ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Valentino S.p.A. v. Zhangyongqiang, Wendel Ursula
Case No. D2026-0904

1. The Parties

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

The Respondents are Zhangyongqiang, China and Wendel Ursula, Germany.

2. The Domain Names and Registrars

The disputed domain name <valentino-dk.com> is registered with Bangning Digital Technology Co.,Ltd (“the “Registrar”).

The disputed domain name <valentinomagazin.ro> is registered with ROTLD (the “Registry”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on March 2, 2026. On March 3, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar and the Registry a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On March 4, 2026, the Registrar and Registry transmitted by email to the Center their verification responses disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain names which differed from the named Respondent (Unknown Respondent) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on March 5, 2026 with the registrant and contact information of nominally multiple underlying registrants revealed by the Registrar and the Registry, requesting the Complainant to either file separate complaint(s) for the disputed domain names associated with different underlying registrants or alternatively, demonstrate that the underlying registrants are in fact the same entity and/or that all domain names are under common control. The Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on March 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 Respondents of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on March 16, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was April 5, 2026. The Respondents did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondents’ default on April 10, 2026.

The Center appointed Gonçalo M. C. Da Cunha Ferreira as the sole panelist in this matter on April 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 an Italian fashion house founded in 1960, operating globally in the luxury fashion sector, including haute couture, ready-to-wear, accessories, and related goods. The VALENTINO brand is widely recognized worldwide and has been used for several decades.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous trademark registrations for VALENTINO, including:

International Trademark Registration No. 570593 (registered April 24, 1991);
International Trademark Registration No. 764790 (registered November 20, 2000); and
European Union Trademark Registration No. 001990407 (registered September 18, 2008).

The Complainant also owns a significant portfolio of domain names incorporating the VALENTINO mark, including <valentino.com>, registered on July 21, 1998, and operates an official website used for the promotion and sale of its products.

The disputed domain names were both registered on December 17, 2025.

The disputed domain names resolved to websites offering for sale purported VALENTINO products. These websites reproduced the Complainant's trademarks, displayed images of Valentino boutiques, and presented themselves as official Valentino stores (e.g., "Valentino Boutique Denmark" and "Valentino Magazin Romania") without any disclaimer of affiliation.

The products offered were listed at significantly reduced prices compared to genuine products, suggesting that they may be counterfeit.

At the time of filing, the disputed domain name <valentino-dk.com> remained active, while the disputed domain name <valentinomagazin.ro> resolved to a security warning page.

The Complainant sent cease-and-desist letters to the Respondents, but received no response.

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 names.

The Complainant contends that:

1. the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the Complainant's VALENTINO trademark, as they incorporate the whole of the trademark.
2. the disputed domain names incorporate the Complainant's trademark in its entirety, with the mere addition of non-distinctive elements consisting of a geographical term, namely "dk", and a dictionary term, namely "magazin".
3. the addition of such elements does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.
4. the addition of the Top-Level Domains ".com" and ".ro" is merely instrumental to the use of the Internet and should be disregarded in the assessment.

5. the Respondent is not a licensee, authorized agent of the Complainant or in any other way authorized to use the Complainant's trademarks.
6. the Complainant is not aware of the existence of any evidence demonstrating that the Respondents might be commonly known by a name corresponding to the disputed domain names.
7. the Respondents have not provided any evidence of the use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the disputed domain names in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services.
8. there is no evidence that the Respondents have used the disputed domain names in connection with a legitimate noncommercial or fair use, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers.
9. the disputed domain names were used to resolve to websites reproducing without authorization the Complainant's trademarks and offering for sale purported VALENTINO products at discounted prices, without displaying any disclaimer as to the lack of affiliation with the Complainant.
10. such use is apt to confuse and mislead Internet users into believing that the websites are operated by the Complainant or one of its affiliated entities or authorized resellers.
11. the products offered for sale at the websites to which the disputed domain names resolve are offered at very low prices compared to genuine products, suggesting that the Respondents may be engaged in the sale of counterfeit goods.
12. the Respondents failed to provide accurate and complete information about the entity operating the websites associated with the disputed domain names.
13. the Respondents' conduct demonstrates that it did not intend to use the disputed domain names in connection with any legitimate purpose.
14. the Respondents have been attempting to gain from the offer for sale of the products advertised on its websites by free-riding on the well-known character of the Complainant's trademark.
15. the Respondents registered the disputed domain names with knowledge of the Complainant's trademark.
16. the Respondents intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its websites by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademark.
17. the use of the disputed domain names in connection with websites offering counterfeit products constitutes evidence of bad faith.
18. the Respondents failed to reply to the cease-and-desist letters sent by the Complainant.

B. Respondents

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Consolidation: Multiple Respondents

The amended Complaint was filed in relation to nominally different domain name registrants. The Complainant alleges that the domain name registrants are the same entity or mere alter egos of each other, or under common control. The Complainant requests the consolidation of the Complaint against the multiple disputed domain name registrants pursuant to paragraph 10(e) of the Rules.

The disputed domain name registrants did not comment on the Complainant's request.

Paragraph 3(c) of the Rules states that a complaint may relate to more than one domain name, provided that the domain names are registered by the same domain name holder.

In addressing the Complainant's request, the Panel will consider whether (i) the disputed domain names or corresponding websites are subject to common control; and (ii) the consolidation would be fair and equitable to all Parties. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.11.2.

As regards common control, the Panel notes that the disputed domain names were registered on the same date, share the same structure (VALENTINO + descriptive term), resolved to websites with highly similar layout and content, used similar contact details and email structures and were hosted by the same provider.

These circumstances support a finding of common control.

The Panel further finds that consolidation is fair and equitable to the Parties.

Accordingly, the Panel decides to consolidate the disputes regarding the nominally different disputed domain name registrants (referred to below as “the Respondent”) in a single proceeding.

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 names. 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 names. Accordingly, the disputed domain names are 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, namely “dk” and “magazin”, 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 names 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 names. 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 names such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The evidence shows that the disputed domain names were used to operate websites impersonating the Complainant and offering for sale purported VALENTINO products without authorization and without disclaimer, such use being misleading and commercial in nature. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity, including the sale of counterfeit goods or impersonation/passing off, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. Such circumstances further support a finding that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names.

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 sets out circumstances which, 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 finds that the Respondent registered the disputed domain names incorporating the Complainant's VALENTINO trademark in its entirety. Given the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's mark, the Panel considers that the Respondent was clearly aware of the Complainant and its rights at the time of registration.

The Panel further notes that the disputed domain names have been used to resolve to websites reproducing the Complainant's trademark, branding, and overall look and feel, and offering for sale purported VALENTINO products. Such use demonstrates an intention to impersonate the Complainant and mislead Internet users into believing that the websites are operated by, affiliated with, or authorized by the Complainant.

In these circumstances, the Panel finds that the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its websites by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the websites and of the products offered therein, within the meaning of paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel notes that the use of the disputed domain names in connection with websites offering prima facie counterfeit goods constitutes additional evidence of bad faith.

As consistently recognized in prior UDRP decisions, the use of a domain name for the purpose of passing off as a complainant and offering counterfeit goods is inherently indicative of bad faith.

In light of the above, the Panel finds that the disputed domain names were registered and are being used in bad faith.

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of paragraph 4(a) 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 names <valentino-dk.com> and <valentinomagazin.ro> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Gonçalo M. C. Da Cunha Ferreira/
Gonçalo M. C. Da Cunha Ferreira
Sole Panelist
Date: April 24, 2026