

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Novomatic AG v. Kieran Holmes

Case No. D2026-0042

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Novomatic AG, Austria, represented by Salomonowitz Attorneys-at-Law, Austria.

The Respondent is Kieran Holmes, Afghanistan.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sizzling-hot.xyz> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on January 7, 2026. On January 7, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On January 8, 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 (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 January 8, 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 13, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 2, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on February 4, 2026.

The Center appointed George R. F. Souter as the sole panelist in this matter on February 11, 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 Austrian company offering casino games. The Complainant has provided the Panel with evidence of widespread registration of its SIZZLING HOT trademark in respect of, inter alia, casino games, including the European Union trademark registration No. 005179387, registered on December 7, 2007 and United States of America registration No. 86311460, registered on September 15, 2015.

The disputed domain name was registered on November 4, 2025 and used to offer slot games and gambling services.

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 its SIZZLING HOT trademarks are so well known that the Respondent without doubt was aware of them when registering the disputed domain name, and refers to its famous slot games.

The Complainant states that, so far as it has been able to establish, the Respondent is not generally known by the disputed domain name, and that the Complainant has never authorized the use of its trademark in connection with the registration of a domain name, or otherwise.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.2. and 1.7.

The Panel finds the mark is wholly contained in 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. The mere addition of a hyphen in the disputed domain name does not disturb this finding.

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 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.

Moreover, the Panel finds that the composition of the disputed domain name, which incorporates the Complainant’s trademark in its entirety with the addition of a hyphen carries a risk of implied affiliation. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.5.1.

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

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel considers it implausible that the disputed domain name was adopted without having the Complainant’s SIZZLING HOT trademark in mind, and the subsequent use of the disputed domain name for a website purporting to offer slot games and gambling services confirms this inference.

The Panel finds that the disputed domain name was registered in bad faith.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name found to be confusingly similar to a complainant’s trademark in connection with the sale of the same or similar goods to those sold by the Complainant constitutes use of the domain name in bad faith.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent’s use of the disputed domain name in the circumstances of the present case constitutes use in bad faith under 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 <sthling-hot.xyz> be transferred to the Complainant.

/George R. F. Souter/

George R. F. Souter

Sole Panelist

Date: February 25, 2026