

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

GFI Group, Inc. v. John Smith  
Case No. DCC2026-0007

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is GFI Group, Inc., United States of America (“United States”), represented by Akerman LLP, United States.

The Respondent is John Smith, United States.

### **2. The Domain Name and Registrar**

The disputed domain name <gfhksecurities.cc> is registered with Gname.com Pte. Ltd. (the “Registrar”).

### **3. Procedural History**

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on April 2, 2026. On April 7, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On April 8, 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 April 8, 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 April 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 April 9, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was April 29, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on May 1, 2026.

The Center appointed Gary Saposnik as the sole panelist in this matter on May 6, 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 United States based company that was founded in 1987 and provides competitive wholesale market brokerage services in a multitude of global over-the-counter (OTC) and exchange lists cash and derivative markets. The Complainant has expanded to include a broad range of markets, including fixed income derivatives, cash fixed-income, emerging market financial products, energy and commodity derivatives, and equities. The Complainant also operates a hybrid brokerage strategy, combining voice brokerage with trading technology. Currently, the Complainant is active in more than 22 countries, has over 2200 employees and serves more than 2600 institutional clients around the globe.

The Complainant operates as a broker dealer through a subsidiary under the name of GFI Securities LLC. GFI Securities LLC is registered as a broker dealer through the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. ("FINRA") in the United States. The Complainant also has a subsidiary in Hong Kong, China, by the name of GFI (HK) Securities LLC, which is registered with The Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) of Hong Kong, China. In addition, the Complainant and its subsidiaries operate an office in Hong Kong, China.

The Complainant owns a number of trademark registrations for "GFI" and "GFI" formative marks in connection with financial services, including the following:

- GFI, USPTO (United States) Registration No. 4088117, registered January 17, 2012, in class 36;
- GFI (Figurative), USPTO (United States) Registration No. 3081665, registered April 18, 2006, in class 36'
- GFI (Figurative), EUIPO (European Union) Registration No. 004042982, registered October 21, 2005, in class 36;
- GFI, CNIPA (China) Registration No. 6357577, registered July 4, 2012, in class 36.

The Complainant has been the registrant of and using the domain name <gfigroup.com> since at least as early as 1997 in connection with a website regarding the Complainant's financial services.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain name on January 27, 2026. The disputed domain name is in use for a website that the Complainant claims impersonates the Complainant, including the Complainant's GFI logo, its Hong Kong, China, Subsidiary name and Central Entity number, and which purports to provide various financial services. The Respondent's website has versions in English and Chinese.

#### **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 identical or confusingly similar to the Complainant's GFI marks, as it consists of an exact copy of the Complainant's GFI mark at the head of the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name adds the abbreviation "hk" (for Hong Kong) and the word "securities", which relates to financial offerings by the Complainant and mirrors the name of the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary. The disputed domain name does not distinguish from the Complainant's GFI mark as GFI is clearly identifiable and the primary and dominant elements of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant avers that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. Where the Complainant's mark is fully incorporated into and emphasized in the Respondent's disputed domain name there can be no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name is not, nor could it be contended to be, a legitimate name or nickname of the Respondent, nor is it in any other way identified with or related to any rights or legitimate interests of the Respondent. The information provided by the Respondent appears to be false, particularly as the Respondent is attempting to impersonate the Complainant by using the name "GFI Hong Kong Securities Limited" and the Central Identity number of the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary on the Respondent's website at the disputed domain name.

Additionally, there is no relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent giving rise to any license, permission, or other right by which the Respondent could own or use any domain name incorporating the exact GFI mark. The Respondent is neither using the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services nor making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The Respondent has used, and is using, the disputed domain name, without permission or authorization from the Complainant, to capitalize on the GFI name and mark that are known in the financial industry solely for financial gain. The Respondent has used the disputed domain name to attract consumers to a website impersonating the Complainant in furtherance of a likely fraudulent scheme or to offer competing financial services for the profit of the Respondent. Such use to redirect web users to a website impersonating the Complainant to either promote competing financial services or for a fraudulent purpose is not a legitimate purpose or bona fide use. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), sections 2.5.1, 2.5.3, and 2.13.

Lastly, the Complainant alleges that the Respondent registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith, for commercial gain and to benefit from the goodwill and notoriety associated with the Complainant's GFI mark. The disputed domain name completely incorporates and emphasized the Complainant's exact GFI mark, copies the name of the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary and was registered long after the Complainant's rights in its GFI mark were established, after the Complainant registered the GFI mark, and after the Complainant's financial services became well-known.

The Respondent's bad faith is also exhibited by the fact that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name for a likely fraudulent scheme or to offer competing financial services without authorization for purposes of obtaining information from consumers interested in the Complainant's services in Hong Kong, China. The fact that the Respondent has sought to pass itself off as the Complainant by using the Complainant's GFI name and mark (including the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary name and Central Identity number) makes it clear that the Respondent has targeted the Complainant.

The Respondent's bad faith is further evidenced by the Respondent using the disputed domain name based on the GFI name and mark, as well as using the Complainant's GFI name on its website, all in furtherance of a likely fraud. The Respondent is fraudulently using, without authorization and in bad faith, the goodwill and reputation built by the Complainant in its GFI name and marks for the Respondent's own profit.

## **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 3.1](#), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of its GFI trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the Complainant's GFI mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. 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, "hk" and "securities", 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 mark 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 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.

There is no relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent that would be perceived as giving license, permission, or other right for the Respondent to own or use any domain name incorporating the Complainant's GFI mark. The Respondent has provided false contact information and has attempted to impersonate the Complainant by using the name "GFI Hong Kong Securities Limited" as well as the Central Identity number of the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary on the Respondent's website at the disputed domain name. Additionally, the Respondent has used the Complainant's GFI logo on its website. Respondent's use of the disputed domain name is neither in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. Rather, the Respondent is attempting to capitalize on the Complainant's well-known GFI mark in the financial industry for its own financial gain. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), sections 2.5.1, 2.5.3.

The Respondent's use of the disputed domain name is an attempt to attract consumers to its website by impersonating the Complainant through its name, various contact details, and use of the Complainant's logo on its website. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, claimed as applicable to this case: phishing/identity theft, copycat sites, 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.

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 the disputed domain name a number of years after the Complainant acquired registered rights in its GFI mark. The disputed domain name contains the Complainant's mark, as well as "hk" and "securities", which are references to "Hong Kong" and a descriptive term related to the Complainant's business. Combined with the Respondent's lack of its own rights or legitimate interests, use of the Complainant's Hong Kong, China, subsidiary's name on its website, mimicking the Complainant's logo, as well as other contact details, the Respondent has clearly targeted the Complainant to intentionally attempt to attract for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark.

These factors evidence the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name in bad faith.

[WIPO Overview 3.1](#), sections 3.1.4, 3.2.1.

As noted above, the Respondent has clearly targeted the Complainant with a copycat site, passing themselves off as the Complainant with its name, logo, and contact information, whether as an attempt to fraudulently induce consumers into providing financial or other contact information, or other types of fraud. Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate activity here, claimed as applicable to this case: phishing/identity theft, copycat sites, passing off, or other types of fraud, constitutes bad faith.

[WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.4. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes 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 <gfhksecurities.cc> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Gary Saposnik/*

**Gary Saposnik**

Sole Panelist

Date: May 20, 2026