

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

IMC B.V. v. Josh David

Case No. D2022-5018

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is IMC B.V., Netherlands, represented by Merkenbureau Knijff & Partners B.V., Netherlands.

The Respondent is Josh David, Nigeria.

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

The disputed domain name <imclivetrade.com> is registered with NameCheap, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

### **3. Procedural History**

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on December 29, 2022. On December 29, 2022, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On December 29, 2022, 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 (Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf), and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on January 5, 2023, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed the amendments to the Complaint on January 5, and 16, 2023.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amendments 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 January 19, 2023. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was February 8, 2023. The Center received informal communications from the Respondent on January 7, 14 and 16, 2023. Accordingly, the Center sent a possible settlement email to the Parties on January 16, 2023. The Complainant did not request for a suspension of the proceedings. The Center received communications from a third party on February 8 and 12, 2023, disclosing that they received the Written Notice but that they’re not familiar with the disputed domain name. In light of the third party

communication, on February 8, 2023, the due date for the Response was extended. On February 14, 2023, the Center received communications from the Complainant concerning the third party's communications. The Respondent did not submit any formal Response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Commencement of Panel Appointment Process on February 14, 2023. On February 28, 2023, the Center received a further informal communication from the Respondent.

The Center appointed Edoardo Fano as the sole panelist in this matter on February 28, 2023. 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.

The Panel has not received any requests from the Complainant or the Respondent regarding further submissions, waivers or extensions of deadlines, and the Panel has not found it necessary to request any further information from the Parties.

Having reviewed the communication records in the case file provided by the Center, the Panel finds that the Center has discharged its responsibility under the Rules, paragraph 2(a), "to employ reasonably available means calculated to achieve actual notice to Respondent". Therefore, the Panel shall issue its Decision based upon the Complaint, the Policy, the Rules, and the Supplemental Rules, and without the benefit of a formal response from the Respondent.

The language of the proceeding is English, being the language of the Registration Agreement, as per paragraph 11(a) of the Rules.

#### **4. Factual Background**

The Complainant is IMC B.V., a Dutch company operating in the field of trading and owning several trademark registrations for IMC and IMC TRADING, among which the following:

- International Trademark Registration No. 929842 for IMC, registered on June 26, 2007;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1488678 for IMC TRADING, registered on July 23, 2019.

The Complainant also operates on the Internet, its website being "www.imc.com".

The Complainant provided evidence in support of the above.

According to the Whois records, the disputed domain name was registered on November 4, 2022, and it resolves to a website in which cryptocurrency-trading services are offered and the Complainant's trademark and logo are reproduced, as well as a Complainant's video, a text taken from the Complainant's website and the address of the Complainant's office in Sydney, Australia.

#### **5. Parties' Contentions**

##### **A. Complainant**

The Complainant states that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its trademarks IMC and IMC TRADING, as the disputed domain name wholly incorporates the Complainant's trademark IMC with the addition of the term "live", while the term "trade" is very similar to the term "trading" of the Complainant's trademark IMC TRADING.

Moreover, the Complainant asserts that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name since it has not been authorized by the Complainant to register the disputed domain name or to use its trademarks within the disputed domain name, it is not commonly known by the disputed

domain name, and it is not making either a *bona fide* offering of goods or services or a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name is used by the Respondent to redirect Internet users to its website in which the same services as the Complainant are offered.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent has registered the disputed domain name in bad faith, since the Complainant's trademarks IMC and IMC TRADING are distinctive and internationally known. Therefore, the Respondent targeted the Complainant's trademarks at the time of registration of the disputed domain name and the Complainant contends that the use of the disputed domain name with the purpose to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's trademarks as to an affiliation between the Respondent and the Complainant, falsely claiming to be associated with the Complainant, qualifies as bad faith registration and use.

## **B. Respondent**

The Respondent has made no formal reply to the Complainant's contentions. In reference to paragraphs 5(f) and 14 of the Rules, no exceptional circumstances explaining the absence of a reply to the Complainant's contentions have been put forward or are apparent from the record.

A respondent is not obliged to participate in a proceeding under the Policy, but if it fails to do so, reasonable facts asserted by a complainant may be taken as true, and appropriate inferences, in accordance with paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, may be drawn. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 4.3.

However, the Respondent submitted the following informal email communications on January 7, 14, 16, and February 28, 2023:

"Ok, understood better, it was an error" and "The we programer used wrong address" (January 7, 2023);

"Please release the domain name so that the info will be corrected" (January 14, 2023);

"Thank you. Please I want to correct the address on the domain name" (January 16, 2023);

"What will be the solution" (February 28, 2023).

## **6. Discussion and Findings**

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy lists three elements, which the Complainant must satisfy in order to succeed:

- (i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and
- (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.

### **A. Identical or Confusingly Similar**

The Panel finds that the Complainant is the owner of the trademarks IMC and IMC TRADING and that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the trademarks IMC and IMC TRADING.

Regarding the addition of the terms "live" and "trade", the latter very similar to the term "trading" of the Complainant's trademark IMC TRADING, the Panel notes that it is now well established that the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical terms, letters, or otherwise) to a domain name does not

prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the trademark. The addition of the terms “live” and “trade” does not therefore prevent the disputed domain name from being confusingly similar to the Complainant’s trademarks. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

It is also well accepted that a generic Top-Level Domain in this case “.com”, is typically ignored when assessing the confusing similarity between a trademark and a domain name. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.11.1.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has therefore met its burden of proving that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant’s trademarks, pursuant to the Policy, paragraph 4(a)(i).

## **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

Paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy requires the Complainant to prove that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Respondent may establish rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name by demonstrating in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of the Policy any of the following circumstances, in particular but without limitation:

- “(i) before any notice to you of the dispute, your use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the domain name or a name corresponding to the domain name in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services; or
- (ii) you (as an individual, business, or other organization) have been commonly known by the domain name, even if you have acquired no trademark or service mark rights; or
- (iii) you are making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the domain name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue.”

According to paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant has the burden of proving the three elements of the Policy. However, satisfying the burden of proving a lack of the Respondent’s rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name according to paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy is potentially quite difficult, since proving a negative circumstance is generally more complicated than establishing a positive one. As such, it is well accepted that it is sufficient for the Complainant to make a *prima facie* case that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name in order to shift the burden of production to the Respondent. If the Respondent fails to demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of the Policy or on any other basis, the Complainant is deemed to have satisfied paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

The Complainant in its Complaint, and as set out above, has established a *prima facie* case that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. It asserts that the Respondent, who is not currently associated with the Complainant in any way, is not using the disputed domain name for a legitimate noncommercial or fair use or in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services. The disputed domain name is used by the Respondent to redirect Internet users to its website in which the same services as the Complainant’s are offered, falsely suggesting an affiliation with the Complainant.

The *prima facie* case presented by the Complainant is enough to shift the burden of production to the Respondent to demonstrate that it has rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. However, the Respondent has not presented any evidence of any rights or legitimate interests it may have in the disputed domain name.

Moreover, the Panel finds that the composition of the disputed domain name carries a risk of implied affiliation as it effectively impersonates or suggests sponsorship or endorsement by the Complainant. See [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

Based on the facts of this case, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Panel therefore finds that paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy has been satisfied.

### **C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith**

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy provides that “[f]or the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, the following circumstances, in particular but without limitation, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith:

(i) circumstances indicating that [the respondent has] registered or [has] acquired the domain name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the domain name registration to the complainant who is the owner of the trademark or service mark or to a competitor of the complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of [its] documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the domain name; or

(ii) [the respondent has] registered the domain name in order to prevent the owner of the trademark or service mark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding domain name, provided that [the respondent has] engaged in a pattern of such conduct; or

(iii) [the respondent has] registered the domain name primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or

(iv) by using the domain name, [the respondent has] intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to [the respondent’s] website or other on-line location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant’s mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of [the respondent’s] web site or location or of a product or service on [the respondent’s] web site or location”.

Regarding the registration in bad faith of the disputed domain name, the reputation of the Complainant’s trademarks IMC and IMC TRADING in the field of trading is clearly established and the Panel finds that the Respondent likely knew of the Complainant, and deliberately registered the disputed domain name in bad faith, especially because the content of the website to which the disputed domain name resolves consists of purportedly offering the same services as the Complainant, claiming a connection to the Complainant.

The Panel further notes that the disputed domain name is also used in bad faith since on the relevant website the same services as the Complainant’s are offered and a nonexistent connection to the Complainant is claimed, an activity clearly detrimental to the Complainant’s business.

The above suggests to the Panel that the Respondent intentionally registered and is using the disputed domain name in order both to disrupt the Complainant’s business, in accordance with paragraph 4(b)(iii) of the Policy, and to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website with the purpose of intentionally attempting to create a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s trademarks as to the disputed domain name’s source, sponsorship, affiliation or endorsement, in accordance with paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel considers that the nature of the inherently misleading disputed domain name, which includes the Complainant’s trademark IMC in its entirety with the addition of the terms “live” and “trade”, the latter very similar to the term “trading” of the Complainant’s trademark IMC TRADING, further supports a finding of bad faith. See, [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has presented evidence to satisfy its burden of proof with respect to the issue of whether the Respondent has registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith.

The Panel therefore finds that paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy has been satisfied.

## 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, <imclivetrade.com>, be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Edoardo Fano/*

**Edoardo Fano**

Sole Panelist

Date: March 9, 2023