

Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance relies on Citrix as India navigates COVID-19 lockdown

Capitalizing on the Citrix platform, the insurer promotes remote working, delivers exemplary customer service, and eyes cloud computing in the not-too-distant future

In late March 2020, when COVID-19-related lockdown was announced in India, Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance Company Limited was one of the few organizations that was ready to evolve. Because of a previous Citrix implementation, its IT team wasn't struggling with the challenge of arming employees to productively work from home.

"The announcement was made one night and within the next two to three days, our team members transitioned and were at work from their new home environments, and we scaled up from there," says Mr. Sachin Dutta, COO. "Because we already had [Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops](#) and [Citrix ADC](#) in place, we were able to immediately ensure our workers had secure remote access to the applications and information they needed to be successful."

To compound the impact of the pandemic, one additional factor was an issue for India's businesses during this time: March is the end of the fiscal year. "The added pressure of a business disruption a week prior to the end of the financial year was immense. Had we not implemented the remote working solution (Citrix) several years ago, I can tell you that our year end really would have been a dry period for us – our business would have suffered."

Lockdown goals and unlocked insights

When the leadership team at Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance found out about the lockdown, they identified two priorities. The first was to make approximately 1,000 support function staff members (including partner and vendor staff) operational as quickly as possible. This included varied job functions, from the back office operations team to customer-facing servicing staff, to support and control functions. The second was to maintain as close to business-as-usual service levels as possible, in view of the large-scale business disruptions that the pandemic had caused.



Industry
Insurance

Location
India

Citrix products

- [Citrix ADC](#)
- [Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops](#)

Key Benefits

- Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops (on-premises) delivers secure remote access to applications and desktops
- Citrix ADC (on-premises) provides load balancing for apps, remote access, and app security

Citrix enabled them to do both. Mr. Dutta notes, “When we chose to implement Citrix a couple of years back, we never anticipated that we would scale it so extensively. During the pandemic, our company became digitally-forward and was much leaner in its digital aspects. We learned that even while working remotely, we can securely deliver a higher level of service than ever before.”

At the moment, employees are using company-issued devices. With many essential services being disrupted since the advent of COVID-19, company leaders are realizing that it is prudent to experiment with workers using Citrix on their own devices. “This is another area in which the versatility of Citrix can be delivered for us. It works on all kinds of devices,” Mr. Dutta says.

Virtual technology delivers productivity improvements

Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance has offices in different parts of the country. Before the pandemic, operating outside of an office was not an option that was offered to employees across all levels. Now, offices have morphed into rooms with sofas and dining tables. Those who previously clustered in call centers work from remote locations as well, all thanks to Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops. “This I would call ‘workstation revolution or reform,’” says Mr. Dutta.

The virtual desktop technology in which the company has invested has enabled productivity improvements for those in many job functions. Remote employees are able to find information more easily than ever before and share it effortlessly with coworkers.

“Now that the world is operating in a ‘business continuity mode,’ a transition from ‘the new normal mode,’ our technology has delivered beyond our expectations. It has helped us improve productivity – which actually is the inverse of what we expected to happen,” says Mr. Dutta. “We’re offering better service levels in this contingency kind of situation,” he adds. “That’s all possible because our stakeholders – including our business partners and service providers – have the right digital solution to operate out of their remote locations. It’s certainly an agile way of doing business during these difficult times.

“In addition to this, Citrix has made the back office team more mobile. Eventually, when the timing is right, we will be able to operate from an asset light model,” he summarizes. “It has provided us with much-needed mobility that delivers better productivity.” Mr. Dutta adds, “Today, I see the organization as much more digitally progressive than ever before.”

Addressing the needs of many different personas

Mr. Dutta acknowledges that there are many different work personas at Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance. The Citrix solution caters to many different kinds of users, regardless of their needs. The actuarial function, for example, uses very complex tools and applications, while admin or facilities functions have other requirements. Meanwhile, the back office team concerns itself with core functions, all of which are now supported by remote ways of working.

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COO
Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance

“Clearly, Citrix technology helps us meet the varied needs of our entire workforce. The Citrix solution is a game changer for us,” explains Mr. Dutta. “If I can capitalize on the agility that Citrix brings, I can vouch for how we deliver the best kind of employee experience that ultimately enables employees to deliver better customer service to our clients.”

Customers typically call in and reach someone at a call center. They expect to get answers to their queries. “Where we are enabling our call center agents – in essence, one area in which Citrix really helps – is providing business continuity and the ability to scale up, even during unforeseen business disruptions like this pandemic,” states Mr. Dutta. “Customers were able to call in the next day after we transitioned employees to remote locations and they got the services that they would normally expect to receive.”

Load balancing with Citrix Application Delivery Controller (ADC)

Citrix ADC enables the Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance’s team to manage network traffic. It provides load balancing and a single screen dashboard that enables the IT team to get better visibility into how the environment as a whole is functioning. “ADC helps us run and manage the business in a much better, more fact-based way, because we have visibility into issues and problems, sometimes even before they occur,” Mr. Dutta shares.

Cloud computing in the not-too-distant future

“Now that everyone is working from home, the Citrix load has increased substantially. That is one of the reasons why our technologists have identified and been proponents of cloud adoption as a next initiative in the not-too-distant future,” he says.

“I’m very passionate about a move to the cloud at the right time. That transition is on our road map, for sure,” Mr. Dutta exclaims. “Any cloud solution that we implement must be able to provide us with much-needed scalability, elasticity, and agility. Now, I’m really keen to explore Citrix in the context of cloud strategies soon.”

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