

# Enriching the community through job skills, development, and placement services

## Customer story



Goodwill Industries of Kentucky embraces hybrid IT solutions to keep its staff focused on supporting dynamic employment programs for Kentucky's underemployed population.



### Flexential solution portfolio



Colocation



Data Protection



Cloud

### Flexential partnership highlights

- Lean IT team remains focused on strategic initiatives
- Ease of budgeting with OPEX
- Colocation, cloud and disaster recovery services provide IT infrastructure for operations in 66 locations

### Quick facts about Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

- Founded in 1923
- Diverts about 50 million pounds of goods from Kentucky landfills yearly
- Goodwill retail stores fund its work in job preparation and placement
- More than 900 job placement partners
- 87% of retail sales goes toward mission
- Ranked 11th on the Forbes magazine "20 Most Inspiring Companies" list

## The history

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**Goodwill Industries of Kentucky** is one of 132 regional Goodwill Industries organizations—each of which is operated independently to best serve the demographics of its community. Best known for its affordable retail stores, Goodwill of Kentucky offers more than low-priced merchandise. The nonprofit uses the revenue generated from the sales of donated goods to fund job placement, skill development and career planning services for Kentuckians with disabilities and other challenges such as limited education, legal issues and chronic poverty. Through partnerships with regional businesses, Goodwill of Kentucky assists these individuals in finding and maintaining long-term employment.



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“The reason I’m here at Goodwill is I believe I can make a difference. I can use my experience and my history in technology to help promote programs that help individuals understand the technology they’re going to use in the workplace.”

**Jeff Grammer**

Director of Information Technology  
Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

## The challenge

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### Maximized resources required to effectively drive mission

Headquartered in Louisville, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky is dedicated to providing the skills and training necessary to reintegrate individuals with disabilities and life challenges into the workforce using the revenue from its retail stores to support this mission. As a nonprofit, Goodwill of Kentucky always looks for opportunities to streamline and improve its operations to enrich and support its programs.

Initially, the organization hosted its servers on-premise. Recognizing that colocation could relieve its small IT staff of the day-to-day responsibilities of managing a server environment, Jeff Grammer, director of information technology, began investigating outsourced solutions. Grammer was particularly cognizant of the needs of the business. With relatively fixed costs and no complex inventory management systems in its retail stores, the organization did not need real-time accessibility or high-density bandwidth to support its operations.

“Our data is not time-sensitive, proprietary or mission-critical, and we’re not required to adhere to specific compliance regulations,” said Grammer. Goodwill just needed a reliable solution that could accurately capture point-of-sale data and improve internal operations.

## The solution

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### Local colocation solution keeps internal IT team lean

Goodwill of Kentucky chose Flexential as its colocation provider based on its strong reputation, locality and customer commitment. While the data center offers uncompromising uptime, rich connectivity options and industry-leading 100 Gbps network bandwidth scalable to 400 Gbps, its local footprint and emphasis on service are what sold Goodwill. With a customer-first culture, Flexential mirrors Goodwill's commitment to community, delivering a high standard of service that Goodwill appreciates.

Goodwill of Kentucky also relies on Flexential for its disaster recovery needs to safeguard its environment. Replicating its data and applications to a Flexential cloud, Goodwill is able to recover operations in the event of an unexpected incident.

## The results

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### \$45k cost savings reinvested in the life-changing employment programs

With its servers operating in the Flexential data center, Goodwill of Kentucky no longer needs to designate valuable resources to backend services such as security, redundancy, DR, equipment maintenance and more—it's all taken care of by Flexential. This allows Goodwill to maintain a lean IT staff and redirect internal resources to more strategic, customer-facing initiatives.

"Now I can hire a program manager, instead of an IT technician, to work with the program services and retail sides of the business to ensure they have the correct software and other technologies to support their needs," explained Grammer.

Flexential colocation has also eased Goodwill of Kentucky's budgeting process as its OPEX model normalizes costs year over year, minimizing the potential of unexpected costs. This cost structure enables Grammer to calculate his hardware, DR and hosting expenses, taking the guesswork out of the budgeting process and enabling him to implement technology solutions that directly impact the business. It has also offered a cost savings of \$45k a year.

Over the next couple of years, Goodwill of Kentucky plans to continue to enhance its IT infrastructure by integrating data mapping and analysis to understand



"Since I don't have to worry about our IT infrastructure, I can focus on more strategic initiatives that will help us help more people in the community."

**Jeff Grammer**

Director of Information Technology  
Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

its efficacy better as well as where it needs to focus its attention to better support its community. For Grammer, better IT tools are essential to the organization's resilience and success. "When we have better tools, we can be more effective and operate at a higher level," he said. "Technology can elevate our decision-making processes and deliver value to our programs and the community as a whole."