

Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co

Indian law firm achieves enhanced employee experience with Citrix

The business challenge

Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co is one of India's leading law firms. As a full-service law firm, it offers legal services in the areas of General Corporate Law, Capital Markets, Competition Law, Dispute Resolution, Projects & Project Finance, Banking & Finance, Tax, IP and VC, among others.

As one of India's leading law firms, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co works with some of the largest multinational corporations, Private Equity Funds and Indian corporate houses. The clients' trust that the firm has earned over the years can be attributed to its knowledge assets, i.e., its vast network of lawyers and legal experts spread across eight cities.

For the firm, there were two scenarios at play to ensure that its knowledge assets were efficiently optimized. Firstly, employees across all branch offices needed seamless access to the corporate applications hosted at the data center to conduct day-to-day operations. Secondly, they needed the flexibility to work on the go from anywhere to be productive without compromising on security. Connectivity and security were two major concerns that the firm needed to address to meet these requirements.

Addressing challenges within existing connectivity infrastructure

According to Shams Khan, Head of IT Infrastructure & Information Security at Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co, the challenge on the connectivity aspect centered on the existing setup lacking the ability to optimize for efficiency. The firm had two separate MPLS links connecting the branch offices to the data center - one for data and the other for video conferencing. With the MPLS link for data having a primary and a secondary link, there were essentially three links that needed to be managed. With each link being on a different router and system, centralized visibility and control were severely lacking. This in turn, created challenges around monitoring and managing these links.



Industry
Legal

Location
India

Citrix products

- Citrix SD-WAN
- Citrix Endpoint Management

Key Benefits

- Citrix Endpoint Management has enabled the firm to implement secure BYOD, allowing employees the flexibility to work on any device
- Citrix SD-WAN has led to improved availability of the IT network, delivering a marked improvement in the end-user experience

With no backup for the video MPLS link, the firm was also facing issues around availability. In instances of the video link being disrupted, the ensuing disconnection would disrupt the video conference session. Meanwhile, since the primary and the secondary MPLS links for data didn't work on the Active-Active mode, there was no provision for seamless real-time failover in case of one link going down.

For the 10-15 seconds that was required to switch from one link to the other, the users would be disconnected and unable to access the applications. "The availability issues on both the data and video MPLS links were adversely impacting overall user experience and productivity across the branch offices. People are used to working in a highly digitized and connected environment and even a 10-15 seconds time lag can adversely impact their experience at work. This prompted us to shift from our current set-up to a consolidated and centralized link with failover to address both the availability and manage ability challenges," explains Khan.

Balancing flexibility with security as BYOD is introduced

While ensuring seamless connectivity across all the branch offices was key to delivering a superior work experience to employees, the firm realized that there was also a need to allow the flexibility to work from anywhere and on any device with improved productivity. While the firm was supporting Blackberry devices, the user preference was clearly shifting towards Android and iOS devices.

As the firm decided to put in place a BYOD policy to align with user preference, this decision opened up the challenge of securing the corporate and client data on an employee's personal device. According to Khan, "Being a law firm, our clients trust us with their data which today resides in emails. While enabling our people to access corporate emails on their personal device allowed them the flexibility to work from anywhere, we also wanted to ensure that the corporate data was not compromised in any manner. With security being of paramount concern, we wanted a container-based solution that would enable security of BYOD."

Finding the right fit with Citrix solutions

After evaluating different solutions, Khan and his team finalized on Citrix SD-WAN for its connectivity requirement. It proved to be the right fit as it scored high on the key evaluation criteria of cost, as well as features. As far as the features criteria is concerned, the team was particularly impressed by the solution's ability to provide seamless real-time failover from one link to the other.

For secure BYOD, the team evaluated Blackberry, AirWatch and MobileIron besides Citrix Endpoint Management (CEM). According to Khan, besides being competitively priced, the Citrix solution also offered the added advantage of flexible licensing terms and strong after sales support. As the firm conducted Proof of Concepts (PoCs) with all the shortlisted solutions with a select user group, CEM outperformed its peers on key parameters, nailing the final decision in its favor.

"Being a law firm, our success lies in how efficient and productive our lawyers are. While Citrix SD-WAN has helped us ensure great user experience, Citrix Endpoint Management (CEM) has significantly boosted productivity by providing the flexibility to work from anywhere on a device of choice. With all these benefits, Citrix has helped enable our workforce to be at their productive and efficient best."

Shams Khan
Head - IT Infrastructure &
Information Security
Shardul Amarchand
Mangaldas & Co

Enabling the workforce to be at their productive and efficient best

According to Irshad Saifi, CIO & CDO, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co, “Employee productivity, security, compliance, and experience are at the center of our business success. Through its strong technology portfolio spanning across both connectivity and secure BYOD solutions, Citrix has enhanced the firm’s overall efficiency.”

“Being a law firm, our success lies in how efficient and productive our knowledge assets, i.e. our lawyers, are. While Citrix SD-WAN has helped us ensure great user experience through seamless connectivity and availability, Citrix Endpoint Management has significantly boosted productivity by providing the flexibility to work from anywhere on a device of choice, without compromising on data security. With all these benefits, Citrix has helped enable our workforce to be at their productive and efficient best,” adds Khan.

SD-WAN

The move to SD-WAN helped the firm consolidate all its links and distribute both data and video over the same link with a failover. It helped enable centralized visibility with a single pane for the IT team for monitoring and alerts. This, in turn, has simplified management of the MPLS links, saving IT resources in terms of both time and effort.

The shift to SD-WAN has also led to improved availability with real-time failover. This means that if one link fails, there is no disconnection for the end-user as it switches to the backup failover link. This applies to both data and video traffic. With real-time switch from one link to the other, there is no drop in video conferencing sessions and no disruption in accessing corporate applications. All this has led to marked improvement in the end-user experience while benefitting the firm in terms of uninterrupted flow of work.

The load balancing, bandwidth segregation and prioritization offered by Citrix SD-WAN have been particularly helpful for the firm by driving optimized utilization of the bandwidth. In cases where there are not many video sessions, the video bandwidth can be utilized for data and vice versa. Meanwhile, the prioritization feature has helped improve quality, especially for video calls.

Citrix Endpoint Management

CEM has helped the firm implement secure BYOD. This has allowed employees the flexibility to work on a device of their choice, leading to a high degree of user satisfaction without compromising on security, while enabling improved productivity due to unhindered work flow that is not limited by any geographical constraints.

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Shardul Amarchand
Mangaldas & Co

The solution, while allowing secure access to corporate emails, also enables secure browsing of the intranet sites on mobile devices. The 256-bit encryption on the container where all the corporate data/documents are stored in the mobile device, provides protection against any data leakage. It protects against a user taking out any data from the container as well as against any hackers infiltrating the device to steal corporate data.

CEM also ensures that users cannot transfer corporate data into their personal container on the mobile device nor copy and paste it. The user cannot post any document which has come as an email attachment on WhatsApp or any other native application or social media sites.

Khan is particularly impressed with the solution's Quick Edit feature that allows a user to edit the documents on their mobile device itself. The convenience it offers has made it one of the most widely used features by people across the firm.

According to Khan, "By aptly balancing productivity with security, CEM has given us the confidence to roll out BYOD across the firm, with the assurance that our corporate and client data is secure."

The Citrix solution has been received fairly well by users across the firm. Unlike a Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution, CEM doesn't infiltrate the personal area of the container in the user's mobile device. For the employees, knowing that their personal data is not being accessed and controlled by IT has further enhanced user satisfaction.

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