



(Hong Kong Office)

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Case No.	HK-2301745
Complainant:	Gap (ITM) Inc.
Respondent:	zhang fang
Disputed Domain Name(s):	<gap-tw.com>

1. The Parties and Contested Domain Name

The Complainant is Gap (ITM) Inc. of 2 Folsom Street San Francisco, CA 94105 United States of America.

The Respondent is zhang fang of changshashibaiyunqu, changshashi, China 410000.

The domain name at issue is <gap-tw.com> (the “Domain Name”), registered by Respondent with Internet Domain Service BS Corp of Ocean Centre, Montagu Foreshore, East Bay Street, Nassau, The Bahamas, P.O. Box SS-19084.

2. Procedural History

On 19 April 2023, the Complainant filed a Complaint with the Hong Kong Office of Asian Domain Name Dispute Resolution Centre (“ADNDRC”), pursuant to the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (“Policy”) approved by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (“ICANN”) on 24 October 1999, the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (“Rules”), approved by ICANN Board of Directors on 28 September 2013 and the ADNDRC Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (“Supplemental Rules”) effective from 31 July 2015. The Complainant chose to have a sole panelist to handle the dispute.

On 20 April 2023, the ADNDRC transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the Domain Name. On the same day, the Registrar transmitted by email to the ADNDRC its verification response confirming that the Respondent is listed as the registrant and providing the contact details. On 21 April 2023, the ADNDRC notified the Complainant of the deficiencies in the Complaint. On the same day, the Complainant filed a rectified Complaint. The ADNDRC formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint and the proceedings commenced on 24 April 2023. The ADNDRC did not receive any formal response from the Respondent within 20 calendar days as required under paragraph 5 of the Rules. Accordingly, on 15 May 2023, the

ADNDRC informed the parties that no response has been received and it would shortly appoint a single panelist.

On 17 May 2023, the ADNDRC appointed Ms. Karen Fong as sole Panelist in this matter. The Panelist accepted the appointment and has submitted a statement to the ADNDRC that she is able to act independently and impartially between the parties.

3. Factual background

The Complainant is a global clothing and accessories retailer headquartered in the United States. Its products are offered for sale under the brand GAP. The brand GAP was created in 1969. The Complainant has currently 493 stores in operation in North America and 232 stores in operation in Asia. In addition, “GAP” has been identified as one of the best global brands for many years since 2006.

The Complainant owns a portfolio of trade mark registrations for GAP in over 130 countries including in Taiwan. The earliest trade mark registration for GAP dates back to 1972 (individually and collectively, the “Trade Mark”).

The Respondent registered the Domain Name on June 29, 2022. The Domain Name resolved to a website in Chinese displaying, without any disclaimer of non-affiliation with, or authorization from the Complainant, the Trade Mark, the Complainant’s images from its official website in Taiwan, and offered for sale products bearing the GAP trade mark (the “Website”). Purchases of goods by the Complainant’s investigator revealed that the items purchased were counterfeit goods bearing the Trade Mark. The Panel was denied access the Website at the time of the writing of the decision.

4. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant’s contentions may be summarized as follows:

The Domain Name is identical or confusingly similar to the Trade Mark, that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests with respect to the Domain Name, and that the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant requests transfer of the Domain Name.

B. Respondent

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

5. Findings

A. General

The Policy provides, at Paragraph 4(a), that each of three findings must be made in order for a Complainant to prevail:

- i. The Respondent's domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which Complainant has rights; and
- ii. The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the domain name; and
- iii. The Respondent's domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

B. Identical / Confusingly Similar

The Panel is satisfied that the Complainant has established that it has rights to the Trade Mark.

The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the trade mark and the domain name to determine whether the domain name is confusingly similar to the trade mark. The test involves a side-by-side comparison of the domain name and the textual components of the relevant trade mark to assess whether the mark is recognizable within the domain name.

In this case the Domain Name contains the Trade Mark in its entirety plus the letters "tw" which may refer to the abbreviation for Taiwan. The addition of these two letters do not prevent a finding of confusing similarity. For the purposes of assessing identity or confusing similarity under paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy, it is permissible for the Panel to ignore the generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD"), which in this case is ".com", since it is viewed as a standard registration requirement (section 1.11.1 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0")).

The Panel finds that the Domain Name is confusingly similar to trade marks in which the Complainant has rights and that the requirements of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy therefore are fulfilled.

C. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Pursuant to paragraph 4(c) of the Policy, a respondent may establish rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name by demonstrating any of the following:

- (i) before any notice to it of the dispute, the respondent's use of, or demonstrable 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; or
- (ii) the respondent has been commonly known by the domain name, even if it has acquired no trade mark or service mark rights; or
- (iii) the respondent is making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the domain name, without intent for commercial gain, to misleadingly divert consumers, or to tarnish the trade mark or service mark at issue.

Although the Policy addresses ways in which a respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name, it is well established that, as it is put in section 2.1 of the WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("WIPO Overview 3.0"), that a complainant is required to make out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests. Once such prima facie case is made, the burden of production shifts to the respondent to come forward with

appropriate allegations or evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name. If the respondent does come forward with some allegations of evidence of relevant rights or legitimate interests, the panel weighs all the evidence, with the burden of proof always remaining on the complainant.

Section 2.13 of the WIPO Overview 3.0, states that UDRP panels have categorically held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity like the sale of counterfeit goods can never confer rights or legitimate interests on a respondent.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has made out a prima facie case, a case calling for an answer from the Respondent. The Respondent has not provided any reasons why he chose to register the Domain Name comprising a trade mark with which it has no connection. The Panel is unable to conceive of any basis upon which the Respondent could sensibly be said to have any rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name.

The Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name. In all the circumstances, the Panel finds that the Complainant has fulfilled the requirements of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

D. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

To succeed under the Policy, the Complainant must show that the Domain Name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

The Panel is satisfied that the Respondent must have been aware of the Complainant's trade mark when he registered the Domain Name. It is implausible that he was unaware of the Complainant when he registered the Domain Name especially since the Website displays the Trade Mark, and the products offered for sale are counterfeit GAP products.

In the WIPO Overview 3.0, section 3.2.2 states as follows:

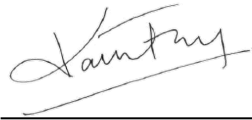
“Noting the near instantaneous and global reach of the Internet and search engines, and particularly in circumstances where the complainant's mark is widely known (including in its sector) or highly specific and a respondent cannot credibly claim to have been unaware of the mark (particularly in the case of domainers), panels have been prepared to infer that the respondent knew, or have found that the respondent should have known, that its registration would be identical or confusingly similar to a complainant's mark. Further factors including the nature of the domain name, the chosen top-level domain, any use of the domain name, or any respondent pattern, may obviate a respondent's claim not to have been aware of the complainant's mark.”

The Panel also finds that the actual use of the Domain Name is in bad faith. The products offered for sale on the Website are counterfeit GAP products. The use by a respondent of a domain name which includes a well-known trade mark to resolve to a website which offers and sells counterfeit products under that trade mark may be evidence of bad faith registration and use. (See *Burberry Limited v Jonathan Schefren*, WIPO Case No. D2008-1546; and *Prada SA v. Domains for Life*, WIPO Case No. D2004-1019). There is a clear intention to attract for commercial gain by confusing and misleading Internet users into believing that the Website was and the products sold on it are authorised or endorsed by the Complainant. This is clearly bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Domain Name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

6. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, and in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the Domain Name <gap-tw.com> be transferred to the Complainant.



Karen Fong
Panelist

Dated: 31 May 2023