ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Ghost Management Group, LLC v. Hierro Mela
Case No. D2026-4327

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Ghost Management Group, LLC, United States of America ("United States" or "U.S."), represented by Friedland Cianfrani LLP, United States.

The Respondent is Hierro Mela, United States.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <weedmapsthe.com> is registered with TuringSign Inc. d/b/a Cosmotown (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on September 25, 2026. On September 25, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On September 28, 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) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 29, 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 29, 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 30, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 20, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on October 21, 2026.

The Center appointed Raj Sachdev as the sole panelist in this matter on October 27, 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 limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of Delaware and operating in Irvine, California, United States, which, among other things, provides tools and services for cannabis businesses. [1] The Complainant is the owner of various federal trademarks including:

U.S. Trademark Registration No.	Mark	Class(es)	Date of Registration
4,943,997	weedmaps	9, 35, 38, 42	April 26, 2016
5,312,061	WEEDMAPS	25, 35, 41	October 17, 2017
5,335,970[2]	wm	25, 35, 41	November 14, 2017
5,424,530	WEEDMAPS	35	March 13, 2018
6,889,828	WEEDMAPS	9, 35, 38, 39, 42	November 1, 2022

The disputed domain name was registered on December 9, 2025. The disputed domain name resolves to an online shop purportedly offering cannabis products and displaying the Complainant's wm and weedmaps marks.

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 the WEEDMAPS marks because it contains the WEEDMAPS mark. The Complainant also contends that the Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name, and has never engaged in any bona fide commercial activity in connection with the disputed domain name. The Complainant further contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name and has registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith to impersonate the Complainant. The Complainant has provided evidence that the disputed domain name was used to impersonate the Complainant and attract the Complainant's customers by creating a likelihood of confusion and disrupt the Complainant's business.

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[1] Noting the general powers of a panel articulated in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Rules, and WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.8, 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. In this case the information about the Complainant's business is noted in the About section of the Complainant's website at "weedmaps.com/corporate".

[2] While the Complainant did not provide a copy of their U.S. trademark registration for this specific mark, noting again, the general powers of a panel articulated in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Rules, and WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.8, 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, in particular to affirm or corroborate a party's contention including accessing trademark registration databases. The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) public records shows the live registration of this mark under the Complainant's name.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, to succeed the Complainant must satisfy the Panel that: (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 was registered and is being used in bad faith.

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 WEEDMAPS marks for the purposes of the Policy through its trademark registrations including the United States registrations referenced in the Factual Background section above (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1).

The WEEDMAPS mark is entirely reproduced within the disputed domain name along with the addition of "the". As is the case here, where a domain name incorporates the entirety of a trademark, or where at least a dominant feature of the relevant mark is recognizable in the disputed domain name, the disputed domain name will normally be considered confusingly similar to that mark (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7). Although the addition of another term, here, "the," 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 (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.8). Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the WEEDMAPS marks for the purposes of the Policy.

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 (see 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 submitted a response and accordingly 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. There is no evidence that the

Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name. Further, there is no evidence of any bona fide offering of goods or services, or legitimate noncommercial use.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity such as passing off, or other types of fraud can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent (WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.13.1). Specifically, panels have held that illegal activity and a deceptive use of the disputed domain name such as impersonation cannot confer such rights. The Complainant has submitted evidence showing the disputed domain name was used for impersonation of the Complainant, specifically, by using the WEEDMAPS Mark in the disputed domain name, prominently displaying the Complainant's mark ™ at the top of the page of the website to which the disputed domain name resolves, and prominently displaying the WEEDMAPS device mark within the main banner at the top of the website to which the disputed domain name resolves, and the offering of products related to the Complainant's business through the said website in order to create a likelihood of confusion and disrupt the Complainant's business.

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 has registered and used the disputed domain name in bad faith under paragraph 4(b) of the Policy. 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 (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.1).

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate or illegal activity, here, claimed impersonation of the Complainant constitutes bad faith (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.4). As noted above, evidence submitted by the Complainant shows the website to which the disputed domain name resolves was used by the Respondent to impersonate the Complainant. By registering the disputed domain name, which includes the Complainant's mark and the term "the", especially considering that the Complainant is in the same business, it is evident that the Respondent was aware of and targeted the Complainant when registering the disputed domain name, and thereafter used it to engage in the manner described above in bad faith (see *Ghost Management Group, LLC v. Dickson oru*, WIPO Case No. D2026-3670). Additionally, the Respondent had their information redacted, which by itself does not automatically equate to bad faith, but appears to have been done to remain anonymous to engage in passing off, another indicator of bad faith (see WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.6).

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitute bad faith under the Policy.

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 <weedmapsthe.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Raj Sachdev/
Raj Sachdev
Sole Panelist
Date: November 6, 2026