Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-109094

Case number	CAC-UDRP-109094
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Domain names	lactalis-intl.com

Case administrator

Name	Olga Slanařová (Case admin)

Complainant

Organization	Groupe Lactalis

Complainant representative

Organization	NAMESHIELD S.A.S.

Respondent

Organization	Princess Zabat

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, Groupe Lactalis, owns several trademark registrations for the sign LACTALIS, including:

- European Union Trademark Registration No. 001529833 for LACTALIS (word mark), filed on 28 February 2000 and registered since 7 November 2002 in Classes 1, 5, 10, 13, 16, 31, 33, 34, 40 and 42;
- International Trademark Registration No. 900154 for LACTALIS (device mark), registered since 27 July 2006 in Classes 29, 30 and 35;
- International Trademark Registration No. 1135514 for LACTALIS (device mark), registered since 20 September 2012 in Classes 5, 29, 30, 32 and 35;
- European Union Trademark Registration No. 017959526 for LACTALIS (device mark), filed on 20 September 2018 and registered since 22 May 2019 in Classes 1, 5, 7, 9, 16, 21, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45.

The Complainant also owns the domain name <lactalis.com>, registered since 9 January 1999, which it uses for its official website.

The above-mentioned trademark rights are hereinafter collectively referred to as the LACTALIS Trademark.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complainant is a French multinational company founded in 1933, operating in the food industry, particularly in the dairy sector. It is one of the world's leading dairy groups, with approximately 85,500 employees and 266 production sites across 49 countries.

The Complainant has been conducting business under the LACTALIS company and trade name since 1999. Its international export activities are carried out, inter alia, through Lactalis International, which distributes dairy products in more than 100 countries.

The LACTALIS Trademark has been used by the Complainant for many years in connection with its business activities and enjoys international recognition in the dairy industry.

The disputed domain name <lactalis-intl.com> was registered on 4 July 2026. According to the Registrar Verification, the Respondent is Princess Zabat, located in the United Arab Emirates.

The disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website. However, it has been configured with MX (mail exchange) records.

PARTIES CONTENTIONS

The Complainant contends that the requirements of the Policy have been met and that the disputed domain name should be transferred to it.

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 trademark 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 Panel is satisfied that all 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

Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires the Complainant to prove each of the following three elements:

(i) the disputed 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 respect of the disputed domain name; and
(iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

I. THE COMPLAINANT'S RIGHTS AND THE CONFUSING SIMILARITY OF THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME TO THE COMPLAINANT'S MARK

The first element of the Policy serves essentially as a standing requirement.

The test for identity or confusing similarity involves a straightforward, reasoned comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. This typically entails a side by-side evaluation of the domain name and the textual elements of the relevant trademark to determine if the mark is recognizable within the domain name. When a domain name fully incorporates a trademark, or at least a dominant feature of it is evident in the domain name, the domain name is generally deemed confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the first element.

Where the relevant trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of punctuation marks, letters, numbers or other terms, whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless or otherwise, does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element.

The Top-Level Domain ("TLD") is usually disregarded in determining identity or similarity, as it is simply a technical aspect of registration.

The Complainant has established that it has rights in the LACTALIS Trademark.

The disputed domain name consists of the LACTALIS Trademark, followed by a hyphen and the letters "intl", and the TLD ".com".

The Panel finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the LACTALIS Trademark. The disputed domain name incorporates the LACTALIS Trademark in its entirety, followed by the abbreviation "intl", commonly used to refer to "international". The addition of this abbreviation, separated from the trademark by a hyphen, does not prevent the LACTALIS Trademark from remaining clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name.

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Complainant has proven the first element of Paragraph 4(a) of the Policy and that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the LACTALIS Trademark.

II. THE RESPONDENT'S LACK OF RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS IN THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME

Under Paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy, the Complainant must establish that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof rests with the Complainant, panels have consistently recognized that proving a respondent's lack of rights or legitimate interests may result in the difficult task of proving a negative. Accordingly, where a complainant establishes a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

The Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant and has not been licensed or otherwise authorised to use the LACTALIS Trademark or to register a domain name incorporating it.

The Respondent has been identified by the Registrar as Princess Zabat, with an address in the United Arab Emirates. There is no evidence that the Respondent, whether as an individual, business, or other organization, has been commonly known by the disputed domain name or has acquired any rights in a trademark or trade name corresponding to it. Accordingly, there is no evidence of rights or legitimate interests within the meaning of Paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy.

The disputed domain name incorporates the LACTALIS Trademark in its entirety, followed by the abbreviation "intl", commonly understood as referring to "international". The Panel notes that the Complainant conducts international export activities under the name Lactalis International. Consequently, the composition of the disputed domain name creates a risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant, as Internet users may reasonably perceive it as referring to the Complainant's international business operations.

The disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website. There is therefore no evidence of its use in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services within the meaning of Paragraph 4(c)(i) of the Policy, nor of any legitimate noncommercial or fair use within the meaning of Paragraph 4(c)(iii) of the Policy.

The Panel also notes that MX records have been configured for the disputed domain name. While the mere configuration of MX records does not, in itself, establish illegitimate activity, it does not provide any basis for finding rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

Furthermore, there is no other evidence or circumstance before the Panel that could support a finding that the Respondent has rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name.

The Respondent has not submitted a Response and has therefore failed to rebut the Complainant's prima facie case or otherwise demonstrate any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

Accordingly, the Panel finds 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 Policy.

III. THE REGISTRATION AND USE OF THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME IN BAD FAITH

Under Paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, the Complainant must establish that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

As for the bad faith registration, UDRP panels have consistently held that the mere registration of a domain name identical or confusingly similar to a famous or widely known trademark by an unaffiliated entity may, in itself, constitute evidence of bad faith registration, depending on the circumstances of the case.

The LACTALIS Trademark substantially predates the registration of the disputed domain name. The Complainant has a longstanding international presence in the dairy industry, and the LACTALIS Trademark enjoys widespread recognition in connection with its business activities.

The disputed domain name incorporates the LACTALIS Trademark in its entirety, followed by the abbreviation "intl", commonly used to refer to "international". The Panel considers it significant that the Complainant conducts its international export activities under the name Lactalis International. The combination of the distinctive LACTALIS Trademark with an abbreviation directly corresponding to the international nature of the Complainant's business suggests a deliberate reference to the Complainant and its activities.

In these circumstances, considering the distinctiveness and reputation of the LACTALIS Trademark, the Complainant's longstanding international business activities, and the composition of the disputed domain name, the Panel finds it more likely than not that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its trademark when registering the disputed domain name and deliberately targeted the Complainant.

As for the bad faith use, the Panel notes that the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website. However, the absence of an active website does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding, as established in previous UDRP decisions. The Panel must examine the totality of the circumstances to determine whether the Respondent's passive holding of the disputed domain name amounts to bad faith use.

In the present case, the Panel takes into account the longstanding reputation and distinctiveness of the LACTALIS Trademark, the incorporation of the trademark in its entirety into the disputed domain name, and the addition of the abbreviation "intl", which corresponds to the Complainant's international business activities conducted under the name Lactalis International.
The composition of the disputed domain name creates a risk of implied affiliation with the Complainant, as it may lead Internet users to believe that the disputed domain name is associated with or operated by the Complainant, particularly in connection with its international activities.

The Panel also notes that MX (mail exchange) records have been configured for the disputed domain name, indicating its potential use for email communications. Given the composition of the disputed domain name and the risk of confusion with the Complainant's international operations, this configuration raises concerns about its use for deceptive purposes. However, there is no evidence before the Panel that the disputed domain name has actually been used for phishing, impersonation or other fraudulent activities. The Panel therefore considers the MX records as an additional circumstance supporting its assessment of bad faith, rather than as independent evidence of fraudulent conduct.

The Respondent has not submitted a Response and has provided no explanation for the registration of the disputed domain name or evidence of any actual or contemplated good-faith use.

Considering all the circumstances of the case, including the reputation and distinctiveness of the LACTALIS Trademark, the composition of the disputed domain name, its potential to suggest an affiliation with the Complainant's international business activities, the absence of any apparent legitimate use, the configuration of MX records, and the Respondent's failure to provide any explanation, the Panel finds that the passive holding of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith use under the Policy.

Accordingly, the Panel finds 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 Policy.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

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

1. **lactalis-intl.com**: Transferred

PANELLISTS

Name	**Ivett Paulovics**

DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2026-11-13

Publish the Decision