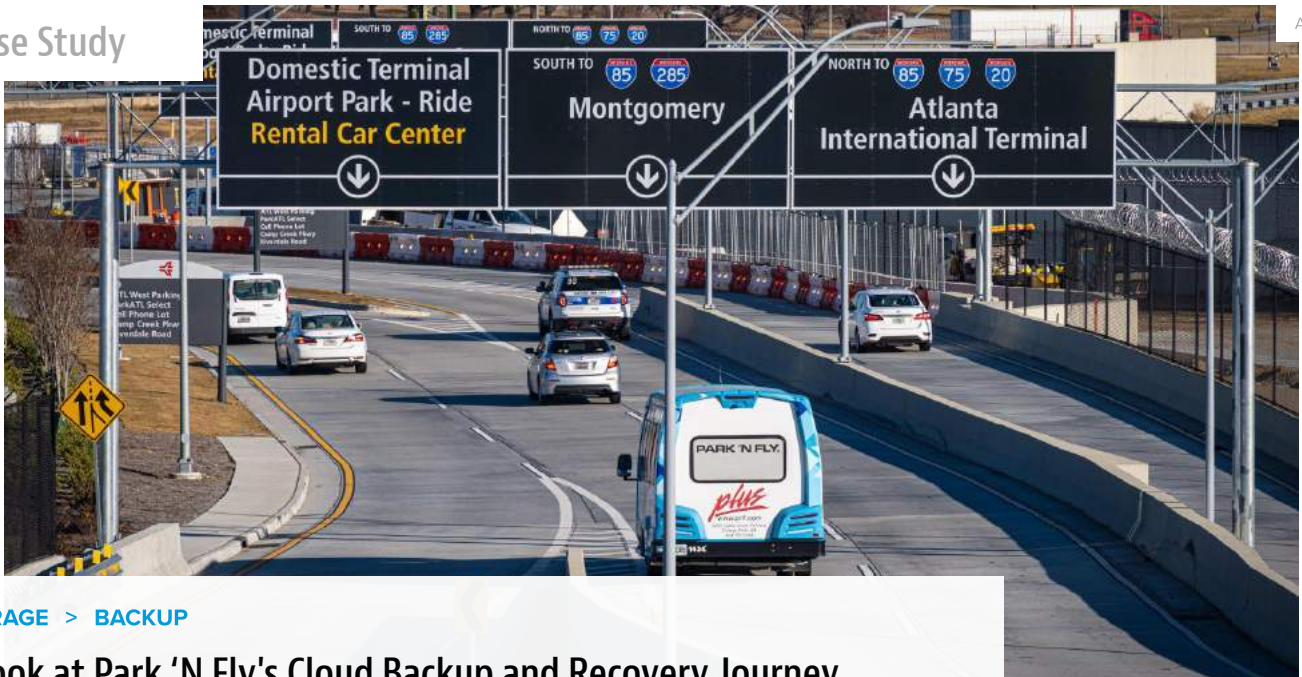


Case Study

Alamy



STORAGE > BACKUP

## A Look at Park 'N Fly's Cloud Backup and Recovery Journey

Airport shuttle service Park 'N Fly turned to a cloud-based backup and recovery service to overcome Microsoft backup limitations. Learn about the implementation and results.

Karen D. Schwartz | Apr 07, 2023



The company adopted Keepit, a cloud-based service that specializes in Microsoft and Azure AD backup and recovery, due to its ease of implementation, security protections, and fast performance.

Park 'N Fly plans to explore additional features such as Keepit's API and self-service portal for users.

Parking at the airport is one of life's annoyances. It's crowded, expensive, and hard to find a spot near the entrance. That's where Park 'N Fly comes in. The company shuttles customers from their cars to their terminals. Over the years, Park 'N Fly has expanded to include car washes, bag checks, and even pet boarding.

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While one might assume a parking company is fairly low-tech, that's not the case with Park 'N Fly. During its more than 50 years in business, the company has increasingly invested in technology. It launched its first booking engine in 2005 and uses a multichannel approach to drive sales. It also provides kiosks for flight check-in and has a full cadre of security protections for its back-office resources and customer information.

Park 'N Fly is a Microsoft shop, dependent on Office 365, SharePoint, Exchange, [Active Directory](#), and Azure to remain productive. While the Microsoft technologies works well, CTO Ken Schirmmacher had long worried that Microsoft's backup and recovery methods weren't fully protecting data stored in the cloud.

"With Office 365 you can do some Outlook-level archiving and, if you have the right license, a full backup of your entire inbox history, but those don't provide real full-service retention," Schirmmacher said. "When you do a full Exchange deployment locally on-premises, it just backs up the Exchange server, but when you put everything into the cloud, you're missing that backup piece."

## Microsoft Backup Limitations Lead to Action

Microsoft's backup shortcomings are common knowledge. For example, email backups in Outlook are restricted to 30 days, and the cloud server backing up that data could be lost if something happens to the servers stored in a specific area. What's more, Microsoft doesn't guarantee retrieval of stored data or content during an outage. Microsoft itself recommends customers use third-party


could easily misplace.

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 Together, Park 'N Fly has between one and two terabytes of data that it can't afford to lose. Still, the company was mostly relying on Microsoft for backup, and Schirmmacher knew that had to change



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“The thought just kept getting louder and louder until I finally listened to it,” he said. “I knew it would eventually bite us and that we needed to install some type of safety net.”

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## Choosing Keepit for Microsoft and Azure AD Backup

When looking for a better way to back up Microsoft data, Schirmmacher wanted a cloud-based product that would be easy to implement, have a straightforward restore process, and offer strong security.

After asking around, a Park 'N Fly partner told him about Keepit, a cloud-based service that specializes in Microsoft and [Azure AD](#) backup and recovery. Keepit also [encrypts data](#) in transit and at rest using Transport Layer Security 1.2 and 256-bit Advanced Encryption Standard. The fine-grained user access controls also appealed to Schirmmacher.

“I didn't want something with simple RSA 1024-bit encryption, because anybody with a decent security background could probably get around it,” he said. “And I really liked the idea of not having to swap keypairs with my coworkers.”

After a successful trial, Park 'N Fly signed on the dotted line and rolled out Keepit's service companywide. Schirmmacher noted that a 10-minute demo showed his IT staff to how to use the service.

Once in use, Schirmmacher saw that the service performed fast, which he valued. “We're constantly having things thrown at us, and we need to be able to focus,” he said. “If we have to tend to our backups or spend an entire day restoring files, we can't do our other tasks.”

## Enhancements on the Horizon

Today, Keepit is Park 'N Fly's main backup and recovery technology, along with [AWS S3 buckets](#) for

storage. The company also uses a small amount of on-premises storage for specific workloads.

Keepit has proven to be easy to work with. After signing in on Keepit's web-based portal and adding an account, IT staff can log in with single sign-on via Office 365 non-interactively, which essentially means that sign-ins are done on behalf of users. The system then asks permission to access files. Once given that permission, Keepit asks staff to select areas to be backed up. Initially, Keepit backups took an entire day, but since then, Keepit takes snapshots continuously. The portal displays what has been backed up, using root-level trees that let staff navigate down to the file level.

Although Keepit has an API to enable organizations to work with data on Keepit's platform, Park 'N Fly hasn't yet taken advantage of it. That will change eventually, Schirmmacher said. He plans to investigate [building the API](#) into the company's executive PowerBI dashboard. This would allow executives to quickly see uptime and endpoint management statistics, plus data from other tools like Mailchimp, Trustpilot, and ActiveCampaign.

Schirmmacher also is looking forward to an upcoming Keepit enhancement that will provide a self-service portal for users.

"I look forward to the day when our users will be able to restore their own data," he said. "That would really free up time for our IT staff."

## About the author



*Karen D. Schwartz is a technology and business writer with more than 20 years of experience. She has written on a broad range of technology topics for publications including CIO, InformationWeek, GCN, FCW, FedTech, BizTech, eWeek and Government Executive.*