ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Daiwa Corporate Advisory Holdings Inc. v. Chadwick Desseyn
Case No. D2026-2269

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Daiwa Corporate Advisory Holdings Inc., United States of America ("United States"), represented by Morrison & Foerster, LLP, United States.

The Respondent is Chadwick Desseyn, United States, self-represented.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <dcdadvisory.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 May 26, 2026. On May 27, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On May 28, 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 service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on May 29, 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 29, 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 June 1, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 21, 2026. Upon the Respondent's request for an extension of time of June 2, 2026, the due date for the Response was extended to June 25, 2026. The Response was filed with the Center on June 3, 2026.

The Center appointed W. Scott Blackmer as the sole panelist in this matter on June 8, 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 corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, United States, with a principal place of business in New York, New York, United States. According to the online database of the Delaware Division of Corporations, the Complainant was incorporated in 2011.[1] The Complainant functions as an international investment bank and corporate-finance advisor that specializes in providing strategic consulting services, as described on the Complainant's website at "www.dcadvisory.com", which the Complainant has operated since "at least as early as May 2019", according to the Complaint. The Complainant's website indicates that the Complainant is involved in mergers and acquisitions and other corporate transactions in multiple sectors across 35 countries working from four offices in the United States (Washington DC, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco).

The Complainant holds United States Trademark Registration Number 5874821 (registered on October 1, 2019) for the DC ADVISORY word mark in international classes 35 and 36 (disclaiming the word "advisory" alone). The Complainant also holds United States Trademark Registration Number 7165441 (registered on September 12, 2023) for a DC ADVISORY figurative mark (the logo appearing on the Complainant's website) consisting of the capital letters "DC" above a line over lower-case letters spelling the word "advisory", also in international classes 35 and 36 and also disclaiming the word "advisory" apart from the mark as shown.

The disputed domain name was created on April 30, 2026, and is registered to the Respondent listing no organization, a postal address in the State of Tennessee, United States, and a Gmail contact email address. At the time of this Decision, the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website. The Complainant attaches a screenshot showing that on May 26, 2026, the disputed domain name resolved to a landing page headed with the disputed domain name and displaying what appear to be categories of videogames leading to pay-per-click ("PPC") third-party advertising links.

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.

Notably, the Complainant asserts that the disputed domain name is "virtually identical and confusingly similar to" the DC ADVISORY marks and the Complainant's associated domain name, merely adding the letter "d" after the term "dc" in an instance of typosquatting or deliberate misspelling. The Complainant states that the Respondent does not have a corresponding name, has no permission from the Complainant, and has not made use of the disputed domain name, so the Respondent has no evident rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and could not claim any, since the disputed domain name is virtually identical to the Complainant's mark.

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[1]Noting the general powers of a panel articulated in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Rules, it is commonly accepted that a panel may undertake limited factual research into matters of public record, as the Panel has done in these proceedings. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.8.

The Complainant contends that its mark is well known, and the Respondent's registration of the disputed domain name with a slight misspelling of the mark represents an example of opportunistic bad faith. The Complainant cites the Respondent's concealing its identity through a domain privacy service as an indicator of deception, as well as the implausibility of any good faith use of the disputed domain name confusingly similar to a clearly recognizable, well-established trademark. The Complainant argues for the application of the "passive holding" doctrine in the totality of these circumstances, citing WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.3. The Complainant infers that the Respondent hopes to disrupt the Complainant's business or ultimately to use the disputed domain name to attract Internet users to another site for commercial gain.

B. Respondent

The Respondent contends that the Complainant has not satisfied all three of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

The Respondent explains his interest in the disputed domain name based on the initials of his two children's names, which are both "DCD". The Respondent attaches copies of the children's birth certificates as evidence of this fact. The Respondent asserts that "[t]he domain was acquired as a personal and family-related digital asset, with the intention of serving as the foundation for a future artificial intelligence, business automation, and workflow technology consulting venture built around these shared family initials". The Respondent also attaches a copy of the business tax license he obtained from Wilson County, Tennessee on April 27, 2026, to operate a business named DCD Consulting, as well as the United States federal tax identification he obtained on April 25, 2026, for DCD Consulting. The Respondent explains that he consults in the fields of business automation, artificial intelligence integration, workflow optimization, and technology consulting and not in international investment banking and corporate finance. Hence, he states that he was not aware of the Complainant, does not compete with the Complainant, never attempted to sell the disputed domain name to the Complainant or a third party, and did not act in bad faith to disrupt the Complainant's business or create confusion as to source or affiliation with the Complainant.

The Respondent requests a finding of Reverse Domain Name Hijacking. "The Complainant's attempt to obtain transfer of a domain name based on a common three-letter acronym, despite the Respondent's clear and legitimate explanation for registration, exceeds the intended scope of the UDRP and places an unfair burden on an individual registrant …".

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 (the registered DC ADVISORY word mark and the DC ADVISORY figurative mark in which the terms "DC ADVISORY" are prominent elements) for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds the marks are recognizable within the disputed domain name, differing only by the addition of a letter "d" after the term "dc". Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the marks for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7, 1.9.

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.

The Complainant made a prima facie assessment that the Respondent lacked rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name based on the record at the time of the Complainant was filed: the Respondent had no permission from the Complainant, the Respondent's name did not correspond with the disputed domain name, and the disputed domain name was parked briefly (probably by the Registrar) on a landing page with PPC advertising links and then produced only an error message. As the Respondent registered the disputed domain name through a domain privacy service, the Complainant could not initially identify the Respondent or any potential legitimate interests.

However, in this proceeding the Respondent has come forward with a plausible explanation for the selection of the string composing the disputed domain name, backed by evidence of his children's names and demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of consulting services (a federal tax identification and a county business license, both obtained a few days before registering the disputed domain name), consistent with the Policy, paragraph 4(c)(i). The children's and business names notably consist of the initials "DCD" not "DC" as found in the Complainant's trademark and refer to a quite different kind of consulting business. Lacking persuasive evidence that this name selection was a pretext to attack the Complainant's mark (as discussed further below in connection with the issue of bad faith), the Panel concludes that the Respondent has legitimate interests in the disputed domain name for Policy purposes. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.2.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has not 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. These all require establishing the likelihood that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's mark and meant to exploit or attack it.

In the present case, the Respondent denies such prior awareness, and the Panel finds that denial credible. The Complainant may be well known in certain international financial circles but is not necessarily well known to the general population. The Complainant's mark is composed of a geographic abbreviation representing the United States' capital, "DC", plus a generic designation of a broad category of services, "advisory", for which the Complainant disclaims trademark protection. Thus, the Panel is not persuaded that the mark is so highly distinctive and well-known that it is "not plausible" that a slightly different domain name would be registered for any reason other than to attack the Complainant's mark. The record does not suggest that the Respondent is active in the same services or markets as the Complainant, and the Respondent offers credible reasons for choosing the string corresponding to the disputed domain name, which is not identical to the Complainant's mark. The fact that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name through a domain privacy service also is not particularly relevant. There are legitimate reasons for this common practice aside from almost being a default these days, such as avoiding spam and identity theft through the automated harvesting of contact details, and the Respondent replied when reached through the proxy service.

The evidence in the case file as presented does not indicate that the Respondent's aim in registering the disputed domain name was to profit from or exploit the Complainant's trademark.

The Panel finds the third element of the Policy has not been established.

D. Reverse Domain Name Hijacking

Paragraph 15(e) of the Rules provides that, if after considering the submissions, the Panel finds that the Complaint was brought in bad faith, for example in an attempt at Reverse Domain Name Hijacking ("RDNH") or to harass the domain-name holder, the Panel shall declare in its decision that the Complaint was brought in bad faith and constitutes an abuse of the administrative proceeding. The mere lack of success of the complaint is not, on its own, sufficient to constitute reverse domain name hijacking. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 4.16.

The Respondent objects to the filing of the Complaint against the disputed domain name "based on a common three-letter acronym, despite the Respondent's clear and legitimate explanation for registration". But the Complainant did not know of this explanation when it filed the Complaint. The Respondent was unidentified, and the Respondent has not yet published a website associated with the disputed domain name. The Complainant might have attempted to communicate first with the Respondent through the Registrar or proxy service, but the Panel is reluctant to find that because of this omission the Complainant filed the Complaint in bad faith or as an abuse of the administrative proceeding.

In these circumstances, the Panel declines to enter a finding of RDNH.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, the Complaint is denied.

The Panel enters this Decision without prejudice to refiling of a complaint, however, in the event that the Respondent's subsequent use of the disputed domain name casts doubt on the Respondent's declared legitimate interests and good faith as assessed on the present record, where the Respondent has not yet made active use of the disputed domain name.

/W. Scott Blackmer/
W. Scott Blackmer
Sole Panelist
Date: June 22, 2026