

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

WhatsApp LLC v. Ammar Noman
Case No. D2026-2644

1. The Parties

The Complainant is WhatsApp LLC, United States of America, represented by Hogan Lovells (Paris) LLP, France.

The Respondent is Ammar Noman, Yemen.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <anwhatsapp.com> is registered with GoDaddy.com, LLC (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on June 17, 2026. On June 18, 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 (Registration Private, Domains by Proxy LLC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on June 24, 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 June 29, 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 June 30, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 20, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on July 24, 2026.

The Center appointed Anita Gerewal as the sole panelist in this matter on July 29, 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 one of the world's leading mobile messaging applications, "WhatsApp". Established in 2009 and acquired by Meta Platforms, Inc. (formerly Facebook, Inc.) in 2014, WhatsApp enables users worldwide to send messages free of charge through smartphones, including both iPhone and Android devices. In addition to its mobile application, the service is accessible through its official website, "www.whatsapp.com", where users can access its messaging platform via the Internet. Since its introduction in 2009, WhatsApp has experienced remarkable growth, becoming one of the most widely used messaging applications globally. As of April 2025, the platform had more than 3 billion monthly active users worldwide.

The Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations for WHATSAPP in many jurisdictions throughout the world, including the following:

- United States Trademark Registration No. 3939463, for the word mark WHATSAPP, in international class 42, registered on April 5, 2011;
- European Union Trade Mark Registration No. 009986514, for the word mark WHATSAPP, in International Classes 9, 38 and 42, registered on October 25, 2011;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1085539, for the word mark WHATSAPP, in International Classes 9 and 38, registered on May 24, 2011;
- European Union Trade Mark Registration No. 10496602, for the figurative mark , in International Classes 9, 38 and 42, registered on May 18, 2012; and
- United States Trademark Registration No. 4359872, for the figurative mark , in International Classes 9 and 38, registered on July 2, 2013.

The Complainant is also the owner of numerous domain names comprising its WHATSAPP trade mark, under various generic Top-Level Domains ("gTLDs") as well as under many country code Top-Level Domains.

The disputed domain name was registered on April 16, 2019 and, prior to the filing of the Complaint, resolved to a website titled "ANWhatsApp Download" that purports to offer for download unauthorized modified APK versions of the WhatsApp app. The Respondent's website also features modified versions of the Complainant's figurative trademark.

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 Complainant owns numerous registered trademarks for WHATSAPP in multiple jurisdictions and has therefore established rights in the WHATSAPP mark for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy. The disputed domain name incorporates the WHATSAPP trade mark in its entirety, with the addition of the prefix "an" and the gTLD ".com". The Complainant submits that the addition of the prefix "an" does not dispel confusing similarity, as the WHATSAPP trade mark remains

clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the incorporation of the Complainant's mark is sufficient to establish that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the WHATSAPP trade mark.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent is neither affiliated with nor authorized by the Complainant to use the WHATSAPP trade mark in a domain name or otherwise, and cannot claim to be commonly known by the disputed domain name. The Complainant further contends that the Respondent is using the disputed domain name to offer unauthorized modified versions of the WhatsApp application for download. These modified APK files do not comply with the WhatsApp Terms of Service, and the Respondent's use of modified WhatsApp logos creates a false impression of affiliation with the Complainant. The Complainant argues that the Respondent cannot be regarded as a bona fide service provider, as it neither sells nor repairs the Complainant's products but instead uses the disputed domain name to distribute unauthorized modified APK versions of the WhatsApp application under the WHATSAPP trade mark. Further, even if the Oki Data principles were applied, the Respondent would fail to satisfy them because it does not offer legitimate services relating to the Complainant's products and does not clearly disclose the absence of any relationship with the Complainant. Instead, the Respondent's use of modified versions of the Complainant's logos and figurative marks is likely to mislead Internet users into believing that its website is operated, authorized, or endorsed by the Complainant. Accordingly, the Complainant submits that the Respondent's conduct does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services and does not confer any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Complainant submits that the WHATSAPP trade mark is highly distinctive and enjoys worldwide recognition, having been extensively used since the launch of the WhatsApp application in 2009. Given the mark's global reputation and the Respondent's extensive use of the Complainant's name, trade mark, logo, and references to its official application on the associated website, the Complainant contends that the Respondent was clearly aware of its rights when registering the disputed domain name in April 2019 and intentionally sought to capitalize on the Complainant's goodwill for commercial gain. The Complainant further argues that the confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and its trade mark, coupled with the absence of any disclaimer, is likely to mislead Internet users into believing that the Respondent's website is affiliated with or endorsed by the Complainant. In addition, the Respondent's distribution of unauthorized modified WhatsApp APK files is said to harm the Complainant's reputation while exposing users to potential privacy and security risks, thereby constituting further evidence of bad faith registration and use.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

According to paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, in order to succeed, the Complainant must establish each of the following elements:

- (i) The disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the 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 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 the WHATSAPP trademark 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, "an" 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.

The Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name under paragraph 4(c) of the Policy. The Respondent is neither a licensee nor an affiliate of the Complainant and has never been authorized to use the WHATSAPP trademark. Rather, the Respondent uses the disputed domain name to offer unauthorized modified versions of WhatsApp, together with modified logos. As noted by panels, such use increases the likelihood of an implied affiliation with the Complainant and does not establish rights or legitimate interests. Even if the Oki Data principles were applicable, the Respondent would not satisfy them, as it does not offer legitimate services relating to the Complainant's products and fails to clearly disclose the absence of any relationship with the Complainant. The Panel further notes that there is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or holds any trademark rights in the corresponding term. Nor is the Respondent making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name, given that the associated website promotes unauthorized modified versions of WhatsApp.

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.

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 disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The WHATSAPP trademark is highly distinctive and internationally well known, and the Respondent's extensive use of the Complainant's trademark, name, logo, and references to the official WhatsApp application on the associated website demonstrates that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's rights when registering the disputed domain name. The Panel considers that the Respondent intentionally sought to exploit the Complainant's goodwill by using the disputed domain name to attract Internet users through a misleading impression of affiliation or endorsement, particularly in the absence of any disclaimer. The Respondent's distribution of unauthorized modified WhatsApp APK files further supports a finding of bad faith, as such conduct both capitalizes on the Complainant's reputation and potentially exposes Internet users to privacy and security risks. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 <anwhatsapp.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Anita Gerewal/

Anita Gerewal

Sole Panelist

Date: August 12, 2026