Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-108416

Case number	CAC-UDRP-108416
Time of filing	2026-02-18 09:29:37
Domain names	novartisdemo.com

Case administrator

Name	Olga Slanařová (Case admin)

Complainant

Organization	Novartis AG

Complainant representative

Organization	Abion GmbH

Respondent

Name	Grant Rheingold

OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Panel is unaware of any other pending or decided legal proceedings in respect of the domain name <novartisdemo.com> (the "disputed domain name").

IDENTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

The Complainant, Novartis AG, is the holder of numerous trade marks for the word mark NOVARTIS, including, inter alia:

- International trade mark registration no. 663765, registered on 1 July 1996;
- EU trade mark registration no. 013393641, registered on 17 March 2015; and
- US trade mark registration no. 2336960, registered on 4 April 2000.

(Each a "trade mark" and collectively, the "Complainant's trade marks").

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A. Complainant's Assertions

The Complainant is a Swiss-based global pharmaceutical company formed in 1996 and is part of the Novartis Group, one of the largest healthcare groups worldwide.

The Complainant develops and markets innovative medicines and maintains a significant global presence, including substantial operations in the United States. Its products reach hundreds of millions of patients worldwide.

The Complainant owns and operates various domain names incorporating its NOVARTIS trade mark, including <novartis.com>, through which it provides information about its business and products.

The NOVARTIS trade mark has been recognised in prior UDRP decisions as well known.

B. Respondent's Position

The Respondent did not submit a Response within the time prescribed under the UDRP Rules, nor has it otherwise participated in this proceeding.

C. Disputed Domain Name

The disputed domain name <novartisdemo.com> was registered on 30 December 2025.

At the time of the decision, the disputed domain name resolves to an inactive page.

PARTIES CONTENTIONS

A. Complainant

A.1 The disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trade mark in which the Complainant has rights

The Complainant submits that the disputed domain name reproduces the NOVARTIS trade mark in full and merely adds the word "demo". It refers to section 1.8 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition (the "WIPO Jurisprudential Overview 3.0"), and maintains that the addition of a descriptive expression does not avoid confusing similarity where the mark remains plainly recognisable.

The Complainant further submits that the generic Top-Level Domain (the "TLD") <.com> should be disregarded for comparison purposes.

A.2 The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name

The Complainant contends that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

According to the Complainant, the Respondent has no connection with the Complainant, has received no permission to use the NOVARTIS trade mark, and is not known by the name reflected in the disputed domain name. The Complainant further contends that no corresponding trade mark rights are held by the Respondent.

The Complainant states that the form of the disputed domain name is such as to suggest a connection with the Complainant. It also points out that the disputed domain name does not lead to an active website and there is nothing to indicate any genuine commercial use or any legitimate non-commercial or fair use.

A.3 The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith

The Complainant maintains that the NOVARTIS trade mark is well known and that the Respondent was likely aware of the Complainant and its rights when the disputed domain name was registered.

It notes that the disputed domain name was registered many years after the Complainant secured trade mark protection for NOVARTIS.

The Complainant also states that the combination of NOVARTIS with the word "demo" is apt to mislead Internet users into thinking that the disputed domain name is connected with, or authorised by, the Complainant.

Lastly, the Complainant relies on the fact that the disputed domain name has not been actively used and that, given the distinctiveness of its mark, passive holding in these circumstances is indicative of bad faith.

A.4 Relief Sought

The Complainant requests that the disputed domain name <novartisdemo.com> be transferred to the Complainant in accordance with paragraph 4(i) of the UDRP Policy.

B. Respondent

No Response was filed. The Panel therefore proceeds on the basis of the uncontested evidence and may draw such inferences as it considers appropriate pursuant to Rule 14(b) of the UDRP Rules.

RIGHTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown that the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trade mark in which the Complainant has rights (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the UDRP Policy).

NO RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the UDRP Policy).

BAD FAITH

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the UDRP Policy).

PROCEDURAL FACTORS

The Panel is satisfied that all procedural requirements under the UDRP Policy, the UDRP Rules, and the CAC Supplemental Rules have been met. The dispute is properly before the Panel.

PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE DECISION

A. Applicable Legal Framework

Pursuant to Rule 15 of the UDRP Rules, the Panel decides on the basis of the statements and evidence submitted, in accordance with the UDRP Policy, the UDRP Rules, and any applicable principles of law.

Under paragraph 4(a) of the UDRP Policy, the Complainant must establish, on the balance of probabilities, that:

(i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trade mark 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.

B. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The Panel is satisfied that the Complainant has rights in the NOVARTIS trade mark.

For the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the UDRP Policy, the comparison is straightforward. The dominant element of the disputed domain name is "novartis", which is identical to the Complainant's trade mark. The additional word "demo" is insufficient to dispel similarity; on the contrary, it leaves the mark immediately perceptible within the string. The TLD <.com> is without legal significance in this context.

The Panel therefore concludes that paragraph 4(a)(i) of the UDRP Policy is satisfied.

C. Rights or Legitimate Interests

The burden on the Complainant under this element is to make a prima facie case, following which the evidential burden shifts to the Respondent. The threshold has been met here.

There is no evidence that the Respondent has been authorised to use the Complainant's trade mark, that it is commonly known by the disputed domain name, or that it has made any genuine use of the disputed domain name for a legitimate purpose. The record instead shows that the disputed domain name is inactive.

In the Panel's view, a domain name composed of a well-known pharmaceutical mark together with the word "demo" carries a clear suggestion of sponsorship or endorsement. In the absence of any explanation from the Respondent, the Panel sees no basis on which rights or legitimate interests could be found.

The Panel accordingly finds that paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the UDRP Policy is satisfied.

D. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The chronology here is telling. The Complainant's rights long pre-date the registration of the disputed domain name. Given the distinctiveness of NOVARTIS and its established reputation, the Panel considers it more likely than not that the Respondent had the Complainant and its mark in mind when the disputed domain name was registered.

The choice of the word "demo" does not point away from the Complainant; rather, it reinforces the impression that the domain name may relate to some demonstration, presentation, or authorised material connected with the Complainant. This supports an inference of targeting.

As to use, the present case falls to be assessed under the passive holding doctrine. Non-use does not preclude a finding of bad faith. Here, the relevant factors include the notoriety of the Complainant's mark, the lack of any credible explanation from the Respondent, and the absence of any apparent legitimate use to which the disputed domain name could plausibly be put. Taken together, those matters support a finding that the disputed domain name is being used in bad faith notwithstanding its inactivity.

The Panel therefore concludes that paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the UDRP Policy is satisfied.

E. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraph 4(i) of the UDRP Policy and Rule 15 of the UDRP Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <novartisdemo.com> be transferred to the Complainant, Novartis AG.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

AND THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME(S) IS (ARE) TO BE

1. **novartisdemo.com**: Transferred

PANELLISTS

Name	**Gustavo Moser**

DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2026-03-30

Publish the Decision