Case study:

Irish Transport - CIE

CIÉ and Facit's Identity Cloak: Protecting Privacy While Driving Ireland's Public Transport Future

Overview

Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) is Ireland's state-owned public transport group and is the organisation behind Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Dublin Bus. Established in 1945, CIÉ has been at the heart of Ireland's transport evolution for nearly eight decades.

Objectives

- Gather and operate video footage with integrity
- Ensuring compliance with GDPR and other data protection laws
- Ensure the safety of staff members
- Dramatically reduce video editing time and manual effort

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>
> Paul Whelan
> Data Protection Officer

Introduction:

Today, the CIÉ plays a vital role in connecting communities, enabling economic growth and supporting Ireland's transition to a sustainable, low-carbon future.

But in an era in which data protection is just as important as passenger safety, CIÉ has a modern problem: how to protect personal information – especially in video footage – while meeting legal and ethical obligations to the public.

The CIÉ Group operates as a holding company for three major subsidiaries:

- Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) runs the national rail network, including the DART and InterCity services.
- Bus Éireann manages intercity, regional and city bus services across Ireland.
- Dublin Bus provides the majority of public transport within the Greater Dublin area.

Together, these companies carried over 350 million passengers in 2023, supported by more than 12,000 employees.

That's where Facit's Identity Cloak came in.

The Challenge:

Managing Data Privacy in a Complex Transport Network

Paul Whelan, Data Protection Officer (DPO) at CIÉ. Carrying out this role is no easy task, especially when personal data is flowing across thousands of devices, systems and video cameras.

As part of its public accountability, CIÉ must respond to Subject Access Requests (SARs) under GDPR; that is, formal requests from individuals for copies of personal data held about them.

In transport, this means video footage from buses, trains and depots. Each request requires meticulous redaction of personal information — removing or obscuring other people's faces, vehicle licence plates or identifying features — before footage can be released.

Previously CIÉ outsourced this work but costs were running to €700 per video, even for clips under 20 minutes long.

"**Identity Cloak is a winner for us.** I'm totally happy with **what it does and how it does it.**"

Paul Whelan
Data Protection Officer

Data Redaction in the Transport Sector

From Half a Day to Half an Hour

Video evidence is key to accident investigations and passenger claims. Other subject access requests received are for less serious matters such as lost property cases.

The majority of requests are handled by the individual train or bus operating companies but when a claim is attached, they are referred to the holding company, CIÉ.

However, fulfilling SARs in the transport sector can be complicated. Many cameras are mobile, installed on buses or trains that move between routes and depots. In some instances, retrieving and locating the correct footage can take time, which shrinks the already tight 30-day window for GDPR compliance response.

Delays in finding footage sometimes compresses the time available for redaction, which puts pressure on staff and systems. As SARs became more frequent - and sometimes more contentious - this process risked becoming a bottleneck.

The public's growing expectation for fast, cost-free responses only added to the pressure, which turned what should be a routine compliance task into a major operational challenge.

The Solution:

Automating Redaction with Facit's Identity Cloak

In 2023 CIÉ introduced Facit's Identity Cloak, an AI-powered video redaction platform that automates the masking of sensitive data. According to Paul Whelan, the results were immediate:

"It's made an unbelievable difference - like night and day. Even in complex scenes, Identity Cloak finds and redacts the vast majority of sensitive material automatically and minimises the need for manual intervention."

Where a single video might have taken four hours to process manually, Identity Cloak now takes around 30 minutes - a 90% reduction in redaction time.

The reduction in fulfilment time has freed up staff to focus on other governance tasks and has reduced the need for expensive outsourcing.

Faster, Safer, Smarter Compliance

Automated redaction has helped CIÉ not only meet GDPR deadlines but also build public trust by demonstrating a proactive approach to privacy.

Processing large volumes of SARs significantly reduced, Paul's team can now handle new requests more efficiently, even those with complex datasets that might have previously slowed operations significantly.

"Identity Cloak is a winner for us," Paul says. "I'm totally happy with what it does and how it does it."

Beyond compliance, there is a bigger shift for CIÉ in how it approaches digital transformation by using technology to improve transparency, accountability and service delivery.

CIÉ's story shows that even the biggest and most complex organisations can adapt to modern data protection requirements without sacrificing efficiency or public trust.

The organisation is able to meet its dual responsibility to maintain the trust of the public and to manage its budgets as effectively as possible.

By using automation with Facit's Identity Cloak, CIÉ has turned a costly and time-consuming process into a streamlined, sustainable one and freed up resources to focus on what matters most: keeping Ireland moving safely, securely and responsibly.

Automating Redaction with Facit's Identity Cloak

As digital tools and artificial intelligence change how organisations communicate and record information, new data protection questions are arising.

Paul expects future reviews of CIÉ's data protection policies will need to consider AI-generated meeting recordings which raise new considerations around data storage, retention and redaction, especially in audio format.

Facit's development of AI-driven redaction tools, including audio masking, is in line with CIÉ's forward thinking approach to privacy governance.

About Facit

Cutting-edge compliance and video analytics software

Solve problems, create opportunities and enhance business operations

23	80+	2
Countries where Facit solutions are developed	Current customers	Technology patents granted

Commitment to quality. Simplicity. Excellence. Innovation

Commitment to quality
We offer consistently high-performing products thanks to years of in-depth team experience and innovative testing.

Simplicity
We offer simple solutions to complex problems, saving you time and resources.

Excellence
We help our clients future-proof their organisations with compliant document and video redaction solutions.

Innovation
We work with the brightest minds from around the world to deliver innovative solutions for our compliance and video analytics clients.

Facit

Facit

8 Rankin House,
Murdoch Court, Knowlhill,
Milton Keynes, MK5 8GB, UK

+44 (0)3700 610 498

info@facit.ai

www.facit.ai

Connect with us