

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Valeo v. Evolutioncmr EcoWave
Case No. D2026-1437

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Valeo, France, represented by Tmark Conseils, France.

The Respondent is Evolutioncmr EcoWave, Cameroon, self-represented.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <valeo.online> is registered with Hostinger Operations, UAB (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on April 3, 2026. On April 7, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On April 8, 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 (Unknown) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on April 9, 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 April 13, 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 16, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was May 6, 2026. The Respondent sent email communications to the Center on April 13, 2026.

The Center appointed Mireille Buydens as the sole panelist in this matter on May 18, 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 European automotive technology company headquartered in Paris, France, and registered in the French commercial register since 1955. The Complainant operates globally as a supplier and partner to automakers, focusing on innovative solutions for smart mobility under the brand VALEO, which is also its company name. The Complainant provides and distributes spare parts for both automakers and the independent aftermarket.

The Complainant uses the VALEO trademark (hereafter “the VALEO Trademark” or “the Trademark”) for commercializing its products and services. It holds various trademark registrations for the VALEO Trademark, including:

- French Trademark Registration No. 1576649 for VALEO (word mark), registered on August 3, 1990;
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 018363184 for VALEO (word mark), registered on August 16, 2023; and
- International Trademark Registration No. 870058 for VALEO (word and device mark), registered on February 28, 2005.

The Complainant operates its official website under the domain name <valeo.com> registered on March 25, 1997. The Complainant is also active on social media under the name VALEO and has received media coverage and awards.

The disputed domain name was registered on February 19, 2026. According to the Complaint, the disputed domain name redirects Internet users to a login website prominently displaying the Complainant’s VALEO Trademark (including the word and device Trademark), as well as the same colors (blue and green), in relation with the automotive sector. At the time of this Decision, the disputed domain name resolves to an error page.

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 the VALEO Trademark, as it includes the Trademark in its entirety. No additional element is included in the disputed domain name. The use of the generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD “.online” should be ignored when assessing the confusing similarity. The Complainant further explains that the likelihood of confusion is all the more significant in view of the use of the disputed domain name in connection with a webpage displaying content related to the automotive industry, *id est* the same field of activity as the Complainant, and prominently displaying the VALEO Trademark while using the same colors as the Complainant.

Second, the Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The VALEO Trademark has been used by the Complainant in the automotive sector for decades before the registration of the disputed domain name and constitutes a well-known trademark in the automotive business, which the Respondent certainly knew or should have known. The Complainant never authorized the Respondent to make any use of the VALEO Trademark. Besides, to the

Complainant's knowledge, the Respondent is not known under the VALEO Trademark and is not using the VALEO Trademark for any legitimate activity.

On the contrary, the website under the disputed domain name reproduces the VALEO Trademark for offering products and services related to automotive equipment, which carries a risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant as it effectively suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. The Respondent has intended, for commercial gain, to attract unsuspecting Internet users who may be confused and falsely believe that the website under the disputed domain name is held, controlled by, or somehow affiliated with or related to the Complainant.

The Complainant finally contends that the Respondent registered and uses the disputed domain name in bad faith. Concerning the registration in bad faith, the Complainant asserts that, taking into account the use of the VALEAO Trademark as a trademark and company name by the Complainant for decades before the registration of the disputed domain name and the fact that the Respondent's website offers products and services in the automotive sector, it is unlikely that the Respondent choose the disputed domain name by chance. This is the more so that the Respondent's website reproduces the Complainant's VALEO Trademark and logo, using the same colors. Besides, a search online and in a trademark database would have revealed the existence of the Complainant and its VALEO Trademark.

Concerning the use in bad faith, the Complainant contends that the Respondent uses the disputed domain name to intentionally attract Internet users for commercial gain to the Respondent's website, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website and products. The website under the disputed domain name is well suited to mislead Internet users as it depicts the Complainant's VALEO Trademark, also using the VALEO logo and using the same graphic charter (same green and blue colors) for offering the same type of products and services.

B. Respondent

The Respondent sent several emails to the Center on April 13, 2026 to express its incomprehension about the proceedings. The Respondent did however not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy provides that the Complainant proves each of the following three elements in order to succeed in its Complaint:

- (i) the disputed 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 disputed domain name; and
- (iii) the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

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.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds the entirety of the VALEO Trademark is reproduced within the disputed domain name, without any change or addition. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical to the VALEO Trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Further, the gTLD “.online” is a standard registration requirement and does not prevent the disputed domain name from being identical to the VALEO Trademark.

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.

According to the Complaint, which has not been rebutted by the Respondent, the Respondent is not licensed by, nor affiliated with, the Complainant in any way. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name, nor is there any evidence of use or demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name for a bona fide offering of goods or services. There is no evidence of legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name, either. On the contrary, the Panel notes that the disputed domain name reproduces the VALEO Trademark in its entirety with no change nor addition. The disputed domain name therefore carries as such a high risk of implied affiliation, which cannot constitute fair use as it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant.

Moreover, the Panel also notes the impersonating nature of the website under the disputed domain name: the website prominently displays the VALEO Trademark, including the VALEO logo, uses the same colors (blue and flashy green) and is dedicated to the automotive sector (*id est* the Complainant’s field of activity). As a result, the Respondent induces Internet users into falsely believing that the disputed domain name resolves to a website operated or endorsed by the Complainant. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, claimed impersonation/passing off, 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.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy. Concerning the registration in bad faith, the Panel notes that the Respondent has registered a domain name which is identical to the VALEO Trademark, which is well-known in the automotive sector and has been used in this sector for several decades before the registration of the disputed domain name. A quick search for the term "valeo" (which is a coined term) online would have revealed to the Respondent the existence of the Complainant and its Trademark. As a result, the Panel finds that the Respondent was more likely than not aware of the Complainant's Trademark at the time of the registration of the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#) section 3.2.2.

Concerning the use in bad faith, the Panel notes that the disputed domain name resolved to a website prominently depicting the VALEO Trademarks, prominently displaying the VALEO logo, and using the same colors (blue and flashy green) as the Complainant, while referring to the automotive sector (the background of the website seems to be a picture of a stand at a commercial fair with a car in the middle). There is no evidence that the website directly offered automotive products or services but it appears that the website invites Internet users to log in or create an account. Taking the impersonating nature of the website and the disputed domain name, Internet users are induced to falsely believe that they are invited to create an account on a website endorsed or operated by the Complainant. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here impersonating or passing off, constitutes bad faith [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. In the present case, as explained above, the disputed domain name resolves to a website where the Respondent passes itself off as the Complainant (use of the VALEO Trademark, use of the VALEO logo, same colors, pictures referring to the automotive sector.), while offering potential customers to create an account. It results from the evidence filed by the Complainant that the website does not contain any information allowing Internet users to identify the company operating the website nor its (lack of) relationship with the Complainant. In light of this, it seems inconceivable that the Respondent would have registered and used the disputed domain name for a reason other than seeking to unduly benefit from the Complainant, its VALEO Trademark, and associated goodwill, and to mislead Internet users into believing that the website under the disputed domain name was an official Complainant's website.

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 <valeo.online> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Mireille Buydens/

Mireille Buydens

Sole Panelist

Date: May 27, 2026