ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Morris Printing Group, Inc. v. VV Brands
Case No. D2026-3672

1. The Parties

Complainant is Morris Printing Group, Inc., United States of America ("United States" or "U.S."), represented by McGrath North Mullin & Kratz, PC LLO, United States.

Respondent is VV Brands, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

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

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on August 16, 2026. On August 17, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On August 18, 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 (da739ad36a264b3c9ef91847af54c191-Namech/The RDAP server redacted the value, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to Complainant on August 19, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. Complainant filed an amendment to the Complaint on the same day.

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 Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on August 20, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 9, 2026. Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified Respondent's default on September 14, 2026.

The Center appointed John C. McElwaine as the sole panelist in this matter on September 16, 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, Morris Printing Group, Inc., is a Nebraska, United States corporation engaged in the business of printing, graphic design, book publishing, and self-publishing services. Complainant has used the MORRIS family of marks in commerce in connection with printing and publishing services since as early as 1975, and it offers self-publishing services to authors through its website at "www.morrispublishing.com".

Complainant owns the following United States trademark registrations relevant to this matter:

- MORRIS PRESS, U.S. Reg. No. 3,656,819, registered July 21, 2009, in International Classes 40 and 42;

- MORRIS PUBLISHING, U.S. Reg. No. 3,656,821, registered July 21, 2009, in International Classes 40 and 41; and

- MORRIS PUBLISHING, U.S. Reg. No. 8,156,802, registered March 3, 2026, in International Classes 9, 41, and 42.

(Collectively, these registered trademark rights are referred to as the "MORRIS Marks.")

The Domain Name was registered on June 3, 2026. The Domain Name resolves to a commercial website under the banner "MORRIS BOOK PUBLISHERS" that offers book writing, ghostwriting, editing, formatting, marketing, and publishing services to authors. The website prominently displays the name "Morris Book Publishers", a toll-free telephone number, +1 (888) 423-[…], and a mailing address in , New York, U.S.

Respondent is disclosed by the Registrar as VV Brands, located in Texas, United States.

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.

Complainant contends that it holds longstanding and valid rights in the MORRIS Marks through multiple United States trademark registrations, and that it has consumer recognition in connection with printing, publishing, and self-publishing services. Complainant states that it has never authorized Respondent to use the MORRIS Marks and that Respondent is exploiting Complainant's goodwill through a website that offers directly competing book writing and publishing services.

With respect to the first element of the Policy, Complainant asserts that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the MORRIS Marks because it incorporates the term "morris" together with the terms "book" and "publishers", which describe and correspond to Complainant's publishing services, such that the MORRIS PUBLISHING mark remains recognizable within the Domain Name.

With respect to the second element of the Policy, Complainant alleges that Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name. Complainant asserts that Respondent is not affiliated with, licensed by, or authorized by Complainant, is not commonly known by the Domain Name, and is using the Domain Name to trade on Complainant's marks and to offer competing services, which does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use.

With respect to the third element of the Policy, Complainant contends that the Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith. Complainant asserts that Respondent registered the Domain Name with knowledge of Complainant's rights in order to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to Respondent's website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the MORRIS Marks as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website and the services offered on it.

B. Respondent

Respondent did not reply to Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Even though Respondent has defaulted and failed to file a Response, paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires Complainant to support its assertions with evidence and thus prove each of the following elements:

(i) the Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which Complainant has rights;

(ii) Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name; and

(iii) the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

Because of Respondent's default, the Panel may accept as true Complainant's reasonable factual allegations and draw appropriate inferences in Complainant's favor, provided the Panel is satisfied that such allegations are supported by evidence. See *St. Tropez Acquisition Co. Limited v. AnonymousSpeech LLC and Global House Inc.*, WIPO Case No. D2009-1779; *Bjorn Kassoe Andersen v. Direction International*, WIPO Case No. D2007-0605; see also Rules, paragraph 5(f) ("If a Respondent does not submit a response, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the Panel shall decide the dispute based upon the complaint"). Having reviewed the Complaint, the amendment to the Complaint, and the supporting evidence, and in light of the Policy, the Rules, the Supplemental Rules, and applicable principles of law, the Panel's findings on each of the required elements are set forth below.

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 Complainant's trademark and the 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 MORRIS PUBLISHING and MORRIS PRESS trademarks for the purposes of the Policy through its registered trademark rights in the United States. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The Panel finds that Complainant's MORRIS PUBLISHING mark is recognizable within the Domain Name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7. The Domain Name reproduces the term "morris" and the term "publishers", a close variant of the word "publishing", adding only the descriptive term "book", which corresponds directly to Complainant's book publishing services. Although the addition of such terms may bear on the assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds that the addition of these 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.

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to a mark in which Complainant has rights. The first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Under the Policy's second element, paragraph 4(a)(ii), Complainant has the burden of establishing that Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. Complainant needs to make a prima facie showing on this element, at which point the burden of production shifts to Respondent to present evidence that it has rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name. If Respondent has failed to do so, Complainant is deemed to have satisfied its burden under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy. See *Vicar Operating, Inc. v. Domains by Proxy, Inc. / Eklin Bot Systems, Inc.*, WIPO Case No. D2010-1141; WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.1.

In this case, Complainant has not licensed or otherwise authorized Respondent to use the MORRIS Marks or to register domain names incorporating those marks. There is no evidence that Respondent has been commonly known by the Domain Name, and the name associated with Respondent in the record, "VV Brands", bears no connection to the Domain Name or to the MORRIS Marks.

The Panel further notes several features of the record that affirmatively undermine any claim that Respondent is a legitimate business operating under a name corresponding to the Domain Name. First, there is no reference anywhere on the website to which the Domain Name resolves to any corporation, trade name, or business identity consistent with Respondent's name, VV Brands. The site holds itself out only as "Morris Book Publishers". Second, the Panel undertook basic independent research into matters of public record[1] and determined that the telephone number displayed on the website, is also associated with a number of other self-publishing websites, which undermines any claim that the number identifies a genuine, distinct business operated by Respondent under the name appearing on the site. Third, the mailing address associated with Respondent is linked to a website development firm and has no apparent connection to Respondent, VV Brands, which is located in Texas, United States.

Taken together, these facts show that there is no indicia that Respondent is an ongoing, legitimate business: there is no corporate presence corresponding to Respondent's name, no response in this proceeding, and no credible use of the Domain Name. Instead, the record demonstrates that Respondent has used the Domain Name to operate a commercial website offering book writing and publishing services that directly compete with Complainant's services, under a name that incorporates and likely trades upon Complainant's MORRIS Marks, thereby credibly misleading Internet users into believing there is an affiliation with or authorization by Complainant. Such use is inconsistent with a bona fide offering of goods or services and constitutes evidence of an intent to capitalize on Complainant's reputation. Panels have consistently held that a domain name's use cannot be deemed bona fide where the domain name and associated website constitute trademark infringement. See *On AG, On Clouds GmbH v. Nguyen Luu, Withheld for Privacy Purposes, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf, Vuong Hoang, AN NGUYEN, NEO CORP., and Ngoc Tam Nguyen*, WIPO Case No. D2021-1714 ("a [disputed domain name's] use cannot be deemed bona fide if the disputed domain names constitute trademark infringement"), citing *Sai Machine Tools Private Limited v. Mr. Sudhir Jaiswal, Shree Sai Extrusion Technik Pvt. Ltd*, WIPO Case No. D2018-2560.

[1] Noting in particular the general powers of a panel articulated inter alia in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Rules, it has been accepted that a panel may undertake limited factual research into matters of public record if it would consider such information useful to assessing the case merits and reaching a decision. See WIPO Overview 3.1, section 4.8.

Based on the foregoing, Complainant has made a prima facie showing of Respondent's lack of any rights or legitimate interests, and Respondent has failed to come forward to rebut that showing. As provided for by paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, the Panel may draw such inference from Respondent's default as it considers appropriate. The Panel finds that Respondent does not have rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name and that Complainant has met its burden under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy. The second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Under paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, Complainant must show that Respondent registered and is using the Domain Name in bad faith. A non-exhaustive list of factors constituting bad faith registration and use is set out in paragraph 4(b) of the Policy.

Beginning with registration, bad faith registration can be found where a respondent "knew or should have known" of a complainant's trademark rights and nevertheless registered a domain name in which it had no rights or legitimate interests. See *Accor S.A. v. Kristen Hoerl*, WIPO Case No. D2007-1722. The MORRIS Marks are distinctive in the field of printing and publishing and were registered and used in commerce well before Respondent registered the Domain Name on June 3, 2026. The Domain Name incorporates the term "morris" together with the descriptive term "book" and the term "publishers", a close variant of the word "publishing", and resolves to a website that offers the very categories of book writing and publishing services that Complainant provides under the MORRIS Marks. In these circumstances, where Respondent's registration of the Domain Name apparently trades off the goodwill and reputation of Complainant's trademark, it is incumbent upon Respondent to come forward with an explanation for its actions. *Six Continents Hotels, Inc. v. Patrick Ory*, WIPO Case No. D2003-0098 ("While bad faith cannot be presumed, once the Complainant has presented some evidence pointing in that direction, it is then incumbent upon the Respondent to either respond or explain why its conduct should not be ascribed to bad faith."). The Panel finds that Respondent registered the Domain Name likely with the MORRIS Marks in mind and with the intention of exploiting them. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.2.

Turning to use, by operating a commercial website under the name "MORRIS BOOK PUBLISHERS" and offering competing book publishing services, Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the MORRIS Marks as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website and the services offered on it. This constitutes bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. Such infringing use of Complainant's marks cannot be reconciled with good faith, and panels have recognized that a finding that a respondent is infringing a complainant's trademarks is dispositive of the issue of bad faith. See *On AG, On Clouds GmbH v. Nguyen Luu, Withheld for Privacy Purposes, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf, Vuong Hoang, AN NGUYEN, NEO CORP., and Ngoc Tam Nguyen*, WIPO Case No. D2021-1714 ("the Panel's finding not only that the Respondents are infringing the Complainants' trademarks … also runs afoul of principles articulated in sections 2.4 and 2.5 (including subsections) of the WIPO Overview is dispositive of [the issue of bad faith]").

The Panel's finding of bad faith is reinforced by the additional circumstances of record. As discussed above, there is no indicia that Respondent is an ongoing, legitimate business and that this is a coincidental matter of adopting a confusingly similar trademark and domain name. There has been no response from Respondent, and the website contains no reference to any corporation or trade name consistent with Respondent's name or the Domain Name. This absence of any corporate presence, credible use, or explanation weighs in favor of a finding of bad faith and against any legitimate interest. Finally, and significantly, Respondent failed to respond to the Complaint and has offered no explanation that might support a good-faith registration or use of the Domain Name. Taken together, and in the absence of any Response, the totality of the circumstances demonstrates that Respondent registered and is using the Domain Name in bad faith.

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, <morrisbookpublishers.com>, be transferred to Complainant.

/John C McElwaine/
John C McElwaine
Sole Panelist
Date: September 28, 2026