ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Lidl Stiftung & Co. KG v. Neil Renfroe
Case No. DCO2026-0052

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Lidl Stiftung & Co. KG, Germany, represented by HK2 Rechtsanwälte, Germany.

The Respondent is Neil Renfroe, United States of America ("United States").

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <lidls.co> 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 June 30, 2026. On July 1, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On July 2, 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 (Unknown) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on July 3, 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 the same date.

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 July 7, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was July 27, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on July 30, 2026.

The Center appointed Ahmet Akgüloğlu as the sole panelist in this matter on August 5, 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, Lidl Stiftung & Co KG, is the owner of a renowned supermarket chains in Europe and the United States with history that dates back to 1930s.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous trademarks incorporating iterations of “Lidl” which is the surname of the co-founder of “Lidl Supermarkets”.

The Complainant holds registrations for its LIDL trademarks in many jurisdictions such as the United States, European Union, and Germany. The Complainant, is the owner of trademark registrations, such as the LIDL (logo) United States trademark with the registration number 5206745, registered in international classes 16, 30,and 35 on May 23, 2017; LIDL, German trademark with the registration number 2006134, registered in international class 29on November 11, 1991; LIDL, European Union trademark with the registration number 001778679, registered in international classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 41 and 42 on August 22, 2022; LIDL, International trademark with registration number 1541701, registered in international classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44 on January 30, 2020.

The Complainant is the registrant to the domain name <lidl.de> that resolves to its official website in Germany.

The disputed domain name was registered on March 31, 2024, and consists of the LIDL trademark and additional letter “s” and is redirected to the Complainant’s official website of “www.jobs.lidl.de”.

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 a trademark or service mark in which the Complainants have rights.

The Complainant asserts that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its LIDL trademark since it contains the word LIDL. The Complainant explains that the disputed domain name consists of the Complainant’s LIDL trademark with the only difference being the addition of the letter “s” which does not affect the overall impression on the average Internet users and LIDL stands out in the disputed domain name. The Complainant also asserts that the addition of a specific Top Level to a domain name such as “.com”, “.co”, “.tv” or “.net” does not affect the domain name for the purpose of determining the identity or similarity of a domain name and a trademark .

The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

The Complainant contends that, having made a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden shifts to the Respondent to provide concrete evidence that it has rights to, or legitimate interest in the disputed domain name and the Respondent is unable to do so. The Complainant also asserts that the disputed domain name redirects to an official website of the Complainant and the Respondent is not using the disputed domain name for any independent goods and services of his own, which does not constitute a bona fide offering of goods and services. The Complainant also submits that the composition of the disputed domain name consisting of the LIDL trademark and the additional letter “s” leads to the suggestion of an endorsement by the Complainant as Internet users expect an online shop of the Complainant offering its products and that the disputed domain name cannot be used “fairly” by the Respondent and the Respondent is not commonly known by the name “Lidl” and the Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant in any way and has never been authorized, licensed, or otherwise permitted to use the Complainant’s LIDL trademark.

The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Complainant states that its LIDL trademark is well known, and this is accepted by the previous UDRP panels. The disputed domain name would be identical to the Complainant’s highly distinctive and well-known trademark LIDL predating the registration of the disputed domain name. The registration of such a domain name by an unaffiliated party gives rise to a presumption of bad faith and the Respondent knew or should have known of the Complainant’s rights at the time of registration.

The Complainant also asserts that the choice of the Respondent of “.co” Top Level Domain also proves bad faith as “.co” extension is similar to widely used “.com” extension and can be misspelled easily.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 15(a) of the Rules instructs the Panel to “decide a complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted and in accordance with the Policy, these Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable”. Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires that the complainant prove each of the following three elements to obtain an order that the disputed domain name should be transferred or cancelled: (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. The Panel will proceed to analyze whether the three elements of paragraph 4(a) of the Policy are satisfied in this proceeding.

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 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 3.1, section 1.7.

Although the addition of the letter “s” may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such a letter 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 ccTLD ".co" may be disregarded for purpose of assessing confusing similarity, as it is viewed as a standard requirement of registration. See WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.11.1. Therefore, the disputed domain name includes LIDL mark of the Complainant, with the additional letter "s" as well as the ccTLD. The Panel finds that the additional letter "s" after the trademark is not sufficient to prevent the confusing similarity of the trademark and the disputed domain name.

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.

It is accepted by the Panel that the Complainant has not licensed nor authorized the use of its trademark to the Respondent. In fact, as the website under the disputed domain is redirected to the Complainant's official website, it is understood that the Respondent's use does not support a claim to rights or legitimate interests . WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.5.3.

There is no evidence that the Respondent has used or made demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name in connection with a legitimate noncommercial or fair use or a bona fide offering of goods and services. The Respondent's use of the disputed domain name redirecting Internet users to the Complainant's official website does not amount to use for a bona fide offering of goods and services. In fact, although no evidence to this effect has been presented to the Panel, the use of the disputed domain name to redirect Internet users to the Complainant's employment opportunities website suggests a risk that the disputed domain name could be used for fraudulent purposes.
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.

The Complainant had listed its LIDL trademark which dated back to 1991, and the disputed domain name was registered on March 31, 2024. The Respondent did not respond to the Complainant's contentions, and the disputed domain name resolves to the official website of the Complainant for employment opportunities. The redirection to the Complainant's website, for this Panel, demonstrates without a doubt that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant at the time of registration.

The Respondent is located in the United States, and the Complainant has supermarket stores in the United States as well. The Panel is of the view that the Complainant's LIDL trademark is well-known and well-established especially in the European Union and the United States and the Respondent should be deemed as familiar with the Complainant's trademark due to the well-known status of the trademark in these regions.

Meanwhile, the evidence shows that the Respondent configured the disputed domain name to redirect Internet users to the Complainant's official website. As the redirection was carried out without the Complainant's authorization and most likely is serving a commercial (and potentially fraudulent) purpose, the Panel considers such use to constitute bad faith use of the disputed domain name. (See *ACCOR v. S1A,* WIPO Case No. D2004-0053).

Linking the disputed domain name to the website of the Complainant without authorization will likely create an impression on the Internet users that the disputed domain name is associated with or authorized by the Complainant.
In this regard, considering the failure of the Respondent to submit a response and to come forward with any explanation for the registration and use of the disputed domain name, the Respondent's concealing its identity, the notoriety of the Complainant's trademark and the redirection to the Complainant's website, the Panel concludes that the Complainant has established bad faith. Overview 3.1, section 3.3.

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 <lidls.co> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Ahmet Akgüloğlu/
Ahmet Akgüloğlu
Sole Panelist
Date: August 19, 2026