

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

The School of Hard Knocks LLC v. Ogonna Nwofe
Case No. D2026-3186

1. The Parties

The Complainant is The School of Hard Knocks LLC, United States of America ("United States"), represented by Fross Zelnick Lehrman & Zissu, PC, United States.

The Respondent is Ogonna Nwofe, Nigeria.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <theschoolofhardknockz.com> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on July 20, 2026. On July 21, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On July 22, 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, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 27, 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 31, 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 August 11, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was August 31, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on September 1, 2026.

The Center appointed Gökhan Gökçe as the sole panelist in this matter on September 4, 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, founded in 2021, is a media company that promotes financial literacy through engaging content, including video interviews with successful entrepreneurs and other individuals who share their experiences and advice on career development, mentorship, and financial literacy.

The Complainant maintains a substantial presence across multiple social media platforms, including YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Spotify, and the Skool.com platform, and states that it has more than 20 million followers across these platforms.

The Complainant owns United States trademark registration No. 7,924,669 for SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS in Class 41, registered on September 2, 2025, with a claimed date of first use of August 23, 2021.

The disputed domain name was registered on August 11, 2025. It resolves to a website presenting a business networking and investment platform that promotes purported investment opportunities in African businesses and offers funding of up to USD 500,000. The website also uses the Complainant's SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS trademark and logo and links to the Complainant's official social media accounts.

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.

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 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 mark is recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name 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, “the”, 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.

It is well-established that “a domain name which consists of a variation of a trademark (typically a common, obvious, or intentional misspelling, referred to as typosquatting) is considered by panels to be confusingly similar to the relevant mark for purposes of the first element”. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.9. Here, the last letter “s” is replaced with the letter “z”. The inclusion of the generic Top-Level Domain (“gTLD”) “.com” is typically disregarded in the context of the confusing similarity assessment, being a technical requirement of registration. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.11.1.

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.

There is also no indication in the current record that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name.

Furthermore, the Respondent has failed to demonstrate any of the other non-exclusive circumstances evidencing rights or legitimate interests under the Policy, paragraph 4(c) or other evidence of rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Respondent appears to be in no way associated with the Complainant, as the Complainant has not licensed, approved or in any way consented to the Respondent’s registration and use of the trademark in the disputed domain name. The Panel finds in the circumstances of this case that the Respondent’s failure to reply to the Complaint further supports the conclusion that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. See *The Argento Wine Company Limited v. Argento Beijing Trading Company*, WIPO Case No. [D2009-0610](#); *Bayerische Motoren Werke AG v. (This Domain is For Sale) Joshuathan Investments, Inc.*, WIPO Case No. [D2002-0787](#).

The disputed domain name resolves to a website that directly references the Complainant and uses the Complainant's SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS trademark and logo, including as the website favicon and on the login page, and also provides links to the Complainant's official social media accounts. The website presents a purported business networking and investment platform offering investment opportunities and funding to African businesses, thereby creating the impression that the website is operated by, affiliated with, or endorsed by the Complainant.

In these circumstances, the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name to impersonate the Complainant and falsely suggest an affiliation with it cannot constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor a legitimate noncommercial or fair use. Moreover, the composition of the disputed domain name, which closely corresponds to the Complainant's mark and mirrors the "theschoolofhardknockz" username used by the Complainant on certain social media platforms, may cause Internet users confusion. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

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 the disputed domain name which incorporates a misspelled version of the Complainant's SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS mark, replacing the final letter "s" in "knocks" with the letter "z" and adding the term "the". The disputed domain name remains visually and phonetically very close to the Complainant's mark, which is readily recognizable within it. See, *Longs Drug Stores California, Inc. v. Shep Dog*, WIPO Case No. [D2004-1069](#) (finding typosquatting to be evidence of bad faith domain name registration); *Lexar Media, Inc. v. Michael Huang*, WIPO Case No. [D2004-1039](#) ("Typosquatting has been held under the Policy to be evidence of bad faith registration of a domain name"); *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Longo*, WIPO Case No. [D2004-0816](#) ("[typosquatting] is presumptive of registration in bad faith"). Although the Complainant's trademark registration postdates the registration of the disputed domain name, the record demonstrates that the Complainant had been using the SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS mark since 2021 and had developed a substantial online presence prior to the registration of the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name was also registered after the Complainant had filed its trademark application. In these circumstances, and noting the Respondent's subsequent use of the disputed domain name to impersonate the Complainant, the Panel finds that the Respondent was aware of and targeted the Complainant when registering the disputed domain name. See [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.8.2. The Panel further notes that the spelling "theschoolofhardknockz" corresponds to the username used by the Complainant on its Instagram and Facebook accounts, which reinforces the conclusion that the Respondent was targeting the Complainant when registering the disputed domain name.

In these circumstances, the Panel finds that the registration of the disputed domain name constitutes typosquatting. Panels have consistently found that typosquatting may be evidence of bad faith registration, particularly where, as here, the disputed domain name closely imitates the Complainant's trademark and the surrounding circumstances demonstrate that the Respondent had the Complainant in mind. This conclusion is further supported by the Respondent's subsequent use of the disputed domain name for a website reproducing the Complainant's mark and logo and linking to the Complainant's official social media accounts.

The Panel further notes that the Respondent's website expressly represents itself as being associated with the Complainant, including by stating that it is "built by the team behind the School of Hard Knocks" and by presenting a purported funding program as connected with the Complainant and individuals featured in its content. The website also reproduces the Complainant's mark and logo and links to the Complainant's official social media accounts. In the Panel's view, such use clearly demonstrates that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and deliberately sought to create the false impression that the disputed domain name and the associated website were operated by, affiliated with, or endorsed by the Complainant. The Panel finds that such use demonstrates a clear intent to target and impersonate the Complainant. Accordingly, by using the disputed domain name, the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of its website and the products offered there.

In the Panel's view, the Respondent's failure to respond to the Complaint additionally supports the conclusion that it has registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith.

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 <theschoolofhardknockz.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Gökhan Gökçe/

Gökhan Gökçe

Sole Panelist

Date: September 14, 2026