commercial links related to the Complainant's activities. This indicates the Respondent's intention to capitalize on the Complainant's reputation and cannot confer any rights or legitimated interests on the Respondent.

The Panel also finds that the nature of the disputed domain name carries a risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant's trademarks (see WIPO Overview 3.0, section 2.5.1).

The Respondent did not submit a Response or attempt to demonstrate any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, and the Panel draws adverse inferences from this failure, where appropriate, in accordance with the Rules, paragraph 14(b).

The Panel finds the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name and that paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy is satisfied.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy requires the Complainant to prove that the Respondent registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith. Both bad faith registration and bad faith use must be established.

Bad faith can be found where a respondent "knew or should have known" of the complainant's trademark rights and nevertheless registered a domain name in which it had no rights or legitimate interests (see *Research In Motion Limited v. Privacy Locked LLC/Nat Collicot,* WIPO Case No. D2009-0320; *The Gap, Inc. v. Deng Youqian,* WIPO Case No. D2009-0113).

It is implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant when registering the disputed domain name. The Complainant is well-known worldwide, and many panels have acknowledged its global reputation, making it unlikely that the Respondent was not aware of the Complainant's rights in the MICHELIN trademark. The disputed domain name reproduces the MICHELIN mark in its entirety, combined with the term "party," which strongly suggests that the Respondent had the Complainant's trademark in mind at the time of registration.

A simple trademark search or even a basic search engine query for the expression "Michelin" would have revealed the Complainant's rights and reputation. The Respondent's failure to conduct such checks further supports a finding of bad faith. In today's digital environment, the notoriety of the MICHELIN brand transcends borders, and it is inconceivable that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant's trademark when registering the disputed domain name. The Panel therefore finds that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name in bad faith, opportunistically targeting the Complainant's well-known mark to divert Internet traffic and generate revenue.

The disputed domain name has been used in a manner that evidences bad faith. Initially, it resolved to a page titled "Michelin party" intended to be an online store for party articles, and later directed to a parking page displaying PPC links related to the Complainant's activities. Panels have consistently held that such use, diverting Internet users for commercial gain by creating confusion with a well-known trademark, constitutes bad faith under Paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy (see *F Hoffmann-La Roche AG v. Anna Valdieri,* WIPO Case No. D2007-0956; *L'Oréal SA v. LV Kefeng*, WIPO Case No. D2009-1231,).

The configuration of the disputed domain name to trigger phishing warnings and the presence of an email server further raises the risk of fraudulent activity.

The Panel concludes that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith and that consequently, the Complainant has satisfied the requirement under paragraph 4(a)(iii) 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 <michelinparty.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Daniel Peña/
Daniel Peña
Sole Panelist
Date: February 6, 2026