ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Valentino S.p.A. v. Huynh Tran Anh Tu, Huynh Tran Anh Tu
Case No. D2025-5451

1. The Parties

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

The Respondent is Huynh Tran Anh Tu, Huynh Tran Anh Tu, Viet Nam.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <brandprotection-valentino.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 December 31, 2025. On January 2, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On January 5, 2026, 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 (GMO-Z.com RUNSYSTEM, GMO-Z.com RUNSYSTEM JSC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on January 7, 2026, 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 January 9, 2026.

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 January 19, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 8, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on February 12, 2026.

The Center appointed Yuri Chumak as the sole panelist in this matter on February 23, 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 an Italian fashion house founded in 1960. It operates globally in the field of luxury fashion goods, including clothing, footwear, handbags, fragrances, and accessories.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous active registrations for the trademark VALENTINO, including:

- International Trademark Registration No. 570593 for VALENTINO, registered on April 24, 1991;
- International Trademark Registration No. 764790 for VALENTINO, registered on November 20, 2000, designating, inter alia, Viet Nam;
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 001990407 for VALENTINO, registered on September 18, 2008;
- United States Trademark Registration No. 1153226 for VALENTINO, registered on May 5, 1981.

The Complainant operates, inter alia, the domain name <valentino.com>, through which it promotes and sells its products.

The disputed domain name <brandprotection-valentino.com> was registered on February 21, 2025. According to the evidence submitted, the disputed domain name has been redirected to the Complainant's official website at "www.valentino.com".

The Respondent was disclosed by the Registrar as Huynh Tran Anh Tu, located in Viet Nam. There is no evidence in the record of any relationship between the Parties or of any authorization granted by the Complainant to the Respondent to use the VALENTINO trademark.

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 confusingly similar to its VALENTINO trademark, as it wholly incorporates the mark with the addition of the term "brandprotection" and a hyphen.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, has not been authorized to use the mark, and is not commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The Complainant further contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. In particular, the Complainant relies on the redirection of the disputed domain name to its official website and the configuration of MX records associated with the disputed domain name.

The Complainant requests transfer of the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

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 of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms here, "brandprotection" separated by a hyphen, may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.8.

The Panel finds that the VALENTINO mark is clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark for the purposes of the Policy.

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 the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that 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 the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element 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. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, 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 use of the disputed domain name to redirect to the Complainant's official website does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor a legitimate noncommercial or fair use. On the contrary, such redirection, in the absence of authorization, supports the inference that the Respondent sought to create an impression of association with the Complainant.

In addition, the record includes evidence of MX configuration for the disputed domain name. The configuration of email servers in circumstances indicating a risk of impersonation further supports the absence of rights or legitimate interests.

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, which has not been rebutted.

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 the VALENTINO trademark predates the registration of the disputed domain name by many years and is widely known in the field of luxury fashion. The composition of the disputed domain name, incorporating the mark in its entirety together with the term “brandprotection”, indicates targeting of the Complainant.

The redirection of the disputed domain name to the Complainant’s official website supports the conclusion that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its mark at the time of registration and sought to create an impression of association or legitimacy.

Furthermore, the evidence of MX configuration associated with the disputed domain name reinforces the risk that the disputed domain name could be used for email-based impersonation or other abusive purposes.

In these circumstances, the Panel finds that the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial or other illegitimate purposes, Internet users by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s mark as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement within the meaning of paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

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 <brandprotection-valentino.com> be transferred to the Complainant**.**

/Yuri Chumak/
Yuri Chumak
Sole Panelist
Date: February 27, 2026