



Companies and Intellectual
Property Commission

a member of **the dti** group

TRADE MARKS AI IMAGE SEARCH USER GUIDE

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1. Purpose

This step-by-step guide is designed for both existing CIPC customers and new users who intend to access and utilise the variable image and associated search functions on IP Online. The relevance of this guide is associated with the Acsepto version 11 upgrade and the extension of the AI image search to IP Online. The screenshots in the guide is simplified to assist existing and new users to consume the variable search features for Trade Marks.

The objective is to:

1. Allow ease of access to IP Online search features associated with Trade Mark registrations
2. Provide a simplified and improved user experience for first time as well as frequent users of the portal
3. Extend CIPC's smart AI search and machine learning features to its clients for improved collaboration
4. Attract users across various diversified stakeholder groups to consume the functions and encourage communities to protect their intellectual property with ease
5. Enable professional law firms to utilise the commercial searches more proficiently and consume full functionality of the AI and machine learning capability associated with the incorporated feature additions

Expected benefits with this optimisation and deployment of the AI features are to attract more users from various social and commercial background to access the CIPC IP online portal and extend social computing to all communities and demographics of South Africa and abroad.

The guide is simplified with search tool-tips depicted delineated as follows:

Unit 1: The Free Search Option covers the following steps:

- Step 1: Access the portal and access IP online as a customer: Login
- Step 2: User login: by entering their registered user credentials (customer detail)
- Step 3: Confirmation of Login credential
- Step 4: Choosing the relevant search option from the drop-down menu
- Step 5: Image search selection
- Step 6: User image (or logo) upload from a device (any image may be searched) or simple question where relevant
- Step 7: Image search and result retrieval
- Step 8 & 9: Selecting a Nice class and entering the on-screen secure Captcha.

Unit 2 : Commercial Search (Paid Searches)

- Step 1: Choosing the commercial search option from the drop-down menu
- Step 2: Image search selection
- Step 3: User image (or logo) upload from a device (any image may be searched)
- Step 4 & 5: Selecting Nice class(es)
- Step 6: Search billing confirmation
- Step 7: Application register page.

2. Training Outcomes

The effectiveness of this training guide will be evaluated based on the successful completion of the outlined steps. Upon completing the training guide, CIPC external users will be able to:

- Navigate the IP Online portal to access Free and Commercial AI Image Search
- Perform an image-based trademark search using uploaded logos
- Select relevant Nice class(es) for search refinement
- Complete commercial searches, including payment confirmation and result printing.

3. Prerequisites

- Registered IP Online account with login credentials (CIPC customer code)
- Access to a desktop
- Internet connection and access to uploaded image files.
- (For Unit 2) Payment method linked to IP Online account.

3.1 Unit 1 : Free AI Image Search

3.1.1 How to Perform a Free AI Image Search Using IP Online.

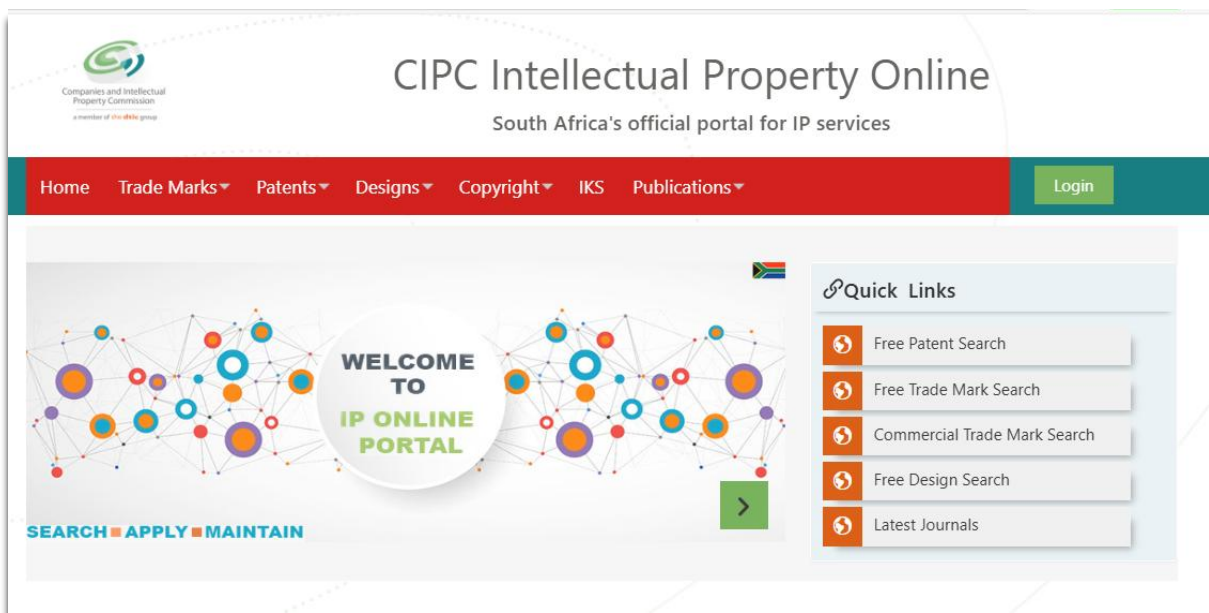


Figure 1: Homepage

The user need to access the portal using the URL “https://iponline.cipc.co.za” to gain access to IP Online

CIPC Intellectual Property Online
South Africa's official portal for IP services

Home Trade Marks Patents Designs Copyright IKS Publications Login

Sign in or create an account

Sign In

Username Admin

Password *****

Log in

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

New Customers

You will need to register as a CIPC customer in order to login into the IPOnline system.

Users who login using CIPC customer accounts can create beneficiary accounts that will use funds from their customer account for IP transactions.

Click "Create Account" button below in order to create a CIPC customer account.

Create Account

Safety and Privacy

- ✓ We take your privacy seriously and won't share your personal information in your profile!
- ✓ Transacting with IPOnline is safe and secure. Sensitive information is always encrypted!
- ✓ We're always there to help you out and answer questions. Log queries on CIPC Enquiries.

Figure 2: Login Page

Step 1: To log in, the user should click the "Login" button. This action will open the login page, where the user can enter their credentials to access the system. Step 2: Insert username and password. Step 3: Select login to access your IP space.

CIPC Intellectual Property Online
South Africa's official portal for IP services

My IP Space Trade Marks Patents Designs Copyright IKS Publications Log Out admin

My Filings

Trade Marks

125 New Applications 33 Renewals 0 Advertisements

Patents

26 New Applications 0 Renewals 0 Advertisements

My Messages

Trade Marks

0 Unread 0 Today 0 Total

Patents

0 Unread 0 Today 0 Total

Figure 3: My IP space

From the previous login page **existing IP users** will have the My IP space page displayed. This page will reflect most recent collaboration on the portal. Proceed by hovering over the Trade Marks "tab" and select Trade Marks.



Figure 4: *Trademark Tab*

Hovering over the Trademark tab as in, Step 4: depicted above, the user should select for example the Free Search feature to proceed.



Figure 5: *Trademark Free Searches.*

Step 5: This step provides two options “**Simple Question**” or “**AI image search**”. The Simple Question search uses the application number and verbal mark as the primary search criteria where known, users may choose that option. **Step 5:** is focused on the image search as shown in the screen example, the user should proceed by selecting AI Image Search to continue.

The screenshot shows the 'AI Image Search' page. At the top is a red navigation bar with links: 'My IP Space', 'Trade Marks', 'Patents', 'Designs', 'Copyright', 'IKS', 'Publications', and a 'Log Out' button. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > IPOOnline > Trade Marks > Free Searches'. There are two tabs: 'Simple Question' and 'AI Image Search'. The main form area has a 'Choose file' button, which is highlighted by a blue arrow labeled 'Step 6'. To the right of this button is an 'Upload Image' button. Below the 'Choose file' button is a text field for 'Nice class(es)'. To the right of this field is a grid of checkboxes numbered 01 to 45, arranged in three rows of 15. Below the grid is a green link: 'Hover on check box to get description'. At the bottom of the form is a captcha section with a black box containing the text '4cb9a1', a text input field, and a 'Try another one' button. There are also 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons at the bottom left.

Figure 6: AI Image Search.

Step 6: to proceed with image search select **choose file** and **select a logo** from a **device** (computer, laptop, photo gallery, etc). This is an upload feature driven by smart drag and drop from any reputable digital location for search purposes. Using a **device** the button will redirect the user to the selected device and associated location. upload the image of choice for search purposes. Using this option the button will redirect the user to the selected location to upload the image of choice.

The screenshot shows the 'AI Image Search' page after a file has been selected. The 'Choose file' button is now disabled, and the text 'Billetterie - P...top SSJPE' is displayed next to it. A blue arrow labeled 'Step 7' points to the 'Upload Image' button. The rest of the page, including the 'Nice class(es)' checkboxes, the captcha, and the 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons, remains the same as in Figure 6.

Figure 7: Upload Image page.

On completion of **step 6** on screen it reflects the name of the file that will be displayed. **Step 7:** the user should now select **Upload image** button for requisite result to display.

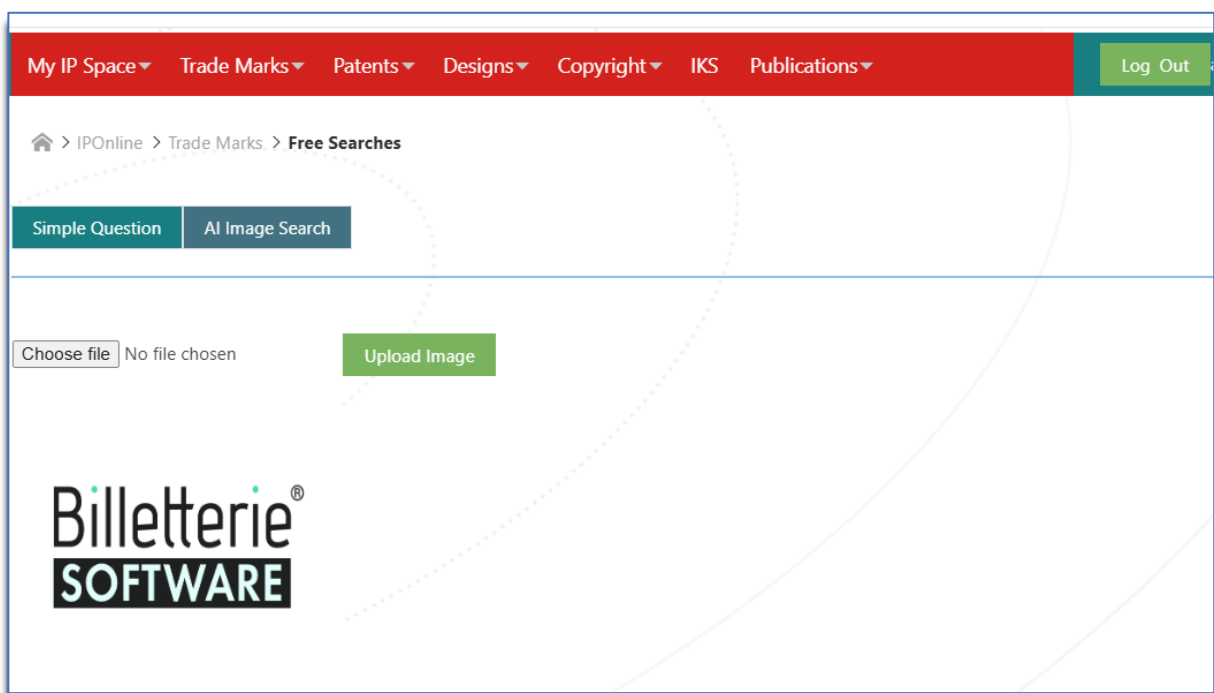


Figure 8: Image displayed.

Upon successful upload, the image will be displayed on the screen. Users may also select Nice class(es) following the steps below:

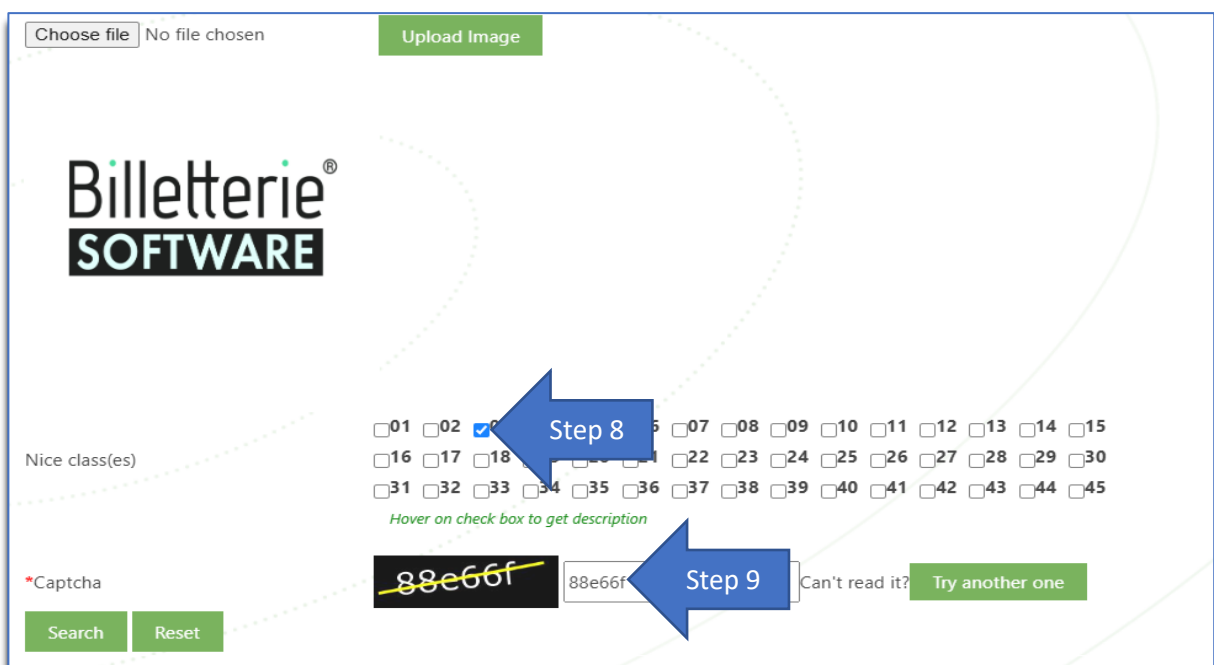


Figure 9: Image displayed.

Nice class(es) as in the screen i.e. **Step 8**: Select a relevant Nice class or a few classes and, **Step 9**: enter the "Captcha" onscreen as displayed if correctly applied the user may proceed and select "search" to proceed. The results of the search will be displayed.

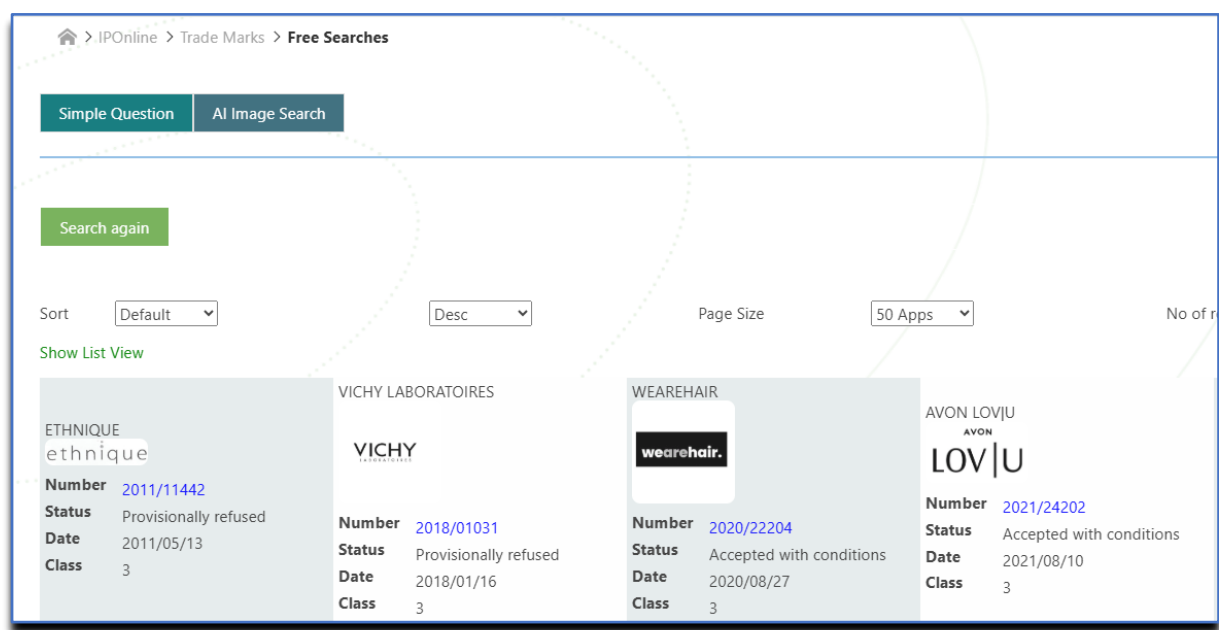


Figure 10: Image search results.
The results of the search will be displayed.

3.2 Unit 2: Commercial (Paid) Search

This section is a commercialised function and is subjected to payment depending on the number of Nice class selection. Users may select one or multiple Nice class(es) per search, ranging from a single class up to all 45 classes and will be subsequently be billed in line with the CIPC pricing structures.

3.2.1 How to Perform a Commercial AI Image Search Using IP Online.



Figure 1: Commercial search Tab

Once Unit 1: Free Search has been successfully completed, the user should proceed to **Unit 2: Commercial Search**. To do this, hover over the Trade Marks tab as shown in **Step 1** above, and then select Commercial Search from the dropdown menu, **Step 2:** select AI Image Search feature to proceed.

The screenshot shows the CIPC Intellectual Property Online interface. The header includes the CIPC logo and the text 'CIPC Intellectual Property Online' and 'South Africa's official portal for IP services'. A navigation bar contains links for 'My IP Space', 'Trade Marks', 'Patents', 'Designs', 'Copyright', 'IKS', and 'Publications'. A 'Log Out' button and an 'admin' link are on the right. The breadcrumb trail is 'IPOnline > Trade Marks > Commercial Search > AI Image Search'. The main content area has a 'Choose File' button and an 'Upload Image' button. A blue arrow labeled 'Step 3' points to the 'Choose File' button. Below these buttons is a 'Nice class(es)' section with a grid of checkboxes numbered 01 to 45. Below the grid is a 'Search' button and a 'Reset' button. At the bottom, there are dropdown menus for 'Sort' (Default), 'Desc', 'Page Size' (50 Apps), and 'No of results: 0'. There are also 'Print Register(s)' and 'Print List' buttons.

Figure 2: AI Image Search page

Step 3: On the upload screen, the user should click the "**Choose File**" button to select a logo from their device. This feature supports smart drag-and-drop functionality, allowing users to upload images from any trusted location for search purposes. Upon clicking the button it will open the file browser, enabling the user to navigate to the desired location and upload the selected image.

The screenshot shows the same CIPC Intellectual Property Online interface as Figure 2. The 'Choose File' button now displays 'No file chosen'. A blue arrow labeled 'Step 4' points to the 'Upload Image' button. The rest of the interface, including the 'Nice class(es)' section, 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons, and the bottom navigation and printing options, remains the same.

Figure 3: Upload Image

On completion of **step 3** On screen reflects the name of the file that will be displayed. **Step 4:** the user should now select Upload image button for requisite result to display.

The screenshot shows the 'AI Image Search' interface. At the top, there is a 'Choose File' button and a green 'Upload Image' button. Below this is a large black square containing the white Nike logo. Underneath the image is a list of 'Nice class(es)' from 01 to 45, arranged in three rows. A green tooltip 'Hover on check box to get description' is visible. Below the list are 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons. At the bottom, there are dropdown menus for 'Sort' (Default), 'Desc', and 'Page Size' (50 Apps), along with a 'No of results: 0' indicator and 'Print Register(s)' and 'Print List' buttons.

Figure 4: Upload Image button

Upon successful upload, the image will be displayed. Users may also search Nice classes following the steps below:

This screenshot is identical to Figure 4 but includes two blue arrows with text labels. A blue arrow labeled 'Step 4' points to the checkbox for Nice class 24. Another blue arrow labeled 'Step 5' points to the 'Search' button. The interface elements are the same as in Figure 4.

Figure 5: Select Nice classes

Step 4: The user selects the relevant Nice class(s) and, **Step 5:** select “search” to proceed.

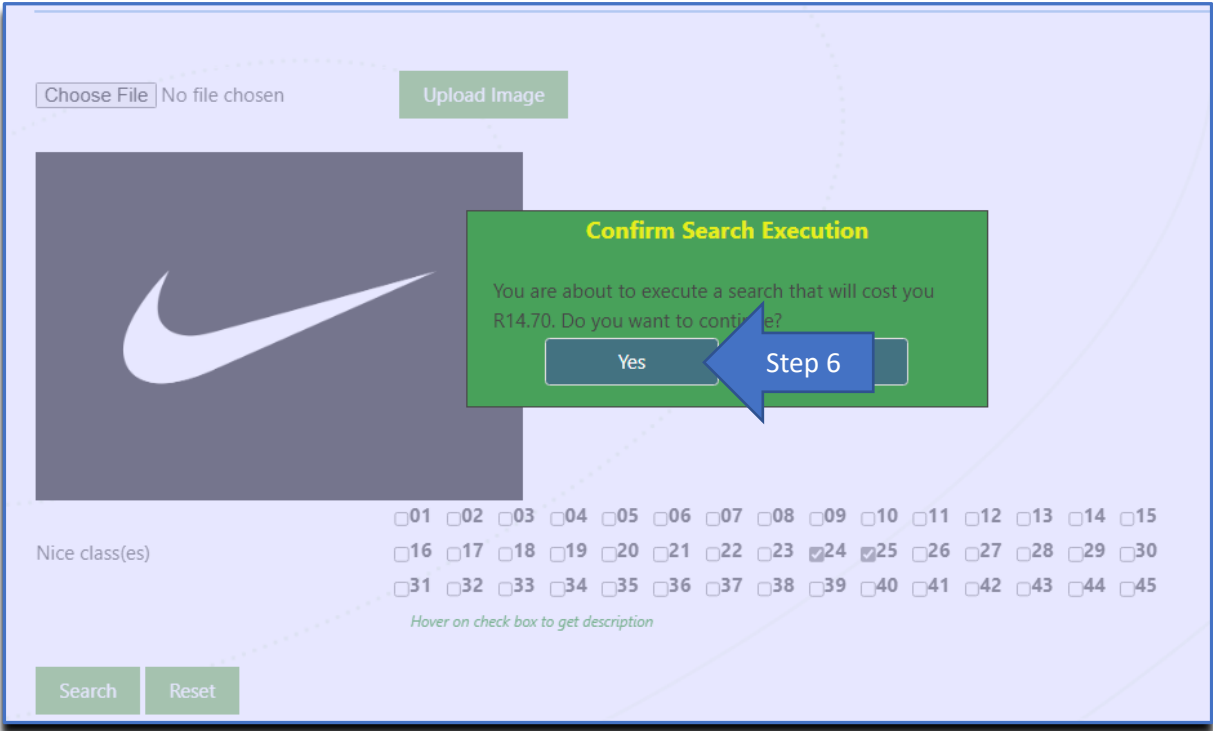


Figure 6: Billing page

On completion of Step 5, on screen billing confirmation of the search will be displayed. **Step 6:** The user should select “Yes” to confirm the search execution and to display the search results, or select “No” to cancel the search execution.

The screenshot shows the Search Results Display Page. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > IPOnline > Trade Marks > Commercial Search > AI Image Search'. Below this is a 'Search again' button. There are dropdown menus for 'Sort' (Default), 'Desc', and 'Page Size' (50 Apps). The text 'No of results: 184' is displayed. There are buttons for 'Print Register(s)' and 'Print List'. Below this is a 'Show Grid View' link. The main content is a table with the following columns: Application no, Class, Mark type, Status, Representation of mark, Vienna codes, Applied on, Accepted on, Registered on, and a checkbox column. The table contains four rows of results.

Application no	Class	Mark type	Status	Representation of mark	Vienna codes	Applied on	Accepted on	Registered on	
1998/01685	17	Figurative	Pending		020301 020323 020330 020912	1998/02/09			
2003/00652	17	Figurative	Registered	illbruck	260401 260418 290103 290106 290108	2003/01/16	2007/01/08	2008/10/07	
2005/26737	17	Figurative	Registered	aerolite AEROLITE THINK.PINK	070311 241702 260323 270507 270509 270510 270511	2005/12/12	2007/06/21	2008/07/29	
2007/22316	17	Figurative	Registered	CAT	260301 260404 260411 260422 260424 260501 260510 260522 260524 261511 270508 270524 240901 240905	2007/10/01	2009/01/14	2010/08/06	

Figure 7: Search Results Display Page

Upon successful completion of step 6: the search results will be displayed as depicted above.

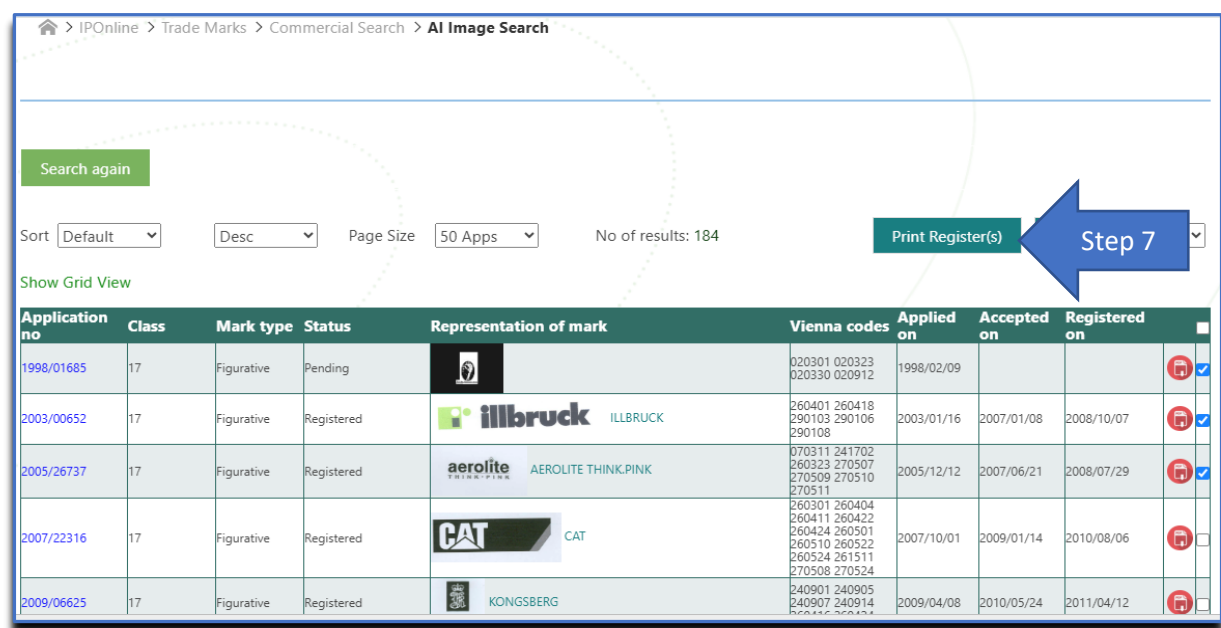


Figure 8: Search results selection page

Once the search results are displayed, the user should select the relevant applications by ticking the corresponding checkboxes. To print the register page for the selected applications, proceed to **Step 7** and click on the “**Print Register**” button.

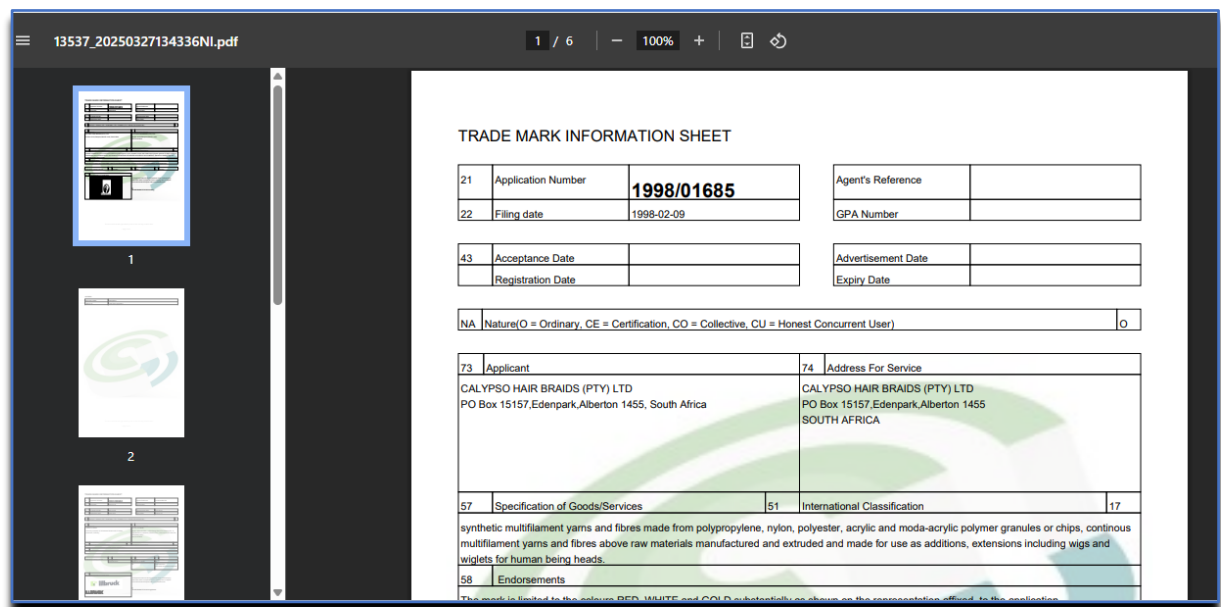


Figure 9: Register display

This guide is supported by the CIPC regulations and support services and is aligned with the requisite communications and practice note published by The CIPC Trade Marks business unit in August 2025. *All queries may be directed through the CIPC support channel.*