

Redefining remote workspace with the help of Netskope Borderless SD-WAN

Case Study



Founded in 1972 by Aziz Hadeed as the Caribbean Insurance Company, it was rebranded in 1996 as the Beacon Insurance Company Limited. Its early business model was characterized by interpersonal relationships between staff and customers rather than intermediaries and brokers. Across five decades of successful operations and consistent growth, Beacon has been evolving to meet the needs of its customers and is now a regional player with Branch Offices and an Agency network that spans Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, St. Kitts & Nevis, and Dominica. Beacon enjoys a reputation as an emerging giant in the regional insurance industry and is ranked as the fifth largest insurer in Trinidad & Tobago.

The Challenge

The Insurance sector has not been immune to the COVID-19 pandemic and regional players like Beacon have had to adapt and invest in digital assets and infrastructure. While key indicators like Return on Equity (RoE), expense ratio, profitability and investment yields have not recovered to pre-Covid levels, Netskope is helping Beacon transition to the “new normal” with little to no disruption in any of its business operations.

Many of Beacon’s remote workers and various micro-branches had performance issues with real-time voice and video applications over lossy internet links. With increased use of technology in the midst of government-mandated lockdowns and decreased mobility, having a reliable solution was critical to business. Issues arose because it had no capability to prioritize critical applications over bandwidth-consuming streaming applications. With branches and agencies spanning across five countries and various regions and reinsurers across the Atlantic, Beacon needed to work with a variety of sites and workers.

Beacon was using a software-based VPN client for its remote workers to provide connectivity to an application hosted in a data center. The VPN connection from remote workers was terminated at a VPN server (cluster) at the data center. This approach had security risks and often resulted in unreliable access to customers’ data for employees.

Another critical aspect is regulatory compliance and adhering to various legislations in different countries where Beacon operates. As a regional player operating in several countries, Beacon had to ensure compliance with different IT Acts, Insurance regulatory bodies, and adherence to strict privacy laws.



Profile

Industry
Insurance

Region
Trinidad



[Click here to visit the Beacon Insurance website](#)

Challenges

- Inconsistent application performance for remote workers.
- Regional fluctuations in quality of ISPs and networking infrastructure made it difficult to achieve consistent performance and maintain quality of service protocols.
- Change in operating model from primarily on-site and home-based service representatives to a hybrid model of WFH and remote employees.
- Requirements for adherence to strict privacy laws and regulations creates a need to keep customers’ data and information safe from data breaches and malicious attacks.

Results

- Ease of deployment and flexibility with Netskope Borderless SD-WAN for offices and remote users that delivers superior user experience for hybrid work environments.
- Converged secure and optimized connectivity for remote users and micro-branches to the data center.
- Improved video/voice quality to support Beacon’s promise to deliver a convenient and caring customer experience.

The Solution

Beacon Insurance started exploring alternative options and partnered with Netskope to build a unified network policy for remote workers and micro-branches while improving application performance and security. Beacon required a solution that could be deployed quickly, and that is secure, provides better visibility, limits downtime, and delivers exceptional user experience. The micro-branches also required high availability with simplified routing and integrated cellular.

Adaptability and Flexibility for Work From Home (WFH) and Remote Workers

Beacon began deploying the Netskope Borderless SD-WAN solution by connecting workers with cloud-delivered Netskope SASE Gateways. Using the internet as transport, all remote staff could easily and securely connect to applications hosted in the data center. With the success of remote staff deployment, Beacon expanded deployment to other micro-branches. 4G/5G connectivity at the micro-branches provided ubiquitous reach. Deployment is hassle-free with Netskope SASE Orchestrator providing a single pane of glass for configuration and AI-driven operations, minimizing cost, and ensuring an efficient IT team can easily handle adoption of new technology.

Zero Trust Security With Netskope

Netskope delivers best-in-class security features that keep Beacon's customer data and sensitive information secure and help with various regulatory compliance needs. Users are granted only the level of access necessary to perform their assigned function.

Netskope provides Beacon with secure access by controlling traffic flows and isolating trust boundaries, enabling identity-aware per-app access policies, as well as security through an application-aware stateful firewall and filtering of unwanted content categories.

Assured Application Performance

With Netskope, business-critical applications are automatically prioritized with sufficient bandwidth, ensuring superior application performance. Application steering offers dynamic path selection with sub-second blackout/brownout protection. Netskope's built-in remediation ensures performance protection against link degradation on all paths. With Netskope, Beacon Insurance has the ability to reach its customers and continue business as usual even through the toughest challenges, including the COVID pandemic.

TCO 8-10x Lower Than Alternatives

Traditional wide area network (WAN) and infrastructure at geographically-dispersed sites is expensive, with high per-location costs. Instead, Beacon was able to purchase inexpensive circuits from carriers, and use Netskope's Intelligent Access architecture to deliver high-quality video, voice, and data to each facility in its network.

Moving Forward

Beacon Insurance is looking to expand the Netskope Borderless SD-WAN solution to more micro-branches and WFH employees across the Caribbean and to reinsurers in different continents.

“Netskope Borderless SD-WAN is a new mindset. It's a new way of thinking about how our users access our domain and critical applications. For us, it will replace VPN for our employees and branch offices across our seven countries. We have implemented a zero trust model while delivering superior network access with this modern, secure, cloud-first implementation.”

– Robert Boopsingh, CIO, Beacon Insurance Company



Netskope, a global cybersecurity leader, is redefining cloud, data, and network security to help organizations apply Zero Trust principles to protect data. The Netskope Intelligent Security Service Edge (SSE) platform is fast, easy to use, and secures people, devices, and data anywhere they go. Learn how Netskope helps customers be ready for anything on their SASE journey, visit [netskope.com](https://www.netskope.com).