

# Helping dreams come true by navigating financial journeys

## Customer story



**MOUNTAIN AMERICA**  
CREDIT UNION

Mountain America Credit Union creates enterprise-grade IT infrastructure to provide a full suite of financial products and services to members in a five-state region.

### Flexential solution portfolio



Colocation



Data Protection

### Flexential partnership highlights

- Shifting from CAPEX to OPEX
- Evaluating buy vs. build
- Solid construction to counter seismic activity
- Enhanced physical security, suppression and power sources

### Quick facts about Mountain America Credit Union

- More than 100 branches across Utah, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico and Nevada
- Tenth largest credit union in the United States
- #1 SBA lending credit union for the last 19 years
- More than 1.1 million members and \$17 billion in assets  
(as of May 2023)

## The history

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Mountain America Credit Union is a nationally recognized financial services leader, providing a full suite of products and services to members in Utah, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico and Nevada. Recognized by Forbes magazine as the Best-in-State Credit Union for Utah, Mountain America focuses on safely and effectively supporting its members along their financial journeys. A reliable IT infrastructure is a critical component in delivering on the promise to serve as a trusted financial guide to members.



“The true value of our partnership with Flexential is that we are able to reinvest the real time saved not focused on maintaining our own data center into our employees and members.”

**Lee Christiansen**

Assistant Vice President of Network Infrastructure & Operations  
Mountain America Credit Union

## The challenge

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### To buy or to build, that is the question

A plan to relocate its headquarters was announced to employees in 2016. Mountain America embraced the announcement as an opportunity to analyze and compare its data center options. Historically, Mountain America utilized an in-house data center managed by its internal IT and Facilities teams. However, the in-house facility lacked state-of-the-art physical security, modern fire suppression, and redundant UPS and generator systems.

“Even before the announcement, our lack of adequate fire suppression, UPS/Generator, and more stringent physical security with our in-house data center worried us – concern around potential failures would literally keep us up at night!” said Lee Christiansen, assistant vice president of Network Infrastructure and Operations for Mountain America Credit Union.

Mountain America’s other option was to purchase its data center needs. This option moved the conversation from a capital expense model to an operational expense model. To help make this decision, Flexential provided Mountain America with the necessary tools to evaluate these models and the benefits of each.

## The solution

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### Members' financial data is secure with Flexential Colocation

Mountain America opted to outsource its data center needs and chose Flexential as its colocation and compliance partner. In 2017, the organization successfully moved its servers to the Flexential Salt Lake City – South Valley data center without disrupting member/employee accessibility.

The value of Flexential's data center to Mountain America is that they did not miss a step in delivering their core financial services business to members during the transition and experienced complete continuity.

Offering multiple redundant power distribution paths, Flexential delivered the power diversity and uptime guarantee the credit union sought to ensure its members were not impacted, even in the face of a natural disaster or emergency.

To further alleviate the impact of a disaster, the data center features state-of-the-art construction with base isolation, a critical feature to minimize the risk of seismic activity. This robust, built-in construction allows the building to move three feet in any direction without damaging the structure or anything in it.

Flexential also offers the dynamic security Mountain America requires to safeguard its assets and its members' financial data. With 24/7 monitoring, dual-factor authentication access and 4-zone security access, Flexential delivers better security than Mountain America could have achieved on its own.

The connectivity-rich facility provides tremendous bandwidth and promotes a strong online experience for members and improved productivity for employees. Flexential's carrier-neutral approach to connectivity allows Mountain America to utilize its preferred carrier for faster, more sophisticated delivery and heightened performance.

However, it wasn't just Flexential's leading-edge technology that sold Mountain America; it was also its people. The Flexential member-first philosophy and its responsiveness to Mountain America's needs did not go unnoticed. Dedicated to delivering value and comprehensive products and services to its own members, the credit union appreciates the value Flexential places on building relationships.

## The results

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### Helping members achieve their financial goals with an enriched IT ecosystem

With Flexential, Mountain America has achieved the security and redundancy to improve the member experience. Since the initial implementation, the credit union has collaborated with Flexential to supplement its space to meet its growing data needs. Flexential also implemented a biometric security system to deliver the secure access Mountain America desired. Mountain America now operates a fully secure cage environment containing 12 racks.

Today, the organization continues to experience high availability in a secure environment that allows its IT team to sleep at night. Its faith in the Flexential team and the data center environment allows Mountain America to remain focused on running its core business and

supporting its member needs – rather than managing a data center. The time saved is reinvested in its business to deliver improved value to its members.



“ Flexential delivered on the expectations they set with us. They delivered on enhanced security, HVAC, fire suppression and redundant power systems. We have great confidence hosting our data center with Flexential.”

For Mountain America, there is comfort in knowing its operations are secure in the Flexential high-performing, redundant ecosystem, and are backed by a strong partnership.