# [IPO's first AI-powered tool improves quality of TM applications](#)

In the year since the IPO's trade mark pre-apply service was launched, the average number of trade mark applications rejected due to unsuitable Nice classification terms has dropped by 14%.

Pre-apply is the IPO's first service powered by AI. The AI tool identifies similar trade marks that already exist, and presents these to the customer, which helps improve the chances of successfully registering a trade mark. Additionally, by helping customers identify the right groups of goods and services for their proposed trade mark, using the pre-apply service means applications are more likely to be accepted.

The IPO has seen a 70% drop in the length of goods and services lists since the service was launched. This means customers will have more suitable trade marks that are more likely to only protect the right goods and services, leaving them less open to challenge. It could also save applicants money, because there is a fee payable for each additional category of goods and services that is selected.

The service has introduced an improved customer interface and Nice classification picker, shorter and more relevant lists of goods and services, and has removed the option for customers to select all classifications listed on the page.

These improvements mean:

1. Examining trade marks is quicker — examiners no longer need to trawl through long lists of goods and services and it's easier to search and compare.

2. Better quality applications — applications are less likely to be rejected due to unsuitable Nice classification terms, saving customers time and money

The service is proving popular and has been used over 15,000 times in the last 3 months alone. This equates to around two thirds of all applications submitted by customers who don't have an attorney.

The service:

- uses AI to perform relative and some absolute grounds checks
- provides guidance on choosing the right classifications of goods and services
- introduced an improved classification picker containing a pre-approved list of terms

* gives an estimate of application costs

The IPO has actively sought feedback from customers, and this suggests the office's first use of AI within its services is delivering what was hoped for.

One customer said:

> As a first timer applying for a trade mark, I found this tool very beneficial. It helped me understand my chances of being rejected, and also what grounds a rejection can be given on.

The IPO's application [guidance video](#) helps explain what classes of goods and services are, which ones they should select and why they are important. It has been well received, generating 12,295 views in the last 90 days.

## Future AI powered services

The IPO is planning to make further use of the opportunities brought by AI, and build this technology into future services, as part of the One IPO Transformation Programme.

Potential opportunities making further use of AI could include:

* improved automated text searches using Natural Language Processing
* automated help and guidance, such as pre-apply services across all rights, and chatbots that could, for example, suggest classifications of goods and services
* advanced validation and authentication features across customer accounts and application processes to help improve the quality of applications we receive

David Holdsworth, Deputy CEO and Director of Operations, gave his view on what this means for IPO's future services:

> It's great to see the positive impact our first AI powered tool is making. More importantly, it's a statement of intent for our future digital services. Through our One IPO Transformation Programme, we're looking to bring the same innovative thinking to all of our customer interactions. We want to bring our digital services up to a level of quality that matches our reputation for world leading customer service.

The tool has been designed around customer feedback. To help the IPO build services around the needs of those using them, the IPO is calling for more customers to take part in its transformation user research and help make its One IPO transformation programme a success.

To take part in the research, or find more about how your input can help

shape the future of the IPO's services, simply drop an email to [usertesting@ipo.gov.uk](mailto:usertesting@ipo.gov.uk).

## Notes to Editors:

1) The Nice Classification (NCL), established by the [Nice Agreement](#) 1957, is an international classification of goods and services applied for the registration of marks." (Source: WIPO)

2) When we examine a trade mark's suitability we consider:

Relative grounds: the trade mark is already in use or similar to one that is already in use; Absolute grounds: the trade mark is unsuitable because of its intrinsic qualities (eg it isn't distinctive, or uses prohibited names or symbols)

3) To access the tool, go to the first page of the [trade mark application form](#), select the first option 'trade mark owner or the authorised person within their business' and click 'continue'.

4) More information about the [One IPO Transformation Programme](#) is available.

5) Artificial intelligence (AI) is a transformative technology and is already revolutionising many areas of our lives. It can be a powerful tool for scientists, entrepreneurs, and artists, enabling new inventions and creations.  The Government wants the UK to be at the forefront of this revolution, to encourage innovation in AI technology and promote its use for the public good.

6) In October 2021, the IPO launched a consultation on how the copyright and patent system should deal with Artificial Intelligence (AI). This consultation is seeking evidence and views on the extent to which patents and copyright should protect inventions and creative works made by AI, and measures to make it easier to use copyright protected material in AI development, supporting innovation and research.