

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

PizzaExpress Limited v. Justin R  
Case No. D2026-3397

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is PizzaExpress Limited, United Kingdom ("UK"), represented by Abion AB, Sweden.

The Respondent is Justin R, China.

### **2. The Domain Name and Registrar**

The disputed domain name <pizzaexpress.store> 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 July 31, 2026. On August 4, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On August 6, 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 August 7, 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 August 12, 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 17, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 6, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on September 8, 2026.

The Center appointed Willem J. H. Leppink as the sole panelist in this matter on September 15, 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 following facts are undisputed.

The Complainant is a multinational pizza restaurant chain with its headquarters in the UK.

The Complainant was founded in 1965 by Peter Boizot, who opened the first restaurant on Wardour Street, Soho, London. The Complainant asserts it revolutionized the British restaurant industry when it introduced the concept of casual dining.

Today, the Complainant operates over 470 restaurants in the UK and overseas, in Hong Kong, China, Europe, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates. The Complainant also has a well-established commercial presence in the Chinese market, including in Hong Kong, China, where it operates numerous PIZZAEXPRESS restaurants across Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. The Complainant actively promotes its restaurants and services in the region through its dedicated Hong Kong, China website operated under the domain name <pizzaexpress.com.hk>.

The Complainant has an online presence via its official domain names, inter alia, <pizzaexpress.com> (created on November 4, 1998), and social media.

The Complainant is the owner of various trademark registrations, consisting of or including the word elements PIZZA EXPRESS and PIZZAEXPRESS, including:

- European Union trademark registration PIZZAEXPRESS (word) registered under No. 015183668 on March 19, 2018;
- International trademark registration PIZZA EXPRESS (device) registered under No. 782231 on May 24, 2002;
- United Kingdom (registered at the European Union Intellectual Property Office) trademark registration PIZZAEXPRESS (word) registered under No. 015183668 on March 19, 2018;
- Hong Kong, China trademark registration PIZZA EXPRESS (device) registered under No. 2002B06217AA on May 23, 2002; and
- Chinese trademark registration PIZZA EXPRESS (word) registered under No. 9118492 on December 14, 2013.

The disputed domain name was registered on September 24, 2025, and resolved at the time of filing the Complaint and during the review of the case file by the Center, to a landing page hosted by the Registrar advertising that the disputed domain name is available “for sale” for USD 1,450 (with a “Buy now” button and a “Lease to own” option) and promoting the Registrar’s capabilities.

#### **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 the following.

The disputed domain name is identical the Complainant’s trademarks.

The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, as the Complainant has not authorized the Respondent to use its marks and the disputed domain name does not correspond to the Respondent's name.

When searching for the disputed domain name, the terms "pizzaexpress" and "pizzaexpress.store" in the Google search engine, the results directly relate to the Complainant, its website or related topics. Moreover, the structure of the disputed domain name – incorporating the Complainant's trademark in its entirety – is inherently misleading and reflects the Respondent's intention to create an association, and a subsequent likelihood of confusion, with the Complainant and its trademark in Internet users' minds. The disputed domain name conveys the clear impression of an official online store operated or authorized by the Complainant. Internet users encountering the disputed domain name would naturally expect the disputed domain name to resolve to the Complainant's legitimate online retail or ordering platform, or to correspond to communications from an entity officially connected with the Complainant.

The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The structure of the disputed domain name shows that the Respondent registered it having the Complainant and its trademarks in mind. It reflects the Respondent's clear intention to create an association, and a subsequent likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademarks in Internet users' mind.

Overall, the Respondent's true intent in registering the disputed domain name is simply to re-sell it at a higher price than it paid.

The Complainant sent a Notification of Violation of Trademark Rights letter on July 3, 2026, and corresponding reminders to the Respondent. However, no response was received from the Respondent.

## **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 entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is identical 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 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.

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 was more likely than not aware of the Complainant and its mark, as it is well-established, including in China, where the Respondent is purportedly located, and the disputed domain name is identical to the Complainant's word marks.

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.

The Panel notes that the Respondent has been the subject of at least four other UDRP proceedings. In each of these proceedings, the Respondent registered a domain name composed of a registered trademark and the generic Top-Level Domain ".store", and the domain name was offered for sale for USD 1,450 (see, e.g., *Newcastle United Football Company Limited v. Justin R*, WIPO Case No. [D2026-1090](#)). In light of the same conduct in this case, and in the absence of a Response from the Respondent, the Panel finds that the Respondent has registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith within the meaning of paragraph 4(b)(ii) of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.1.2. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the reputation of the Complainant's trademark and the composition of the disputed domain name, identical to the Complainant's word marks (and essentially identical to the Complainant's own domain name), and finds that in the circumstances of this case the offering of the disputed domain name for sale supports a finding of bad faith under the Policy. The Panel notes that the Respondent has failed to reply to communications from the Complainant and, despite apparently receiving notice of the proceedings, the Respondent has not come forward in this proceeding to offer an alternative explanation for its registration of the disputed domain name and offering it for sale.

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 <pizzaexpress.store> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Willem J. H. Leppink/*

**Willem J. H. Leppink**

Sole Panelist

Date: September 21, 2026