

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sodexo v. Brett sylverain
Case No. D2026-0063

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Sodexo, France, represented by AREOPAGE, France.

The Respondent is Brett sylverain, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <hrsodexoglobal.com> (the “Disputed Domain Name”) 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 January 8, 2026. On January 9, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Disputed Domain Name. On January 9, 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 (Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0177079802) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on January 12, 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 amended Complaint on January 13, 2026.

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 January 16, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 5, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on February 10, 2026.

The Center appointed Nicholas Weston as the sole panelist in this matter on February 13, 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 French listed company that operates a food services and facilities management business with 426,000 employees serving 80 million consumers in 43 countries and consolidated revenues of EUR 24.1 billion in 2025. From 1966 the business was promoted as SODEXHO then in 2008 it changed its brand to SODEXO. The Complainant holds registrations for the trademark SODEXO in numerous countries, including International trademark registration No. 964615 SODEXO (figurative) registered on January 8, 2008.

The Complainant is also the owner of, inter alia, the domain name <sodexo.com> registered on October 9, 1998, which resolves to the company's main website.

The Disputed Domain Name was registered on January 5, 2026, and is inactive.

5. Parties' Contentions

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 cites trademark registrations for the mark SODEXO, and variations of it, in numerous jurisdictions as prima facie evidence of ownership.

The Complainant submits that its rights in the mark SODEXO predate the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name and submits that the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to its trademark, for the reason that "[t]he SODEXO / SODEXHO mark has a strong reputation and is widely known all over the world" and "addition of the elements HR and GLOBAL in the [Disputed D]omain [N]ame at issue is inoperative to distinguish it from the Complainant's mark SODEXO".

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name because "the Respondent does not have any affiliation, association, sponsorship or connection with the Complainant and has not been authorized, licensed or otherwise permitted by the Complainant or by any subsidiary or affiliated company to register the concerned domain name and to use it" and contends that none of the circumstances set out in paragraph 4(c) of the Policy apply.

Finally, the Complainant alleges that the registration and use of the Disputed Domain Name was, and currently is, in bad faith, contrary to the Policy and the Rules having regard to the prior use and submits that "[t]he sign SODEXO is purely fanciful and nobody could legitimately choose this word or any variation thereof, unless seeking to create an association with the Complainant's activities and mark SODEXO", and advances the argument that inactivity of the Disputed Domain Name is also indicative of bad faith.

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 has the burden of proving the following:

- (i) that the Disputed Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and
- (ii) that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name; and
- (iii) that the Disputed Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds 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 Complainant has produced sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it has registered trademark rights in the mark SODEXO in numerous countries.

Turning to whether the Disputed Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the SODEXO trademark, the Panel observes that the Disputed Domain Name is comprised of: (a) the letters "hr"; (b) followed by the Complainant's trademark SODEXO; (c) followed by the word "global"; (d) followed by the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com".

It is well established that the gTLD used as part of a domain name is generally disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.11.1. The relevant comparison to be made is with the second-level portion of the Disputed Domain Name, specifically: "hrsodexoglobal".

The Panel finds the mark is recognizable 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 the letters "hr" and the word "global" 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 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 Disputed 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 Disputed 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.

The Panel finds that there is no indication that the Respondent was commonly known by the term “hrsodexoglobal” prior to registration of the Disputed Domain Name. The Complainant has not licensed, permitted, or authorized the Respondent to use the trademark SODEXO. The Panel also notes that the addition of the letters “hr” and the word “global” to the Complainant’s distinctive trademark in the Disputed Domain Name carries a risk of implied affiliation (see [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.5.1).

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 Panel notes the evidence that the Disputed Domain Name resolves to an inactive webpage, which supports the Complainant’s evidence, and finds that this does not represent a bona fide offering of goods or services, or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use, given the substantial reputation and goodwill of the Complainant’s mark or capacity to otherwise mislead Internet users.

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.

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 3.1](#), section 3.2.1.

In the present case, the Panel finds that the evidence in the case shows the Respondent registered and has used the Disputed Domain Name in bad faith.

On the issue of registration, this Panel finds that there is no reason for the Respondent to have registered the Disputed Domain Name other than to trade off the reputation and goodwill of the Complainant’s well-known trademark. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.4.

Further, a gap of several years between registration of a complainant’s trademark and respondent’s registration of a disputed domain name (containing the trademark) may indicate bad faith registration. In this case, the Respondent registered the Disputed Domain Name some 18 years after the Complainant established registered trademark rights in the SODEXO mark. The Respondent has not come forward to rebut the Complainant’s allegations or to offer an alternative explanation.

On the issue of use, the Disputed Domain Name does not currently resolve to an active website.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a “coming soon” page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. Although panelists will look at the totality of the circumstances in each case, factors that have been considered relevant in applying the passive holding doctrine include: (i) the degree of distinctiveness or reputation of the complainant’s mark, (ii) the failure of the respondent to submit a response or to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, (iii) the respondent’s taking active steps to conceal its identity or (iv) the use of false or inaccurate contact details (noted to be in breach of the respondent’s registration agreement). [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the Complainant’s well-known trademark, the composition of the Disputed Domain Name, and the Respondent’s failure to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the Disputed Domain Name does not prevent a finding of 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 <hrsodexoglobal.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Nicholas Weston/

Nicholas Weston

Sole Panelist

Date: February 19, 2026