ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Grove Collaborative, Inc. v. Nickolas Wilderman
Case No. D2026-2762

1. The Parties

Complainant is Grove Collaborative, Inc., United States of America ("United States" or "U.S."), represented by Fredrikson & Byron, PA, United States.

Respondent is Nickolas Wilderman, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <grovelife.shop> ("the Domain Name") is registered with Spaceship, Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on June 24, 2026. On June 25, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On June 26, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the Domain Name which differed from the named Respondent (Unknown / Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to Complainant on June 30, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. Complainant filed an amended Complaint that same day.

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 Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on July 7, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 27, 2026. Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent's default on July 30, 2026.

The Center appointed Harrie R. Samaras as the sole panelist in this matter on August 12, 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

Complainant has created and curated more than 150 high-performing eco-friendly products (e.g., health, wellness, personal care, beauty, cosmetics, household cleaning, laundry, baby and pet care), which it sells at retail online at <grove.co>. Complainant has owned that domain name since 2016.

Complainant owns a number of trademark registrations for the GROVE Mark (or the "Mark") for online retail store services, including U.S. Registration No. 7,414,073 and 7,677,368, registered on June 11, 2024, and February 4, 2025, respectively. It also owns trademark registrations for the GROVE CO. Mark including U.S. Registration No. 6,886,119, registered on October 25, 2022.

Complainant's annual revenue for 2025 was USD 173.7 million and its advertising spend was USD 9.7 million. Complainant has received numerous accolades for its sustainability efforts, most notably being named the EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year for three consecutive years (2020, 2021, and 2022). Other key awards include the 2024 Dieline Award for sustainable packaging and the Reuters Responsible Business Award for its reporting and transparency.

The Domain Name was registered on August 27, 2025. The website that was associated with the Domain Name (the "Website") copied aspects of the website that Complainant uses to sell its products, including the font colors, presentation of the GROVE Mark (reversing the colors from white on green to green on white), selling the same or similar products, using the same or similar photos, and using products sold under Complainant's GROVE CO. Mark. The Domain Name currently does not resolve to any website.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the Domain Name. Notably, Complainant contends that the Domain Name consists entirely of Complainant's GROVE Mark followed by the descriptive word "life". That term describes the nature of the products Complainant sells -- products to clean and care for the things, people, and pets in one's "life". When "life" follows a brand, therefore, it signals that the brand contributes to a better, fuller, or more enjoyable way of living without taking away from the power of the brand itself. Adding "life" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity, because the GROVE Mark is clearly recognizable within the Domain Name. Also, combining the Mark with the Top-Level Domain ("TLD") ".shop" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name because: Complainant has never authorized Respondent to register or use the Domain Name or to provide any goods or services for Complainant; there is no trademark application or registration for GROVE or GROVELIFE in Respondent's name; Respondent is not commonly known by "Grove" or "Grove Life", nor is he using or making preparations to use the Domain Name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services; and Respondent is not making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the Domain Name without intent for commercial gain. Respondent is purporting to sell genuine products like those Complainant sells on its website while using the Mark on the Website described above. The Website contains no disclaimer as to an affiliation or sponsorship by Complainant.

Respondent intentionally selected a domain name fully containing and confusingly similar to the GROVE Mark adding the descriptive word "life", thereby preventing Complainant from registering the Domain Name, diverting traffic from Complainant's website, and disrupting Complainant's business. Respondent registered the Domain Name with a TLD ".shop" that only furthers confusion. There is no evidence Respondent intended to use the Domain Name in good faith. Respondent has attempted to conceal his identity by failing to provide any accurate information for WhoIs contact information or on the Website. Attempts to contact the email contact listed on the Website ("...@grovelife.shop") were returned as undeliverable. Given the status of Complainant in the eco-friendly home products industry and Respondent's use of the Mark in the Domain Name adding the descriptive word "life", on a website designed to impersonate Complainant's website for purposes of selling knock-off or purportedly genuine GROVE ("life") and Grove curated products, bad faith may be inferred. Respondent is using the Domain Name to pass itself off as Complainant by selling purported "GROVE CO." products on its "GROVE" branded retail website.

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

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.

Complainant has shown rights in respect of the GROVE Mark for purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the Mark is reproduced within the Domain Name. Accordingly, it 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, "life", may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of that term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the 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 Complainant has established a prima facie case that Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. Respondent has not rebutted Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity, here, claimed as hosting a copycat site and passing off, 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.

In the present case, the Panel notes that Respondent registered the Domain Name in bad faith because: Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name; Respondent registered the Domain Name after Complainant began using the GROVE Mark in commerce and Complainant became successful along with earning accolades for its sustainability efforts; in registering the Domain Name, Respondent added the descriptive term "life" to the Mark, suggesting he knew of Complainant and Complainant's products that are intended to promote a healthier way of life; Respondent used the Domain Name in conjunction with the Website that copied the Mark and key aspects of Complainant's website to sell the same or similar products that Complainant sells on its website; and Respondent was selling products on the Website that bore Complainant's GROVE CO. Mark. Respondent was using the Domain Name in bad faith in conjunction with the Website described above to exploit Complainant's reputation in the eco-friendly home products industry to gain financially in its sale of eco-friendly home products.

Regarding the Domain Name's current non-use, Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name including a blank page would not by itself prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. To the contrary, in looking at the totality of circumstances in each case, panels have found that the registration and non-use of a domain name can still constitute bad faith for purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness and reputation of Complainant's Mark and the composition of the Domain Name and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the Domain Name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, claimed a copycat website and passing off, constitutes bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds Respondent's registration and use of the Domain Name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that 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 Domain Name <grovelife.shop> be transferred to Complainant.

/Harrie R. Samaras/
Harrie R. Samaras
Sole Panelist
Date: August 21, 2026