

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Valentino S.p.A. v. Kay Horstmann
Case No. D2026-2459

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Valentino S.p.A., Italy, represented by STUDIO BARBERO S.p.A., Italy.

The Respondent is Kay Horstmann, Germany.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <valentino-butik.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 June 5, 2026. On June 8, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On June 9, 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 the same day, 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 June 10, 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 11, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 1, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on July 7, 2026.

The Center appointed Martin Svorčík as the sole panelist in this matter on July 14, 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 an Italian luxury fashion house founded by Valentino Garavani and Giancarlo Giammetti in 1960. It offers luxury fashion products, including clothing, handbags, shoes, and accessories, and operates through a global retail network in more than 90 countries.

The Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations for the trademark VALENTINO around the world. These include, inter alia:

- International Trademark Registration No. 570593 for VALENTINO (word mark), registered on April 24, 1991;
- International Trademark Registration No. 764790 for VALENTINO (word mark), registered on November 20, 2000, designating amongst others, Türkiye; and
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 001990407 for VALENTINO (word mark), registered on September 18, 2008.

The Complainant also owns other extensive national and international trademark registrations for VALENTINO and the various VALENTINO logos in many jurisdictions worldwide.

Additionally, the Complainant maintains a substantial portfolio of domain names incorporating the VALENTINO trademark, including its main domain name <valentino.com>, through which it markets and sells its products and provides information regarding its business.

The disputed domain name <valentino-butik.com> was registered on March 31, 2026. According to evidence submitted by the Complainant, the disputed domain name resolves to a website displaying the Complainant's VALENTINO logo, an image of a Valentino Boutique, and offering VALENTINO products at a substantially lower price than the Complainant's. Additionally, the Respondent's website includes a notice "Valentino Resmi Türkiye Butik Copyright 2026 ©" at the bottom of the website page, which in English translates to "Valentino Official Türkiye Boutique." The Respondent's website is currently blocked in countries outside Türkiye, but the Complainant has provided evidence that the website is active and available to consumers in Türkiye.

The Complainant's representative attempted to send a cease-and-desist letter to the Respondent on April 28, 2026, using the email address displayed on the website, but the communication could not be delivered. On May 15, 2026, after obtaining information from Cloudflare concerning the hosting provider, the Complainant's representative sent a further cease-and-desist letter to the hosting provider, requesting deactivation of the website.

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 contends that:

- The disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's VALENTINO mark. When comparing the disputed domain name with the Complainant's mark it is clear that the disputed domain name <valentino-butik.com> wholly incorporates the VALENTINO mark, with the inclusion of a hyphen and the Turkish word "butik", meaning "boutique" in English. The Complainant argues that the inclusion of another term "butik" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.
- The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, because the Complainant's trademark is wholly incorporated in the Respondent's disputed domain name without any license or authorization from the Complainant. Additionally, Respondent has not provided any evidence of the use of the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. The website offers purported VALENTINO products at prices significantly lower than those of genuine VALENTINO products, suggesting that the goods may be counterfeit.
- The Respondent's disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith due to the extensive use and well-known nature of the Complainant's trademark. Moreover, the use of the disputed domain name to promote a website containing prima facie counterfeit VALENTINO products shows the Respondent's intent to mislead consumers and attract internet users for commercial gain.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy directs that the Complainant must establish each of the following:

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

Although the addition of other terms, here "butik" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

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.

From the evidence, it is clear that the Respondent is neither a licensee nor an authorized reseller of VALENTINO products, and is not associated with the Complainant in any manner. Nor is there any evidence that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The available evidence shows that the disputed domain name resolves to a website displaying the Complainant’s VALENTINO trademarks, an image of a Valentino boutique, and the wording “Valentino Official Türkiye Boutique”, while offering purported VALENTINO products at significantly lower prices than those of the Complainant. The website does not accurately disclose the Respondent’s lack of relationship with the Complainant and instead presents itself as an official Türkiye boutique of the Complainant.

Such use is misleading and cannot amount to a bona fide offering of goods or services or to a legitimate non-commercial or fair use. The Respondent has not come forward with any evidence to rebut the Complainant’s prima facie case.

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 a domain name containing the Complainant’s trademark which directs consumers to a website containing the Complainant’s VALENTINO mark and logo, and product offerings. The Complainant has submitted extensive evidence of the VALENTINO mark’s global use and reputation, as well as the Complainant’s active trademark registrations in Türkiye, which is the country targeted by the Respondent’s site. Together, this evidence proves that the Respondent knew about the VALENTINO trademark when registering the disputed domain name. See [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.2.2

The Panel further finds that the Respondent uses the disputed domain name intentionally to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s VALENTINO trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website. This falls within paragraph 4(b)(iv) of 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 <valentino-butik.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Martin Švorčík/

Martin Švorčík

Sole Panelist

Date: July 22, 2026