

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

SODEXO v. asd as dfsa

Case No. D2023-3739

1. The Parties

The Complainant is SODEXO, France, represented by Areopage, France.

The Respondent is asd as dfsa, Mexico.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <sodexosaldo.app> is registered with Squarespace Domains II LLC¹ (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on September 7, 2023. On September 7, 2023, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. Also on September 7, 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 (Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 7151571251) and contact information in the Complaint.

The Center sent an email communication in English and Spanish to the parties on September 13, 2023, regarding the language of the proceeding, as the Complaint has been submitted in English and the language of the registration agreement for the disputed domain name is Spanish. The Complainant submitted a request for English to be the language of the proceeding on September 13, 2023. The Respondent did not comment on the language of the proceeding.

The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on September 13, 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 amended Complaint on September 18, 2023.

¹ The Complaint was filed identifying the Registrar as Google LLC. On October 6, 2023, Google LLC confirmed that the disputed domain name is registered with Squarespace Domains II LLC following a purchase agreement. Google LLC has confirmed both Registrars’ compliance with the UDRP and the implementation of the decision by either Registrar.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended 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 20, 2023. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was October 10, 2023. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on October 11, 2023.

The Center appointed Edoardo Fano as the sole panelist in this matter on October 13, 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 [the] 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 response from the Respondent.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is SODEXO, a French company operating in the field of foodservices and facilities management, and owning several trademark registrations worldwide for SODEXO, among which:

- Mexican Trademark Registration No. 1030006 for SODEXO and design, registered on March 13, 2008;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1240316 for SODEXO, registered on October 23, 2014;
- European Union Trade Mark Registration No. 008346462 for SODEXO, registered on February 1, 2010.

The Complainant also operates on the Internet, its main website being “www.sodexo.com”.

The Complainant provided evidence in support of the above.

According to the WhoIs records, the disputed domain name was registered on September 3, 2023, and it directs to an inactive website.

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 disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its trademark SODEXO.

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 trademark 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 directs to an inactive website.

The Complainant submits that the Respondent has registered the disputed domain name in bad faith, since the Complainant's trademark SODEXO is well known in the field of foodservices and facilities management. Therefore, the Respondent targeted the Complainant's trademark at the time of registration of the disputed domain name and the Complainant contends that the passive holding of the disputed domain name qualifies as bad faith registration and use.

Finally, the Complainant suspects that the Respondent might also use the disputed domain name in connection with fraudulent email communications.

B. Respondent

The Respondent has made no reply to the Complainant's contentions and is in default. In reference to paragraphs 5(f) and 14 of the Rules, no exceptional circumstances explaining the default 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. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 4.3.

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1 Language of Proceeding

According to paragraph 11(a) of the Rules, the Panel decides that the language of the proceeding will be English. The language of the Registration Agreement of the disputed domain name is Spanish. The Complainant has requested English to be the language of the proceeding and the Respondent did not comment on the Complainant's request to use English. Moreover, the Center sent the email communication regarding the language of the proceeding and the notification of the Complaint in both Spanish and English, but the Respondent did not reply to either. The Panel finds that it would be not only unnecessary but also unfair, both economically and timewise, to request the Complainant to translate the Complaint. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 4.5.1.

6.2 Substantive Issues

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

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 3.0](#), section 1.7.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds 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 Panel finds 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.

While the addition of other terms, here “saldo” (meaning “account balance” in Spanish), 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.

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

Based on the available record, 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.

While 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 often impossible 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. 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 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.

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. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.5.1.

Based on the available record, 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.

In the present case, regarding the registration in bad faith of the disputed domain name, the reputation of the Complainant’s trademark SODEXO in the field of foodservices and facilities management is clearly established, and the Panel finds that the Respondent must have known of the Complainant, and deliberately registered the disputed domain name in bad faith.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank or “coming soon” page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the non-use of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith in the circumstances of this proceeding. While panelists will look at the totality of the circumstances in each case, factors that have been considered relevant in applying the passive holding doctrine include: (i) the degree of distinctiveness or reputation of the complainant’s mark, (ii) the failure of the respondent to submit a response or to provide any evidence of actual or contemplated good-faith use, (iii) the respondent’s concealing its identity or use of false contact details (noted to be in breach of its registration agreement), and (iv) the implausibility of any good faith use to which the domain name may be put. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness and reputation of the Complainant’s trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, and the failure of the Respondent to submit a response, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

Furthermore, the Panel considers that the nature of the inherently misleading disputed domain name, which includes the Complainant’s trademark in its entirety with the mere addition of the term “saldo” (meaning “account balance” in Spanish), further supports a finding of bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

Based on the available record, the Panel finds the third element of the Policy has been established.

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, <sodexosaldo.app> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Edoardo Fano/

Edoardo Fano

Sole Panelist

Date: October 18, 2023