

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

WhatsApp, LLC v. ف.ا فرید امنیه هنرور
Case No. D2026-1921

1. The Parties

The Complainant is WhatsApp, LLC, United States of America (“United States”), represented by Perkins Coie LLP, United States.

The Respondent is ف.ا فرید امنیه هنرور, Iran (Islamic Republic of).

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <whatsappdownloader.com> is registered with Hosting Concepts B.V. d/b/a Registrar.eu. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on May 5, 2026. On May 5, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On May 6, 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 (Redacted for Privacy) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on May 6, 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 May 6, 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 May 15, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 4, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on June 5, 2026.

The Center appointed Manuel Wegrostek as the sole panelist in this matter on June 10, 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 operates the WhatsApp messaging and voice-over-IP service as well as the WhatsApp mobile application and is a global leader in messaging services for mobile devices. Over two billion people in over 180 countries are using the WhatsApp service, which is available in sixty different languages. In recent years the WhatsApp mobile application has consistently ranked among the top apps in the market. According to the platform BusinessOfApps, WhatsApp was the fourth most popular application globally in 2025, and according to the platform App Figures, it was the third most downloaded application globally in 2024.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous trademark registrations for WHATSAPP (“WHATSAPP Trademark”), including:

- United States Trademark Registration No. 3939463, registered on April 5, 2011;
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 009986514, registered on October 25, 2011; and
- Indian Trademark Registration No. 3111463, registered on November 30, 2015.

The Complainant is also the owner of several domain names including the WHATSAPP Trademark, such as <whatsapp.com>, registered on September 4, 2008.

The disputed domain name was registered on August 16, 2025. At the time of the Decision, the disputed domain name resolved to an inactive website. The Complainant provided evidence that the disputed domain name previously resolved to an active website prominently displaying the WHATSAPP Trademark, claiming to offer a tool that enables to download profile pictures from users of the Complainant’s WhatsApp application by entering the corresponding phone number.

In December 2025, the Complainant sent email communications to the Respondent demanding (i) cessation of the use of the WHATSAPP Trademark and (ii) to transfer the disputed domain name to the Complainant. The Respondent did not reply to any correspondence from the Complainant.

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.

On the first element of the Policy, the Complainant claims that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the WHATSAPP Trademark. The disputed domain name wholly incorporates and is confusingly similar to the well-known WHATSAPP Trademark, which is followed by the nondistinctive term “downloader”. The addition of the term “downloader” is not sufficient to dispel the ensuing confusing similarity between the WHATSAPP Trademark and the disputed domain name.

On the second element of the Policy, the Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. There is no evidence to suggest that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or has any rights in the disputed domain

name independent of the Complainant's well-established trademark rights. The Respondent is not a licensee of the Complainant, nor is affiliated with the Complainant in any way. The Complainant has not authorized the Respondent to make any use of the WHATSAPP Trademark, whether in a domain name, or mobile app, in the use of its logos on the website, or otherwise. Rather, the Respondent offers a purported tool to download profile pictures of users of the Complainant's WhatsApp service and is expressly prohibited from using the WHATSAPP Trademark. The disputed domain name and the Respondent's services have been flagged by cybersecurity vendors as malicious. The Respondent does not prominently disclose their lack of relationship with the Complainant despite repeatedly making prominent use of the WHATSAPP Trademark. Further, the Respondent's website content features heavy use of pop-up advertisements on the disputed domain name in an attempt to trade off the goodwill of the Complainant, which cannot constitute any bona fide offering of goods or services.

On the third element of the Policy, the Complainant asserts that the Respondent has registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith. The Respondent knew of the Complainant's rights to the WHATSAPP Trademark when it registered the disputed domain name. The WHATSAPP Trademark is inherently distinctive, widely known throughout the world, and has been continuously and extensively used by the Complainant since 2009. It is therefore inconceivable for the Respondent to argue that he was not aware of the WHATSAPP Trademark when registering the disputed domain name on August 16, 2025. Choosing the disputed domain name that resembles the WHATSAPP Trademark to promote an unauthorized, derivative, competing service, the Respondent is taking advantage of the WHATSAPP Trademark for commercial gain. Further, the Respondent's unauthorized downloader services promoted via the disputed domain name may be used to spread malware, to enable spam, to harvest personal data from the Complainant's platform, to steal users' account credentials, or for other illegal activities. Indeed, the disputed domain name has been flagged by cybersecurity vendors as being malicious in connection with malware. Finally, in December 2025, the Complainant sent to the Respondent notifications demanding that the Respondent cease all unauthorized use of its WHATSAPP Trademark and transfer the disputed domain name to the Complainant, whereas the Respondent never replied to any correspondence from the Complainant.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules requires that the Panel's decision be made "on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable".

The Complainant must evidence each of the three elements required by paragraph 4(a) of the Policy in order to succeed on the Complaint with respect to each disputed domain name, namely that:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and
- (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and
- (iii) the disputed domain name has been 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.

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 disputed domain name contains the WHATSAPP Trademark in its entirety, with the only difference being the addition of the generic term "downloader". The Panel finds the mark is recognizable within the disputed domain name. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7. The addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise), in this case "downloader", does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy.

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.

Panels have categorically held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity (e.g., the sale of counterfeit goods or (unlicensed) pharmaceuticals, phishing/identity theft, distributing malware, unauthorized account access/hacking, impersonation/passing off, or other types of fraud) can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.13.

The Complainant has not authorized, licensed, or permitted the Respondent to register or use the disputed domain name or to use the WHATSAPP Trademark. The Panel finds that there are no indications that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or otherwise has any rights to or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. Further, the disputed domain name is not used for a bona fide offering of goods or services. Rather, the disputed domain name previously resolved to an active website prominently displaying the WHATSAPP Trademark, claiming to offer a tool that enables to download profile pictures from users of the Complainant's WhatsApp application by entering the corresponding phone number. The website linked to the disputed domain name did not accurately and prominently disclose the relationship, or rather the lack thereof, between the Respondent and the Complainant, thus creating the false impression that the Respondent might be authorized by or affiliated with the Complainant.

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 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.

Panels have consistently found that the mere registration of a domain name that is identical or confusingly similar (particularly domain names comprising typos or incorporating the mark plus a descriptive term) to a famous or widely-known trademark by an unaffiliated entity can by itself create a presumption of bad faith. Panels also have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity (here, claimed phishing/identity theft or distribution of malware) can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent, such behavior is manifestly considered evidence of bad faith.

[WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.4.

Further, panels have found the following types of evidence to support a finding that a respondent has registered a domain name to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's mark: (i) actual confusion; (ii) seeking to cause confusion (including by technical means beyond the domain name itself) for the respondent's commercial benefit, even if unsuccessful; (iii) the lack of a respondent's own rights to or legitimate interests in a domain name; (iv) redirecting the domain name to a different respondent-owned website, even where such website contains a disclaimer; (v) redirecting the domain name to or mimicking the complainant's (or a competitor's) website; and (vi) absence of any conceivable good faith use. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.4.

Moreover, 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.

In the present case the, the disputed domain name incorporates the WHATSAPP Trademark in its entirety, with the only difference being the addition of the generic term "downloader". Considering the distinctiveness and public presence of the WHATSAPP Trademark, Internet users may think the disputed domain name is connected to the Complainant and would resolve to a website related to the Complainant. Further, the disputed domain name previously resolved to an active website prominently displaying the WHATSAPP Trademark, claiming to offer a tool that enables to download profile pictures from users of the Complainant's WhatsApp application by entering the corresponding phone number. Moreover, the website linked to the disputed domain name did not accurately and prominently disclose the relationship, or rather the lack thereof, between the Respondent and the Complainant. The Panel also notes the Respondent's failure to submit a response to the Complaint or any correspondence from the Complainant. As shown above, the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Panel has not reached a final conclusion as to whether the Respondent has used the disputed domain name for phishing/identity theft, distribution of malware, unauthorized account access/hacking, or other types of fraud, despite certain indications, such as the requirement to enter a phone number on the website under the disputed domain name, suggesting such use. In any case, the above-mentioned evidence leads to the conclusion that the Respondent has registered and used the disputed domain name to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the WHATSAPP Trademark.

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 <whatsappdownloader.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Manuel Wegrostek /

Manuel Wegrostek

Sole Panelist

Date: June 22, 2026