

Business situation:

Racing to meet new public safety regulations

From the moment most of the world was locked down during the COVID-19 pandemic, people everywhere began counting the days until we could once again enjoy daily activities and new adventures. For many, leaving their country to reunite with family and friends abroad was high on the wish list, as borders between countries remained closed to international travelers – or open only for essential reasons – long after the strictest lockdown measures were lifted. For citizens within the European Union (EU), this began to change with the widespread availability of COVID-19 vaccines. To ensure free and safe travel into member countries, the EU required the use of a Digital COVID Certificate (DCC), which documented that holders had either received their vaccine (vaccination certificates) or recovered from a case of the virus within the previous six months (recovery certificates).

While the EU provided each country with a basic application for creating DCCs, countries were required to create their own system for citizens to request certificates, make changes and update personal information. In Ireland, the Department of Health (DOH) assumed this responsibility. With the busy summer travel season approaching shortly after the new requirements were announced, the DOH expected an immediately high volume of requests. Looking for a scalable, flexible and secure solution that could be built quickly to meet this demand, it partnered with Accenture and Avanade – a joint venture between Accenture and Microsoft – and got to work. Like so many initiatives launched in response to the pandemic, and with the public anxiously waiting, timing was critical.

Company Name: Ireland Department of Health

Country: Ireland

Industry: Government and Public Services, Health

Solutions: Microsoft Azure, Microsoft Azure Sentinel, Microsoft Dynamics 365, Microsoft Power Apps

Solution:

Meeting the massive demand in multiple ways

Working closely with multiple government departments, Accenture and Avanade began by creating a bespoke case management solution to support the rapid scale-up of an agent-based call center using [Microsoft Azure](#) PaaS services and [Microsoft Dynamics 365](#) Customer Service. The system was integrated with the internal infrastructure of Ireland's Health Service Executive (HSE) so that information relating to new and updated certificates could be automatically imported into Dynamics 365.

By contacting the call center, citizens could request a new certificate, update personal information on their existing certificate or have a certificate reissued if it had been lost. Omnichannel features allowed agents to interact with citizens through multiple points of contact, including phone, chat and email. Individual case management flows and case types – certificate requests, updates, etc. – were developed, and user interface screens were built to assist with requests.

On a parallel track, Accenture and Avanade also created a public-facing, self-service web portal using [Microsoft Power Apps](#), in line with the Irish government's "digital first" strategy, which encourages public services to embrace digital technology where possible. Using Power Apps allowed for a low-code, secure and scalable solution that was delivered quickly.

CASE STUDY

Ireland Department of Health helps citizens rediscover the world

Unlocking self-service activities immediately helped alleviate stresses on the call center, allowing users to quickly and easily request recovery certificates, request vaccination certificates, update personal information and reissue existing certificates via email. The portal's intuitive, user-friendly interface meant requests could be completed in minutes.

Following its initial launch, the portal evolved to include more value-added capabilities, such as:

- Full Irish language translation support
- Support for Irish citizens who received their vaccinations outside the EU
- Updates to facilitate certificates for booster vaccines received in Ireland and outside the EU
- Automatic ID verification using an integrated third-party passport application for easy personal information updates

Because the solution handled personal citizen information, it was backed by [Microsoft Azure Sentinel](#) – an advanced threat detection and mitigation tool – to ensure the highest level of security.

Results: Safe travels

Having quick and easy access to, and control of, their DCCs through both the call center and self-serve portal empowered millions of Irish citizens to reclaim some of their freedoms that were lost since the start of the pandemic, allowing them to once again visit people and places in other countries. The call center and self-serve portal were also met with an enthusiastic response by the Irish government and those who have used them.

For the duration of the work with Accenture and Avanade:

- Ireland issued approximately 4.5 million DCCs to its domestic citizens, representing almost 90 percent of the population.
- 1.6 million cases were automatically processed through the portal.
- Nearly 70,000 certificates were issued through the portal for vaccinations received outside the EU.

As the world continues to move beyond the COVID crisis, the successful collaboration between the Ireland Department of Health, Accenture and Avanade will be one of the stories we tell about how real people pulled together to overcome the challenges placed before us.

**"The Accenture and Avanade team challenged our thinking and traditional mindset in terms of how to go about designing and delivering a solution that allows the public to engage with you across multiple channels. The project built on the ambition to evolve from eGovernment to Digital Government and how we deliver public services."
– Ireland Department of Health**

About the Ireland Department of Health

The Department of Health's mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Ireland by delivering high quality health services and getting best value from health system resources.

About Accenture

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About Avanade

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