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(3) Common Law Trademark Infringement

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

SUMMARY OF ACTION

- 1. In this action, Ricks seeks injunctive and declaratory relief concerning the non-infringement and non-dilution of Bmezine's asserted common law trademark rights to the mark BME arising out of a dispute over the control of the contract that controls the domain name BME.COM. Defendant Bmezine filed a World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) complaint pursuant to ICANN's Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP). The WIPO panel ordered the transfer of the BME.COM domain to Bmezine. Plaintiff disputes the results of the arbitration and seeks in this action to permanently enjoin Bmezine from gaining control of the BME.COM domain pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1114(2)(D)(v); requests that this Court declare that Ricks has legitimate interests in and to the rights to use the mark BME.COM and the domain name BME.COM pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §2201 and §2202; and to recover compensatory damages that have resulted from Bmezine's actions.
- 2. This is also an action for federal and common law service mark infringement, common law tarnishment, bad faith interference with intellectual property rights and unfair competition arising out of Defendant's infringement of Ricks' common law rights to the mark BME.COM and Defendant's bad faith attempts to interfere in Ricks intellectual property rights. This Complaint asserts claims for service mark infringement

in violation of Section 43 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §1125(a) and Nevada state common law for good faith and fair dealing and for unfair competition.

THE PARTIES

- 3. Plaintiff, Gregory Ricks is an individual domiciled in College Station, Texas with a primary mailing address 4702 Johnson Creek Loop, College Station, TX 77845.
- 4. Defendant, Bmezine.com, LLC is a Nevada limited liability company with a primary business address of 1802 N. Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701.

JURISDICTION OVER THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS ACTION

- 5. Subject matter jurisdiction of this Court is proper under 28 U.S.C. §1331 (Federal Question), 15 U.S.C. §1121 and 28 U.S.C. §1338 (Trademark Disputes), 15 U.S.C. §1114 (2)(D)(v) (Remedy for UDRP Suspended Domain), 15 U.S.C. §1114 (2)(D)(v)(ii) (Reverse Domain Hijacking & Injunctive Relief), 15 U.S.C. §1125(a) (Trademark Infringement), 15 U.S.C. §1116 (Injunctive Relief) and the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. §2201 and §2202.
- 6. This Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1332 by virtue of the diversity of the parties. The amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.
- 7. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant and venue is proper in this Court as Nevada is Defendant's domicile.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

8. Ricks, the original registrant of the domain BME.COM, registered the domain in the name of Motherboards.com on March 6, 2000 because it was a valuable "three-letter .COM" domain name. Motherboards.com and other companies owned by Gregory Ricks are unregistered, sole proprietorships.

time he registered the domain name BME.COM.

protectable rights since as early as 2000.

9. Ricks was not aware of the company Bmezine or its use of the mark BME at the

10. Since the acquisition of the domain name BME.COM, Ricks initially used the

11. Since as early as 2001, Ricks has used the BME.COM mark in association with

Ricks' Internet search engine services and has established common law rights to the

BME.COM mark since that time. Ricks has a valid common law service mark with

12. Although the actual design of the web pages changed over the years, all of the

web pages used to promote the Internet search engine services were located at

domain to promote his computer company Motherboards.com, which sold computer

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BME.COM with the BME.COM mark boldly displayed on the web pages. 13. Over a period of time Ricks used different marketing tools, which utilized different branding opportunities, in order to promote the Internet search engine services to the public. The current search results are derived from Yahoo®.

14. On or about March 21, 2004 Ricks was contacted by Shannon Larratt, the previous owner of Bmezine, inquiring as to whether Ricks was interested in selling the domain BME.COM to Mr. Larratt personally. At that time, Ricks explained that he was not interested in selling the domain BME.COM as he was using it for his Internet search engine services. This was the first contact Ricks had with Mr. Larratt until July 2008. In the subsequent correspondence, Mr. Larratt related to Ricks that when he owned the Bmezine company, he made a decision many years earlier that the company's brand

identity would be based on the domain BMEZINE.COM as the company was known by its brand BM EZINE not BME.

- 15. Upon information and belief, the assets of the Bmezine company were part of a divorce settlement and the new owner took over in 2008.
- 16. On March 27, 2008, Bmezine filed a federal trademark application, Application Serial No. 77432832, to register the mark BME for the following: "Providing an online interactive database of photos and videos in the field of body art, namely piercing, tattoos, scarification, subincision, castration" in IC 041 and "Providing news about body art, namely, piercing, tattoos, scarification, subincision, castration through photos and video" in IC 044. At this time, the application is still pending registration. Apparently Bmezine is using BME for commercial Internet related services, including, but not limited to, free email services.
- 17. The term BME, although originally an acronym for "Body Modification Ezine," has become generic and unprotectable because the term BME is commonly used to refer to persons who go beyond body modifications and are considered "body mutilation extremists."
- 18. A review of Bmezine's web pages located at BMEZINE.COM reveals that Defendant provides and distributes pornographic images of individuals with piercings, tattoos, scarification, subincisions and castrations of various sorts.
- 19. Upon information and belief, and according to its previous owner Mr. Larratt, Bmezine was originally a credit card processing and hosting company and in 2004 the company ownership changed and it began providing, among other things, the online database of pornographic photos and videos.

20. On or about June 9, 2008, Bmezine filed a WIPO dispute resolution complaint in accordance with the ICANN UDRP. On or about August 21, 2008 the arbitration panel ruled that the domain BME.COM should be transferred to Defendant.

- 21. On August 25, 2008 the Official Notification of the Decision was sent to all parties and the registrar Moniker Online Services, LLC. Pursuant to the ICANN UDRP and the August 25, 2008 Official Notification, if as a result of an unfavorable UDRP decision a the disputed domain is ordered transferred, the registrant has ten (10) business days after receiving the Official Notification to submit official documentation (such as a copy of a complaint, file-stamped by the clerk of a court) to the Registrar demonstrating that it has commenced a legal proceeding against the Complainant to prevent the transfer of the disputed domain name.
- 22. Bmezine's commencing a UDRP proceeding in bad faith is an effort by Bmezine to interfere with Ricks intellectual property rights associated with the BME.COM mark and BME.COM domain name.
- 23. Bmezine's use of the mark BME for pornographic images is offensive and likely to cause consumer confusion with Ricks' use of the mark BME.COM for Internet search engine services.
- 24. Bmezine's use of the mark BME for pornographic images is offensive and disparages, as well as tarnishes, Ricks common law rights to the mark BME.COM for Internet search engine services.

DECLARATORY JUDGMENT

25. Ricks repeats and realleges Paragraph Nos. 1- 24 of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

26. A justiciable issue exists between the parties as the domain BME.COM would be
transferred to Bmezine if registrant did not file this action within ten (10) business days
of the Official Notification of the WIPO arbitration panel's decision.

- 27. Ricks asserts that the registration and use of the domain BME.COM is not unlawful because the domain was obtained under a reasonable belief that the use of BME.COM, a random three letter domain, was fair and otherwise lawful, and without a bad faith intent to profit from Defendant's use of BME for an online interactive database of pornographic photos and videos in the field of body modification.
- 28. Additionally, Ricks asserts that the registration and use of the domain BME.COM is not unlawful because currently, as well as on the date the domain name was registered, Defendant's asserted BME mark is generic, not protectable, not distinctive, and not famous.
- 29. A judicial determination regarding Ricks rights is necessary and appropriate, thus Ricks requests this Court to declare that Ricks did not register the BME.COM domain in bad faith and that Mr. Ricks may use the domain BME.COM without restriction and to quash the ICANN order transferring the domain BME.COM to Defendant.

COUNT I - Reverse Domain Name Hijacking Under The Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA), 15 U.S.C. § 1114(2)(D)(v)

30. As a cause of action and ground for relief, Ricks asserts his rights pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1114 which allows a domain name registrant to sue an overarching trademark owner who misuses or abuses its rights in bringing a cybersquatting action and realleges Paragraph Nos. 1-29 of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

31. On June 9, 2008, more then eight years after Ricks registration of the domain

BME.COM, Bmezine filed a WIPO complaint in accordance with ICANN UDRP alleging that Ricks had no rights nor any legitimate interest in BME.COM, falsely accusing Ricks of capitalizing on the alleged goodwill associated with the Bmezine's pornography business by driving traffic to its BME.COM site, and demanding that the domain BME.COM be transferred to Bmezine.

- 32. The arbitration panel ruled that the domain BME.COM should be transferred to Defendant.
- 33. Ricks' registration and use of the domain name BME.COM is not unlawful. Ricks was the original registrant of the domain BME.COM and at the time of registration, was not aware of Defendant's use of the term BME.
- 34. Ricks has a legitimate interest in the disputed domain name BME.COM because he uses the BME.COM mark for Internet search engine services. The web pages located at BME.COM have never created the impression that the BME.COM domain nor the BME.COM mark is or was affiliated or associated with Defendant.
- 35. Ricks asserts that his registration and use of the domain BME.COM is not unlawful because Defendant's alleged mark is generic, not distinctive, and was not famous at the time the domain name was registered.
- 36. Ricks requests that the Court declare that Defendants have acted in bad faith have engaged in reverse domain name hijackers.

COUNT II - Service Mark Infringement

37. As a cause of action and ground for relief, Ricks alleges service mark infringement under Section § 43(a) of the Federal Trademark Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a),

and at common law and incorporated by reference Paragraph Nos. 1- 36 of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

- 38. For many years prior to the acts complained of herein, Ricks has been continuously engaged in the development of the BME.COM domain for Internet search engine services through the use of various marketing opportunities.
- 39. As a result of the extensive efforts by Ricks, the mark BME.COM has become well known to the public as a distinctive indication of the origin of Ricks Internet search engine services and is entitled to service mark protection and protection against infringing uses. Attached hereto as Exhibit A to Ricks Declaration (attached hereto as Appendix 1) are examples of Ricks' use of the mark BME.COM for Internet search engine services.
- 40. Bmezine is engaged in not only providing an online interactive database of pornographic photos and videos in the field of piercing, tattoos, scarification, subincision, and castration but also for commercial Internet related services, including, but not limited to, free email services. Attached hereto as Exhibit B is an example of Bmezine's use of BME.
- 41. The use of the mark BME by Bmezine in a manner illustrated in Appendix 2 is likely to cause the public to believe, contrary to fact, that the services offered by Bmezine emanate from, or are otherwise sponsored or approved by Ricks. The use of BME infringes Ricks exclusive right in the mark BME.COM within the meaning of Section § 43(a) of the Federal Trademark Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a) and at common law.

WHERFORE, Plaintiff Ricks, demands judgment against Defendant, Bmezine as follows:

- Declaring that Gregory Ricks did not register the BME.COM domain in bad faith, that his actions do not constitute trademark infringement or dilution under United States law, and that Ricks may use the domain BME.COM without restriction;
- Quashing the ICANN arbitration's award and transfer order of the BME.COM domain to Defendant;
- 3. Enjoin Bmezine.com LLC and any other entity, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1116, from using the BME.COM domain now and in the future;
- 4. Declare Bmezine.com LLC has infringed Ricks' exclusive right in the mark BME.COM under 15 U.S.C. 1125(a) and at common law;
- 5. Award Plaintiff damages, both past and future, for interference with its contractual rights and contract expectancies relating to the domain name BME.COM;

APPENDIX 1

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF NEVADA

Gregory Ricks)
4702 Johnson Creek Loop)
College Station, TX 77845)
) CASE NUMBER: CV
Plaintiff,))
)
v.)
)
Bmezine.com, LLC.)
1802 N. Carson Street)
Carson City, Nevada)
)
Defendant.)

DECLARATION OF GREGORY RICKS

Gregory Ricks, declares under the penalty of perjury as follows:

- My name is Gregory Ricks, I am over the age of 18 and competent to make this declaration. The facts stated herein are within my personal knowledge and are true and correct, and where stated upon information and belief, are believed to be true and correct.
- I live and have a primary mailing address at 4702 Johnson Creek Loop,
 College Station, TX 77845.
- 3. I acquired the domain name BME.COM on March 6, 2000, as it is a valuable three-letter .com domain name.
- 4. At the time I was not aware of Bmezine.com LLC in any way.
- 5. When I first obtained the domain name BME.COM I directed it to my primary business site MOTHERBOARDS.COM.

6. Over the years I have provided Internet search services using the BME.COM mark. Although the site has had different logos and formats, such services have been provided continuously since 2000. The results provided have always been derived from Google® or Yahoo®, which are controlled exclusively by the latter companies. (see Exhibit A)

Document 1

- 7. On or about March 21, 2004 I was contacted by Shannon Larratt, the previous owner of Bmezine, inquiring as to whether I was interested in selling the domain BME.COM to Mr. Larratt personally.
- 8. At that time, I explained that BME.com was not for sale.
- 9. Later, in 2008 Mr. Larratt related to me that his Bmezine company used BM EZINE as its brand identity mark and that was why he wanted to buy the domain for himself and not his company.
- 10. The 2004 contact was the first and only contact Ricks had with Bmezine until April 2008.

I herby declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: September 5, 2008

Gregory Ricks

EXHIBIT A

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008

Page 16 of 27

Mother BOARDS

Welcome to
Motherboards.com your
best
source for Name Brand
Motherboards
and High Quality PC Upgrade
Parts.

For your protection we use the most trusted secure server key authority. Verify that your credit card transactions are secure by clicking the VeriSign logo.



Motherboards

Accessories

CPUs

Drives

Memory

Software

Video Cards

Compare

View Order

Please read our <u>Terms and Conditions</u> before placing an order.



1 of 3 9/3/2008 11:58 AM

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008

Page 17 of 27

- Check out our Compare Motherboard feature to help in your Motherboard selection.
- Repeat Customers use Gator Software to fill out our order form. This fantastic utility automatically fills out forms and remembers your login names and passwords and comes with over \$100 of premium coupons to popular shopping sites!
- Many of our long term customers already know this but if you are new to our site you should know if you purchase a motherboard and reach a Technician CPU together we configure and test motherboard prior to shipment.
- Shipping charges are \$12/UPS Ground, \$12/UPS 3 Day and \$26/UPS Next Business Day. Case shipping extra.
- Most orders ship within 1 to 3 days business days.

Order:

Online 24 /7 or you can call 800-364-7232 M-F 9:00AM - 5:00PM CST to place your order with a live operator.

Technical Support:

Customers can by email technical@mssi.com or by calling 337-625-9592 please have your invoice available.

Sales:

You can send any sales related

Case 2:08-cv-01174-PMP-GWF

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008

Page 18 of 27

questions to sales@mssi.com





Motherboards.com 2000 All rights reserved



Case 2:08-cv-01174-PMP-GWF

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008

Page 19 of 27





Brought To You By Bme.com

Find

- Cars
- Casino
- **. Computers**
- **.** ◆ Entertainment
- ♣Finance

- **.**♦Free
- **.**♦Health
- **.**◆Jobs
- **. Music**
- ◆Real Estate

- ■Shopping
- **.**◆Software
- **.**◆Travel
- **.**♦Web
- Web Hosting

4.5 cents/min Long Distance!

Any questions about this site can be sent to **Bme.com Webmaster**

Copyright 2001 Bme.com

1 of 1 9/3/2008 11:59 AM



Your Jewelry Resource

- Home
- Jewelry
- <u>Diamonds</u>
- Watches
- Engagement Rings
- Rings
- Earrings

Jewelry Categories

For the one you love

- Engagement
- Promise Rings

Case 2:08-cv-01174-PMP-GWF

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008

Page 21 of 27

• Anniversary Rings

•

Types of Jewelry

- Rings
- Bracelets
- Necklaces
- Earrings

Gems and Stones

- Diamonds
- Sapphires
- Pearls
- Rubies

Precious Metals

- Platinum
- White Gold
- Yellow Gold
- Silver

Related Links

- Body Piercing
- Navel Body Jewelry
- Belly Ring Jewelry
- Eyebrow Body Jewelry
- Tongue Jewelry
- Nose Jewelry
- Cheap Body Jewelry
- Gold Body Jewelry
- Sexy Body Jewelry
- Piercing Jewelry
- Glow Jewelry
- Celtic Body Jewelry
- Tribal Body Jewelry
- Belly Button Jewellery
- Custom Made Body Jewelry

Favorite Categories

Tattoos

- <u>Tattoo</u>
- Tattoo Flash
- Kid Tattoo
- <u>Tattooing</u>
- Tattoo Sleeve

Massage

- Massage Class
- Massage Therapy Course
- Massage College
- Tantric Massage
- Massage Therapist College

Spas

- Sauna
- Spa Resort
- Spa
- Day Spa
- New York Spa

Spa

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008 F

Page 24 of 27

- London Health Spa
- Champneys
- Health Spa Yorkshire
- Health Spa In the Uk
- Spa Weekend Break

Beauty Services

- Beauty Salon
- Esthetician
- Salon
- Treatment
- Regis

Vacation

- Cruise
- Hotel
- Cheap Flight
- Travel Agent
- Golf Vacations

body piercing

Case 2:08-cv-01174-PMP-GWF

Document 1

Filed 09/05/2008 Page 25 of 27

Search the Search Web:

APPENDIX 2





Apply for a free homepage and anonymous email account

Read the rules of membership

View the HTML template

View the online help

About BME/World...

SOME OF THE PAGES ON THIS SERVER: (Email me to be added or remove)

- Bert's Perforinktions Tattoos and Piercings
- Bonita/Christine What bodyart/body modification means to me
- Brad Giles' Psyko Art The Zany Crazy Mass Mindf**k World
- Brad's Piercing Photographs at BME Lots of nipples, and even some genitals
- Braveone and Baby's Home Page Hardcore adult -- members only!
- buster current and future mods
- buttrfly's bodyart pages art, wheel, and sludge the slug
- buttrfly's bodyart pages art, wheel, and sludge the slug
- Catgirl Meat, Sex, and Me
- ceridwen: the lady is in the building! I am an online entitiy.
- Claire's bodmods Massage My Ego!
- Cloglover's Piercing Gallery Genital Piercings and Female Nipple Piercings
- Creeper's Piercing Playground Piercings, Pictures, and Aftercare
- dogslut's homepage Cock torture and Self-Castration
- Dragonfly Designs From Void and Formless Infinite: Tattoo studio specializing in tattoos
- Dutchman Scrotal/Testicular Injection, scarification, piercing, and other body modications
- ESMAN Cock & Ball Torture Scenes
- Female Pumping... A woman's home Breast pumping, nipple pumping, genital pumping
- femsubmissionsex IRC channel homepage
- Frank's Body Art Page "Just another Body Art Page"
- Get My Balls! A site for gay men fond of castration
- Golgotha A place of torment or torture, A hill outside ancient Jerusalem where Jesus was crucified, and Me.
- Gothic Tokyo Modificatio Do-It-Yourself Page
- Heidi Anderson's Munches I Have Known
- Inky's Spot Kevin's Tattoos
- It's my page.. and jeffs.. Deal With it!!! Tattoos, Piercing, and Implants
- JoeSuper's Home Page A tribute to septum pierced girls
- Josh Burdette A Freak Loose on the Web: Here there be Dragons and RABbits
- Let me hurt you *Girls*Kick*Ass*
- LoBalls! Split-ring Ball Weights and Princes Wands
- Markus welcome to my world
- Mischa's Piercing Site Piercing in Sydney, Australia
- Modified: Thy body is thy temple, thou shalt adorn it. Reasons and Thoughts

Exhibit W.7

1 of 2