

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Valentino S.p.A. v. Aung Hagen
Case No. D2026-0800

1. The Parties

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

The Respondent is Aung Hagen, United States of America (“United States”).

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <valentinochic.com> is registered with Cosmotown, Inc. (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 28, 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 and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on March 2, 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 March 4, 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 March 10, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 30, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 31, 2026.

The Center appointed James Bridgeman as the sole panelist in this matter on April 7, 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 manufacturer of a range of luxury products including garments and accessories using the VALENTINO mark for which it holds a large number of trademark and service mark registrations including the following:

- International Trademark registration number 570593, registered on April 24, 1991, and duly renewed, in classes 3, 14, 18, and 25;
- International Trademark registration number 764790, registered on November 20, 2000, and duly renewed, in classes 3, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 34, and 35;
- European Union Trademark Registration (EUTM) registration number 001990407, filed on December 7, 2000, registered on September 18, 2008, and duly renewed, in classes 3, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 34, and 35;
- United States registered trademark VALENTINO, registration number 1153226, registered on the Principal Register on May 5, 1981, for goods in international class 25.

Relevantly, among its portfolio of registrations the Complainant is the owner of International Trademark Registration No. 969844 for VALENTINO GARAVANI, registered on July 2, 2008, and duly renewed, in classes 8, 11, 19, 20, 21, 27, 36, 42, and 43.

The Complainant operates the website at “www.valentino.com”.

The disputed domain name was registered on December 23, 2025, and resolves to a website which prominently displays the Complainant’s trademarks, and purports to offer the Complainant’s products for sale.

There is no information available about the Respondent except for that provided in the Complaint, the Registrar’s WhoIs, and the information provided by the Registrar in response to the request by the Center for details of the registration of the disputed domain name for the purposes of this proceeding.

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.

The Complainant claims rights in the VALENTINO mark established by its ownership of its portfolio of registrations described above and extensive use of the mark in its business as a world renowned luxury fashion house.

The Complainant submits that the VALENTINO trademark has been regularly and continuously used by the Complainant for more than 60 years in connection with products in the high-fashion and leather industry, including ready-to-wear apparel, haute couture garments, handbags, small leather goods, luggage, footwear, jewelry, eyewear, and fragrances.

It is further argued that in light of the Complainant's substantial investments in advertising, its uninterrupted and consistent use of the VALENTINO trademark for decades, and its impressive international client base, VALENTINO is indisputably a well-known trademark worldwide.

The Complainant adds that the global recognition of the VALENTINO brand is reinforced by the Complainant's extensive retail presence. VALENTINO-branded products are available in over 90 countries worldwide through a carefully curated and capillary retail network including approximately 160 directly operated VALENTINO boutiques located in the most prestigious shopping streets internationally, as well as more than 1,300 authorized points of sale.

Furthermore, it is argued that the reputation of the VALENTINO mark is enhanced by the Complainant's Internet presence. The Complainant owns more than 1,000 domain names identical to or comprising the trademark VALENTINO, including <valentino.com>, registered on July 21, 1998, which resolves to the Complainant's principal website as illustrated in a screen capture exhibited in an annex to the Complaint.

Firstly, the Complainant alleges that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the VALENTINO trademark and service mark as it incorporates the mark in its entirety,

The VALENTINO mark immediately recognizable within the disputed domain name and constitutes the dominant and distinctive element of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant refers to section 1.7 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), which provides that where a domain name at issue incorporates the entirety of a trademark, or at least a dominant feature thereof, the domain name at issue will normally be considered confusingly similar to that trademark for purposes of standing in a complaint under the Policy.

It is noted that the disputed domain name differs from the Complainant's VALENTINO trademark solely by the addition of the non-distinctive term "chic", and as confirmed in section 1.8 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), the addition of terms does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity where a complainant's trademark remains clearly recognizable within the domain name.

The Complainant adds that the inclusion of the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") extension ".com" is a standard technical requirement of domain name registration, and, as confirmed by section 1.11 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), it is disregarded when assessing identity or confusing similarity under the first element of the Policy.

Secondly the Complainant alleges that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name arguing that:

- the Respondent is not a licensee of the Complainant, nor is it an authorized agent, reseller, or distributor of the Complainant;
- the Respondent has not been authorized by the Complainant to use the VALENTINO trademark in any manner;
- the Respondent has not been authorized by the Complainant to register or use the disputed domain name;
- the Complainant is unaware of any evidence demonstrating that the Respondent has ever been commonly known, as an individual, business, or organization, by a name corresponding to the disputed domain name;
- the Respondent has provided no evidence of use, or demonstrable preparations to use, the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services prior to notice of the dispute;
- neither is there any evidence that the Respondent has made a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name without intent for commercial gain or to mislead consumers;

- as shown in the screen captures exhibited in the annexes to the Complaint, the disputed domain name resolves to a commercial website prominently displaying the Complainant's VALENTINO trademarks and offering for sale purported VALENTINO products at heavily discounted prices, without any disclaimer disclosing the absence of an affiliation with the Complainant;
- such use is calculated to confuse and mislead Internet users into believing that the website is operated by, or affiliated with, the Complainant or its authorized entities.

The Complainant further alleges that the exhibited screen capture shows that the Respondent is using the disputed domain name to advertise and offer for sale prima facie counterfeit VALENTINO products, as evidenced by pricing significantly below that applied to genuine VALENTINO goods and by the absence of accurate or complete information regarding the operator of the website.

Panels established under the Policy have consistently held that there can be no legitimate interest in the sale of counterfeit goods, as confirmed in section 2.13.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), which provides that the use of a domain name for illegal activity can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent.

Furthermore, the Complainant argues that irrespective of whether the goods offered are in fact counterfeit, the Respondent's conduct fails to meet the criteria set forth in *Ok! Data Americas, Inc. v. ASD, Inc.*, WIPO Case No. [D2001-0903](#). In particular, as explained in section 2.8.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), a reseller must accurately and prominently disclose its relationship with the trademark holder, which the Respondent has entirely failed to do.

Furthermore, the Complainant argues that the Respondent failed to reply to the Complainant's cease-and-desist letter, which is further evidence that no rights or legitimate interests exist.

In conclusion, the Complainant submits that as described in section 2.1 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), a complainant satisfies its burden under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy by making a prima facie showing, after which the burden of production shifts to the respondent; and the Respondent has failed to rebut the Complainant's prima facie case in this proceeding.

Thirdly the Complainant alleges that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Complainant argues that the disputed domain name reproduces the Complainant's VALENTINO trademark in its entirety, combined only with the term "chic," which is closely associated with fashion and style. Panels have found that the registration of a domain name confusingly similar to a famous trademark, particularly where the mark is reproduced in full, may of itself give rise to a presumption of bad faith, as reflected in section 3.1.4 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#).

The Complainant contends that when the disputed domain name was registered, the VALENTINO trademark had already been in continuous, widespread, and international use for several decades and had acquired an exceptional global reputation in connection with luxury fashion goods and related services.

It is submitted that given the fame and long-standing use of the VALENTINO trademark, it is inconceivable that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant and its trademark rights when registering the disputed domain name. Panels established under the Policy have consistently held that where a trademark is widely known and globally publicized, a panel may infer that the respondent "knew or should have known" of the complainant's rights, as held in *The Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. v. Hamid Reza Mohammad Pouran*, WIPO Case No. [D2002-0770](#).

In support of this contention the Complainant submits that the well-known character of the VALENTINO trademark has been expressly recognized in numerous prior decisions under the Policy, including *Valentino S.p.A. v. hong chen, chen hong*, WIPO Case No. [D2014-2129](#); *Valentino S.p.A. v. Qiu Yufeng, Li Lianye*, WIPO Case No. [D2016-1747](#); *Valentino S.p.A. v. Wu Dong*, WIPO Case No. [D2018-0641](#); and *Valentino S.p.A. v. Lijin Liu*, WIPO Case No. [D2020-0011](#).

The Complainant adds that as shown in the screen capture of the website to which the disputed domain name resolves which is exhibited in annex to the Complaint, the disputed domain name resolves to a commercial website that prominently displays the Complainant's trademarks and offers purported VALENTINO products for sale at prices significantly below those applied to genuine VALENTINO goods.

The Complainant argues that such use falsely suggests an association, sponsorship, or endorsement by the Complainant and constitutes bad faith use under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. Panels have repeatedly held that the use of a domain name to promote and sell counterfeit goods constitutes paradigmatic evidence of bad faith registration and use, including in *Prada S.A. v. Chen Mingjie*, WIPO Case No. [D2015-1466](#), and *L'Oréal SA v. PrivacyProtect.org / WangShanShan*, WIPO Case No. [D2014-0295](#).

Finally, the Complainant argues that the Respondent's failure to reply to the Complainant's cease-and-desist letter constitutes an additional indicator of bad faith, as recognized in *Societe des Produits Nestle SA v. Deleting domain, Umbeke Membe*, WIPO Case No. [D2008-0738](#).

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 3.1](#), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of the VALENTINO trademark and service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the VALENTINO 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, "chic", 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 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 disputed domain name resolves to a commercial website prominently displaying the Complainant's VALENTINO trademarks and offering for sale purported VALENTINO products at heavily discounted prices, without any disclaimer disclosing the absence of an affiliation with the Complainant. The Panel infers that the products are counterfeit. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity here, claimed as the sale of counterfeit goods, passing off, 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 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 Respondent was on the balance of probabilities aware of the Complainant, its fashion business and its rights in the VALENTINO mark when the disputed domain name was chosen and registered on December 23, 2025. The uncontested evidence shows that the Complainant had established rights in the VALENTINO mark long before the disputed domain name was registered on has registered, and on the balance of probabilities the disputed domain name was registered with the Complainant's name in mind with the intention of taking predatory advantage of the Complainant's reputation and goodwill in the VALENTINO mark.

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.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity, claimed as applicable to this case: the sale of counterfeit goods, and passing off constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The uncontested evidence is that the disputed domain name resolves to a website which purports to offer the Complainant's goods at unrealistically discounted prices. Furthermore, the screen capture which is exhibited in an annex to the Complaint shows that the Respondent's website has the look and feel of the Complainant's website at "www.valentino.com"; it prominently displays the Complainant's trademarks and service marks including VALENTINO mark and the VALENTINO GARAVANI mark. There is no attempt by the Respondent to show that it has no association with the Complainant, and in fact the website to which the disputed domain name resolves is clearly intended to create the impression that it is owned by the Complainant.

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 <valentinochic.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/James Bridgeman SC/

James Bridgeman SC

Sole Panelist

Date: April 10, 2026