

Insurance Agents
VTD 20394 - Insurancewide.com

Insurancewide.com is an insurance comparison website for a number of insurance providers. It receives a commission for each insurance contract concluded which originated from the website.

The issue in this case was whether Insurancewide.com is an insurance agent for VAT purposes and therefore falls within the exemption.

When Insurancewide.com was originally created, it was bound to refer people to the Cox panel of insurers. The Tribunal found in this instance that Insurancewide.com acted merely as an introducer for Cox and that its services could not be distinguished from those of an advertiser.

As the company developed, more insurance companies were added to its database and it created the 'Wizard' application which enabled Insurancewide.com to direct customers more accurately to the appropriate insurers. The Tribunal concluded that, for the period after the introduction of the Wizard, Insurancewide.com acted as an insurance intermediary and not a VAT agent.

Insurancewide.com had submitted that Public Notice 700/36/02 did not differentiate between the concept of an insurance agent and an intermediary. However, the Tribunal concluded that the VAT Act does distinguish between the two and that the law must have authority over the Public Notice. Accordingly, Insurancewide.com must charge and account for VAT on its supplies to the insurers.