



# Hybrid IT Solution Takes Nation's Largest Transporter from Crisis to Recovery, and Beyond

## Customer Story



A&R Logistics leverages Flexential cloud, colocation and disaster-recovery-as-a-service to support the company's growth and provide its customers with unrelenting availability.

"We fully replicated the data center using Flexential Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service within five weeks of the initial call, which believe me was a phenomenal accomplishment. Our performance with Flexential DRaaS was equal to or even better than our previous production performance."

**Rick Blanchard**  
VICE PRESIDENT OF TECHNOLOGY  
A&R Logistics

## The History

### Growing At Hyper Speed

Founded in 1969, A&R Logistics is the nation's largest transporter of plastic resins, operating a nationwide fleet of 800 trucks, 1,200 trailers and an extensive network of 23 terminals and 10 warehousing/packaging facilities.

Backed by \$1 billion in private equity, the Louisville, Kentucky-based company is making significant investments to capitalize on an American manufacturing surge that has its biggest customers – the global petrochemical companies who make the resins – setting up shop and expanding operations across the U.S.

With a mission to grow quickly, neither A&R nor its customers have room for downtime. "We have 750 drivers on the road, from San Diego to Boston and everywhere in between," says Rick Blanchard, A&R's vice president of technology. "They need to know what products to load on their trucks, and where and when to deliver them. If a driver doesn't show up on time with the right products, manufacturing operations can be forced to shut down for hours or longer."

## Flexential Partnership Highlights

- Replication of 14 terabytes of data to Flexential DRaaS
- Accelerated implementation of production and disaster recovery infrastructure
- Shared sense of urgency and ongoing IT support



Colocation



Disaster Recovery

“When that happens,” Blanchard adds, “we don’t typically get a second chance.” So when A&R began experiencing unexplainable, catastrophic power problems in its Chicago-area data center, the A&R team knew it had to act fast — and fail over its production IT environment to a high-performance disaster recovery infrastructure that would enable A&R Logistics to provide uninterrupted service for customers.

## The Solution

### Bulletproof IT at Break-Neck Speed

A&R Logistics began planning its failback to its production environment. Because the power problems in A&R Logistics’ data center persisted, Flexential proposed an alternative: recreate A&R’s production environment at the Flexential colocation facility in Louisville, near A&R’s corporate headquarters. Once again, A&R was impressed with the speed, responsiveness and dedication of the Flexential team.

“One weekend, our Flexential team drove to the company’s Nashville - Franklin data center, picked up the server hardware we needed to recreate our environment, drove it to Louisville and had it set up by Monday morning,” said Blanchard. “This is the type of thing they did throughout the process.”

Once the production environment was in place, A&R and Flexential set up disaster recovery infrastructure in Atlanta, again using Flexential DRaaS.

By July 2016, just six months after declaring disaster, A&R — a rapidly growing company with a national footprint — had recovered to the cloud, reestablished its production IT in a colocation facility and implemented a permanent remote disaster recovery as a service infrastructure.

“In the end, this was a 14- to 16-month project that would have been tough to do in a year, and Flexential accomplished it in six months, at warp speed,” said Blanchard. “Think about it: we’re a \$250 million company that wants to get to \$1 billion dollars within five to 10 years, and in six months Flexential built the infrastructure we’ll need to support that growth.”

## The Results

### A Hybrid IT Partner for Foul or Fair Weather

According to Blanchard, a company needn’t be in the depths of a crisis to benefit from a partner like Flexential.

“I’ve never been in a situation like this one before, and most companies won’t ever see a similar situation,” he said. “I have worked at other companies where we wanted to go to the cloud for production or disaster recovery, and we either thought we didn’t have the resources to do it, or we didn’t know the next steps to take. Having a partner with Flexential’s expertise, dedication and ability to execute would have been invaluable at that time in my career, and it’s great to have them as a partner now and going forward.”