

LEGAL UPDATES

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WIPO Delivers Two New Offerings to Help Brand Owners in Their Fight Against Online Infringers

Most brand owners have grown accustomed to the world of whack-a-mole—shouldering an unfair burden as they struggle to combat the sheer scale of infringement happening online. So, it is a breath of fresh air to see an organization that feels their pain step forward, acknowledge that burden, and provide offerings that address their needs. It should come as no surprise that the entity spearheading this charge is the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO), the leading provider of UDRP domain name dispute resolution services.

WIPO's dedication to brand owners runs deep. It played a central role in creating the UDRP and publishes the "WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions" (WIPO Jurisprudential Overview 3.1), a valuable resource providing brand owners with insightful information to help them build strong cases. WIPO's commitment is reflected in their results: 2025 was a record-breaking year, with WIPO managing over 6,200 domain name cases, and close to 80% of its decisions resulting in a transfer of the domain name to the brand owner.

Two of WIPO's new offerings are discussed below:

1. *UDRP decision time cut in half*

WIPO recently announced a priority service for expedited processing of UDRP filings. The cost of this service is more than double the current filing fee (\$4,000 versus \$1500), but the payoff is significant: the timeline for a decision has been cut roughly in half, to just one month from start to finish. That means brand owners can move faster to stop the harm caused by an infringing domain name—and who doesn't want that?

What hasn't changed is the time registrars have to lock a domain name once a complaint is filed (2 business days), the time given to domain name owners to respond to a complaint (20 days from the commencement date), or the time within which a decision will be implemented (10 business days from the date of the decision). This expedited service is also limited to single-member panels involving no more than five (5) domain names.

It will be interesting to see whether brand owners embrace this new service, and if so, how many, particularly because very few have utilized the Uniform Rapid Suspension (URS) service, which was designed to be a quicker and less expensive alternative to the UDRP.

2. Reduced fees for early UDRP case termination

Brand owners know all too well that most online infringers hide behind privacy and proxy services when registering their domain names. Once a UDRP is filed, however, UDRP providers such as WIPO are required to disclose the true domain name registrant behind those services. The problem, until now, has been that filing a UDRP complaint solely to unmask an infringer was rarely a cost-effective strategy.

WIPO may have just changed that. Now, brand owners who file a UDRP with WIPO and terminate the case before it officially commences will be refunded all but \$100 of the \$1,500 filing fees. While the brand owner still needs to invest the time and effort in preparing the complaint (and certifying that the information contained therein is, to the best of its knowledge, complete and accurate, and that the assertions therein are warranted under the rules and applicable law), it still is a relatively small price to pay for such disclosure. In addition, the information that goes into preparing the complaint will likely prove useful, and possibly essential, in any subsequent action the brand owner chooses to take against the domain name owner.

Further information about these new offerings can be found on WIPO's website.

Contact us

If you have questions regarding the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) or domain name dispute resolution services, please contact Caroline Chicoine or your Husch Blackwell attorney.