

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

WhatsApp LLC v. Olivia Martin, DOTSLINK TECH

Case No. D2026-3574

1. The Parties

The Complainant is WhatsApp LLC, United States of America ("United States"), represented by Ashurst Perkins Coie US LLP, United States.

The Respondent is Olivia Martin, DOTSLINK TECH, Hong Kong, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <gbwhatsproapp.net> is registered with Hosting Concepts B.V. d/b/a Registrar.eu. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on August 11, 2026. On August 12, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On August 14, 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, DOTSLINK TECH) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on August 14, 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 August 19, 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 August 21, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 10, 2026. The Respondent sent an email message to the Center on August 23, 2026, but did not submit a formal response. On September 11, 2026, the Center informed the Parties it would proceed to appoint the Administrative Panel.

The Center appointed Assen Alexiev as the sole panelist in this matter on September 17, 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 a global leader in messaging services for mobile devices. It was founded in 2009, and in 2014, it was acquired by Meta Platforms, Inc. (formerly known as Facebook, Inc.). The Complainant provides the WhatsApp messaging and voice-over-Internet Protocol service and mobile application, which is being used by over two billion people in over 180 countries. The Complainant's official website for its WhatsApp messaging platform is located at the domain name <whatsapp.com>, registered on September 4, 2008.

The Complainant is the owner of a number of trademark registrations for WHATSAPP (the "WHATSAPP trademark"), including the following representative registrations:

- the United States trademark WHATSAPP with registration No. 3939463, registered on April 5, 2011 for services in International Class 42;
- the European Union trademark WHATSAPP with registration No. 009986514, registered on October 25, 2011 for goods and services in International Classes 9, 38, and 42; and
- the Chinese trademark WHATSAPP with registration No. 21470708A, registered on December 21, 2017 for goods in International Class 9.

The Complainant is also the owner of a number of trademark registrations for the logo , including the International trademark with registration No. 1109890, registered on January 10, 2012 for goods and services in International Classes 9 and 38.

The disputed domain name was registered on October 14, 2025. It is currently inactive. At the time of filing of the Complaint, the disputed domain name redirected to a website at "www.gbappsdl.net" with the title "GB WhatsApp Download APK Latest Update 2026", which displayed the Complainant's logo and offered for download an unofficial modified GB WhatsApp version of the Complainant's WhatsApp application, without identifying its provider. The website described the offered application as "Security Verified" and "100% Safe" and included the following small-font statement at the bottom of the page: "This site only shares guides and news about GBWhatsApp. All rights belong to their owners.", and "GB WhatsApp is a third-party application and is not affiliated with or endorsed by WhatsApp or Meta."

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.

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its WHATSAPP trademark, because it incorporates the entirety of the trademark, adding the letters “gb” as a prefix and inserting the descriptive element “pro” between “whats” and “app”. According to the Complainant, the addition of “gb” and “pro” adds to the confusing similarity because the letters “gb” are commonly associated with unauthorised modified versions of its WhatsApp application, while the term “pro” suggests a “professional” or enhanced version of the same application, thereby reinforcing the association with the WHATSAPP trademark, rather than distinguishing the disputed domain name from it.

According to the Complainant, the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant states that the Respondent is not commonly known under the disputed domain name and has no trademark rights for “GBWhatsProApp”, and that it is not a licensee or affiliate of the Complainant. The Complainant adds that the Respondent is a mobile application developer for software integrated with the Complainant’s WhatsApp platform, and is therefore explicitly prohibited from using the Complainant’s WHATSAPP trademark.

The Complainant submits that the disputed domain name incorporates the entirety of the Complainant’s WHATSAPP trademark, which, coupled with the content of the website at the disputed domain name, entails a high risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant.

The Complainant notes that the Respondent has configured the disputed domain name to redirect to the domain name <gbappsdl.net>, which displays content targeting the Complainant by distributing an unauthorised modified version of WhatsApp, known as “GB WhatsApp”, whilst making prominent use of the WHATSAPP trademark. According to the Complainant, the Respondent had the WHATSAPP trademark in mind when registering the disputed domain name and intended to exploit it. The Complainant notes that the website content associated with the disputed domain name uses the WHATSAPP trademark and its stylised design elements, in order to purportedly distribute an unauthorised modified version of WhatsApp. The Complainant adds that the Respondent’s website also displays logos that are confusingly similar to the Complainant’s WHATSAPP design mark, and replicate the Complainant’s trade dress by using a colour similar to its iconic green, as well as nearly identical white design elements, in order to achieve a similar look and feel. According to the Complainant, all these elements are likely to confuse users into believing that the disputed domain name and the Respondent’s purported “GB WhatsApp” services are operated by, approved of, or affiliated with the Complainant.

The Complainant refers to the Oki Data test, set out in *Oki Data Americas, Inc. v. ASD, Inc.*, WIPO Case [D2001-0903](#), and discussed in WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions (“[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)”), section 2.8. According to the Complainant, the Respondent’s use of the disputed domain name does not satisfy the Oki Data criteria. The Complainant submits that its Terms of Use expressly prohibit the Respondent from using the WHATSAPP trademark in the disputed domain name, and the Respondent cannot provide any bona fide services while it uses the Complainant’s trademark in violation of the prohibitions set out in the Complainant’s Terms of Use. The Complainant points out that the Respondent is not providing legitimate sales or repairs in relation to a product provided by the Complainant, because the disputed domain name and the Respondent’s services have been flagged by one or more cybersecurity vendors as malicious. The Complainant adds that the Respondent does not prominently disclose the absence of any relationship with the Complainant, but has published an easily-missed disclaimer link at the bottom of the website at the disputed domain name in small font, and Internet users are likely to believe the disputed domain name and the underlying services are authorised or endorsed by the Complainant.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. According to it, the Respondent knew of the Complainant’s rights to the WHATSAPP trademark when it registered the disputed domain name, considering that at that time, WhatsApp had amassed over two billion users worldwide. The Complainant notes that the disputed domain name and the associated website are so obviously connected with the Complainant and its WHATSAPP trademark and services, that such use by the Respondent suggests opportunistic bad faith.

The Complainant maintains that the composition of the disputed domain name and the associated website are likely to lead Internet users to believe that the website and the “GB WhatsApp” application it promotes are affiliated with or endorsed by the Complainant. According to the Complainant, the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract Internet users to the website at the disputed domain name by creating a likelihood of confusion as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website and services marketed therein.

The Complainant also submits that the Respondent’s modified unauthorised application promoted via the disputed domain name may be used to spread malware, to enable spam, to harvest personal data from the Complainant’s platform, to steal users’ account credentials, or for other illegal activities, which places the security of WhatsApp users at risk. The Complainant notes in this regard that the disputed domain name has been flagged by at least one independent cybersecurity vendor as being malicious in connection with malware.

The Complainant notes that in June 2026 it sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Respondent, but it never replied.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not formally reply to the Complainant’s contentions. With its only communication to the Center, sent in response to the Notification of the Complaint, the Respondent stated (omitting salutations and personal names):

“[...] We're so sorry for that, Our time is UTC+8, and we don't work on weekends. So, we didn't check the email on time. We do hope to solve this. We can delete all data on this domain. Please help us solve this problem. [...]”

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 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 Panel finds that the WHATSAPP trademark is recognisable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the WHATSAPP trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other elements (here, “gb” and “pro”) 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 disputed domain name and the WHATSAPP trademark 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 recognised 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 disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant’s WHATSAPP trademark and has been used for a website that prominently featured the same trademark and the Complainant’s logo and offered for download a modified version of the Complainant’s WhatsApp application that has not been authorised and supported by the latter. As to the “Ok! Data test” ([WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.8), the Panel considers that the Respondent has failed to comply with all the requirements of this test, because it does not offer for download the official product of the Complainant, but a modified software product of unknown origin and characteristics that have not been authorised by the Complainant, and its website does not prominently disclose the absence of a relationship with the Complainant. The Panel finds that the small font statement at the bottom of the page on the Respondent’s website does not render the Respondent’s activities bona fide or as amounting to fair use under the Policy. This text is insufficient to prevent the risk of implied affiliation by Internet users as it is included at the very end of the website, in small font and even if Internet users have a chance to read it, they have already been attracted to the Respondent’s website, under the impression that the disputed domain name and the website are associated with the Complainant and would have been exposed to its content, which replicates the Complainant’s trade dress by using a similar scheme as well as nearly identical white design elements.

Considering the above, the Panel does not regard that the Respondent’s conduct may give rise to rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name under the Policy.

The Panel therefore 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.

The disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the WHATSAPP trademark, and the Respondent has used it for a website that offered for download an unofficial and unauthorised version of the Complainant’s WhatsApp application without a prominent disclosure that it has not been authorised by the Complainant, while ostensibly using a logo similar to the Complainant and replicating the Complainant’s branding elements. The Respondent has not provided any plausible explanation for its actions.

Taking this into account, the Panel accepts that the Respondent has registered and used the disputed domain name with knowledge of the Complainant and targeting the WHATSAPP trademark in an attempt to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to the Respondent’s website, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s WHATSAPP trademark as to the affiliation or endorsement of its website and of the software application offered for download on it.

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 <gbwhatsproapp.net> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Assen Alexiev/

Assen Alexiev

Sole Panelist

Date: September 18, 2026