

Beneva Adopts Zscaler Internet Access for Enhanced Security and User Experience for 5,000 Remote Workers



Beneva

Location: Quebec, Canada

Industry: Insurance/financial services

Customer Size: 5,000 employees

Beneva is one of the top 10 insurers in Canada, with 5,000 employees and operations from coast to coast. The company offers a range of insurance, savings and retirement products. In 2020 La Capitale merged with SSQ Insurance; the merged entity, Beneva, aims to become the country's largest mutual insurer, bringing together more than 3.5 million members and clients, and promoting a philosophy of shared human values, rooted in mutualism.

A patchwork of solutions ill-equipped for remote work

Mergers often present a consolidation opportunity. The coming together of La Capitale and SSQ meant the combined company had a total of three web-filtering solutions.

"The result was a patchwork of solutions that were costly and hard to manage," explained Jérôme Tétreault, Security Architecture Specialist at Beneva.

More concerning was the inconsistency of user and application protection. Tétreault continued: "Protection differed depending on whether users were off-premises or on-premises. Remote working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was congesting the VPN and exposing the business to increased security risks."

Beneva wanted to move quickly to unify its internet security posture, offload VPN traffic destined for the internet and SaaS applications, and provide a uniform security presence regardless of user location.

CHALLENGE

Consolidate multiple web filtering solutions to drive consistency, strengthen security, and streamline management costs; both in branches and with remote workers

SOLUTION

- Zscaler Internet Access™

OUTCOMES

- Enhanced security for remote workers
- Improved visibility, including in-depth report logs detailing what users are accessing
- A standardized solution across two different group companies
- Enhanced user experience, including quick access to business-critical applications

A need for easier collaboration

Most Beneva employees use Microsoft Office 365 applications and are directly routed to the cloud without a VPN. With all staff collaborating virtually and exchanging terabytes of data each day, an equally secure and seamless solution was a critical requirement. When staff were forced to work from home due to COVID restrictions, Beneva quickly realized that Zscaler could offer the safest product without having to compromise performance, with no latency or noticeable degradation in speed.

No compromises on cybersecurity

As an insurer, public trust is the foundation of Beneva's business. "Our customers trust Beneva with their personal information and depend on the company to be there to assist them when they need it most. We make no compromises on cybersecurity," said Tétréault.

Extensive in-house testing was conducted to evaluate Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) with comparable solutions in the market. "If I know of a vulnerability in a security solution, you can bet that hackers know it too. When it comes to cybersecurity, there is no such thing as 'good enough,'" said Tétréault.

It became clear that ZIA was the only solution that Beneva could trust for its endpoint, with full inspection of all the network's layers, not just at DNS level. Using the product is also highly intuitive for Beneva's security analysts, backed up by comprehensive documentation and online help.

"Zscaler offers a comprehensive security solution for best securing both users and applications. It passed every one of our security tests, while competing solutions had shortcomings. Ultimately, the decision to implement Zscaler was a 'no brainer'."

Progressive rollout minimizes risk of business disruptions

With a full cloud platform, Beneva has gradually deployed clients on endpoints while limiting any potential negative impacts on end users. Constructive feedback has also enabled the business to adjust rules and improve its processes even further. Beneva works with tech giants such as Microsoft and AWS, and the applications it uses daily are tightly connected to these cloud platforms. This ensured the fastest paths for users, and the business achieved new levels of productivity as a result.

ZIA is a fundamental component of the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange Platform, delivered as-a-service. It eliminates the cost and complexity of traditional secure web gateway approaches that were previously adopted by SSQ and La Capitale. By moving security to a globally distributed cloud, Zscaler brings protection close to every user regardless of location. Protection can be scaled easily, regardless of location; users are provided with identical protection, no matter where they connect. At the same time, network and appliance infrastructure is minimized.

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Security Architecture
Specialist
Beneva

“Deployment was a breeze. All we needed was to integrate authentication with Azure ID, which took about an hour,” Tétreault explained. “As with any solution, customizing security policies takes a little longer and exceptions may be discovered along the way. We did a progressive rollout over a few weeks to minimize the risk of business disruptions.”

Zscaler was the first joint IT project to be completed across the newly merged business. “Implementation was a great success,” Tétreault added. “We shone!”

Enhanced security for remote workers

ZIA is now standardized across both La Capitale and SSQ. Remote workers have better security and the company’s visibility has been improved with in-depth reporting logs. User experience is enhanced with faster access to business-critical applications, and WAN congestion is reduced as most traffic is diverted away from the corporate network for remote workers.

Unsecured cloud resources can enable data leakage, malware proliferation, loss of visibility and noncompliance. Zscaler’s Cloud Access Security Broker (CASB) is part of the comprehensive Zero Trust Exchange. It protects data, stops threats and ensures compliance across SaaS and IaaS.

“An important feature for Beneva is the ability to restrict potential leakage of sensitive information to public cloud. Zscaler’s Data Protection features allow downloading from file sharing sites but not uploading. Web application control allows users to receive documents without having the security team constantly allowing and removing exceptions.” According to Tétreault, this had been a major pain point in the past.

Beneva was initially concerned its security department would be overwhelmed with a large volume of exception requests. However, the ability to post a warning page and restrict sending of information to uncategorized domains has allowed the company to permit consultation of the site without compromising on security. This has avoided numerous requests and end user frustration.

“I’d recommend any organization deploying web and data security to carefully craft its policies,” Tétreault commented. “Configuration is key. Zscaler deployment specialists helped us get the most out of the product.”

“Ultimately, the decision to implement Zscaler was a ‘no brainer’.”

– **Jérôme Tétreault**
Security Architecture
Specialist
Beneva

Securing an entire pillar of security architecture with minimal effort

Zscaler means Beneva can address several areas of security with a single solution. This covers basic web filtering, as well as other critical elements including data loss prevention and malware protection. While the integration process was straightforward, Tétreault credits much of its success to Zscaler's customer success manager, who was on hand after deployment to help the business improve its security even further.

Looking to the future, Tétreault says the plan is to look at Zscaler Private Access (ZPA), a cloud service that uses a distributed architecture to provide secure access to private applications running on-prem or in the public cloud, with an end goal of further simplifying security management.

"Compounded by staff shortages, staying ahead is challenging. Zscaler allowed us to secure an entire pillar of our security architecture with minimal effort, enabling us to speed up the entire security program. We feel very confident that we're protected and that business operations won't be compromised," said Tétreault. "Ultimately, deploying Zscaler has proved simple, secure and efficient."

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About Zscaler

Zscaler (NASDAQ: ZS) accelerates digital transformation so that customers can be more agile, efficient, resilient, and secure. The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange protects thousands of customers from cyberattacks and data loss by securely connecting users, devices, and applications in any location. Distributed across more than 150 data centers globally, the SASE-based Zero Trust Exchange is the world's largest inline cloud security platform. Learn more at [zscaler.com](https://www.zscaler.com) or follow us on Twitter [@zscaler](https://twitter.com/zscaler).

