

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

419Studios Ltd. v. Abdul Rauf Raza, Namecheap Org Pk
Case No. D2026-2616

1. The Parties

The Complainant is 419Studios Ltd., United Kingdom, represented by Harbottle & Lewis LLP, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is Abdul Rauf Raza, Namecheap Org Pk, Pakistan.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <corteizstore.com> (the “Disputed Domain Name”) is registered with Nicenic International Group Co., Limited (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on June 16, 2026. On June 17, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Disputed Domain Name. On June 18, 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 June 23, 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 July 3, 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 July 3, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 23, 2026. The Respondent sent email communications to the Center on June 24, 2026, and July 28, 2026.

The Center appointed Nicholas Weston as the sole panelist in this matter on August 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 is a UK registered company incorporated in February 2019 that operates a fashion business founded in 2017 with an online presence that includes around 1.6 million followers on Instagram, physical pop-up stores in New York City, United States of America ("United States"), London, United Kingdom, and Paris, France, and a turnover of over GBP 121 million between January 1, 2017, to November 7, 2025. The Complainant has used the name CORTEIZ since 2017 in connection with its provision of streetwear and accessories and holds registrations for the trademark CORTEIZ, and variations of it, in numerous jurisdictions, including United Kingdom Registration No. 3976277 for the mark CORTEIZ registered on March 1, 2024, in International Classes 25 and 35; European Union Registration No. 18963656 for the mark CORTEIZ registered on May 3, 2024, in International Classes 25 and 35; United States Registration No. 7839983 for the mark CORTEIZ registered on June 24, 2025, in International Classes 25 and 35; and International Registration No. 1816106 for the figurative mark CORTEIZ RULES THE WORLD registered on May 3, 2024, in International Classes 25 and 35.

The Complainant primarily operates from its online stores <corteiz.com> and previously <crtz.xyz> to offer CORTEIZ Brand streetwear fashion and accessories.

The Disputed Domain Name was registered on September 22, 2023, and resolves to a webpage that is similar to the Complainant's main website, and displays the Complainant's trademarks, including on clothing bearing those marks, and uses the same colour palette as used by the Complainant in its online store.

6. 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 says it has unregistered common law trademark rights for the trademark CORTEIZ and also cites its registrations as prima facie evidence of ownership.

The Complainant submits that its rights in the mark CORTEIZ predate the Respondent's registration of the Disputed Domain Name and that it "has gained widespread recognition and media attention" combined with "the extensive and continuous use of the CORTEIZ Brand and name since 2017, the significant sales turnover, widespread media coverage, celebrity endorsements, and substantial online presence" that it contends "it has acquired unregistered trade mark rights in the CORTEIZ name". It submits that the Disputed Domain Name is confusingly similar to its trademark, because the Disputed Domain Name is comprised of the CORTEIZ trademark and that the addition of the word "store" and the generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) ".com" is not sufficient to avoid the confusing similarity.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Disputed Domain Name because "[t]he Respondent is not licensed by the Complainant to use the CORTEIZ trademark in domain names or otherwise", and that none of the circumstances set out in paragraph 4(c) of the Policy apply. The Complainant also submits that "the Disputed Domain Name is being utilised to display an online store impersonating the Complainant, featuring the Complainant's CORTEIZ logo and trademark for illegitimate commercial gain" which is not a legitimate or fair use under the Policy.

Finally, the Complainant alleges that the registration and use of the Disputed Domain Name was, and currently is, in bad faith, contrary to the Policy and the Rules having regard to evidence that points to awareness of the Complainant and its trademark. On the issue of registration in bad faith the Complainant submits “that the most basic degree of due diligence would have otherwise made the Respondent aware of the Complainant’s rights in the CORTEIZ mark when registering the Disputed Domain Name”. On the issue of bad faith use, the Complainant submits that the “Respondent uses and has previously utilised the Disputed Domain Name to give the impression that the website to which it resolves is controlled or authorised by the Complainant by using the CORTEIZ mark, copyright protected images and purporting to sell the Complainant’s products”, and contends that such use is indicative of bad faith.

B. Respondent

No formal response has been filed. However, the Panel will exercise its discretion to take into account the Respondent’s communications with the Center dated June 24, 2026, and July 28, 2026, stating (relevantly):

Email June 24, 2026

“I acknowledge receipt of the Notice of Registrant Information concerning the domain name <corteizstore.com>. I confirm that I am the registrant of the disputed domain name as identified by the Registrar. I respectfully request that all future communications regarding this proceeding be sent to the contact details disclosed by the Registrar. I reserve all rights to submit a formal Response to the Complaint within the applicable deadline and to present evidence demonstrating my rights and legitimate interests in the domain name, as well as the absence of bad-faith registration and use.”.

Email July 28, 2026:

“Thank you for the update. i have replied already”

6. Discussion and Findings

Under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant has the burden of proving 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; and
- (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. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions (“[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)”), section 1.7.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. The requirements of the first element for purposes of the Policy may be satisfied by a trademark registered in any country. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1. The Complainant has produced sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it has registered trademark rights in the mark CORTEIZ covering the period after March 2024.

However, given those registered rights post-date the registration date of the Disputed Domain Name on September 22, 2023, the Panel turns to the question of whether the term “corteiz” is one in which the Complainant has trademark rights that arise from having used it as an identifier of goods or services the

Complainant provides in the period that precedes the registration date of the Disputed Domain Name.

On balance and in the absence of a formal Response, the Panel is persuaded that the Complainant does have unregistered trademark rights that precede registration of the Disputed Domain Name in the word CORTEIZ for the purposes of the Policy, mostly because there was a flurry of publicity in the month preceding registration of the Disputed Domain Name, as indicated by the records, and also because the Respondent clearly thought it worth using that word as an identifier to attract Internet traffic to its own website which targets the Complainant, supporting the Complainant's assertion and evidence that its mark has achieved significance as a source identifier. The Complainant has supplied evidence (and the Panel is persuaded by that evidence) demonstrating that the mark acquired distinctiveness in the period prior to September 22, 2023, having regard to a range of factors including (i) the duration and nature of use of the mark since 2017, (ii) the amount of sales under the mark which involves turnover of over GBP 121 million from January 1, 2017, to November 7, 2025, including net sales in excess of GBP 24 million booked prior to the registration of the Disputed Domain Name, (iii) evidence of the significant advertising using the mark prior to registration of the Disputed Domain Name; and (iv) the significant public recognition of the brand including the nomination on September 5, 2023, of the CORTEIZ brand as the best "New Establishment Menswear" at the Fashion Awards 2023. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.3.

Turning to whether the Disputed Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the CORTEIZ trademark, the Panel observes that the Disputed Domain Name is comprised of: (a) an exact reproduction of the Complainant's trademark CORTEIZ; (b) followed by the word "store"; (c) followed by the gTLD ".com".

It is well established that the gTLD used as part of a domain name is generally disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.11. The relevant comparison to be made is with the second-level portion of the Disputed Domain Name, specifically: "cortezstore".

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.

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 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 Disputed 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 despite acknowledging ownership of the Disputed Domain Name, awareness of this proceeding, and its evidentiary requirements, 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 notes that the Complainant has not licensed or otherwise authorized the Respondent to use its trademark and that there is no relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent, let alone any accurate or prominent disclosure of that relationship, or absence of such, on the website at the Disputed Domain Name. The use of the Complainant's trademarks and the similarity of the Parties' respective websites suggests that the Respondent has deliberately targeted the Complainant. The Panel finds that the Respondent's activities do not represent a bona fide offering of goods or services, or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use, given the substantial reputation and goodwill of the Complainant's mark or capacity to otherwise mislead Internet users.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity such as impersonation, copycat sites, passing off, or other types of fraud, 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.

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 Panel finds that the evidence in the case shows the Respondent registered and has used the Disputed Domain Name in bad faith.

On the issue of registration, while the Complainant's trademarks were registered after the Disputed Domain Name, as indicated above the Panel is satisfied that the Complainant has demonstrated that it has unregistered trademark rights that precede registration of the Disputed Domain Name in the word CORTEIZ for the purposes of the Policy. Therefore, taking into account the composition of the Disputed Domain Name incorporating the Complainant's trademark, the Panel is satisfied that the Respondent deliberately targeted the Complainant's trademark CORTEIZ when it registered the Disputed Domain Name.

On the issue of use, the Complainant's evidence is that the Disputed Domain Name was used to host a website that imitates the Complainant's to the extent they are confusingly similar.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, alleged impersonation copycat sites, or passing off, constitutes bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. The Complainant supplied evidence of the misleading website and the Panel finds they are confusingly similar in many respects. The Panel accepts that the display by the Respondent on its website of clothing that features an image of Alcatraz prison that, in turn features the Complainant's figurative trademark, would be likely to compound the confusion. In the circumstances, having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the Disputed Domain Name constitutes bad faith under 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 <corteizstore.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Nicholas Weston/

Nicholas Weston

Sole Panelist

Date: August 19, 2026