



Alfred Donovan

Alfred Donovan is the 89 year old former marketing consultant to Shell who has been involved in bouts of High Court litigation with the Royal Dutch Shell Group for over a decade. Shell has not won a single case (see overleaf). In May 2005, Shell International Petroleum Company Limited issued proceedings against him in respect of various Shell related Internet domain names including the dotcom domain name for ROYAL DUTCH SHELL PLC. Shell management had neglected to obtain registration when only they knew the name of the new unified company. To Shell managements lasting and huge embarrassment, it lost the case by a unanimous expert panel verdict of the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL drawing of Alfred Donovan shown left is displayed in accordance with the fair use notice displayed on our website, Royal Dutch Shell Group .com (another of the domain names which Shell unsuccessfully attempted to seize).

Examples of the global media coverage of the ROYAL DUTCH SHELL PLC dotcom domain name battle

Extracts from a **WALL STREET JOURNAL** article under the headline: **“SHELL WAGES LEGAL FIGHT OVER WEBSITE DOMAIN NAME”** (2/6/2005): *“Shell executives realized shortly after the merger announcement last fall that the new corporate name had been snapped up. Last month, Shell attorneys filed a complaint with the World Intellectual Property Organization, a Geneva-based arbiter of domain disputes, requesting Mr. Donovan be stripped of rights to the site, along with two others.”: “The two Donovans are well-known to Shell. They have waged a long-running anti-Shell campaign dating to the 1990s revolving around disputes over the rights to Shell gasoline-station promotions. Over the years, the two sides have settled four lawsuits. But Mr. Donovan has continued his crusade. He has periodically picketed the company’s headquarters and annual meetings.”*

Extracts from **THE TIMES** article headline **“HOSTILE DOMAIN”** (21 June 2005): *“ROYAL DUTCH/SHELL is locked in a dispute with an 88-year-old war veteran who saw action in the Burma campaign and now runs a website, <http://royaldutchshellplc.com>, that publishes material critical of the oil company. The roots of the row between Shell and Alfred Donovan go back to the early 1990s and have to do with earlier marketing campaigns. Mr Donovan and his son John say they do not want money for the site, which Shell unaccountably failed to register. But they will not hand over the rights to the domain name until the company “gets rid of the management” responsible for its various woes, notably last year’s reserves scandal.”*

Extract from **THE NEW YORK TIMES** (25/06/05) article headlined: **“Shell Shareholders to Back Unification”**: *“Another dampener on Shell’s biggest corporate overhaul since the two holding firms tied up in 1907, is a spat over the rights to the web domain “royaldutchshellplc.com.” Disgruntled shareholder Alfred Donovan beat Shell to register the domain name. Shell has sued Donovan for the rights to the domain but while the matter plays out, Donovan uses the site to lambaste Shell management.”*

Extract from **THE TIMES** diary (16/08/05): *“AN ATTEMPT by Royal Dutch Shell to claim the website royaldutchshellplc.com from an 88-year-old veteran who uses it to publish material that criticises the oil giant has failed.”*

openprovider.co.uk: The EU domain battle (3/11/05): *“A recent example of an expensive lawsuit is the Shell case for royaldutchshellplc.com and royaldutchshellgroup.com. Shell lost this case. So far the lawsuit has cost millions and the domain still doesn’t belong to them.”*

Alfred Donovan remains the owner of www.royaldutchshellplc.com