CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Ensure business continuity and resilience in times of crisis – 100%

Create a flexible and secure network enabling 3,700 employees to work from home

Increase employee agility and productivity - 100% during the COVID-19 lockdown

Clal Insurance Weathers COVID-19 and Other Crises with VMware Horizon

As one of Israel's leading insurance and long-term savings companies, Clal Insurance requires reliable, stable and accessible IT systems under both normal and extreme circumstances. Over 10 years ago, the company integrated a VMware disaster recovery solution. In 2019, it decided to upgrade its IT infrastructure to create a new work culture enabling remote work options. Clal accelerated its VMware Horizon implementation, installing virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) in the homes of 3,700 of its 4,300 employees. Thanks to VMware Horizon, Clal Insurance was able to carry out a sustainable work-from-home strategy, while consistently providing exceptional user experiences and ensuring all-encompassing security.

Ensuring Reliable IT Systems to Provide High-Level Service

Clal Insurance is one of Israel's leading insurance and long-term savings companies. The company has 2 million private and business customers, and recorded a 2019 turnover of $5.7 billion. Part of the Clal Group, Clal Insurance is rated ilAA+ by Standard & Poor's Maalot. The company comprises three divisions – non-life insurance, long-term savings, and health insurance – employs 4,500 people, and markets its products through 2,000 insurance agents. Its growth strategy is based on financial innovation and high-level service for both insurance agents and customers. Clal's IT team ensures that its systems are reliable, stable and accessible under all circumstances.

CLAL INSURANCE & FINANCE

Clal Insurance is one of Israel's largest insurance and long-term savings companies. The company has 2 million private and business customers, and recorded 2019 turnover of $5.7 billion. Clal Insurance employs some 4,500 people, and markets its products through 2,000 insurance agents. Visit the *Clal Insurance site* for more information.

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

LOCATION

Tel Aviv, Israel

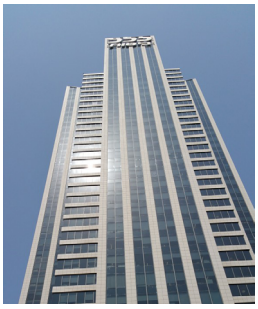
VMWARE FOOTPRINT

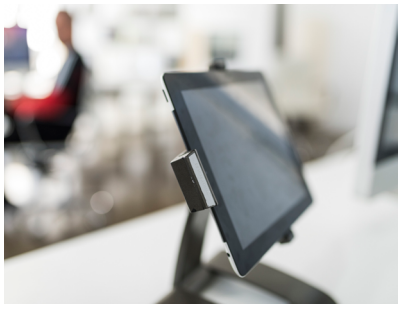
VMware Horizon
VMware vRealize Suite

vmware®

Creating a Remote Work Environment for Disaster Scenarios

Over 10 years ago, Clal Insurance understood that its core business was not adequately protected to handle various disaster scenarios. "Our disaster recovery solutions were based on data backup in local physical devices that were not really updated," says Haim Inger, CTO. "We understood that our core business would be exposed under extreme circumstances, and that we could get caught up in lockdown





situations that we couldn't afford." As such, Clal integrated a VMware disaster recovery solution in 2009.

At the time, Clal also understood that not only its IT systems, but also its physical offices were potentially threatened in the event of extreme situations or disasters. This was underscored by the 2010 fire in Tel Aviv's Shalom Tower, which housed many Clal offices. While the offices were not damaged, the tower's lobby was blocked and employees could not enter the building. Having already integrated VMware Horizon, Clal transferred 50% of its employees working there to another site, and they were up and running within minutes. Clal employees without access to a VDI desktop, however, were unable to work for four more days.

Management recognized the need for a remote work solution to ensure business continuity. Complementing this approach, the company launched a program in 2019 enabling employees to work from home once a week in order to create a more flexible work culture. The program was a great success and proved itself when all employees were forced to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

Implementing Disaster Recovery and Digital Workspace Solutions

Clal Insurance decided to modernize its IT infrastructure by implementing disaster recovery and digital workspace solutions to ensure business continuity and resilience under all circumstances.

To carry out full virtualization, automation, consistent operations, and governance for disaster recovery, the company opted for VMware's vRealize Suite via Site Recovery Manager (SRM). Committed to enhancing the digital transformation process it had started a decade earlier, in 2019 Clal upgraded from VMware Horizon Standard to VMware Horizon Enterprise Suite.

Clal accelerated deployment of the Horizon solution - which provides the secure delivery of virtual desktops and applications across the hybrid cloud - and by the end of the year, had installed virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) in the homes of 3,700 of its 4,300 employees.

"At the time, the COVID-19 crisis had yet to start, but we were already prepared without even realizing it, Inger says. "When the government ordered businesses and offices to close down in March, management asked me what it would take to get our employees to work from home. I answered with complete confidence that there was actually nothing we had to do. We were already ready for this scenario."

Inger and his team instructed 3,700 employees to work from home through their PCs. Employees received user-friendly instruction manuals for accessing the company's network, and Clal's internal IT service center supported those requiring initial access assistance. Once access to the network was completed, each employee's PC screen at home not only looked exactly like its office counterpart, but also offered the same functions and capabilities.

Ensuring Business Continuity and Resilience

VMware Horizon has provided Clal Insurance with business continuity and resilience, both before and especially during the COVID-19 crisis. "The recent period has been full of challenges and uncertainties for our customers, who in many ways need us more than ever," Inger says. While the company has handled fewer car accident claims since the outbreak of COVID-19, there has been an upsurge in health insurance claims and travel insurance cancellations. Inquiry calls covering many areas continue to flood Clal's switchboard.

> "VMware's solution allows us to embrace a sustainable work-from-home strategy, while consistently providing exceptional user experiences and maintaining all-encompassing security. It does this by scaling access to vital applications and data, managing and securing endpoints, and optimizing the network edge to every employee."
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> HAIM INGER
> CTO, CLAL INSURANCE

Thanks to VMware Horizon, Clal has been able to smoothly transition its insurance clerks and call service center representatives – who answer daily thousands of calls from

agents and customers – to home offices. For Clal employees, it's been business as usual, including using the same extension phone number as in the office.

"VMware's VDI has proved to be a solid, digital steel anchor, enabling us to supply instant and comprehensive service to thousands of customers," Inger says. "We passed this challenging test with no difficulties and no extra investment, for which we are extremely proud."

The combination of a pandemic and the VMware solution also gave Clal the chance to take a step back and think about the bigger picture. "We understood that this could be an opportunity to increase our workplace flexibility, improve our technology investments and cybersecurity capabilities, and take another look at the effectiveness of our current operational processes," Inger says.

Like the rest of world, Clal is still figuring out how to best manage the new reallity, from improving employee access to data through to helping them collaborate as a team and successfully engage with customers. As the crisis continues, remote employees have greater expectations from the organization to provide an enhanced work environment. VMware Horizon facilitated this by creating an effective digital workspace platform that gives Clal workers a smooth, remote work experience that has enabled them to be agile and productive from the outset.

"The crisis has taught us that in a highly distributed workforce environment, the boundaries of the network edge go all the way to the employees' homes," Inger says. "VMware Horizon enables us to support our remote workforce by providing a modern, flexible network and access strategy that extends to this new edge."

"VMware's solution allows us to embrace a sustainable work-from-home strategy, while consistently providing exceptional user experiences and maintaining all-encompassing security," Inger continues. "It does this by scaling access to vital applications and data, managing and securing endpoints, and optimizing the network edge to every employee."

Looking Ahead

Clal Insurance will tackle future remote work challenges by harnessing VMware Horizon to create a connected, flexible and strategic global workforce that ensures continued business success. "Our workers' success translates to company and customer success, and that requires giving them the right support," Inger says. "That's why we're striving to promote a culture of choice to advance our quality and values. We are confident that our investment in VMware will prepare the groundwork for future investments in virtual and automated infrastructures that will not only support any extreme scenario, but also bring out the best in each."

Clal Insurance has been able to smoothly transition its insurance and call service center and carry out a sustainable work from home strategy while providing exceptional user experience and ensuring security with #VMware Horizon

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