

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Hachette Book Group, Inc. and Perseus Books, LLC v. Vladimir Veselovskiy
Case No. D2026-1340

1. The Parties

The Complainants are Hachette Book Group, Inc. and Perseus Books, LLC, United States of America (“United States”), represented by Oppenheim + Zembrak, LLP, United States.

The Respondent is Vladimir Veselovskiy, Ukraine.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <rpminis.com> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on March 27, 2026. On March 30, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On March 31, 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 (Withheld for Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainants on April 7, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainants filed an amended Complaint on April 9, 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 10, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was April 30, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on May 18, 2026.

The Center appointed Zoltán Takács as the sole panelist in this matter on June 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.

4. Factual Background

Hachette Book Group (“the First Complainant”) is one of the leading book publishers in the United States, tracing its origins back to 1837.

The First Complainant acquired Perseus Books (“the Second Complainant”) in 2016, including its Running Press imprint and product lines; among others collectibles, kits and games under the RP Minis brand.

The Second Complainant is the owner of the United States Trademark Registration No. 6365315 for the word mark RP MINIS, registered on May 25, 2021.

The disputed domain name was registered on March 28, 2025, and has been used to resolve to a website, which homepage title reads “RP Minis Official Website - Premium Gifts”. The website at the disputed domain name prominently and extensively features the RP MINIS mark and contains photos of products displayed on the First Complainant’s website.

5. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainants

The Complainants contend that they have satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, the Complainants contend that:

- the RP MINIS mark is included in its entirety in the disputed domain name;
- the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name since it is unable to rely on any of the circumstances set out in paragraphs 4(c)(i), (ii), or (iii) of the Policy;
- the Respondent was clearly aware of the Complainants’ business and trademark at the time of registration, because the text and images on the website at the disputed domain name are designed to imitate the Complainants’ business.

The Complainants request that the disputed domain name be transferred from the Respondent to the First Complainant .

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainants’ contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

A complainant must evidence each of the three elements required by paragraph 4(a) of the Policy in order to succeed on the complaint, namely that:

- (i) the 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 respect of the domain name; and
- (iii) the domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

Procedural Issue – Location of the Respondent

Under paragraph 10 of the Rules, the Panel is required to ensure that the Parties are treated with equality and that each Party is given a fair opportunity to present its case, and also that the administrative proceedings take place with due expedition.

The location of the Respondent disclosed by the Registrar appears to be in Ukraine, which is subject to an international conflict at the date of this Decision that may impact case notification. It is therefore appropriate for the Panel to consider, in accordance with its discretion under paragraph 10 of the Rules, whether the proceedings should continue.

Having considered all the circumstances of the case, the Panel is of the view that it should.

The Panel notes that the disputed domain name was registered by the Respondent during the above-referenced international conflict. The Panel has no doubts – for the reasons set out later in this Decision – that the Respondent registered and has been using the disputed domain name in bad faith. These facts and circumstances suggest that the Respondent maintained access to the Internet and has control over the disputed domain name.

The Panel also notes that everything required was done to notify the Respondent, with documents and communications to the Respondent's physical address in Ukraine and to its email address as registered with the Registrar, as well as to a postmaster email address as specified by the Rules.

Having considered all the circumstances of the case the Panel concludes that the Respondent who is allegedly located in Ukraine has been given a fair opportunity to present its case and so that the administrative proceeding takes place with the due expedition the Panel will proceed to a Decision accordingly.

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 Complainants have 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 entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

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 Complainants did not license or otherwise agree for registration and use of their prior registered mark by the Respondent. According to the documentary evidence submitted by the Complainant the Respondent has been using the disputed domain name to resolve to a website which claims to be the “RP Minis Official Website”. The website at the disputed domain name prominently and extensively features the RP MINIS mark and contains photos of products displayed on the First Complainant’s website. Such use of the disputed domain name is not legitimate since it is misleading as to the source or sponsorship and pretext for tarnishment or commercial gain. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.5.3.

The Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and that 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.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the Respondent’s registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel notes that the Complainants’ mark predates the registration of the disputed domain name which incorporates the mark. This fact, coupled with the use of the disputed domain name as mentioned above indicates that the Respondent was aware of the Complainants’ mark at the time of registration.

In this case, the disputed domain name resolves to a website featuring the Complainants’ mark and photos of their products and falsely pretends to be the Complainants’ official website to intentionally attract Internet users by creating confusion with the Complainants’ mark as to the source of the website and its products, which is evidence of bad faith. [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 <rpminis.com> be transferred to the First Complainant, Hachette Book Group, Inc.

/Zoltán Takács/

Zoltán Takács

Sole Panelist

Date: June 10, 2026