

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

WhatsApp, LLC v. Baidar Bakht
Case No. DCO2025-0069

1. The Parties

The Complainant is WhatsApp, LLC, United States of America, represented by Greenberg Traurig, LLP, United States of America.

The Respondent is Baidar Bakht, Pakistan.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <gbwhatsapps.co> is registered with Dynadot Inc (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on August 26, 2025. On August 26, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On August 28, 2025, 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, Super Privacy Service LTD c/o Dynadot) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on August 29, 2025, 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 2, 2025.

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 4, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was September 24, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on September 25, 2025.

The Center appointed Christelle Vaval as the sole panelist in this matter on September 30, 2025. 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, WhatsApp LLC, is a corporation incorporated in the United States of America, specializing in messaging and voice-over-IP services and mobile applications. The Complainant has over two billion users in more than 180 countries.

The Complainant owns the trademark WHATSAPP in multiple jurisdictions and has been using it since September 2009, in the United States of America (Registration No. 3939463, registered on April 5, 2011), European Union (Registration No. 009986514, registered on October 25, 2011), and India (Registration No. 3111463, registered on November 30, 2015).

The disputed domain name was registered on October 30, 2024, after the Complainant had already registered and used its trademark. The disputed domain name leads to a website that features the Complainant's logo and advertises an unofficial version of the Complainant's application.

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:

1. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Complainant asserts rights in the WHATSAPP trademark. The disputed domain name wholly incorporates the Complainant's trademark, which remains its distinctive and dominant element. The addition of the term "gb" (which might refer to "gigabyte") at the beginning and the letter "s" at the end of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity. These additions are insufficient to distinguish the disputed domain name from the Complainant's trademark.

2. No Rights or Legitimate Interests

The Complainant contends that the Respondent is not a licensee of, nor otherwise affiliated with, the Complainant. WhatsApp LLC has not authorized the Respondent to use its trademark in any manner. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The Respondent uses the disputed domain name to promote a modified version of the Complainant's application, in violation of the Complainant's terms of use, and makes unauthorized use of the Complainant's trademarks for commercial gain. The Respondent's use of the disputed domain name to distribute an unauthorized version of the Complainant's app, in breach of the Complainant's policies and posing security risks (including malware and phishing), does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods or services.

3. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Complainant's trademark is well known worldwide, with a significant presence on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter). It is inconceivable that the Respondent was

unaware of the Complainant's trademark when registering the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name is used to promote an unauthorized, derivative, and competing service, indicating that the Respondent is taking unfair advantage of the Complainant's mark for commercial gain. The Respondent's website has been flagged by cybersecurity vendors as malicious, further evidencing bad faith use. The Respondent's failure to respond to cease and desist letters from the Complainant is an additional indicator of bad faith and a lack of legitimate interests. Moreover, the Respondent has a demonstrated history of registering domain names that infringe upon well-known trademarks.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

The case record shows the Center verified the Complaint's formal compliance and formally commenced the proceeding on September 4, 2025 (with a 20-day Response deadline that fell on September 24, 2025). The Center then notified the Respondent of default on September 24, 2025.

The Center employed all reasonably available means to contact the Respondent, pursuant to paragraph 2(a) of the UDRP Rules.

The record reflects service consistent with the Rules and WIPO Supplemental Rules. In the absence of a Response, the Panel may draw appropriate inferences from the Respondent's default (Rules, paragraph 14), as the Center's default notice also notes.

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 Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition, ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the 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 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Top-Level Domain ("TLD") at the end of a domain name (".co") is typically disregarded when assessing confusing similarity. Panels consistently find that the inclusion of a TLD is a standard registration requirement and does not affect the determination of whether a domain name is confusingly similar to a trademark. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.11.1

Although the addition of other terms here, "gb" at the beginning and the letter "s" at the end, 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 3.0](#), section 1.8.

Given the Complainant's rights to the WHATSAPP trademark, and the fact that the disputed domain name entirely includes this trademark, there is confusing similarity.

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 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 3.0](#), 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.

The Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name, nor is the Respondent affiliated with, authorized by, or licensed to use the Complainant’s trademark. Furthermore, the Respondent’s use of the disputed domain name to promote unauthorized, modified versions of the Complainant’s application demonstrates an intent to mislead Internet users and to exploit the Complainant’s goodwill for commercial gain.

Prior UDRP panels have found that domain names identical to or comprising a complainant’s trademark together with certain additional terms tend to suggest sponsorship or endorsement by the trademark owner and carry a risk of implied sponsorship (see [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1). The disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant’s well-known WHATSAPP trademark in its entirety, with only minor additions such as “gb” and “s.” These additions create a likelihood of confusion among Internet users, falsely suggesting affiliation, sponsorship, or endorsement by the Complainant.

Panels have held that the use of a domain name for illegitimate and potentially illegal activities, here, claimed distribution of malware, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), 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. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

In the present case, the Panel notes that the Respondent has registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith. Based on the facts of this case, the Respondent intentionally sought to exploit the Complainant’s well-known trademark for commercial gain.

The Complainant’s WHATSAPP trademark is recognized and has been extensively used since 2009. Given the distinctive nature and widespread reputation of the mark, it is unlikely that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant’s rights when registering the disputed domain name. The incorporation of the Complainant’s trademark in its entirety demonstrates that the Respondent intentionally targeted the Complainant and its goodwill.

The evidence shows that the disputed domain name is used to promote and distribute an unauthorized and modified version of the Complainant's application. The Respondent's website displays the Complainant's word trademark and its design trademark, creating a misleading impression of association, sponsorship, or endorsement by the Complainant. Such conduct constitutes bad faith use under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy, as the Respondent is intentionally attempting to attract Internet users by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark.

By using the disputed domain name to distribute a derivative and unauthorized version of the Complainant's software, the Respondent is seeking to capitalize on the Complainant's reputation for commercial gain. Such action evidences bad faith registration and use.

Cybersecurity vendors have identified the Respondent's website as malicious. The unauthorized "GB WhatsApp" application distributed through it poses security risks to users, including exposure to malware and phishing attempts. These circumstances further confirm that the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name is in bad faith.

The Respondent's failure to reply to the Complainant's cease-and-desist letters and to participate in this proceeding reinforces a finding of bad faith.

Finally, the record indicates that the Respondent has engaged in a pattern of registering domain names incorporating well-known trademarks. This pattern of conduct demonstrates a deliberate practice of targeting famous marks for illegitimate purposes, further evidencing 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 <gbwhatsapp.co> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Christelle Vaval/

Christelle Vaval

Sole Panelist

Date: October 14, 2025