

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Accor SA v. Abdelali Manni
Case No. D2026-0799

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Accor SA, France, represented by Domainoo, France.

The Respondent is Abdelali Manni, France.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <astoredeveloppement.com> is registered with IONOS SE (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 25, 2026. On February 25, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On February 26, 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) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 26, 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 February 27, 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 March 6, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 26, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 27, 2026.

The Center appointed Alexandre Nappey as the sole panelist in this matter on April 1, 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.

Pursuant to paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Rules the Panel made the following order on April 23, 2026:

1. Inviting the Complainant to provide by April 28, 2026, a further statement with specific evidence illustrating that the Respondent was aware of the ASTORE trademark and that it actually participated in events during which the services operated by the Complainant under the ASTORE trademark were presented; and
2. Inviting the Respondent to provide any comments on the Complainant's submission in response to this Procedural Order No. 1 by no later than May 1, 2026.

The due date for the Panel's decision was extended to May 8, 2026.

The Complainant provided further evidence on April 24, 2026. The Respondent did not reply to the Panel's invitation.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is the company ACCOR SA, a leading international hotel group founded in 1967.

The Complainant operates more than 5,400 hotels in over 100 countries with over 805,000 rooms, under more than 40 different names including ACCOR, MERCURE, IBIS, SOFITEL, among others.

In addition, the Complainant created ASTORE, its international procurement platform, dedicated to the needs of the hospitality and food service sectors which has its own website "www.astoreprocurement.com".

ASTORE is 4,500 suppliers referenced, 8,500 clients, of which 40 percent are non-Accor clients, EUR 3 billion in hotel spending goes through our referenced solutions.

In that context, the Complainant is the owner of several "ASTORE" trademarks, among which:

- International trademark ASTORE registration No.1500134 registered on June 11, 2019; and
- Benelux trademark ASTORE (word + device) registration No. 1402525 registered on September 19, 2019;

The Complainant is also the owner of the domain name <astoreprocurement.com> registered in 2021, which activates its digital platform for hospitality procurement.

The disputed domain name <astoredeveloppement.com> was registered by the Respondent on August 29, 2023.

The Respondent operates a website providing consulting, auditing, training, and project development services for the hospitality and restaurant sector.

The Parties have been in contact before the present proceedings, as the Complainant's Moroccan IP law firm sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Respondent on June 20, 2024, to which the Respondent replied on the same day, announcing he would get in touch directly with Complainant's representatives.

A negative certificate delivered by the Moroccan IP office on January 22, 2023, was attached to the Respondent's email, informing that at that date there was no prior right on the name ASTORE as a business name in Morocco.

Since the situation did not evolve after that, the Complainant's Moroccan IP law firm sent a reminder to its cease-and-desist letter to the Respondent on February 20, 2025.

The Complaint was filed one year later, on February 25, 2026.

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.

First, the Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its prior trademark ASTORE as it reproduces this trademark in its entirety, merely adding the generic and non-distinctive term "developpement". According to the Complainant, the combination of the terms "astore" and "developpement" does not create any distinctive meaning or alter the overall impression of the trademark within the domain name as the word "developpement" is a descriptive French term (meaning "development" in English) and the ASTORE trademark remains clearly recognizable and dominant within the disputed domain name.

Furthermore, the Complainant claims that the structure of the disputed domain name is very similar to the Complainant's domain name <astoreprocurement.com>, which reinforces the likelihood of confusion.

Second, the Complainant asserts that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. Indeed:

- the Complainant conducted searches in public trademark databases and it appears that the Respondent has no intellectual property right, and in particular, no trademark right, on the term ASTORE;
- the Respondent has not obtained any license or authorization to use a website reproducing ASTORE trademark;
- the Respondent does not make legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant states that the Respondent incorporated the company Astore Développement in Morocco in February 2023, well after the Complainant's trademark rights were registered and seven months later, in August 2023, the Respondent registered the disputed domain name <astoredeveloppement.com>.

The mere fact that the Respondent has created a company under the name "Astore Développement" in Morocco does not confer any legitimate rights, as he cannot deny his knowledge of the Complainant's trademark, its notoriety, and its prior use.

Third, the Complainant submits that the Respondent has registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith.

The disputed domain name was registered in bad faith.

The Complainant claims that the Respondent could not have been unaware of the Complainant's ASTORE trademark and platform, as it previously served as Operations Director within Caphotel, a company belonging to the Deret Group, an Accor franchisee. In this role, the Respondent participated in several Accor partner conventions where the ASTORE platform was presented. Its professional background and direct interactions with Accor employees demonstrate that the registration was made with full knowledge of the Complainant's rights.

Moreover, the disputed domain name was registered after the Complainant's trademark and after the launch of the Complainant's ASTORE platform.

The Complainant adds that the composition of the disputed domain name is highly similar to the Complainant's official website domain, namely <astoredeveloppement.com> versus <astoreprocurement.com>, creating a strong resemblance.

The Complainant claims that the Respondent is using a logo that closely imitates the sign exploited and registered by the Complainant. The Respondent's logo also features a stylized initial letter evocative of Accor's institutional emblem, which is itself registered as a trademark.

The Respondent has used the disputed domain name to exploit the reputation of the ASTORE trademark and to create a likelihood of confusion, potentially misleading third parties into believing there is a connection with the Complainant.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy provides that in order to divest the Respondent of a disputed domain name, the Complainant must demonstrate each of the following:

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

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

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.

In the present case the Complainant established registered rights on the trademark ASTORE since 2018 in France, and later in several foreign countries through international registration including Morocco, where the Respondent is purportedly running a business under the business name Astore Développement and the disputed domain name.

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, “developpement” 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.

Panels have recognized that a respondent’s prior registration of a trademark which corresponds to a domain name will ordinarily support a finding of rights or legitimate interests in that domain name for purposes of the second element. Although evidence of the registration of a business name may also be submitted to support the respondent’s case, panels are not likely to give a mere business name registration the same weight as a trademark registration, and would expect evidence of use of the business name (beyond mere corporate registration documents) to also be provided in a way that links the business name to the source of specific goods or services. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.12.1. Moreover, the existence of a respondent’s registered business name does not automatically confer rights or legitimate interests on the respondent. Panels have generally declined to find rights or legitimate interests in a respondent’s domain name on the basis of a corresponding business registration where the overall circumstances demonstrate that such registration was obtained primarily to circumvent the complainant’s assertion of its rights or otherwise prevent the complainant’s exercise of its rights (even if only in a particular jurisdiction). [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.12.2.

The Respondent registered its business name Astore Développement and a few months later, in August 29, 2023, the disputed domain name. It purportedly started to run its business in the field of consulting, management, leasing, and investments in the real estate, hotel, and restaurant sectors, and new technology, and launched its website under the disputed domain name.

On the other side the Complainant claims that the Respondent used to work for a Complainant’s franchisee before starting his own business, and that the Respondent even attended some events organized by the Complainant, during which the ASTORE platform was introduced. The Respondent’s logo is similar to the Complainant’s logo for the ASTORE trademark.

The Complainant therefore claims that the Respondent cannot have any rights nor legitimate interests in the disputed domain name as it was aware of the Complainant’s prior rights when it started its business, and worse it chose its corporate name and disputed domain name with knowledge of those prior rights.

The Panel had close examination of evidence provided by the Complainant to support its case on these specific assertions. Notably in its reply to the Procedural Order No. 1, the Complainant provided some correspondence between the Respondent and staff from the Complainant, which clearly shows that the Respondent was familiar with the Complainant and its various subsidiaries and related services.

The Complainant has certified that the Respondent participated in various Complainant-sponsored events featuring its trademarked services. The Respondent operates in the operations/procurement sector, which is the same area where the Complainant uses its trademark. This circumstance cannot be fortuitous as the ASTORE trademark is highly distinctive for such services.

The Panel would like to underline that the Complainant refers to prior UDRP decision to support its case on the Respondent's lack of right and legitimate interest.

Especially it quotes the following decisions:

SAP AG v. Harrison Barnes, WIPO Case No. [D2009-1298](#): "The mere registration of a company name does not automatically confer rights or legitimate interests where the complainant has prior trademark rights."

WIPO Case No. [D2018-2156](#): "Incorporating a business after the complainant's trademark rights were established does not give the respondent a legitimate interest in a corresponding domain name."

However, having regards to the cited decision, the Panel surprisingly notes that the quoted sentence is in fact not in the first decision. And the second case has been terminated so that there is no decision available in that case.

The Panel finds it concerning that the Complainant supports its case with false arguments or incorrectly cited UDRP decisions.

That said, for the Respondent to be considered as having rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, the sign it reflects must itself be used to identify an offer of goods or services made in good faith, and not seek to unfairly take advantage of the Complainant's trademark rights.

From the available records that the Complainant has been using "ASTORE" as a trade name and trademark since a date prior to the establishment of the Respondent's rights in its corporate name and the disputed domain name in Morocco. Taking also into account the Respondent's prior (evidenced) connections to the Complainant, as well as the use for related services and similarities in the Respondent's logo, it appears more likely than not that the Respondent knew of the Complainant and its trademark, and sought to take advantage by using a misleading name to falsely suggest a connection with the Complainant for the Respondent's own benefit, which does not amount to a legitimate or fair use.

As such, the Complainant has established a prima facie case satisfying the Panel that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its ASTORE trademark, which has not been rebutted by the Respondent. The Respondent therefore is deemed to lack rights or legitimate interests for the purposes of the Policy.

The Panel has also to take into consideration the fact that the Respondent did not reply to the Complaint, nor took the opportunity of the Procedural Order No. 1 to rebut the Complainant's claim.

Accordingly, 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 considers that the Respondent could not plausibly ignore the existence of the Complainant's and its ASTORE Trademark at the time the disputed domain name was registered, taking into consideration the evidence provided by the Complainant establishing the relationship between the Respondent and the Complainant by the past.

As to the use of the disputed domain name in bad faith, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out examples of circumstances that will be considered by a panel to be evidence of bad faith registration and use of a domain name:

"(iv) by using the domain name, you [the Respondent] have intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to your web site or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of your web site or location or of a product or service on your website or location."

Here the Panel finds that the disputed domain name resolves a website offering consulting, management, leasing, and investments in the real estate, hotel, and restaurant sectors, and new technology, which is similar to the services provided under the Complainant's ASTORE trademark.

Moreover, the logo used by the Respondent's includes a stylized "A" with a similar hole in the top left (which is a non-standard typographical element for a capital "A") and generally appears similar to Complainant's logo in terms of sizing and capitalization.

It is therefore obvious to the Panel that the disputed domain name was created in order to willingly and unfairly attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant.

The Respondent's failure to formally reply to the Complainant's contentions give no other basis to the Panel to believe that the disputed domain name might conceivably be put to good faith use.

Consequently, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name was registered and used in bad faith, so that the third and final element of the Policy is met.

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 <astoredeveloppement.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Alexandre Nappey/

Alexandre Nappey

Sole Panelist

Date: May 8, 2026