

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Degussa Holding AG v. Luke Grant, Zypher Nest Technologies
Case No. D2026-0242

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Degussa Holding AG, Switzerland, represented by Bettinger Rechtsanwälte, Germany.

The Respondent is Luke Grant, Zypher Nest Technologies, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <degussahande.com> (the “Disputed Domain Name”) is registered with Corehub S.R.L. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on January 21, 2026. On January 22, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Disputed Domain Name. On January 22, 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 (User #d6f4ca2c Privacy, See PrivacyGuardian.org) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant January 29, 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 30, 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 February 6, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 26, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 4, 2026.

The Center appointed Marilena Comanescu as the sole panelist in this matter on March 12, 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, a Swiss stock corporation, is the owner of the DEGUSSA trademark. The Degussa name has a history dating back to the 19th century, originally derived from the Deutsche Gold-und Silber-Scheideanstalt, being used mainly in the field of precious metals trading, refining, and investment.

The Complainant, either directly or through its operating subsidiaries and licensees, oversees a broad range of commercial activities, including: the production and distribution of investment-grade precious metal bars and coins, including gold, silver, platinum, and palladium; the provision of secure high-security storage solutions for precious metals; the purchase and recycling of scrap gold and old jewelry; and the sale of numismatic and commemorative items for collectors and investors.

The Complainant owns trademark rights for DEGUSSA worldwide, such as the following:

- the International trademark registration number 431497A for DEGUSSA (figurative), registered on June 8, 1977, designating many jurisdictions, covering goods in International class 14; and
- the European Union Trade Mark registration number 008749012 for DEGUSSA (figurative), registered on May 20, 2010, covering goods and services in International classes 14 and 36.

The Complainant (and its affiliates) operates more than a dozen retail locations and showrooms in Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Spain.

The Complainant has a strong online presence on various social-media platforms and also operates its official websites at <degussa-goldhandel.de> which serve as central platform for e-commerce, customer education, and brand communication. The Complainant holds various domain names such as <degussa.com>, <degussa.eu>, <degussa.shop>, <degussa-goldhandel.com>, and <degussa-goldhandel.net>, and redirects them to its central platform.

The Disputed Domain Name was registered on March 9, 2025, and, at the time of filing the Complaint, it was used in connection with a website purporting to offer security and vault-related services for the storage of valuables under the name "Degussa Goldhandel Security/Degussa Goldhandel". The website under the Disputed Domain Name also contains English-language marketing statements such as "We secure your valuables for as long as needed" and "Top Level Security", alongside claims such as "Govt Approved", "Award Winning", and "Fully Licensed, Bonded and Insured", without providing verifiable supporting information of any identifiable regulatory disclosures, licensing information, or transparent operator details.

The website further includes a "Vault Access" or "Verify Deposit" function, requiring users to enter an access code in order to "track" or "verify" a purported deposit.

The website under the Disputed Domain Name lists a physical address in Berlin, Germany, an email contact using the Disputed Domain Name, and a telephone number. However, no clear corporate identification, legal entity name, registration number, or ownership information is disclosed on the website.

Also, the website does not contain any disclaimer clarifying that it is unaffiliated with the Complainant or any of its affiliates.

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 the following:

- the DEGUSSA trademark enjoys a strong reputation in the investment and precious metals sectors;
- the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to the DEGUSSA trademark, as it fully incorporates it with the addition of the obvious misspelling (i.e. "hande") of the German word "handel" ("trade"/"commerce"); the structure of the Disputed Domain Name (the mark DEGUSSA and the descriptive term "handel" referring to commerce) reinforces the overall impression that the Disputed Domain Name relates to an official trading, sales, or commercial channel of the Complainant, thereby increasing rather than diminishing the likelihood of Internet user confusion;
- the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Disputed Domain Name mainly because:
 - (i) there is no evidence that the Respondent has been commonly known by the name "Degussa" or "Degussa Hande";
 - (ii) the Disputed Domain Name constitutes a clear typosquatted variant of the Complainant's trademark combined with a descriptive term relating to commercial activity and such use cannot confer rights or legitimate interests;
 - (iii) the Respondent is not making, and has not made, any bona fide offering of goods or services, nor is the Respondent making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the Disputed Domain Name; and
- the Respondent registered and is using the Disputed Domain Name in bad faith mainly because:
 - (i) DEGUSSA mark is well-known and was registered several decades before the registration of the Disputed Domain Name;
 - (ii) the DEGUSSA mark has been in long-standing and widespread use and enjoys a strong reputation, particularly in Germany and internationally, well before the registration of the Disputed Domain Name and therefore it is inconceivable that the Respondent selected the term "degussa" coincidentally;
 - (iii) the composition of the Disputed Domain Name confirms the Respondent's deliberate targeting of the Complainant's trademark since the Disputed Domain Name combines the trademark DEGUSSA in its entirety with the term "hande", an obvious misspelling of the German word "handel" ("trade" / "commerce"), such structure being characteristic of typosquatting, intended to capture Internet users who mistakenly omit a letter or assume the domain refers to an official commercial offering of the trademark owner. Panels have consistently held that the deliberate registration of a domain name that incorporates a well-known trademark together with a descriptive term — particularly where combined with a typographical variation — constitutes evidence of bad faith registration, as it demonstrates knowledge of the mark and an intention to exploit its goodwill;
 - (iv) by using the Disputed Domain Name to resolve to a website that falsely purports to be associated with, or operated by, the Complainant, by using the trademark DEGUSSA and by the overall look and feel of the website, the Respondent intentionally creates a false impression of source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement by the Complainant; and
 - (v) the deliberate misspelling in the Disputed Domain Name further reinforces the deceptive nature of the Respondent's conduct. Internet users who mistakenly omit or overlook the final letter of the word "handel" are diverted to the Respondent's fake website, where they are misled into believing they are dealing with the Complainant or an authorized entity.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Under the Policy, the Complainant is required to prove on the balance of probabilities that:

- (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 the Disputed Domain Name; and
- (iii) 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.

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 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.

While the addition of other term, here, "hande", may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term 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 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 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.

According to the evidence, the Respondent has used the Disputed Domain Name in connection with a website promoting and offering for sale goods and services identical to those of the Complainant, displaying the Complainant's trademark, logo, and a very similar name ("DegussaGoldhandel") reproducing the overall look and feel of the Complainant's website and inviting the Internet users to access purported deposits, without providing any accurate or prominent disclaimer. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for

illegal activity (e.g., impersonation/passing off, phishing, copycat sites, or other types of fraud) can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.1.

The Panel notes that the composition of the Disputed Domain Name, which incorporates the Complainant's mark together with a dictionary term slightly misspelled (i.e. "hande" from the German word "handel" for "trade" / "commerce"), corroborated with the content on the website at the Disputed Domain Name, being also very similar to the Complainant's official website at <degussa-goldhandel.de>, may cause consumer confusion.

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 Disputed Domain Name was registered in bad faith, with knowledge of the Complainant and its trademark particularly because it incorporates the Complainant's distinctive trademark, with a dictionary term, slightly altered, related to the Complainant's business. The registration of the Disputed Domain Name postdates the Complainant's first trademark registration by more than 48 years. Furthermore, the use of the Disputed Domain Name corroborates this judgement.

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.

Paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy provides that the use of a domain name to intentionally attempt "to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to [the respondent's] website or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of [the respondent's] website or location or of a product or service on [the respondent's] website or location" is evidence of registration and use in bad faith.

Given that the Disputed Domain Name incorporates the Complainant's trademark and the website operated under the Disputed Domain Name displays the Complainant's trademark, logo, overall look and feel, promotes similar services to those of the Complainant and without providing any disclaimer, indeed in this Panel's view, the Respondent intended to attract Internet users accessing the website corresponding to the Disputed Domain Name who may be confused and believe that the website is held, controlled by, or somehow affiliated or related to the Complainant, for its commercial gain.

Moreover, previous UDRP panels have found that the mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar to a widely known trademark, particularly in the case of coined or fanciful marks, by an unaffiliated entity can, by itself, create a presumption of bad faith for the purpose of Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.4.

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, <degussahande.com>, be transferred to the Complainant.

/Marilena Comanescu/

Marilena Comanescu

Sole Panelist

Date: March 20, 2026