

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Nipro Corporation v. li zheng
Case No. D2023-2324

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Nipro Corporation, Japan, represented by The GigaLaw Firm, Douglas M. Isenberg, Attorney at Law, LLC, United States of America.

The Respondent is li zheng, Hong Kong, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <nipro-invest.com> 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”) in English on May 30, 2023. On May 30, 2023, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On June 1, 2023, 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 June 2, 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 an amendment to the Complaint on June 6, 2023.

On June 2, 2023, the Center transmitted an email communication to the Parties in English and Chinese regarding the language of the proceeding. On June 6, 2023, the Complainant submitted a request that English be the language of the proceeding. The Respondent did not comment on the language of the proceeding.

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 proceeding commenced on June 9, 2023. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was June 29, 2023. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on June 30, 2023.

The Center appointed Sebastian M.W. Hughes as the sole panelist in this matter on July 10, 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.

4. Factual Background

A. Complainant

The Complainant is a publicly traded company incorporated in Japan in 1954 and a manufacturer of renal, medical, surgical and radiology products marketed and sold worldwide under the trade mark NIPRO (the "Trade Mark").

The Complainant is the owner of numerous registrations in jurisdictions worldwide for the Trade Mark, including the United States of America registration No. 1441070, registered on June 2, 1987.

B. Respondent

The Respondent is located in China.

C. The Disputed Domain Name

The disputed domain name was registered on April 24, 2023.

D. Use of the Disputed Domain Name

The disputed domain name was previously resolved to a predominantly Thai language website with English language product terms that appeared to be a website of, or associated with the Complainant - featuring prominently the logo version of the Complainant's Trade Mark, and apparently offering for sale the same medical equipment produced by the Complainant for many years under the Trade Mark (the "Website").

As at the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name is no longer resolved to an active website.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the Trade Mark; the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1. Procedural Issue: Language of the Proceeding

The language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Chinese. Pursuant to the Rules, paragraph 11(a), in the absence of an agreement between the Parties, or unless specified otherwise in the Registration Agreement, the language of the administrative proceeding shall be the language of the Registration Agreement.

Paragraph 11(a) of the Rules allows the Panel to determine the language of the proceeding having regard to all the circumstances. In particular, it is established practice to take paragraphs 10(b) and (c) of the Rules into consideration for the purpose of determining the language of the proceeding, in order to ensure fairness to the parties and the maintenance of an inexpensive and expeditious avenue for resolving domain name disputes. Language requirements should not lead to undue burden being placed on the parties and undue delay to the proceeding (see [WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition \(“WIPO Overview 3.0”\)](#), section 4.5.1).

The Complainant has requested that the language of the proceeding be English, for several reasons, including the fact the disputed domain name is an English language domain name; and the Website contains some English language terms. The Complainant also contends that the proceeding in Chinese would involve additional costs and delay.

The Respondent did not make any submissions regarding the language of the proceeding, and did not file any response in either Chinese or English, after the Respondent had been duly notified in both Chinese and English of the language of the proceeding, and of the Complaint.

In exercising its discretion to use a language other than that of the registration agreement, the Panel has to exercise such discretion judicially in the spirit of fairness and justice to both Parties, taking into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including matters such as the Parties' ability to understand and use the proposed language, time, and costs.

Although there is some English language content on the Website, the Panel finds there is insufficient evidence to support the conclusion that the Respondent is conversant in English.

The Panel is however mindful of the need to ensure the proceeding is conducted in a timely and cost effective manner, and notes further that the Respondent has not taken any part in this proceeding.

Having considered all the matters above, the Panel determines under paragraph 11(a) of the Rules that the language of the proceeding shall be English.

6.2. Substantive Elements of the Policy

The Complainant must prove each of the three elements in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy in order to prevail.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Panel finds that the Complainant has rights in the Trade Mark acquired through use and registration.

The disputed domain name incorporates the entirety of the Trade Mark (see [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7), followed by a hyphen and the word “invest”.

Where a relevant trade mark is recognisable within a disputed domain name, the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless or otherwise) does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element (see [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8).

The Panel therefore finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Trade Mark.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of non-exhaustive circumstances any of which is sufficient to demonstrate that a respondent has rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name:

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

The Complainant has not authorised, licensed, or permitted the Respondent to register or use the disputed domain name or to use the Trade Mark. The Panel finds on the record that there is therefore a *prima facie* case that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, and the burden of production is thus on the Respondent to produce evidence to rebut this presumption.

The Respondent has failed to show that he has acquired any trade mark rights in respect of the disputed domain name or that the disputed domain name has been used in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services. To the contrary, the Website featured prominently the logo version of the Trade Mark, and purportedly offered for sale the same medical products marketed and sold for many years by the Complainant under the Trade Mark; and as at the date of this Decision, the disputed domain name is no longer being used.

There has been no evidence adduced to show that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name; and there has been no evidence adduced to show that the Respondent is making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name.

The Panel finds that the Respondent has failed to produce any evidence to rebut the Complainant's *prima facie* case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Panel therefore finds that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

In light of the manner of use of the disputed domain name highlighted in section 6.2.B above, the Panel concludes that the disputed domain name has been registered and used in bad faith pursuant to paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

The fact the Website has been taken down at some stage following the filing of the Complaint provides further support for a finding of bad faith in this proceeding.

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 <nipro-invest.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Sebastian M.W. Hughes/

Sebastian M.W. Hughes

Sole Panelist

Dated: July 24, 2023