ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Louis Dreyfus Trademarks B.V. v. Maria Gonzalez
Case No. D2026-2946

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Louis Dreyfus Trademarks B.V., Netherlands (Kingdom of the), represented by Inlex IP Expertise, France.

The Respondent is Maria Gonzalez, United States of America ("United States").

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <eu-ldc.com> (the "Domain Name") is registered with Wild West Domains, LLC (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on July 6, 2026. On July 6, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On July 8, 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 (Registration Private, Domains By Proxy, LLC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 8, 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 July 13, 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 July 15, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was August 4, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on August 7, 2026.

The Center appointed Nicholas Smith as the sole panelist in this matter on August 13, 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 the intellectual property holding corporation of the Louis Dreyfus Company, a multi-national firm involved in agriculture and food processing in over 100 countries, with annual sales of approximately USD 50 billion.

The Complainant has held a trademark registration for LDC (the "LDC Mark") in numerous jurisdictions since at least 2023, including International Trade Mark Registration Number 1729911, registered on April 7, 2023 designating jurisdictions such as Italy and Japan.

The Domain Name was registered on June 14, 2026. The Domain Name is inactive. The Complaint contains evidence that the Respondent has sent email from an email account in the address format "[…]@eu-ldc.com" where the Respondent impersonates the Complainant. In those emails, the Respondent conducts a phishing scam where the Respondent impersonates an employee of the Complainant in communications with the Complainant's business partners and seeks to re-direct payments from them to third party accounts for illegitimate purposes.

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 Domain Name.

Notably, the Complainant contends that:

a) It is the owner of the LDC Mark, having registered the LDC Mark in numerous jurisdictions around the world. The Domain Name is confusingly similar to the LDC Mark as it wholly incorporates the LDC Mark, adding the geographical abbreviation "eu" (an abbreviation for "European Union").

b) There are no rights or legitimate interests held by the Respondent in respect of the Domain Name. The Complainant has not granted any license or authorization for the Respondent to use the LDC Mark. The Respondent is not commonly known by the LDC Mark, nor does it use the Domain Name for a bona fide purpose or legitimate non commercial purpose. Rather, the Domain Name is used for sending emails impersonating an employee of the Complainant, which does not provide the Respondent with rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name.

c) The Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Domain Name is being used for emails that impersonate an employee of the Complainant in order to perpetuate fraud.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the 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 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 Domain Name. Accordingly, the 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 term here, "eu" and a hyphen, may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such terms 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 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 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 Domain Name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel considers that the record of this case reflects that:

- Before any notice to the Respondent of the dispute, the Respondent did not use, nor has it made demonstrable preparations to use, the Domain Name or a name corresponding to the Domain Name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. Paragraph 4(c)(i) of the Policy, and WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.2.

- The Respondent (as an individual, business, or other organization) has not been commonly known by the Domain Name. Paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy, and WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.3.

- The Respondent is not making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the Domain Name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue. Paragraph 4(c)(iii) of the Policy, and WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.4.

- The record contains no other factors demonstrating rights or legitimate interests of the Respondent in the Domain Name.

Furthermore, the Respondent's use of the Domain Name is in connection with a phishing scheme, namely to send emails passing itself off as an employee of the Complainant to third parties seeking to redirect payments based on false and misleading statements. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity (here claimed to be phishing and impersonation/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.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity (here claimed to be phishing and impersonation/passing off) constitutes bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the Domain Name constitutes bad faith under the Policy. The Domain Name has been used to create an email account from where the Respondent sends emails purporting to be from an employee of the Complainant in order to improperly re-direct payment from the Complainant's business partners which amounts to the commission of fraud. This activity commenced shortly after the Domain Name was registered.

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 Domain Name <eu-ldc.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Nicholas Smith/
Nicholas Smith
Sole Panelist
Date: August 13, 2026