Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-108547

Case number	CAC-UDRP-108547
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Domain names	lesechos.online

Case administrator

Name	Olga Slanařová (Case admin)

Complainant

Organization	LES ECHOS

Complainant representative

Organization	NAMESHIELD S.A.S.

Respondent

Name	philippe barnier

OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Panel is not aware of any other legal proceedings which are pending or decided and which relate to the disputed domain name.

IDENTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

The Complainant owns several trade marks consisting of the name LES ECHOS, including the French national trade mark LES ECHOS, registration number 1337380, first registered on 13 June 1986 in international classes 9, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41 and 42; the French national trade mark LES ECHOS, registration number 95576923, first registered on 28 July 1995 in international classes 9, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 and 45; the French national trade mark LES ECHOS, registration number 3011883, first registered on 7 April 2000 in international classes 9, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45; and the international trade mark LES ECHOS, registration number 742930, first registered on 1 September 2000 in international classes 16, 38 and 41. The Complainant’s trade mark registrations predate the registration of the disputed domain name.

Furthermore, the Complainant owns the domain names <lesechos.com>, registered on 31 October 1996, and <lesechos.fr>, registered on 9 February 2009, which consist of and incorporate the name LES ECHOS and are connected to the Complainant's official website through which it informs Internet users and customers about its products and services.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complainant is a French daily financial newspaper, founded in 1908, which covers national and international news. It has 11 million readers per month.

The disputed domain name <lesechos.online> was registered on 16 October 2025 and resolves to a parking page. There is no evidence before the Panel to suggest that the disputed domain name has ever been used for an active website since it was registered. However, the disputed domain name has been used for impersonation attempts.

PARTIES CONTENTIONS

The Complainant contends that all three elements of the UDRP have been fulfilled and it therefore requests the transfer of the disputed domain name to the Complainant.

No administratively compliant response has been filed.

RIGHTS

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

NO RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS

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

BAD FAITH

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

PROCEDURAL FACTORS

The amended complaint in this proceeding referred to a number of annexes, which were not however, filed with the amended complaint. The Panel therefore issued a procedural order, requesting the Complainant to file the omitted annexes and providing the Respondent with the opportunity to respond to the Complainant’s supplemental filings. The Complainant submitted the annexes as directed. No further communication was received from the Respondent. The Panel is satisfied that all other procedural requirements under UDRP were met and there is no other reason why it would be inappropriate to provide a decision.

PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE DECISION

With regard to the first UDRP element, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name is identical to the Complainant's trade mark LES ECHOS. Indeed, the disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant's trade mark in its entirety. The Panel follows in this respect the view established by numerous other decisions that a domain name which wholly incorporates a Complainant's registered trade mark may be sufficient to establish confusing similarity for the purposes of the UDRP (see, for example, WIPO Case No. D2003-0888, Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG v. Vasiliy Terkin <porsche-autoparts.com>).

With regard to the second UDRP element, there is no evidence before the Panel to suggest that the Respondent has made any use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services. Neither is there any indication that the Respondent is making legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. Indeed, the disputed domain name is not being used for any active website but resolves to an inactive parking page. A lack of content at the disputed domain has in itself been regarded by other panels as supporting a finding that the respondent lacked a bona fide offering of goods or services and did not make legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the disputed domain name (see, for example, Forum Case No. FA 1773444, Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc v. Joannet Macket/JM Consultants). The Panel further finds that the Respondent is not affiliated with or related to the Complainant in any way and is neither licensed nor otherwise authorised to make any use of the Complainant’s trade mark or to apply for or use the disputed domain name. Additionally, the Whois information for the disputed domain name does not suggest that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name <lesechos.online>. Past panels have held that a respondent was not commonly known by a disputed domain name if the Whois information was not similar to the disputed domain name, as is equally not the case here (see, for example, Forum Case

No. FA 1781783, Skechers U.S.A., Inc. and Skechers U.S.A., Inc. II v. Chad Moston / Elite Media Group <bobsfromsketchers.com> (“Here, the WHOIS information of record identifies Respondent as “Chad Moston / Elite Media Group.” The Panel therefore finds under Policy ¶ 4(c)(ii) that Respondent is not commonly known by the disputed domain name under Policy ¶ 4(c)(ii).”)). Finally, the Complainant has submitted evidence to suggest that the disputed domain name has been used in an impersonation attempt and that the Respondent was seeking to pass himself off as an employee of the Complainant. The Panel notes that the use of a domain name for per se illegitimate activities, such as impersonation or phishing, can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent (see, for example, Forum Case No. 1775963, United Rentals, Inc. v. saskia gaaede / Mr <united-rentals-inc.com> (“Complainant submits that Respondent is intending to impersonate Complainant to contact customers of Complainant, posing as a credit supervisor of Complainant, directing customers to transmit payments to a bank account not controlled by Complainant. See Compl. Append. M. Therefore, the Panel agrees with Complainant and finds that Respondent does not have rights or legitimate interests in the domain name per Policy ¶¶ 4(c)(i) or (iii).”)). Against this background, and absent any response from the Respondent, or any other information indicating the contrary, the Panel concludes that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

With regard to the third UDRP element, given the fact that the disputed domain name was used for impersonation attempts, it is reasonable to infer that the Respondent knew that the disputed domain name would be identical to the Complainant's trade marks, and that the Respondent registered the disputed domain name in full knowledge of the Complainant's trade marks. Indeed, if the Respondent had carried out a Google search for the term “Les Echos”, the search results would have yielded immediate results related to the Complainant, its website, and its connected business and services. In line with other decisions, this Panel accepts the Complainant’s submission that its trade marks are well-known (certainly in France, where the Respondent is based) (see, for example, WIPO Case No. D2017-1925, LES ECHOS SAS v. Nashan <lesechos.site> (“The Panel finds that Complainant has a widespread reputation in the LES ECHOS marks with regard to its products and services. Complainant, founded in 1908, is the first daily French financial newspaper edited in Paris. It also owns and communicates on the Internet through various websites worldwide. Complainant has rights in the LES ECHOS marks in France and the US, internationally since 2000. It is not conceivable that Respondent would not have been aware of Complainant's trademark rights at the time of the registration of the disputed domain name (in 2017).”)). It is likely that the disputed domain name would not have been registered if it were not for the Complainant's trade marks (see, for example, WIPO Case No D2004-0673 Ferrari Spa v. American Entertainment Group Inc <ferrariowner.com>). Indeed, the Panel considers it likely in the circumstances that the disputed domain name was intentionally designed to be identical with the Complainant’s trade marks. Furthermore, the disputed domain name resolves to a parking page without any other active content. First, it is difficult to conceive of any plausible actual or contemplated active use of the disputed domain name by the Respondent that would not be illegitimate on the grounds that it would constitute passing off, an infringement of consumer protection legislation, or an infringement of the Complainant’s rights under trade mark law under circumstances where the disputed domain name corresponds to the Complainant’s trade mark and is similar to the Complainant’s genuine domain name currently used by the latter and its affiliates to promote their services. Secondly, numerous other UDRP decisions have taken the view, which this Panel shares, that the passive holding of a domain name with knowledge that the domain name infringes another party’s trade mark rights may in itself be regarded as evidence of bad faith registration and use (see, for example, WIPO Case No. D2000-0003, Telstra Corporation Limited v. Nuclear Marshmallows; and WIPO Case No. D2004-0615, Comerica Inc. v. Horoshiy, Inc.). Finally, the Panel repeats that the evidence submitted by the Complainant suggests that the disputed domain name has been used for impersonation purposes by the Respondent, wrongfully seeking to obtain information from the Complainant’s legitimate customers. The Panel concludes that it is inconceivable that the Respondent would be able to make any good faith use of the disputed domain name for that purpose and, indeed, that such use manifestly constitutes further evidence of bad faith (see, for example, WIPO Case No. D2014-1471, Accor v. SANGHO HEO / Contact Privacy Inc. <accorhotels-booking.com> (“The un-opposed allegation of phishing, and the evidence submitted in support of phishing, combined with the likelihood of confusion, is sufficient evidence of bad faith“); and Forum Case No. 1393436, Qatalyst Partners LP and Qatalyst Partners LLP v. Alyna Devimore / N/A <qatalystpartnerslp.com> (“the Panel holds that Respondent’s registration and use of the <qatalystpartnerslp.com> domain name as part of the phishing scheme described above is sufficient evidence of bad faith registration and use pursuant to Policy ¶ 4(a)(iii).”)). Absent any response from the Respondent, or any other information indicating the contrary, the Panel therefore also accepts that the Respondent has registered and is using the disputed domain name in bad faith.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

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

1. **lesechos.online**: Transferred

PANELLISTS

Name	**Gregor Kleinknecht LLM MCIArb**

DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2026-06-01