ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc v. Domain Admin, Domain Registries Foundation
Case No. D2026-4152

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, United Kingdom, represented by Kilburn & Strode LLP, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is Domain Admin, Domain Registries Foundation, Panama.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <bloomsburypublishing.com> 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 September 16, 2026. On September 17, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On September 17, 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 September 18, 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 September 18, 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 September 23, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 13, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on October 14, 2026.

The Center appointed Daniel Peña as the sole panelist in this matter on October 19, 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 public limited company incorporated in England on January 30, 1986. Its registered nature of business includes book publishing and other publishing activities.

The Complainant has traded under the BLOOMSBURY mark since 1986, with offices in London, New York, New Delhi, Oxford, and Sydney; it has published authors who have won the Nobel, Pulitzer, and Booker Prizes; and it is the originating publisher of the Harry Potter series of books. The Complainant is listed on the London Stock Exchange.

The Complainant is the owner of a portfolio of trademark registrations for the word mark BLOOMSBURY, including the following:

- United States of America ("United States") Trademark Registration No. 3650277, registered on July 7, 2009, in class 16 (books), claiming first use in commerce on January 15, 1999;

- European Union Trade Mark Registration No. 009270588, registered on January 7, 2011, in classes 9, 16, 35, 38, 41, 42, and 45, including publishing and electronic publishing services in class 41; and

- United Kingdom Trademark Registration No. UK00909270588, registered on January 7, 2011, in classes 9, 16, 35, 38, 41, 42, and 45, claiming seniority from United Kingdom Application No. 2248960 dated October 14, 2000.

The Complainant also relies on United Kingdom Trademark Registration No. UK00905227715 (registered on July 17, 2007), European Union Trade Mark Registration No. 005227715 (registered on July 17, 2007), and United States Trademark Registrations Nos. 3779055 (registered on April 20, 2010) and 5343771 (registered on November 28, 2017), each for BLOOMSBURY.

The Complainant operates its principal website at the domain name <bloomsbury.com>, which was registered on March 15, 1996, and through which it offers its publications and related services.

The disputed domain name was created on October 16, 2009. At the time the Complaint was prepared, the disputed domain name resolved to a website displaying pay-per-click links entitled "Online Book Publishing", "Editing and Proofreading Services", "Book Manuscript Submission", and "Literary Agents", with a footer reading "© 2025 All Rights Reserved". The Registrar's WhoIs page also displayed the disputed domain name as a "Premium Domain" available for a "Minimum Offer" of GBP 7,384.97.

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 wholly incorporates its BLOOMSBURY mark, followed by the descriptive term "publishing", which directly describes the Complainant's business and reproduces its company and trading name, Bloomsbury Publishing.

The Complainant argues that the Respondent is not authorized to use the BLOOMSBURY mark, is not commonly known by the disputed domain name, and is not making a bona fide offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use, as the composition of the disputed domain name effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant.

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith, given the inherent distinctiveness and international reputation of the BLOOMSBURY mark, the use of the disputed domain name for a website purporting to offer publishing services identical to those of the Complainant, and the offer to sell the disputed domain name for a sum likely exceeding the Respondent's out-of-pocket costs.

The Complainant also expresses concern that email addresses associated with the disputed domain name may be used for fraudulent purposes. The Complainant requests transfer of the disputed domain name.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires the Complainant to prove each of the following three elements in order to obtain an order that the disputed domain name be transferred: (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and (iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

Under paragraph 15(a) of the Rules, the Panel shall decide the Complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, the Rules, and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable. The Respondent's failure to respond does not by itself entitle the Complainant to a finding in its favor; the Complainant must still establish each element on the balance of probabilities, although the Panel may draw such inferences from the Respondent's default as it considers appropriate under paragraph 14(b) of the Rules. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), sections 4.2 and 4.3.

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 a trademark for the purposes of the Policy, on the basis of, among others, its European Union, United Kingdom, and United States registrations for the word mark BLOOMSBURY. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name, where it is plainly recognizable as its leading and dominant element. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is 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 "publishing", 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. The generic Top-Level Domain ".com" is a standard registration requirement and is disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. 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.

In particular, the Complainant has not licensed or otherwise authorized the Respondent to use its BLOOMSBURY mark. There is no evidence that the Respondent, identified as Domain Admin, Domain Registries Foundation, has been commonly known by the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.3.

Nor does the use of the disputed domain name amount to a bona fide offering of goods or services under paragraph 4(c)(i) of the Policy. The disputed domain name resolves to a minimal page displaying links to publishing-related services, namely "Online Book Publishing", "Editing and Proofreading Services", "Book Manuscript Submission", and "Literary Agents", which correspond directly to the field in which the Complainant's mark is registered and used. Whether such links lead to third-party offerings or to services purportedly provided by the Respondent, the use of a domain name reproducing a complainant's mark to direct Internet users to services in the complainant's own field capitalizes on the reputation and goodwill of that mark and does not confer rights or legitimate interests. WIPO Overview 3.1, sections 2.9.

The use of the disputed domain name also cannot be considered a legitimate noncommercial or fair use under paragraph 4(c)(iii) of the Policy. The disputed domain name combines the Complainant's distinctive mark with a term that describes the Complainant's core business and, together, reproduces the Complainant's trading name, Bloomsbury Publishing. Such a composition carries a risk of implied affiliation and effectively suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.5.1. The concurrent offer of the disputed domain name for sale at a premium price further indicates that the Respondent's interest lies in the value of the disputed domain name attributable to the Complainant's mark.

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. 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.

Registration in bad faith.

The disputed domain name was created on October 16, 2009. As detailed in the "Factual Background", the Complainant's rights in the BLOOMSBURY mark predate the creation of the disputed domain name.

The Panel is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name with the Complainant and its mark in mind. BLOOMSBURY, as applied to publishing, is distinctive, and the record shows that the Complainant has been a prominent publisher for several decades, with online search results for the term relating to the Complainant. The disputed domain name exactly reproduces the Complainant's trading name, Bloomsbury Publishing, and the website at the disputed domain name refers exclusively to publishing-related services. The combination of the Complainant's mark with a term describing the Complainant's very field of activity reinforces the inference of targeting. Panels have consistently found that the mere registration of a domain name that is confusingly similar to a famous or well-known trademark, particularly one incorporating the mark plus a descriptive term, by an unaffiliated entity can by itself create a presumption of bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, sections 3.1.4 and 3.2.2.

Use in bad faith.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent has used the disputed domain name in a manner falling within paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy. By using the disputed domain name, which reproduces the Complainant's trading name, to host a page offering services in the field of book publishing, editing, manuscript submission, and literary agency, 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 the website and of the services referred to on it. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.1.4. The fact that any commercial gain may accrue through third-party links does not alter this conclusion. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.5.

In addition, the disputed domain name is offered for sale through the Registrar's premium domain listing for a minimum offer of GBP 7,384.97, an amount that, in the absence of any explanation from the Respondent, the Panel infers is well in excess of the Respondent's documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the disputed domain name. Although a generalized offer to sell a domain

name, including on a third-party platform, is not by itself evidence of bad faith, an offer exceeding the respondent's out-of-pocket costs supports a finding of bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(i) of the Policy where it targets the trademark owner. Here, the disputed domain name reproduces the Complainant's distinctive mark and trading name, and its value derives from that mark, such that the offer targets the Complainant. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.1.1.

The Panel further takes into account the following cumulative circumstances: (i) the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant's mark; (ii) the composition of the disputed domain name, which mirrors the Complainant's trading name; (iii) the Respondent's use of a privacy service which, in the absence of any response or explanation, supports an inference that it sought to conceal its identity and the timing of its acquisition of the disputed domain name; and (iv) the Respondent's failure to respond to the Complaint or to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use. WIPO Overview 3.1, sections 3.2.1 and 3.6. The Panel gives no weight to the Complainant's unsupported concern that email addresses associated with the disputed domain name may be used for fraudulent purposes, as no evidence of such use has been submitted; that concern is in any event unnecessary to the outcome.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used 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 <bloomsburypublishing.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Daniel Peña/
Daniel Peña
Sole Panelist
Date: November 2, 2026