

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Equifax Inc. v. Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico
Case No. D2023-2734

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Equifax Inc., United States of America (“United States”), represented by The GigaLaw Firm, Douglas M. Isenberg, Attorney at Law, LLC, United States.

The Respondent is Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico, Panama.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <clientsupportservicesequifax.com> (the “Domain Name”) 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 27, 2023. On June 27, 2023, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On June 27, 2023, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the Domain Name which differed from the named Respondent (Registration Private / Domains By Proxy, LLC) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on June 28, 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 29, 2023.

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 12, 2023. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was August 1, 2023. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on August 4, 2023.

The Center appointed Piotr Nowaczyk as the sole panelist in this matter on August 17, 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

The Complainant is a global provider of information solutions and human resources business process outsourcing services for businesses, governments and consumers. The Complainant was incorporated in 1913. Its predecessor company dates back to 1899. Currently, the Complainant operates or has investments in 24 countries in North America, Central and South America, Europe and the Asia Pacific region.

The Complainant is the owner of numerous EQUIFAX trademark registrations, including:

- the United States Trademark Registration for EQUIFAX No. 1027544, registered on December 16, 1975;
- the United States Trademark Registration for EQUIFAX No. 1045574, registered on August 3, 1976;
- the United States Trademark Registration for EQUIFAX No. 1644585, registered on May 14, 1991;
- the European Union Trademark Registration for EQUIFAX No. 6979306, registered on June 10, 2009.

The Complainant is also the owner of the domain name <equifax.com> which incorporates its EQUIFAX trademark.

The Domain Name was registered on March 7, 2023.

At the time of submitting the Complaint, the Domain Name was used for the purpose of a technical support scam. Namely, the Domain Name resolved to the website featuring pop-up windows which warned the visitors about the alleged security issues on their computers, prompting them to call a provided helpline (the "Website 1").

At the time of drafting this Decision, the Domain Name has redirected to various domain names. In particular, the Domain Name has redirected to the domain name <app.linqto.com> which resolves to the website displaying log-in page to an alleged investment platform (the "Website 2").

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant requests that the Domain Name be transferred to the Complainant. According to the Complainant, each of three elements specified in paragraph 4(a) of the Policy are satisfied in the present case.

First, the Complainant submits that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the trademark in which the Complainant has rights.

Second, the Complainant argues that the Respondent has neither rights nor legitimate interests in the Domain Name.

Third, the Complainant submits that the Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy places a burden on the Complainant to prove the presence of three separate elements, which can be summarized as follows:

- (i) the 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 the Domain Name; and
- (iii) the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

The requested remedy may only be granted if the above criteria are met.

At the outset, the Panel notes that the applicable standard of proof in UDRP cases is the “balance of probabilities” or “preponderance of the evidence”. See section 4.2 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition (“[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)”).

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

Under the first element, the Complainant must establish that the Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the trademark in which the Complainant has rights.

The Complainant holds valid EQUIFAX trademark registrations. The Domain Name incorporates this trademark in its entirety. As numerous UDRP panels have held, incorporating a trademark in its entirety is sufficient to establish that a domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a registered trademark (see *PepsiCo, Inc. v. PEPSI, SRL (a/k/a P.E.P.S.I.) and EMS COMPUTER INDUSTRY (a/k/a EMS)*, WIPO Case No. [D2003-0696](#)).

The addition of the term “clientsupportservices” in the Domain Name does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the Domain Name and the Complainant’s EQUIFAX trademark. UDRP panels have consistently held that where the relevant trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of other terms, whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise, would not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element. See section 1.8, [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

The Top-Level Domain (“TLD”) “.com” in the Domain Name is viewed as a standard registration requirement and as such is disregarded under the first element confusing similarity test. See section 1.11.1, [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Given the above, the Panel finds that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to the Complainant’s trademark. Thus, the Complainant has proved the requirements under paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Under the second requirement, the Complainant must prove that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name.

The Respondent may establish a right or legitimate interest in the Domain Name by demonstrating in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of the Policy any of the following:

- (i) that it has used or made 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 prior to the dispute; or
- (ii) that it is commonly known by the Domain Name, even if it has not acquired any trademark rights; or
- (iii) that it is 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.

Although given the opportunity, the Respondent has not submitted any evidence indicating that any of the circumstances foreseen in paragraph 4(c) of the Policy are present in this case.

On the contrary, it results from the evidence in the record that the Complainant's EQUIFAX trademark registrations predate the Respondent's registration of the Domain Name. There is no evidence in the case record that the Complainant has licensed or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use the EQUIFAX trademark or to register the Domain Name incorporating this trademark. There is also no evidence to suggest that the Respondent has been commonly known by the Domain Name.

Moreover, it does not result from the evidence in the record that the Respondent makes use of the Domain Name in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services, or it makes a legitimate, noncommercial or fair use of the Domain Name without intent for commercial gain. On the contrary, at the time of submitting the Complaint, the Domain Name was used for the purpose of a tech support scam. The Domain Name resolved to the Website 1 featuring pop-up windows which warned the visitors about alleged security issues on their computers and prompted them to call a provided helpline. At the time of drafting this Decision, the Domain Name has redirected to various domain names. In particular, the Domain Name has redirected to the domain name <app.linqto.com>. This domain name has resolved to the Website 2 inviting visitors to enter their personal information in order to allegedly log-in to the investment platform. Such use of the Domain Name does not confer rights or legitimate interests on the Respondent.

Given the above, the Respondent has failed to invoke any circumstances, which could demonstrate, pursuant to paragraph 4(c) of the Policy, any rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name. Thus, there is no evidence in the case file that refutes the Complainant's *prima facie* case. The Panel concludes that the Complainant has also proved the requirement under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Under the third element, the Complainant must prove that the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

Bad faith under the UDRP is broadly understood to occur where a respondent takes unfair advantage of or otherwise abuses a complainant's mark. See section 3.1, [WIPO Overview 3.0](#).

Under paragraph 4(b) of the Policy, evidence of bad faith registration and use includes without limitation:

- (i) circumstances indicating the domain name was registered or acquired primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the domain name registration to the owner of a trademark or to a competitor of the trademark owner, for valuable consideration in excess of the documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the domain name; or
- (ii) circumstances indicating that the domain name was registered in order to prevent the owner of a trademark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding domain name, provided it is a pattern of such conduct; or
- (iii) circumstances indicating that the domain name was registered primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or
- (iv) circumstances indicating that the domain name has intentionally been used in an attempt to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to a website or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with a trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the website or location or of a product or service on a website or location.

As indicated above, the Complainant's rights in the EQUIFAX trademark predate the registration of the Domain Name. This Panel finds that the Respondent was or should have been aware of the Complainant's trademark at the time of registration of the Domain Name, as it has been proven to the Panel's satisfaction that the Complainant's EQUIFAX trademark is well known and unique to the Complainant. Thus, the

Respondent could not likely reasonably ignore the reputation of products and services under this trademark. In sum, the Respondent in all likelihood registered the Domain Name with the expectation of taking advantage of the reputation of the Complainant's EQUIFAX trademark.

Moreover, the Domain Name was previously used by the Respondent to attract Internet users to the Website 1 featuring an apparent technical support scam. At the time of drafting this Decision, the Domain Name has redirected to various domain names resolving to various websites, including the Website 2 attempting to lure users into entering their personal information to the alleged investment portal. By attracting unsuspecting Internet users to fake login portals, the Domain Names risked these users to use their personal login credentials, which compromises their privacy and financial interests.

In addition, the Complainant has presented evidence that the Domain Name has been configured with MX records to enable sending and receiving emails from the Domain Name. In the circumstances of this case, there appear to be no conceivable benefit to the Respondent to be gained by registration and use of the Domain Name in this way other than through bad faith activity such as phishing (*W.W. Grainger, Inc. v. WhoisGuard Protected, WhoisGuard, Inc. / Daniel Thomas*, WIPO Case No. [D2020-1740](#)).

Furthermore, the Complainant has proven that the Respondent engaged in a pattern of conduct of preventing the Complainant from reflecting its EQUIFAX trademark in multiple domain names. See *Equifax Inc. v. Domains By Proxy, LLC / Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico*, WIPO Case No. [D2022-0698](#); *Equifax Inc. v. Registration Private, Domains By Proxy, LLC / Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-2375](#); *Equifax Inc. v. Registration Private, Domains By Proxy, LLC / Carolina Rodrigues, Fundacion Comercio Electronico*, WIPO Case No. [D2021-3320](#).

Finally, the Respondent's use of a privacy service that concealed registrant information is a further evidence of bad faith.

For the reasons discussed above, the Panel finds that the Complainant has proved the requirements under paragraph 4(a)(iii) 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 Domain Name <clientsupportservicesequifax.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Piotr Nowaczyk/

Piotr Nowaczyk

Sole Panelist

Date: August 31, 2023