ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
B&B Hotels France v. mary rich
Case No. D2026-3978

1. The Parties

The Complainant is B&B Hotels France, France, represented by Fiducial Legal By Lamy, France.

The Respondent is mary rich, United States of America.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <hbhotel.net> is registered with Spaceship, Inc. (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on September 4, 2026. On September 4, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On September 7, 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 (Privacy service provided by WITHHELD FOR PRIVACY LLC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 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 September 8, 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 September 9, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 29, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on October 2, 2026.

The Center appointed Deanna Wong Wai Man as the sole panelist in this matter on October 14, 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, B&B HOTELS FRANCE, is a French company incorporated on May 28, 1990. It operates a hotel chain under the B&B HOTELS name and provides hotel accommodation and related services, including online hotel reservation services. According to a hotel list submitted by the Complainant and dated April 22, 2026, its network comprised 947 hotels across 12 countries, including 452 hotels in France.

The Complainant owns an international trademark portfolio including numerous trademark registrations incorporating the elements “BB” and “HOTEL” in various combinations. These include notably the French trademark BB-HOTEL, Registration No. 3182311, registered on August 29, 2002, with the French Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle, and the European Union semi-figurative trademark B&B HOTELS, Registration No. 004767323, registered on December 12, 2006, with the European Union Intellectual Property Office. The Complainant also owns additional related trademark registrations, including BBHOTEL and HOTELBB.

The disputed domain name was registered on May 10, 2026. A screenshot submitted by the Complainant, dated September 4, 2026, shows that the disputed domain name did not resolve to an accessible website at that time. However, on the date of this Decision, the Panel reviewed the website to which the disputed domain name resolved and observed that it leads to a Chinese-language website containing adult content.

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 that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its BBHOTEL, BB-HOTEL, HOTELBB and B&B HOTELS trademarks. The Complainant argues that the disputed domain name reproduces the elements “bb” and “hotel” of its marks, differing from the BBHOTEL mark only by the substitution of the initial letter “b” with the letter “h”. It further contends that this minor alteration constitutes typosquatting and that the “.net” generic Top-Level Domain (“gTLD”) does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

The Complainant argues that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant essentially states that it has not licensed, authorized or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use its trademarks, that there is no relationship between the Parties, and that the Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name. The Complainant further relies on the absence of an accessible website at the disputed domain name and the lack of any evidence of a bona fide offering of goods or services or legitimate noncommercial or fair use.

The Complainant also contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant contends that its trademark rights and its reputation substantially predate the registration of the disputed domain name and that the domain name’s close resemblance to its marks indicates that the Respondent targeted those marks. It argues that the absence of an active website does not preclude a finding of bad faith and that the Respondent’s conduct must be considered in light of three prior successful UDRP proceedings involving respondents identified as “Mary Rich”. The Complainant submits that these proceedings support a finding of a pattern of bad-faith registrations.

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 Panel notes that the disputed domain name reproduces the sequence "bhotel" of the Complainant's mark, and differs from this mark only by the substitution of the initial letter "b" with the letter "h". The Panel finds that this constitutes, on the balance of probabilities, an intentional typo/misspelling of the Complainant's mark, which remains readily recognizable within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, sections 1.7 and 1.9.

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.

Additionally, the Panel notes that the Complainant has not licensed, authorized, or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use its BBHOTEL or B&B HOTELS trademarks or to register a domain name incorporating those marks or a confusingly similar version of those marks, and there is no evidence of any affiliation or other relationship between the Parties. Further, there is no evidence that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name.

Based on the evidence submitted, the disputed domain name resolved to an inactive website, and upon the Panel's review of the disputed domain name on the date of this Decision, it currently resolves to a Chinese-

language website containing adult content, which is unrelated to the Complainant's hotel and accommodation services and may tarnish the Complainant's marks. There is particularly no evidence that the disputed domain name is currently being used in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services or legitimate noncommercial or fair use. Furthermore, the Respondent has provided no explanation for this use and has failed to rebut the Complainant's prima facie case. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of 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 is confusingly similar to the Complainant's mark years after the first registration of the Complainant's relevant marks. At the time of registration of the disputed domain name, the Complainant had used the B&B HOTELS mark for decades, notably since 1990, and owned multiple trademark registrations for BBHOTEL and B&B HOTELS, dating back to 2003 and 2006, respectively, and had also already an established commercial presence, operating 947 hotels across 12 countries as of April 2026. The Panel further notes that previous panels applying the Policy have recognized the well-known nature and extensive reputation of the Complainant's trademarks, including in *B&B Hotels v. nancy crevello, shy aviation*, WIPO Case No. D2025-0499, and *B&B Hotels v. Simone Paratore*, WIPO Case No. D2023-0327, and the Panel agrees with this assessment. These findings, together with the evidence of the Complainant's longstanding use and substantial prior commercial presence, support the inference that the Complainant's mark was well known at the time of registration of the disputed domain name. Further, a simple trademark or Internet search would likely have revealed the Complainant's pre-existing rights. In the absence of any explanation from the Respondent for its choice of domain name, the Panel accepts that the Respondent deliberately selected the disputed domain name as a misspelling of the Complainant's mark and thereby targeted such mark. In these circumstances, the Panel finds that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name in bad faith.

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.

As regards the use of the disputed domain name in bad faith, the Panel's review on the date of this Decision establishes that the disputed domain name currently resolves to a Chinese-language website containing adult content. Such use is unrelated to the Complainant's hotel and accommodation services and, given the close resemblance between the disputed domain name and the Complainant's BBHOTEL mark, risks creating a false association with the Complainant and tarnishing its mark and associated goodwill, see also WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.12. The current website at the disputed domain name further supports the conclusion that the Respondent is using the disputed domain name to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website, which constitutes direct evidence of use in bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. The Panel further accepts the Complainant's argument that the three prior UDRP proceedings in which the respective panels concluded that the Respondent had registered and used domain names in bad faith support a finding of a pattern of bad-faith registrations targeting third-party trademarks, see prior cases *SODEXO v. mary rich,* WIPO Case No. D2026-2108*; Veolia Environnement SA v. mary rich*, WIPO Case No. D2026-0716 and *La Gardenia Service Y Travel, S.L. and The Art of Living in Spain S.L.U. v. Mary Rich*, WIPO Case No. D2026-0662*.*

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 <hbhotel.net> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Deanna Wong Wai Man/
Deanna Wong Wai Man
Sole Panelist
Date: October 27, 2026