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Trademark owners filed an all-time record 3,036 cases under the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) with WIPO in 2016, an increase of 10% over the previous year. This phenomenon, known as cybersquatting, is due to over 1,200 new generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs) now operational.

Cybersquatting disputes relating to new gTLDs rose to 16% of WIPO's 2016 caseload, which covered a total of 5,374 domain names. Among these, .XYZ, .TOP and .CLUB were the most common new gTLDs in dispute. Over 340 new gTLDs came online in 2016, such as .GAMES, .SHOP, and .STREAM.

WIPO Director General Francis Gurry [1] said: "The continuing growth in cybersquatting cases worldwide shows the need for continued vigilance by trademark owners and consumers alike. This is even more important as a considerable number of these disputes involve incidents of online counterfeiting. In such cases, WIPO assists in restoring these domain names to trademark owners, thereby curbing consumer deception."

Country code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs) accounted for some 14% of WIPO filings.

WIPO UDRP cases in 2016 involved parties from 109 countries. Among the countries where filings originated, the U.S. remained first with 895 cases filed, followed by France - 466, Germany - 273, the U.K. - 237 and Switzerland - 180. France saw the highest growth in cases filed -38%.

The top sectors of complainant activity were banking and finance (12% of all cases), fashion (9%), heavy industry and machinery (9%), internet and IT (8%), biotechnology and pharmaceuticals (7%) and retail (7%). Philip Morris leads the list of filers – 67 cases – followed by AB Electrolux with 51 cases and Hugo Boss, LEGO, and Michelin with 42 cases each. In 2016, WIPO appointed 305 panelists from 47 countries, and administered proceedings in 15 different languages.

Since the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center administered the first UDRP case in 1999, total WIPO case filings passed the 36,000 mark, encompassing over 66,000 domain names.

Details can be found here: http://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2017/article_0003.html [2]

About Cybersquatting

Cybersquatting means the registration or use of domain names with bad faith intent to profit from the goodwill of trademarks established. Those who obtain the respective fields then offer to sell them to the persons or companies that own trademarks at an inflated price. Disputes for domains registered with alleged bad faith intent are usually settled by the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP), which was adopted by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).



[3]

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