

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

LinkedIn Corporation v. Paul Jensen, Astral Business Solutions  
Case No. D2025-5269

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is LinkedIn Corporation, United States of America ("United States"), represented by The GigaLaw Firm, Douglas M. Isenberg, Attorney at Law, LLC, United States.

The Respondent is Paul Jensen, Astral Business Solutions, South Africa.

### **2. The Domain Name and Registrar**

The disputed domain name <thelinkedinstrategist.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 December 17, 2025. On December 17, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 17, 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) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on December 18, 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 amendment to the Complaint on December 18, 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 the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on December 19, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was January 8, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on January 13, 2026. The Respondent

sent an email communication to the Center on January 15, 2026, which the Center acknowledged on the same day.

The Center appointed Uwa Ohiku as the sole panelist in this matter on January 20, 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 was founded in 2003 and is one of the world's largest professional networking platforms on the Internet, with over one billion members in more than 200 countries and regions, including executives from every Fortune 500 company.

The Complainant owns more than 700 trademarks comprising the term LINKEDIN in over 71 jurisdictions worldwide, including:

- United States Trademark No. 3074241 for LINKEDIN, registered on March 28, 2006;
- European Union Trademark No. 004183893 for LINKEDIN, registered on July 24, 2006; and
- International Trademark No. 1368414 LINKEDIN, registered on April 27, 2017.

The Complainant's domain name, <linkedin.com>, which was registered on November 2, 2002, hosts the Complainant's primary website.

The disputed domain name was registered on March 12, 2020, and at the time of the Complaint, resolved to a website offering Internet visitors "Expert Prospecting Services" to help them "find the LinkedIn opportunities" they want, among several other services. The disputed domain name presently resolves to an inactive page, displaying the following message: "Maintenance Mode. This site is undergoing scheduled maintenance. Please check back soon."

#### **5. Parties' Contentions**

##### **A. Complainant**

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

Notably, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights as it contains the Complainant's LINKEDIN trademark in its entirety, with the addition of the words "the" and "strategist", which do not diminish the confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's mark.

The Complainant further contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; that the Respondent has never been granted any rights or authorization, to register or use the disputed domain name; that the Respondent has not been commonly known as "linkedin" and has not acquired any trademark or service mark rights in the mark. The Complainant further asserts that the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name is not in connection with a bona fide offering of goods and services and that the Respondent is not making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name, given the circumstances of the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name. The Complainant also refers to previous UDRP panel decisions to buttress its contentions in this regard.

The Complainant asserts further that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith by the Respondent; that the motive of the Respondent in registering and using the disputed domain name is to disrupt the Complainant's business and to attract Internet users for gain, both acts which

constitute bad faith registration and use. Further, that the use of the disputed domain name (Annex 8 of the Complaint) by the Respondent clearly shows that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's LINKEDIN trademark which has a strong reputation and is globally well known, and creating a website that appears to be a website of the Complainant is "likely fraudulent" and "indicates an intent to deceive or at a minimum, act in bad faith with the intent for commercial gain". The Complainant also asserts that given that the disputed domain name is "so obviously connected with 'the Complainant, the Respondent's actions suggest 'opportunistic bad faith' in violation of the Policy". (*LinkedIn Corporation v. David Naranjo, All Play Media*, WIPO Case No. [D2019-2784](#)).

## **B. Respondent**

The Respondent did not file a formal response to the Complainant's contentions, but sent an email communication to the Center, on January 15, 2026, well after the deadline to respond to the Complaint had expired, copying in the Complainant's representatives and the Registrar of the disputed domain name. The Respondent contended that the communication from the Center appeared to be invalid; that the identities of the recipients could not be verified in the absence of any names or specific email addresses; that he did not know who he was addressing, etc.

The Panel addresses the email communications in the Panel's findings below.

## **6. Discussion and Findings**

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules instructs the Panel to "decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted in accordance with the Policy, these Rules, and any other rules and principles of law that it deems applicable".

The Respondent did not file a formal response to the Complainant's assertions. However, as stated above, the Respondent sent an email communication on January 15, 2026, after the deadline to file a Response had lapsed, to the Center, (copying in the Complainant's representatives and the Registrar of the disputed domain name) contending that the identities of the recipients were unclear; that he did not know who he was addressing and requested valid and verified addresses. The email did not respond, or refute the Complainant's assertions, but was sent on top of the email of December 19, 2025, sent by the Center to notify the Respondent of the Complaint and of the formal commencement of the UDRP proceeding, which included information on the steps the Respondent could take and the timeline for a response, etc. The Center acknowledged receipt of the Respondent's email of January 15, 2026, further clarifying to the Respondent that the Complaint had been filed in accordance with the UDRP incorporated in the Registration Agreement binding on the Respondent.

Taking into consideration the facts and available evidence therefore, this Panel regards the Respondent's communication after the deadline to file a response, as mere subterfuge and by virtue of the Panel powers under paragraph 10 (d) of the Rules, finds the same immaterial and attaches no weight to them.

The lack of a formal response from the Respondent, however, does not automatically mean that the Complainant has established the three elements in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name. The Panel has a responsibility to review all the relevant evidence and annexed materials provided in the Complaint to verify that all three elements are indeed established. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, (["WIPO Overview 3.0"](#)), section 4.3.

Under paragraph 5(f) of the Rules, barring exceptional circumstances, in the absence of a response, the Panel shall decide the dispute based on the Complaint. Under paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the Panel may also draw inferences as it considers appropriate from any non-compliance by a party, with any provision or requirement under the Rules. Limited independent research may also be conducted by the Panel by virtue of paragraph 10 of the Rules.

## **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 the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The 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 Panel finds that the entirety of the Complainant's mark is reproduced and immediately recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Panel also finds that the addition of other terms, here, the words "the" and "strategist", does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

Further, the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com" may be disregarded for the purposes of assessing confusing similarity as this is a standard registration requirement.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

## **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

The second element requires the Panel to examine whether the Respondent has any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances by which a respondent may demonstrate such rights or legitimate interests.

The Complainant has provided copious and uncontested evidence that its rights in the LINKEDIN trademark are extensive and well-established.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the 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. Thus, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element then 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, as in this case, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

The Panel finds that the previous website content and the composition of the disputed domain name together create a risk of Internet user confusion as to who is behind the disputed domain name and website. Accordingly, having reviewed the available record, the Complainant's prior and well-established rights in the LINKEDIN trademark, the un rebutted assertions, the preponderance of evidence submitted as annexes to the Complaint and the failure of the Respondent to come forward to establish any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, such as those enumerated in paragraph 4(c) of the Policy or otherwise, the Panel finds that the Complainant has established the second element of the Policy that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

### **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 sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

Given all the foregoing, and taking into consideration the unrebutted contentions of the Complainant, (some of which are reproduced above), the preponderance of evidence by way of several annexes, and the composition and the use of the disputed domain name, the Panel concludes that the disputed domain name was registered and being used by the Respondent (who appears to trade as Astral Business Solutions) in bad faith, all acts falling particularly within paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy, that is, intentionally attempting to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark.

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 <thelinkedinstrategist.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Uwa Ohiku/*

**Uwa Ohiku**

Sole Panelist

Date: January 27, 2026