

Ayalon Insurance Company selects Arista as foundational technology for digital transformation and next generation software defined and big data projects

Highlights

Challenge

As one of the Israel's largest and fastest growing financial services providers, Ayalon needed a higher performance yet flexible network infrastructure to meet and deliver on the opportunity of big data and cloud.

Solutions

- Arista 7050 Series Switches
- Arista EOS®
- Arista CloudVision
- Tap Aggregation

Results

- Increased core network bandwidth with flexible provisioning plus easy to use management interface
- Higher density solution with lower power consumption plus open standards ready for future SDN transition
- Lower latency, higher reliability and room to scale to a 100Gbps capable network design

Priding itself on customer service and transparency, Ayalon Insurance has also invested heavily in technology to provide its agents and customers with the tools and data to make informed financial decisions. With major big data projects underway, Ayalon turned to Arista Networks to deliver a high performance yet flexible network infrastructure to help them benefit from new software defined and cloud based technologies able to meet its rapid growth in demand.





Project Background

Ayalon Insurance Company is one of the six largest insurance and financial services groups in Israel in terms of insurance premiums and salary-related savings. Founded in 1976, in recent years, Ayalon have reported one of the highest growth rates in the insurance and financial services sectors through its network of 1,200 insurance agents, which are its primary distribution channels. The company is active in all areas of general insurance, life insurance and health insurance for around 6,000 organisations and hundreds of thousands of individual policy holders.

Challenge

Ayalon reflects its vision, through its chosen slogan - "People for People" and its values, the human side of insurance with a special emphasis on the issue of service to the policyholders and agents. The company's overriding objective is differentiation through a high level of service to its clients which include agents and policyholders. As such, it invests heavily in this area offering its tools and financial data to agents and policyholders to promote transparency and increased confidence.

Agents of the company and its policyholders have easy and readily available access for viewing various reports, including reports that reflect their policies, asset balances, yields, fees and other useful data sets. In addition, the company and its controlling shareholders consider it paramount to contribute to the community and work regularly to give donations to various institutions including the needy populations.

To deliver its highly regarded services, Ayalon has invested in technology and maintains over 20 business critical applications including ERP, BI and special bespoke applications to help manage policies which are mostly run on its IBM AS400 mainframe systems. To ensure availability, Ayalon has deployed a full disaster recovery capability designed to failover in the event of a primary data centre outage. To add further safeguards, it maintains a third site which retains full copies of all data sets. Each site is connected via a dedicated multi path SDH network using SSL VPN technology to ensure security for all data in transit. As part of its ongoing efforts to deliver the highest levels of service and transparency, Ayalon is using big data analytics technologies based on Hadoop to better model risk and uncover trends to allow it to improve its offerings.

Solution

However, the large volumes of data moving across the network prompted the IT department to begin a digital transformation project to upgrade its core network infrastructure, "We have had a steady rise in network traffic over the last few years and we felt the time was right to upgrade the network for the next set of challenges," explains Eldad Omer, Director of IT for Ayalon, "We are looking at moving more of our systems onto cloud technologies during 2018 and software defined networking is another area we are considering as a way of improving our operational efficiency."

Like many high tech environments, Ayalon has a lean IT department and alongside flexibility, scalable performance and support for open SDN standards and, Omer adds, "We wanted a technology solution that was easy to manage and a long term relationship with a vendor with a long term vision that matched our own."

Omer and his team ran a detailed technology evaluation of solutions from Avaya, Cisco, Juniper and Arista. "We examined all aspects of the technology," says Omer, "And we asked ourselves, are these vendors ready for the next generation data centre?"

Based on a combination of performance, use of open standards and long term vision, Ayalon upgraded its existing Cisco and Avaya based infrastructure at both its primary and secondary data centre sites to Arista 7050 switches.

Conclusion

“The design and implementation project was relatively straightforward,” says Omer, “Our team had previous experience with Cisco and Avaya products and we picked up Arista really quickly. Our technical guys were particularly impressed by the ease of management of Arista and during operation it has allowed us to make major changes that would typically take weeks in just a few days.”

Ayalon is also using CloudVision to centralise its management activities and move its big data project onto the Arista platform. “We now have a network infrastructure that is able to better support our business objective and also ready for the future.”

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