

**IN THE HEARINGS AND MEDIATION DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF SINGAPORE**

[2026] SGIPOS 3

Trade Mark No. 40202130172U

IN THE MATTER OF A TRADE MARK APPLICATION

IN THE NAME OF

REDDIO PTE LTD

... Applicant

AND

AN OPPOSITION BY

REDDIT INC

... Opponent

GROUND OF DECISION

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Reddit Inc
v
Reddio Pte Ltd

[2026] SGIPOS 3

Trade Mark No. 40202130172U
IP Adjudicator Sim Junhui
19 November 2025

5 March 2026

IP Adjudicator Sim Junhui:

Introduction

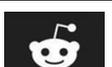
1 This is an opposition by Reddit, Inc. (“the Opponent”) against an application by Reddio Pte. Ltd. (“the Applicant”) to register the trade mark  **reddio** under Trade Mark No. 40202130172U (“the Application Mark”) in Class 42. Having considered all the pleadings and evidence filed and the submissions made in writing and orally, I dismiss the opposition.

Parties and background facts

2 The Applicant was incorporated in Singapore on 4 November 2021, and is said to be in the business of assisting developers to adopt blockchain technologies through Application Programming Interfaces (“APIs”). In particular, it states that it has made a name for itself in enabling developers to embed token or non-fungible tokens (“NFTs”) into their web, desktop and mobile applications with massive scalability and zero gas fee for off-chain transactions.

3 The Opponent has, since its website was first launched on 23 June 2005,

operated an online social media platform (available *via* web, desktop and mobile applications) said to consist of many online communities (or “subreddits”) with numerous daily users. Such subreddits may be created by any registered user and focus on specific topics. Thus, while Singapore users could access the website since its launch, the first subreddit dedicated to Singapore topics was created on 26 January 2008. Since then, the Opponent claims to have grown to become one of the Internet’s largest open archives of human experience. Hence, it owns and operates many domain names, including numerous country-code top-level domains. In addition to its website, which generates revenue through advertising, paid premium membership and an awards system, the Opponent claims to have been offering NFTs for sale on its website since June 2021. Among others, the Opponent registered and/or has been using the following marks:

Mark	Mark No.	Class
REDDIT	40201722083T	9, 38, 41, 42, 45
	40201803298Q	9, 38, 41, 42, 45
	40201723841R	9
	40201805530U	38, 41, 42
	40201812206Q	45
REDDIT PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK	40202013396W	38, 42, 45
 reddit	N/A	N/A

Procedural history

4 On 13 December 2021, the Applicant applied to register the Application Mark in Class 42 in respect of “Design, development and programming of computer software; Software as a service [SaaS]; Platform as a service [PaaS]”. This specification of services was subsequently amended to “Software as a service [SaaS], namely Appchain as a Service and Blockchain as a service [BaaS]; Designing, development and programming of computer software allowing for the deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain and providing an electronic platform for online transactions on a blockchain” (“the Services”) on 17 December 2024.

5 According to the Applicant, the Application Mark had been specially commissioned and created by professional designers. The word “reddio” was a portmanteau of “red” (i.e., one of Singapore’s national colours) and “dio” (i.e., an acronym of Decentralised Input Output), and inspired by radio frequencies, hence the stylised radio as the accompanying device component. The “radio” theme was chosen, says the Applicant, because the mark had been created with programmers in mind as the target audience, and radio frequencies were key to their transfer of data on the Internet.

6 The Opponent filed its Notice of Opposition to oppose the registration of the Application Mark on 26 August 2022, and the Applicant then filed its counter-statement on 23 December 2022.

7 The Opponent subsequently made a request for leave to amend its statement of grounds, which was granted, and the amended statement of grounds was filed on 2 June 2025. Following this, the Applicant made consequential amendments to its counter-statement on 15 July 2025. To address the amended portions of the statement of grounds, the Opponent filed a supplementary

Statutory Declaration on 4 August 2025 and in response to the Opponent’s supplementary Statutory Declaration filed on 4 August 2025, the Applicant filed its supplementary Statutory Declaration on 4 September 2025.

Grounds of opposition

8 The Opponent relies on Section 8(2)(b), Section 8(4) and Section 8(7)(a) of the Trade Marks Act 1998 (“the Act”) in this opposition.

9 At the hearing on 19 November 2025, counsel for the Opponent stated that, although the Opponent had registered and/or used the marks referred to at [3] above, it would only be proceeding with an opposition in this matter in respect of the marks set out below (collectively, the “Reddit Marks”).

Mark	Mark No.	Class
 (the “Reddit Device Mark”)	40201805530U	38, 41, 42
REDDIT (the “Reddit Word Mark”)	40201722083T	9, 38, 41, 42, 45
 (the “Reddit Composite Mark”)	N/A	N/A

Opponent’s evidence

10 The Opponent’s evidence comprises the following:

- (a) a Statutory Declaration made by Julie Krosnicki, Associate

General Counsel of the Opponent, on 14 August 2023 in Connecticut, United States of America;

(b) a supplementary Statutory Declaration made by the same Julie Krosnicki on 20 October 2023 in Connecticut, United States of America;

(c) a Statutory Declaration in Reply made by the same Julie Krosnicki on 4 June 2024 in New York, United States of America;

(d) a supplementary Statutory Declaration in Reply made by Henry Lien, Senior Director, Product Legal of the Opponent on 20 February 2025 in California, United States of America; and

(e) a supplementary Statutory Declaration made by Mali Fenton, Director, Litigation and IP, of the Opponent on 1 August 2025 in California, United States of America.

Applicant's evidence

11 The Applicant's evidence comprises the following:

(a) a Statutory Declaration made by Han Yidong, Director of the Applicant, on 7 March 2024 in Singapore;

(b) a supplementary Statutory Declaration made by the same Han Yidong on 3 April 2024 in Singapore,

(c) a further Statutory Declaration made by the same Han Yidong on 20 November 2024 in Singapore; and

(d) a supplementary Statutory Declaration made by the same Han Yidong on 4 September 2025 in Singapore.

Applicable law and burden of proof

12 There is no overall onus on the Applicant before the Registrar during examination or in opposition proceedings. The undisputed burden of proof in the present case falls on the Opponent.

The opposition under Section 8(2)(b)

13 Section 8(2)(b) of the Act reads as follows:

(2) A trade mark shall not be registered if because —

...

(b) it is similar to an earlier trade mark and is to be registered for goods or services identical with or similar to those for which the earlier trade mark is protected,

there exists a likelihood of confusion on the part of the public.

14 The applicable test in respect of Section 8(2)(b) of the Act is the “step-by-step” approach, which was endorsed by the Court of Appeal in *Staywell Hospitality Group Pty Ltd v Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc and another and another appeal* [2014] 1 SLR 911 (“*Staywell v Starwood*”) at [15], as follows:

Since this court’s decision in [*The Polo/Lauren Co, LP v Shop in Department Store Pte Ltd* [2006] 2 SLR(R) 690 (“*Polo (CA)*”)], our courts have given effect to this statutory wording by applying what is now known as the “step-by-step” approach, as opposed to the competing “global appreciation approach” applied in Europe after *Sabel BV v Puma AG, Rudolf Dassler Sport* [1998] RPC 199 (“*Sabel v Puma*”). Under the step-by-step approach, the three requirements of similarity of marks, similarity of goods or services, and likelihood of confusion arising from the two similarities, are assessed systematically. The first two elements are assessed individually before the final element which is assessed in the round. Under the global appreciation approach the elements of similarity between marks and goods or services, whilst still necessary ingredients in the confusion inquiry, are elided with other factors going towards the ultimate question of whether there is a likelihood of confusion

(see *Sabel v Puma* at 223–224, and *Canon Kabushiki Kaisha v Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc* [1999] RPC 117 at 132). Whilst there have been suggestions that the two approaches might be distinct without being different, we maintain this dichotomy and endorse the step-by-step approach as being conceptually neater and more systematic and, importantly, as being more aligned with the requirements imposed under our statute (see *Polo (CA)* at [8]).

Step 1: Similarity of marks

15 I begin with the first step which is to evaluate the similarity of the marks.

16 The relevant principles to determine the similarity of marks are to be found in *Staywell v Starwood* and *Hai Tong Co (Pte) Ltd v Ventree Singapore Pte Ltd and another and another appeal* [2013] 2 SLR 941 (“*Hai Tong v Ventree*”) and recently re-stated in *V V Technology Pte Ltd v Twitter, Inc* [2023] 5 SLR 513 (“*V V Technology v Twitter*”) at [25] to [28], as follows:

(a) The distinctiveness of the earlier mark is an integral factor in the inquiry. A more distinctive mark means that an applicant will have a higher threshold to show that its competing mark is dissimilar to it: see *Hai Tong v Ventree* at [30]. However, acquired technical distinctiveness should not be taken into consideration when evaluating the similarity of the marks: see *V V Technology v Twitter* at [109]. In raising acquired distinctiveness only in the context of the likelihood of confusion inquiry, the Opponent accepted as much.

(b) Without requiring a formulaic approach such that all similarities must be made out, the inquiry involves the assessment of visual, aural and conceptual similarities: see *Staywell v Starwood* at [18]. However, the aspects of similarity are merely signposts to guide the court’s inquiry and hence it is not necessary for there to be similarity in all three aspects. The question of distinctiveness is integrated into the assessment, and is

not a separate step within the inquiry: see *Staywell v Starwood* at [30].

(c) Further, the assessment is not to be made from the point of view of an unthinking person in a hurry, but rather from that of the average consumer exercising some care and good sense in making purchases. That said, such a person has “imperfect recollection” such that the marks should not be compared side-by-side: see *Hai Tong v Ventree* at [62(a)].

(d) Lastly, the assessment is made by reference to the overall impressions which the marks create in their totality bearing in mind their distinctive and dominant components: see *Staywell v Starwood* at [17]. Apart from this, there should not be any consideration of any external matter: see *Staywell v Starwood* at [20].

Reddit Device Mark

17 I first consider the opposition to the Application Mark by reference to the Reddit Device Mark, which I set out below for ease of reference.

Application Mark	Reddit Device Mark
	

18 Although it was argued otherwise in written submissions, the Applicant conceded at the hearing before me – rightly, in my view – that the registration of the Reddit Device Mark in black and white protected the mark in all colours. Hence, the assessment should be made between the following marks:

Application Mark	Reddit Device Mark
	

19 In my view, the marks are, on the whole, dissimilar. This is evidently so from an aural point of view given that there is no aural element to the Reddit Device Mark.

20 This is no less the case visually. The Opponent argued that both the Application Mark’s device component and the Reddit Device Mark represent heads with faces that are wider than tall, topped by antennae leaning to the right and topped by dots. However, as the Opponent itself argued, albeit in a different context, the Application Mark’s device component is proportionally diminutive compared to its word component, which the Opponent says is “the dominant and distinctive part of the Application Mark”. The overall effect then is one of visual dissimilarity with a mark that consists entirely and only of a device.

21 That aside, even if one were to assess only the devices in question, I find that there are distinct differences. First, whereas the “head” in the Reddit Device Mark is composed of three overlapping ovals (i.e., a head with ears), that in the Application Mark is one rectangle with rounded corners (i.e., a head with *no* ears). Second, the “face” in the Reddit Device Mark is made up of two circles and an upward-curving line (i.e., eyes and a smiling mouth), but that in the Application Mark has three vertical rectangles, with the central rectangle being taller than the flanking two rectangles (i.e., eyes and a *nose*). Third, unlike the unbroken antenna in the Reddit Device Mark with its kink in the middle, the antenna in the Application Mark is broken but straight with no kinks. Likewise, the dot at the tip is, unlike that in the Reddit Device Mark, of equal thickness to the rest of the antenna, and indeed, the rest of the mark which is a line-drawing on a white background. By contrast, the Reddit Device Mark is made up of a solid block figure of varying thickness, regardless of whether it is a colour image on a white background or vice versa. I have gone into some detail to list the visual differences between the devices, but the short point to make is that

these differences create different impressions in the mind of the viewer of what the viewer is looking at. In short, whereas I accept the Opponent’s submission that the “face” in the Reddit Device Mark appears to be that of a friendly alien with personality, the “face” in the Application Mark appears rather to be that of a robot or, as argued by the Applicant, a radio. In my view, even an average consumer with imperfect recollection may thus perceive the devices to be dissimilar when making purchases.

22 The visual dissimilarity, in turn, contributes to a degree of conceptual dissimilarity. I accept the Opponent’s submission that both the Application Mark’s device component and the Reddit Device Mark convey ideas of communication and technology. However, whereas the smiling alien head in the Reddit Device Mark produces the impression that such communication and technology is through means that are fun or unusual, the robotic or radio face in the Application Mark gives the sense of something much more reliable or sturdy or quotidian. Hence, in my view, the extent of conceptual similarity is low, perhaps to the point of dissimilarity.

Reddit Word Mark

23 I turn next to the opposition to the Application Mark on the basis of the Reddit Word Mark, which I set out below for ease of reference.

Application Mark	Reddit Word Mark
	REDDIT

24 As with the Reddit Device Mark, the Applicant rightly conceded at the hearing before me that a word mark registered in black and white protected the word in all colours. Further, registering a word mark in block capitals covered “[the] use of that word in any clearly legible form of lettering and must not be

confined to its representation in block capital letters”: see *Sarika Connoisseur Cafe Pte Ltd v Ferrero SpA* [2013] 1 SLR 531 (“*Sarika v Ferrero*”) at [24], following the reasoning in *Morny Ld’s Trade Marks, in the Matter of* (1951) 68 RPC 131. Hence, the assessment should be made between the following marks, where the font and colour of the Reddit Word Mark as thus represented is derived from the font and colour of the Application Mark:

Application Mark	Reddit Word Mark
	

25 In my view, once the assessment is made with reference to the Reddit Word Mark in red with rounded letters as represented at [24] above, the marks have a moderate level of visual similarity. Both the word component of the Application Mark and the Reddit Word Mark consist of a single word of the same length and identical letters save for the last letter: see *Sarika v Ferrero* at [23]. Although the Application Mark also has a device component, I agree with the Opponent that the focus would be on the word component because the former is proportionally diminutive compared to the latter. It is true that the last letter in the Application Mark (i.e., “o”) has a rounded appearance which is dissimilar to the straight vertical appearance of the last letter in the Reddit Word Mark (i.e., “t”). This goes some way to distinguish this case from *Sarika v Ferrero* (where the letters “o” and “a” had rounded appearances) and *Hyundai Mobis v Mobil Petroleum Company, Inc* [2007] SGIPOS 12 (“*Hyundai Mobis v Mobil (IPOS)*”) (where the letters “s” and “l” were both linear). That said, I do not think that this difference renders the overall visual impression of the marks wholly dissimilar. Rather, when compared and looked at as a whole, there is a moderate level of visual similarity.

26 By contrast, I find that the marks are not conceptually similar. The

Opponent had conceded as much in submissions by reference to *Sarika v Ferrero* at [34] due to what it argued was the lack of any meaning or graphical element in the Reddit Word Mark that may be used to compare with the Application Mark. Now, the Opponent has given no evidence on the derivation of the Reddit Word Mark. However, I note that, in submissions before me, the Opponent argued that the Reddit Word Mark should be pronounced as /'re.dɪt/ (or, as the Opponent put it despite some unclear statements potentially to the contrary in evidence, “read-it”). If anything, the way in which the Opponent says the word should be pronounced and the way in which the Opponent’s online social platform operates with users posting and viewing content generated by other users tends to the view that the Reddit Word Mark is a play on words (i.e., “read it” in the simple past tense) and not, as submitted, a completely invented word. If so, then in my view, the word alludes to a forum or a noticeboard where users may read other users’ posts or comments and thereby keep updated on topics. This quality may mean that the Reddit Word Mark is not as distinctive as it may otherwise have been. It also gives rise to a conceptual dissimilarity in light of my view at [22] above, corroborated by the Applicant’s evidence on the derivation of the mark, that the robotic or radio face in the Application Mark’s device component conveys the idea of a reliable or quotidian form of communication or technology like a radio.

27 This finding feeds into and is, in turn, influenced by my view that the marks have a low level of aural similarity. In reliance on *Hyundai Mobis v Mobil (IPOS)* and *Dr August Wolff GmbH & Co KG Arzneimittel v Combe International Ltd* [2021] SLR 626 (“*Dr August Wolff v Combe International*”), the Opponent sought to focus on the initials of both words, which were spelt and thus to be pronounced identically; and to downplay their respective endings, which were not dissimilar given the tendency to slur. While I accept that the ending of the Reddit Word Mark may be slurred in fast everyday speech in

Singapore, I am not convinced that that is likely to be the case with the ending of the Application Mark's word component.

28 There are two related points to note in that regard. First, the Application Mark ends with a vowel "o", instead of a consonant. Consequently, and this is the second point, the Application Mark has three syllables, instead of two syllables. In my view, the average consumer in Singapore is likely to pronounce all three syllables of the word component of the Application Mark, even if the last vowel is, in fast speech, pronounced in a reduced fashion. Hence, these two points serve to reduce the tendency of the average consumer to slur the ending of the word component in such a way as to render its pronunciation aurally similar to the Reddit Word Mark. They also serve to distinguish this case from *Hyundai Mobis v Mobil (IPOS)* and *Dr August Wolff v Combe International*, where the words in question did not have such differences. In addition, I am of the view that the different pronunciation of the endings of the two words may affect the pronunciation of their initials.

29 In short, while I accept the Opponent's submission that the Reddit Word Mark is likely to be pronounced as /'re.dɪt/, or /'re.dɪ/ in fast everyday speech in Singapore, I am inclined to find that the pronunciation of the Application Mark would be closer to /'re.dɪ.əʊ/, or perhaps even, as the Applicant submits, /'reɪ.dɪ.əʊ/ given the radio face in the Application Mark's device component, and hence only have a low level of similarity to the Reddit Word Mark.

Reddit Composite Mark

30 Lastly, I consider the opposition to the Application Mark by reference to the Reddit Composite Mark. For ease of reference, the respective marks are set out below.

Application Mark	Reddit Composite Mark
	

31 Although the Reddit Composite Mark is not a registered mark, the Opponent argues that it is an “earlier trade mark” as defined by Section 2(1) of the Act because it is a well known mark. For the reasons at [61] to [68] below, I disagree. Given that the Reddit Composite is not well known, and hence not an “earlier trade mark”, there is no need to apply the “step-by-step” approach to the Reddit Composite Mark and consider the opposition to the Application Mark by reference to it.

32 However, had I been called on to consider it, I would have tended to the view that the Reddit Composite Mark is dissimilar to the Application Mark. From a visual point of view, the word components of the respective marks appear distinct due to differences in font, letter spacing and especially colour. These differences are heightened by the differences between the device components of the respective marks, which I have already highlighted at [21] above. To these, I add the fact that the device component of the Reddit Composite Mark is now, unlike that of the Application Mark, housed in an orange circle. Thus, in my view, the overall visual impression of the marks given to the average consumer is likely to be one of visual dissimilarity.

33 As with the Reddio Device Mark, the visual dissimilarity is likely to contribute to a conceptual dissimilarity with consumers regarding the Reddit Composite Mark as conveying ideas of communication and technology by fun or unusual means, unlike the idea of quotidian, reliable communication and technology conveyed by the Application Mark. Hence, in my view, the marks are of limited similarity, even dissimilar.

34 Similarly, the conceptual dissimilarity is likely to feed into a finding of a low level of aural similarity as was the case with the Reddit Word Mark. I reiterate my views at [27] to [29] above, that while the Reddit Word Mark is likely to be pronounced as /'re.dɪt/, or /'re.dɪ/ in fast everyday speech in Singapore, the pronunciation of the Application Mark is likely to be closer to /'re.di.əʊ/, or perhaps even /'reɪ.di.əʊ/ due to the radio face in the Application Mark's device component. The aural similarity of the marks is thus low.

35 Before moving on, I note that there is evidence that in November 2023, the Opponent undertook a rebranding exercise of the Reddit Composite Mark which then appeared as follows:



36 As can be seen, the entire word component (including the tittle above the letter “i”) was changed to be of the same orange colour, and the kink in the antenna in the device component was removed. Although the “face” in the device component was changed and the orange circle housing it was altered to appear like a speech bubble, the overall impression is that the rebranded Reddit Composite Mark appears to be more similar to the Application Mark than it was before. However, I will not consider the rebranded Reddit Composite Mark for the purpose of this opposition because the Opponent did not seek to proceed with its opposition on the basis of the same. Such a position is, in my view, rightly taken given that the rebranding exercise occurred not only after the Applicant applied to register the Application Mark, but also after the Opponent filed its Notice of Opposition.

Conclusion on similarity of marks

37 Having reviewed the Application Mark, the Reddit Device Mark and the Reddit Word Mark, and bearing in mind my findings in respect of the various aspects of similarity, I am of the view that while there are similar and dissimilar elements, the overall impression of these marks in their totality to the average consumer exercising some care and good sense in making purchases is likely to tend in favour of dissimilarity. As stated at [31] above and elaborated on at [61] to [68] below, I do not find that the evidence bears out the conclusion that the Reddit Composite Mark is a well known mark and hence an “earlier trade mark”; and there is thus no need to consider the same for the purposes of the test in *Staywell v Starwood*. In any event, my view is that, on an overall impression, the marks are on balance more different than similar. This ought to be the end of the analysis for Section 8(2)(b) of the Act. Nevertheless, for completeness, I will move on to the other steps.

Step 2: Similarity of Goods or Services

38 I now turn to the second step which is an evaluation, in this case, of the services covered by the Application Mark, and those in the Reddit Marks.

39 The relevant factors to determine similarity in this sense have been set out in *British Sugar plc v James Robertson & Sons Ltd* [1996] RPC 281 (“*British Sugar v James Robertson*”) at 296 to 297, as follows:

- (a) The respective uses of the respective goods and/or services;
- (b) The respective users of the respective goods and/or services;
- (c) The physical nature of the goods and/or acts of service;

- (d) The respective trade channels through which the goods and/or services reach the market;
- (e) In the case of self-serve consumer items, where in practice they are respectively found or likely to be found and in particular whether they are, or are likely to be, found on the same or different shelves; and
- (f) The extent to which the respective goods and/or services are competitive, taking into account how those in trade classify goods.

Reddit Device Mark and Reddit Word Mark

40 With this in mind, I start by comparing the specification of the Services for which the Application Mark is to be registered, with that of services in the Reddit Device Mark and Reddit Word Mark. Although both the Reddit Marks have been registered in other Classes, it is not disputed that the relevant Class to be considered for this opposition is Class 42. For ease of reference, a table setting out the respective services is set out below.

Applicant	Opponent
Application Mark	Reddit Device Mark
Class 42: Software as a service [SaaS], namely Appchain as a Service and Blockchain as a service [BaaS]; Designing, development and programming of computer software allowing for the deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain and providing an electronic platform for online transactions on a blockchain	Class 42: Computer services, namely, providing a website featuring technology that enables users to submit, rate, share, bookmark, index, store, collect, and showcase content in electronic form in the nature and fields of current events, politics, news, gaming, comedy, relationships, technology, photos, videos, religion, science, movies, and music; providing customized on-line web pages featuring user-defined information, including search engines and on-line web links to other websites.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Reddit Word Mark</p> <p>Class 42: Computer services, namely, providing customized on-line web pages and data feeds featuring user-defined information, which includes blog posts, new media content, other on-line content, and on-line web links to other websites, and providing a search engine based on natural language queries on a global computer network; design and development of computer hardware and software; application provider services (ASP), namely, hosting computer software applications for others; application service provider (ASP) featuring software for enabling users to post, search, view, watch, share, submit, critique, rate, bookmark, index, store, collect and comment on messages, news, comments, multimedia content, videos, movies, films, photos, audio content, animation, pictures, images, information, and user-generated content in the fields of current events, politics, news, general interest news, gaming, comedy, relationships, technology, photos, videos, religion, science, sports, movies, music and lifestyle; hosting of websites and of online non-downloadable software for uploading, downloading, editing, posting, showing, displaying, tagging, sharing and transmitting messages, news, comments, text, publications, multimedia content, videos, movies, films, photos, audio content, animation, pictures, images, information, and user-generated content; hosting an interactive website and online non-downloadable software for others that enable users to post, search, watch, share, critique, rate, and comment on messages, news,</p>
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	<p>comments, multimedia content, videos movies, films, photos, audio content, animation, pictures, images, text, information, and user-generated content; providing temporary use of online non-downloadable software and software development tools; hosting of digital content online; hosting computer software applications for others on a virtual private server; hosting multimedia digital content on the Internet; hosting a website for others featuring messages, news, comments, multimedia content, videos, movies, films, photos, audio content, animation, pictures, images, text, information, and user-generated and non-user generated content; providing temporary use of non-downloadable software to enable the sharing of multimedia content and comments among users; hosting websites for others featuring on-line journals and blogs featuring user-defined and non user defined content; hosting websites for others featuring online forums, chat rooms, journals, blogs, and electronic mailing lists, including for the transmission of messages, comments, information, and multimedia content among users; hosting an online website community for users to share information, films, photos, audio and video content including for the purposes of receiving feedback from their peers and others and including for the purpose of forming virtual communities, and to engage in social networking; providing information, advice and assistance about IT and computer technology; providing information, advice and assistance about IT and computer technology via wireless mobile devices, satellite, cable and global computer network; advice,</p>
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	<p>information and assistance relating to all the aforesaid including, but not limited to, all the aforesaid services provided online, and/or provided for use with and/or by way of the Internet, the world wide web and/or via communications, telephone, mobile telephone and/or wireless and/or wired communication networks.</p>
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41 Having considered the evidence, I accept that there is some similarity between the Services for which the Application Mark is to be registered, and the services in both of the Reddit Marks.

42 One point of similarity is in the uses of the respective services. Thus, as the Opponent argues, the services in question are computer services. Indeed, the specifications in both the Applicant’s Mark and the Reddit Word Mark specify that the computer services comprise the design and development of computer software for users. It is true that the Application Mark’s specification refers to the design and development of computer software to “[allow] for the deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain and [provide] an electronic platform for online transactions on a blockchain”, which is missing from the specifications in the Reddit Device Mark and Reddit Word Mark. However, this distinction merely means that the former is a subset of the latter. It is in this respect that the services are similar.

43 Another manner in which the services are similar is in their respective users. I accept that the Applicant’s software is intended to enable “deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain” and provide “an electronic platform for online transactions on a blockchain”, and hence, the relevant user would be sophisticated computer programmers or developers with the capacity and know-how to work with and use such services. However, in my view, this class of

persons would be a subset of the average Internet user whom the Opponent says is the relevant user of the services in the Reddit Marks: see *Discovery Communications, LLC v A-STAR-Education Discovery Camps Pte. Ltd.* [2020] SGIPOS 4 at [83]. Hence, the services are similar in this respect too.

44 A third aspect of similarity is that, for however much it is worth, both parties' services are available online. My doubt as to the utility of this point arises from the fact that the growth of the Internet and the birth of an entire universe separate and distinct from the physical has rendered this fact of as much use as, with respect, the contention that different goods or services are available in the real world. Nevertheless, it remains that the trade channels through which the services reach the market are, to this extent, similar.

45 Lastly, I find that the services are competitive in the way argued by the Opponent, and hence similar. Relying on *Guccio Gucci S.p.A. v Guccitech Industries (Private Ltd)* [2018] SGIPOS 1 ("*Gucci v Guccitech*"), the main contention is that "similar" means not only "identical" or "competing", but "complementary" as well. I agree insofar as it is used "in the right context": see *Gucci v Guccitech* at [41]. It is worth looking at the case more closely to ascertain what the "right context" means. In that regard, I note that the examples given of complementary goods were of lighters and tobacco products, or a fondue or rice cooker and plates, bowls and glasses. It was then noted that the relevant sellers and purchasers were the same or similar, and that the occasions and places for purchase and use were also the same or in close proximity. Hence the conclusion that it would be artificial to distinguish goods which were intimately connected and a necessary corollary to each other. I think that would be the case here given that I have found similarity in the users and uses of the services as well as the occasions and places for purchase and use. The relevant services are therefore, in my view, intimately connected or a necessary corollary

to each other. As such, I find that they are “complementary” in the sense intended in *Gucci v Guccitech* and accordingly competitive.

Reddit Composite Mark

46 As stated at [31] above and elaborated on at [61] to [68] below, I do not find that the Reddit Composite Mark is a well known mark and hence an “earlier trade mark”; and thus there is no need to consider the same for the purposes of the test in *Staywell v Starwood* including the services-similarity stage. However, I am minded to leave passing remarks on this issue because I find a greater degree of similarity between the services in the Application Mark and the services for which the Opponent has been using the Reddit Composite Mark.

47 In that regard, I note that, in addition to the services which are also in the Reddit Device Mark and Reddit Word Mark – on which I have already stated my views at [41] to [45] above, the Opponent has been using the Reddit Composite Mark in what it calls the “Collectible Avatars Creator Program” (the “Program”). In its evidence, the Opponent has described the Program as “a sophisticated avatar building system and creator portal”. It says that it includes software to enable “the deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain” and will “allow users to create NFT smart contracts [and] upload artwork”. In addition, it offers “functionality for users to sell and distribute their artwork and NFTs through the Opponent’s marketplace” and “digital wallet services to facilitate the storage and management of blockchain-based digital assets”. As such, in my view, not only the uses, but also the users, are likely to overlap to a greater degree of identity. The services are thus more likely to be competitive and be similar.

Conclusion on similarity of services

48 In short, I am of the view that the specification of services for which the Application Mark is to be registered is similar to the services in the Reddit Marks.

Step 3: Likelihood of Confusion

49 Lastly, I turn to the third step in the “step-by-step” approach.

50 This issue only arises for consideration after the threshold criteria of similarity of marks *and* similarity of goods or services have been met: see *Staywell v Starwood* at [55]. Thus, on one analysis, it does not arise here given my findings in respect of the similarity (or lack thereof) between the marks in question: see *The Polo/Lauren Co, LP v Shop In Department Store Pte Ltd* [2006] 2 SLR(R) 690 at [8]; *Mobil Petroleum Co, Inc v Hyundai Mobis* [2008] 4 SLR(R) 427 at [27].

51 However, in light of my views concerning the similarity of the services between the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks, I am of the view that it would be useful to assess whether a substantial portion of the relevant public is likely to be confused. This is especially in light of the two elements to such confusion. The first being where one mark is confused for another; and the second – perhaps more applicable here – being where the relevant segment of the public remains confused about the origin that each mark signifies or perceives that goods or services bearing the marks emanate from the same source, or economically linked or associated sources, even though the marks differ: see *Ceramiche Caesar SpA v Caesarstone Sdot-Yam Ltd* [2017] 2 SLR 308 (“*Ceramiche v Caesarstone*”) [at [57]].

52 In determining this, actual and notional fair uses of the marks may be considered, and the factors admissible in the inquiry include the following:

(a) Factors relating to the impact of the similarity of marks on consumer perception:

- (i) The degree of similarity of the marks;
- (ii) The reputation of the marks;
- (iii) The impression given by the marks; and
- (iv) The possibility of imperfect recollection of the marks;

(b) Factors relating to the impact of the similarity of goods or services on consumer perception:

- (i) The normal way in or the circumstances under which consumers would purchase goods or services of that type;
- (ii) Whether the goods or services are expensive or not;
- (iii) The nature of the goods or services and whether they would tend to command a greater or lesser degree of fastidiousness and attention on the part of prospective purchasers; and
- (iv) The likely characteristics of the relevant consumers and whether they would or would not tend to apply care or have specialist knowledge in making the purchase.

(see *Ceramiche v Caesarstone* at [56])

53 Bearing these principles in mind, I find that the likelihood of confusion on the part of the relevant segment of the public is low.

54 In this, I first bear in mind the nature of the services in question and the consequential likely characteristics of the relevant consumers. For this purpose, I will have reference to the Program because that is the service provided by the Opponent which most closely resembles the Services in the Application Mark. As stated at [47] above, the Program is “a sophisticated avatar building system and creator portal” which includes software to enable “the deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain” and will “allow users to create NFT smart contracts [and] upload artwork”. In addition, it offers “functionality for users to sell and distribute their artwork and NFTs through the Opponent’s marketplace” and “digital wallet services to facilitate the storage and management of blockchain-based digital assets”. The Applicant’s software is similarly intended to enable “deployment of smart contracts on a blockchain” and provide “an electronic platform for online transactions on a blockchain”. In particular, the Applicant’s Services assist developers to adopt blockchain technologies using Layer 2 solutions, and provide cloud APIs for developers to interact with to build NFT applications. The services in question are thus of a very specialized nature, and probably require a significant degree of know-how and expertise in blockchain technology. This in turn is likely to have an effect on the characteristics of these users who, in my view, are likely to be sophisticated computer programmers or developers who would apply care when making purchases.

55 Against this backdrop, I note the dissimilarity between the marks in question (i.e., the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks). This dissimilarity would, notwithstanding the possibility of imperfect recollection, produce the most different impression in the mind of the relevant public. In my opinion, the fact that, as the Opponent pointed out, a search on “reddio.com” leads to a prompt as to whether “reddit.com” is intended is neither here nor there. After all, such a search result may be occasioned by the search engine’s algorithms and does not, in any event, change my opinion that the marks are visually,

aurally and conceptually different from a non-specialist point of view, let alone in the eyes of the likely relevant users of the services.

56 Therefore, I am of the view that the likelihood of confusion, even considering the similarity of the services in the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks, is low.

Conclusion on opposition under Section 8(2)(b)

57 For the reasons above, I find that the ground of opposition under Section 8(2)(b) of the Act fails.

The opposition under Section 8(4)

58 Section 8(4) of the Act reads:

(4) Subject to subsection (5), where an application for registration of a trade mark is made on or after 1st July 2004, if the whole or an essential part of the trade mark is identical with or similar to an earlier trade mark, the later trade mark shall not be registered if –

- (a) the earlier trade mark is well known in Singapore; and
- (b) use of the later trade mark in relation to the goods or services for which the later trade mark is sought to be registered –
 - (i) would indicate a connection between those goods or services and the proprietor of the earlier trade mark, and is likely to damage the interests of the proprietor of the earlier trade mark;
 - (ii) if the earlier trade mark is well known to the public at large in Singapore —
 - (A) would cause dilution in an unfair manner of the distinctive character of the earlier trade mark; or
 - (B) would take unfair advantage of the distinctive character of the earlier trade mark.

Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act

59 As stated in *Staywell v Starwood* at [119], the elements required for an opposition to succeed under Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act are as follows:

- (a) The whole or essential part of the application mark is identical or similar to an earlier mark;
- (b) The earlier mark is well known in Singapore;
- (c) The use of the application mark would indicate a connection between the applicant's goods or services and the proprietor's goods or services; and
- (d) The connection is likely to damage the proprietor's interests.

Identity or similarity of marks

60 The applicable test for similarity for the purpose of Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act has been held to be the same as the applicable test under Section 8(2)(b) of the Act: see *Rovio Entertainment Ltd v Kimanis Food Industries Sdn Bhd* [2015] 5 SLR 618 (“*Rovio v Kimanis*”) at [146]. Accordingly, for the same reasons in respect of Section 8(2)(b) of the Act at [17] to [37] above, I find that the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks are not identical or similar for the purposes of Section 8(4)(b) of the Act. This ought to be the end of the analysis. Nevertheless, for completeness, I shall proceed to consider the other elements under Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act.

Well known

61 I turn then to the issue of whether the Reddit Marks, as the earlier marks, are well known in Singapore, as the Opponent contends.

62 Section 2(7) to (9) of the Act reads:

(7) Subject to subsection (8), in deciding, for the purposes of this Act, whether a trade mark is well known in Singapore, it is relevant to take into account any matter from which it may be inferred that the trade mark is well known, including such of the following matters as may be relevant:

- (a) the degree to which the trade mark is known to or recognised by any relevant sector of the public in Singapore;
- (b) the duration, extent and geographical area of —
 - (i) any use of the trade mark; or
 - (ii) any promotion of the trade mark, including any advertising of, any publicity given to, or any presentation at any fair or exhibition of, the goods or services to which the trade mark is applied;
- (c) any registration or application for the registration of the trade mark in any country or territory in which the trade mark is used or recognised, and the duration of such registration or application;
- (d) any successful enforcement of any right in the trade mark in any country or territory, and the extent to which the trade mark was recognised as well known by the competent authorities of that country or territory;
- (e) any value associated with the trade mark.

(8) Where it is determined that a trade mark is well known to any relevant sector of the public in Singapore, the trade mark is deemed to be well known in Singapore.

(9) In subsections (7) and (8), “relevant sector of the public in Singapore” includes any of the following:

- (a) all actual consumers and potential consumers in Singapore of the goods or services to which the trade mark is applied;
- (b) all persons in Singapore involved in the distribution of the goods or services to which the trade mark is applied;

- (c) all businesses and companies in Singapore dealing in the goods or services to which the trade mark is applied.

63 The factors listed at Section 2(7) of the Act are, in general, but a guide, and may ordinarily be added to or disregarded as required: see *Novelty Pte Ltd v Amanresorts Ltd and another* [2009] 3 SLR(R) 216 (“*Novelty v Amanresorts*”) at [137]. The exception is Section 2(7)(a) of the Act, which, due to the deeming effect of Section 2(8), has been described as “arguably the most crucial factor when determining whether a trade mark is well known in Singapore” to the point that the other factors in Section 2(7) may become irrelevant once the earlier trade mark is found to be well known to a relevant sector of the public in Singapore: see *Novelty v Amanresorts* at [139] to [140]. The fact that a trade mark may be found to be well known in Singapore once it is recognised or known to “any relevant sector of the public in Singapore”, regardless of that sector’s size, may give rise to a perception that the threshold for a mark to be considered well known in Singapore is low: see *Novelty v Amanresorts* at [229]. However, the Court of Appeal has since clarified that its statements in *Novelty v Amanresorts* should not be taken as setting down a general rule, or suggesting that the threshold to find that a trade mark is well known in Singapore is low. Rather, the key point to note is that the relevant sector of the public in question need not be large in size and may be “any relevant sector of the Singaporean public”: see *Ceramiche v Caesarstone* at [102].

64 The Opponent argues that the Reddit Marks are well known to many sectors of the public in Singapore, *viz.*, a broad category of consumers looking to find out information about any topic under the sun. The evidence which the Opponent relied on in this regard is the date of registration of the Reddit Marks in Singapore and elsewhere, the use and promotion of the Reddit Marks on the Internet globally and in Singapore, the availability and accessibility of the

Opponent's services worldwide, the size of the membership of Singapore-related subreddits, and the reports of website traffic trackers.

65 I am not of the view that the evidence which the Opponent adduced in support of its argument bears out the submission. There is indeed extensive evidence of the use and promotion of the Reddit Marks globally on the Internet. However, while it is true that Singapore is a globally-connected city, I am of the view that it is incumbent on the Opponent to show that the evidence bears at least some tangible relation to Singapore.

66 In that regard, I consider that the Opponent's reliance on the size of the membership of Singapore-related subreddits does not go very far. If, as the Opponent has pointed out, Singapore users are not restricted to interacting with Singapore-related subreddits and may participate in other communities, then what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and the statistics proffered must be regarded as capable of including non-Singapore users interacting with Singapore-related subreddits. Without distinguishing the two, this evidence is of limited value to the Opponent's contention. Likewise, the Opponent's evidence concerning its promotion and marketing efforts is not of much value given its own admission in its evidence that the efforts were global in nature and not exclusive to Singapore.

67 To its credit, the Opponent has endeavoured to draw a link to Singapore by reference to a report in May 2025 by the website traffic tracker, Semrush, which ranked the Opponent's website as the fourth most visited website in Singapore. However, I do not consider reliance on this report to be safe. First, without the underlying methodology including the metrics used, the manner in which the traffic tracker came to its conclusion in respect of the Opponent's website is not clear. This diminishes the weight to be placed on the evidence.

Second, I agree with the Applicant that the rankings at most only reflect overall visits and may include incidental traffic. They do not therefore establish that the trade marks are known or recognised. Third, given the rebranding exercise in November 2023, it is unclear whether the report’s findings relate to the Reddit Marks (including the Reddit Composite Mark) on the basis of which the Opponent brought this opposition, or only the rebranded Reddit Composite Mark. Lastly, Semrush’s report was issued in May 2025, about three and a half years after the relevant date of 13 December 2021, i.e., the date on which the Applicant applied to register the Application Mark.

68 For these reasons, I do not find that the Opponent’s evidence leads to the conclusion that the Reddit Marks are well known in Singapore and in particular to a broad category of consumers looking to find out information about any topic under the sun.

Connection that is likely to damage the proprietor’s interests

69 The applicable test for a “connection” that is “likely to damage” the Opponent’s interest for the purpose of Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act has been held to be the same as the test of likelihood of confusion under Section 8(2)(b) of the Act: see *Sarika v Ferrero* at [76] to [77]; *Novelty v Amanresorts* at [226] and [233]; *Staywell v Starwood* at [120]. Therefore, for the same reasons in respect of Section 8(2)(b) of the Act at [49] to [56] above, I find that there is no connection between the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks that is likely to damage the Opponent’s interests for the purposes of Section 8(4)(b) of the Act.

Section 8(4)(b)(ii) of the Act

70 The elements to be established for an opposition under Section 8(4)(b)(ii) of the Act are as follows:

- (a) The whole or essential part of the application mark is identical or similar to an earlier mark;
- (b) The earlier mark is well known to the public at large in Singapore; and
- (c) The use of the application mark would cause dilution in an unfair manner or take unfair advantage of the earlier mark's distinctive character.

71 For the reasons at [17] to [37] above, I find that the Application Mark and the Reddit Marks are not identical or similar for the purposes of Section 8(4)(b)(ii) of the Act. Further, I am of the view that the Reddit Marks have not attained the coveted status of being well known to the public at large. Such trade marks enjoy a much more extensive level of protection because they enjoy a much higher degree of recognition, *viz.*, by *most*, though not all, sectors of the public: *City Chain Stores (S) Pte Ltd v Louis Vuitton Malletier* [2010] 1 SLR 382 at [92]. Given my view at [61] to [68] above that the Reddit Marks have not crossed the threshold of being well known in Singapore for the purposes of Section 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act, I do not consider that they may be regarded as well known to the public at large for the purposes of Section 8(4)(b)(ii). In light of these findings, I do not think it is necessary to consider whether there is unfair dilution or unfair advantage.

Conclusion on opposition under Section 8(4)

72 For the reasons above, I find that the ground of opposition under Section 8(4) of the Act fails.

The opposition under Section 8(7)(a)

73 Section 8(7)(a) of the Act reads:

(7) A trade mark shall not be registered if, or to the extent that, its use in Singapore is liable to be prevented —

(a) by virtue of any rule of law (in particular, the law of passing off) protecting an unregistered trade mark or other sign used in the course of trade

74 It was observed in *Staywell v Starwood*, as follows:

129 Under s 8(7)(a) of the Act, a mark may be refused registration because its use would result in liability for the tort of passing off. ...

130 It is not disputed that to succeed in an action for passing off, the classic trinity of goodwill, misrepresentation and damage must be proven. ...

75 All three elements of passing off must be made out, and the ground of opposition will not succeed if any of the elements is not proven: see *Novelty v Amanresorts* at [37]. This ground of opposition can thus be easily dealt with because the analysis for misrepresentation in passing off under Section 8(7)(a) of the Act is the same as that for “likelihood of confusion” under Section 8(2)(b) and that for “connection that is likely to damage interests” under 8(4)(b)(i) of the Act: see *Rovio v Kimanis* at [191] to [194]. For the reasons at [49] to [56] and [69] above therefore, I find that the element of misrepresentation is not proven, and hence, the ground of opposition under Section 8(7)(a) therefore fails.

Overall conclusion

76 Having considered all the pleadings and evidence filed and the submissions made in writing and orally, I find that the opposition fails on all grounds. The application will proceed to registration. The Applicant is awarded

costs in any event in respect of costs incurred as a consequence of the Opponent's amendment of its statement of grounds. The Applicant is also entitled to costs in the cause, and the sum of these two categories of costs is \$11,726.50.

Sim Junhui
IP Adjudicator

Ng Yi Neng and Sarah Hasri (Nanyang Law LLC) and Han Wah
Teng (instructed by Nanyang Law LLC) for the Applicant;
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