

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Sodexo v. Tom Redman
Case No. D2026-1287

1. The Parties

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

The Respondent is Tom Redman, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sodexa.net> is registered with NameSilo, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on March 25, 2026. On March 26, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On March 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 (Privacy User #12f07f68, See PrivacyGuardian.org) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on March 27, 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 March 31, 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 April 7, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was April 27, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on April 29, 2026.

The Center appointed James Bridgeman as the sole panelist in this matter on May 6, 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 owns and uses the SODEXHO and SODEXO marks in its food services and facilities management business, for which it is the owner of a portfolio of trademark and service mark registrations including the following:

- International registered trademark SODEXHO, registration number 689106, registered on January 28, 1998, for goods and services in classes 16, 36, 37, 39, 41, and 42.
- International registered trademark SODEXHO, registration number 694302, registered on June 22, 1998, for goods in class 9.
- European Union registered trademark SODEXO (and design), registration number 006104657, registered on June 27, 2008, for goods and services in classes 9, 16, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 45.

The Complainant has an established Internet presence and maintains its website at “www.sodexo.com” on which it promotes its goods and services. The Complainant also owns the domain name <sodexo.net>.

The disputed domain name was registered on February 18, 2026. According to the evidence provided by the Complainant, an attempt to access the website at the disputed domain name is blocked by security software. The Complainant has also provided evidence showing that the disputed domain name has been used for fraudulent email purposes. There is no information available about the Respondent except in the Complaint, the Registrar’s Whois for the disputed domain name, 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 SODEXO trademark and service mark established by its ownership of the international portfolio of trademark registrations described above and extensive use of the mark in food services and facilities management business including on the Internet on its website at “www.sodexo.com”.

Since it was founded in 1966, the Complainant, a French limited company formerly operating under the corporate name Sodexho Alliance, has grown to become one of the largest companies in the world specializing in food services and facilities management. It has developed extensive global operations and conducts business on an international scale, employing more than 426,000 employees and serving approximately 80 million consumers daily across 43 countries.

As shown in its annual report for fiscal year 2025, which is exhibited in an annex to the Complaint, the Complainant achieved consolidated revenues amounting to EUR 24.1 billion, distributed geographically as approximately 46% in North America, 36% in Europe, and 18% in the rest of the world.

Firstly, the Complainant alleges that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the SODEXO mark in which it has rights because it incorporates the Complainant’s mark almost in its entirety, the only difference being the substitution of the final letter “o” in SODEXO with the letter “a”.

The Complainant submits that this substitution does not significantly distinguish the disputed domain name from the SODEXO mark but instead corresponds to an obvious misspelling of the SODEXO mark which can be made by an Internet user and is characteristic of typosquatting practice intended to create confusing similarity between the Complainant’s mark and the Respondent’s domain name.

The Complainant further argues that the generic Top-Level Domain (“gTLD”) extension “.net” is irrelevant for the purpose of assessing confusing similarity, because it would be viewed as a technical requirement of registration for a domain name. In this respect, the Complainant cites the decision of the panel in *Groupon, Inc. v. Whoisguard Protected, Whoisguard, Inc. / Vashti Scalise*, WIPO Case No. [D2016-2087](#), which confirms that the gTLD may be disregarded by the Panel when making an assessment for the first element of the test in the Policy.

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

- the disputed domain name is registered in the name of the Respondent, who is unknown to the Complainant;
- the Respondent has no rights on SODEXO as corporate name, trade name, shop sign, trademark, or domain name that would be prior to the Complainant's rights in the SODEXO mark;
- the Respondent was not commonly known by the disputed domain name prior to the adoption and use by the Complainant of the corporate name, business name, and trademarks SODEXO and SODEXHO;
- the Respondent has no affiliation, association, sponsorship, or connection with the Complainant;
- the Respondent has not been authorized, licensed, or otherwise permitted by the Complainant or by any subsidiary or affiliated company to register the disputed domain name or to use it;
- the disputed domain name is used to point to a malicious website or page, as exhibited in an annex to the Complaint, where access has been blocked by security software identifying the page as a phishing threat, with the detection module indicating “anti-phishing” and the reason identified as “phishing” and such use cannot create rights or legitimate interests for the Respondent.

Thirdly, the Complainant alleges that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith arguing that the sign SODEXO is a purely fanciful and invented term, having no meaning independent of the Complainant's business, and that nobody could legitimately choose this word, or any variation thereof, unless seeking to create an association with the Complainant's activities and its SODEXO and SODEXHO trademarks. The disputed domain name differs from the SODEXO trademark only by the substitution of the final letter “o” with the letter “a,” a variation which is characteristic of typosquatting practice. The Complainant argues that such deliberate selection of an obvious misspelling of a well-known trademark further demonstrates that the Respondent intentionally targeted the Complainant's mark at the time of registration

It is contended by the Complainant that given the reputation and goodwill in the SODEXO mark which was well established including in the United States of America, where the Respondent is located, long before the registration of the disputed domain name, the Respondent obviously knew of the existence of those trademarks at the time he registered the disputed domain name.

The Complainant further relies on a consistent line of decisions made by panels established under the Policy, confirming that the registration of a domain name incorporating a widely recognized or well-known trademark by an unaffiliated party is, in itself, a strong indication of bad faith. This principle is expressly reflected in *Sodexo v. Shahzan / PrivacyProtect.org*, WIPO Case No. [D2013-1308](#), where the panel observed that the registration of a domain name incorporating a well-known mark by someone with no connection whatsoever to the trademark constitutes a clear indication of bad faith.

The Complainant adds that disputed domain name resolves to a malicious web page. As shown in the screen capture exhibited in an annex to the Complaint access to that page has been blocked by security software, which expressly identifies the webpage as having phishing content. The security notice states that access has been blocked in accordance with organizational security and compliance policies, specifying the detection module as “Anti-phishing” and the reason as “phishing.” In this regard the Complainant refers to *International Business Machines Corporation v. Domains By Proxy, LLC / Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico*, WIPO Case No. [D2019-1279](#), where the panel held that where a respondent uses a domain name at issue to redirect Internet users to a website showing elements consistent with malware or virus distribution, and offers no genuine explanation, such circumstances support a finding of bad faith use.

Furthermore, referring to a copy of a letter exhibited in an annex to the Complaint, the Complainant additionally submits that the disputed domain name is being used to perpetrate email scams to send fraudulent emails to third parties. These emails purport to originate from the Complainant, or from a subsidiary identified as “Sodexo Iberia SA”, and falsely claim to follow up on invoices allegedly nearing their due date.

The email messages state that, due to an alleged internal restructuring process and audit, compliance, and regulatory requirements, the Complainant’s bank account details have been changed, and recipients are instructed to make payments using newly provided banking information to a fake SODEXO bank account. The Respondent is thereby impersonating the Complainant for the purpose of obtaining money fraudulently.

The Complainant refers to the decision in *Sodexo v. Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 1247189803 / NorAm Accounts Receivable*, WIPO Case No. [D2020-1683](#), where the panel concluded that the use of a domain name almost identical to the Complainant’s well-known SODEXO trademark to send scam emails constituted bad faith registration and use within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

In summary, the Complainant argues that the unauthorized use of the disputed domain name by the Respondent to redirect Internet users to a malicious page and to send fraudulent email communications impersonating the Complainant is necessarily for the purpose of achieving commercial gain. According to the Complainant, these circumstances amount to clear evidence that the disputed domain name is registered and being used in bad faith under the Policy.

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 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 SODEXO 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.

Specifically, the disputed domain name is a misspelling of the SODEXO mark, merely substituting the vowel “a” for the “o” in the mark as contemplated in section 1.9 of the [WIPO Overview 3.1](#).

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.

In particular the uncontested evidence is that the disputed domain name is being used by the Respondent in furtherance of a fraudulent email scheme and to point to a malicious website or page, as exhibited in an annex to the Complaint, where access has been blocked by security software identifying the page as a phishing threat, with the detection module indicating “Anti-phishing” and the reason identified as “phishing” and such use cannot create rights or legitimate interests for the Respondent.

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.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate and illegal activity here, claimed as applicable to this case: phishing and distributing malware, 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 registered the disputed domain name, which is almost identical to the Complainant’s mark long after the Complainant had established registered trademark rights and developed an extensive international reputation. The uncontested evidence is that the Complainant employs more than 426,000 employees and serving approximately 80 million consumers daily across 43 countries and as shown in its annual report for fiscal year 2025, which is exhibited in an annex to the Complaint, the Complainant achieved consolidated revenues amounting to EUR 24.1 billion, distributed geographically as approximately 46% in North America, 36% in Europe, and 18% in the rest of the world.

On the balance of probabilities, the disputed domain name was registered with the Complainant’s mark in mind in an act of typosquatting, by registering a misspelling of the Complainant’s SODEXO mark with the intention of taking unfair advantage of the Complainant’s registered trademark rights, and extensive goodwill in the mark, and by using it to impersonate the Complainant in connection with the fraudulent email scheme.

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 and illegal activity here, claimed as applicable to this case: phishing and distributing malware 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 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 <sodexa.net> be transferred to the Complainant.

/James Bridgeman/

James Bridgeman

Sole Panelist

Date: May 18, 2026