



Interview with Dirk Vernailen:

“From now on, we are resolutely targeting the middle market as well”

Today, HDI-Gerling is one of Belgium’s leading insurers in the area of industrial risks and international insurance programmes, as evidenced by its top position in over a hundred international programmes and is increasing its penetration in the mid-sized companies segment. That’s why Dirk Vernailen joined the company. He explains why and how HDI-Gerling can also provide tailor-made solutions to the middle market.

What does HDI-Gerling mean exactly by the middle market?

Dirk Vernailen: There are two approaches: the customer’s and the broker’s. Today, we mainly work with so-called global brokers (brokers representing more than € 1.5 million in premium revenue to HDI-Gerling) and national brokers (who are just below that line). On an international level, we are active in four business lines: Liability, Property, Marine, and Engineering. While our clientele mainly consists of large and international companies, more and more mid-sized companies are beginning to see our added value. Compact, our internet solution, is an effort to optimally respond to the needs of such companies. Obviously, this also affects the brokers with whom we want to collaborate. For example, we want to add medium-sized offices to our broker network, because their portfolios tend to include interesting small and mid-sized business clients, although our emphases lays on the mid-sized companies.

In other words, you will retain the same business lines, but expand your target group to include mid-sized companies?

Dirk Vernailen: That’s correct. Our core activities will remain the same, including where mid-sized companies are concerned. There are no specific exclusions for mid-sized companies.

Why are you convinced that HDI-Gerling can provide added value to mid-sized brokers and companies?

Dirk Vernailen: There are several reasons for this; one of them is Compact which I mentioned earlier. This product allows brokers to automatically submit quotations for industrial risk coverage and this with limited information. Another advantage is that responding times are very short, price quotations are provided within 48 hours. In addition, policies are mailed very quickly, so as to avoid processing delays. This enables our brokers to service their customers more quickly. Furthermore, the extensive technical know-how of our skilled employees makes it possible to develop tailor-made solutions for this target group as well.

Could you give some examples of the added value HDI-Gerling Compact can provide in respect of the coverages?

Dirk Vernailen: Of course. In Property, we provide coverage for property damage up to € 15 million, including numerous high-risk activities. Including extensions and coverage for loss of profits, the total capacity can amount up to € 25 million. The loss of profits would be based on revenue and includes salaries. Even our machinery breakdown coverage includes coverage for loss of profits.

Our Liability Department offers very large insured limits up to € 10 million, whereas quite a few competitors limit their intervention to € 2.5, or, in very few instances, € 5 million. In addition, exports to the United States and Canada may be included in our policies, as is coverage for Recall.

Concretely: we can offer an excellent tailor-made service to mid-sized companies and brokers. Brokers who are interested in collaborating with HDI-Gerling are invited to contact our Corporate Services Sales and Marketing Department (compact@hdi-gerling.be).

Thank you for taking part in this interview.