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Citrix Helps Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Enable Secure WFH for 10,000 Employees In One Day Amidst COVID-19

Citrix ADC helps Bajaj Allianz General Insurance keep the business running even in the middle of the lockdown by enabling its country-wide remote workforce to access the corporate network securely.

**Bajaj Allianz
General Insurance
and Citrix**



“Enabling secure remote working at scale, Citrix ADC has been a key pillar of business continuity for us at Bajaj Allianz General Insurance during the current pandemic crisis. The scalability aptly balanced with security has helped us make WFH a success and continue serving our customers despite the highly constrained circumstances.”

Avinash Naik, Head of Digital Transformation, Innovation & IT Infrastructure, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance is one of the leading private general insurance companies in India. Bajaj Allianz is a joint venture between Allianz SE, the world’s leading insurer and largest asset manager, and Bajaj Finserv Limited, India’s most diversified non-bank financial institution. Bajaj Allianz General Insurance offers general insurance products such as motor insurance, home insurance, health insurance as well as other unique insurance plans such as wedding insurance, event insurance and film insurance. The company began its operations in 2001 and today has a pan-India presence in over 1500 towns and cities. The company has been constantly expanding its operations to be close to its customers. The company’s strong customer orientation that hinges on its vision to be the first choice insurer is aptly supported by its 10,000 plus workforce led by strong processes.

Enabling Remote Workforce Challenged by Scale and Security Roadblocks

The crisis unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing nationwide lockdown risked putting the company’s processes and operations into jeopardy as the whole work paradigm changed drastically.

As the company’s business continuity plan kicked in, a key requirement was to keep the processes running despite the lockdown. This required enabling employees to work remotely. However, it first needed tackling the challenge around scale and security.

In the past, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance had enabled limited remote working for a set of employees during situations such as traveling, etc. with the help of the SSL VPN from Citrix ADC. However, it was nowhere close to the unprecedented scale that the pandemic crisis warranted.

Enabling its 10,000 plus workforce to Work From Home (WFH) was not only a logistical challenge from an execution standpoint considering the extreme time constraint but also a

security risk. Insurance being a highly regulated and compliance driven industry, the company had to ensure that in enabling remote access to its corporate network it was not opening any potential security gaps and exposing confidential data to cyber threats.

According to Avinash Naik, Head of Digital Transformation, Innovation & IT Infrastructure, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, “Quickly enabling WFH for our employees was imperative to empower them to continue serving our customers without any disruption. This required a solution that would let us scale up our remote working capabilities manifold within the shortest possible time without compromising on security.”

Existing Citrix Solution Provides Swift Response With Secure Remote Access at Scale

The urgent business need meant there was no time for evaluation and conducting PoCs. It called for a tried and tested solution with proven value, which Naik and his team found in the existing Citrix ADC solution.

Upon discussion with the Citrix team, they realized that the solution could be easily scaled up to enable secure WFH for the 10,000 plus employees. “The beauty of the Citrix solution is how easy it was to extend the SSL VPN access to such a large workforce with our current appliance without any additional cost or requiring to upgrade our licenses,” explains Naik.

The result was that overnight Bajaj Allianz General Insurance was able to commission its remote workforce across all locations with the help of Citrix SSL VPN. After two days of mock drill, wherein the employees successfully worked remotely, WFH on Citrix SSL VPN was taken live.

“The quick turnaround by the Citrix team ensured there was no disruption to business and we could quickly get back on our feet and in action without wasting any time,” says Naik.

Citrix Helps Make WFH a Success, Paving Way for Business Continuity

While Bajaj Allianz General Insurance had been reaping the benefits of Citrix ADC over the past one year, the solution helped save the day, or rather the business, for the company during the critical time of the pandemic crisis.

The solution allows around 5,000 concurrent users to access the corporate network at any given time without any disruption to hinder the end user experience. This is a massive scale up from the pre COVID-19 setup of around 200 concurrent users. According to Naik, building this level of scale in record time would not have been possible without Citrix’s highly scalable technology architecture and quick turnaround capabilities.

The Citrix solution’s ability to shuffle compute resources between different applications was particularly helpful in supporting the massive remote workforce scaleup. Since Citrix ADC was already serving as a multi-tenancy load balancer, the IT team could easily shift the compute power from the low usage applications to the SSL VPN to support the manifold increase in remote access workload that came with the COVID-19 crisis.

All this ensured there was no resource crunch on the VPN box. With no disruption in accessing the corporate network, the employees experienced the same level of experience and productivity that they were used to when working from the office.

Besides scalability, Citrix SSL VPN has helped address the other key challenge in enabling remote workforce for Bajaj Allianz General Insurance – security. It allows the company’s employees to access applications critical to conducting the business operations without the fear of compromising on security. This includes the core insurance applications, policy portal, insurance models, etc. besides the employee portal, email, finance and web applications.

As Citrix SSL VPN helps establish a secure connection to the corporate network for the remote workforce, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance is assured of not exposing its corporate and customer data to any security vulnerabilities.

The solution provides an additional layer of security with the two factor authentication feature. According to Naik, being an insurance company, compliance was critical and, therefore, it was looking for enabling additional authentication. With the feature already built into the Citrix solution, the company didn’t have to do any additional investments with a third party vendor.

While the base authentication is the Active Directory credential, a second layer of security is added with the users receiving an authentication token (generated every 30 seconds) on their mobile phone.

The geofencing and authorization features of the solution have further strengthened the security while working remotely. The Citrix solution also provides a feature to prevent brute force attacks, further minimizing the risk of cyber threats.

While the employees can log into the SSL VPN using their Windows credentials and access the corporate network, each has restricted access as per what their role authorizes.

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