Ontinue

Scaling Securely Through Mergers & Acquisitions with Ontinue

Scaling Securely Through Rapid Growth with Ontinue's AI-Powered MXDR

If you've picked up a quick meal at a chain restaurant or ordered food at a stadium in the U.S., chances are you've used a product from ACR. The company provides more than 6,000 disposable and food service essentials—from cups and cutlery to back-of-house safety and kitchen supplies—delivering to some of the biggest names in hospitality and food service.

Since its formation in 2016, ACR has completed 10 acquisitions, rapidly expanding its operations and product portfolio. Each acquisition brings unique systems, cultures, and cybersecurity risks that must be integrated and secured quickly to maintain momentum and service reliability.

ACR knew that to scale confidently and protect its growing environment, cybersecurity had to be more than an afterthought—it had to be embedded into the business. The company turned to Ontinue's ION MXDR service to help build a future-ready security operation capable of adapting in real time.

acr

Challenges

- Improve the security posture of a company growing rapidly through acquisition
- Make the most of Microsoft Security investments
- Ensure uninterrupted business continuity while advancing cyber response capabilities
- Address critical security needs without expanding internal headcount

Solution

- Ontinue ION provides 24x7 managed detection and response capabilities
- Provides access to security experts who are specialists in the Microsoft Security Portfolio

Business Outcomes

- Unburdens InfoSec team, allowing them to work on more strategic projects
- Augments team knowledge of Microsoft security stack
- Improves security posture overall
- Reduces complexity
- **50% reduction** in mean time to investigate (MTTI) incidents
- **30 hours** of analyst time saved in just 90 days, freeing staff for strategic projects
- **28% increase** in Microsoft Secure Score, now at **68—70%** above the industry average
- **Zero security breaches** in 2024, despite growing operational complexity
- Consistent 2-month acquisition integration timelines, made possible by embedded security

About ACR

ACR provides disposable products for the food service and hospitality industries. Based in the United States, the company has a dedicated supply chain engine that unifies eight individual companies brought together by acquisition to deliver more than 6,000 types of products to its customers. The company must ensure its supply chain is secure and experiences minimal disruption to keep orders moving as they chart a path to integrate eight business units.

"Ontinue has helped us build a secure foundation that protects our environment around the clock," said Thai Vong, VP of IT and CIO (Acting) at ACR. "Their team feels like an extension of ours—proactive, responsive, and deeply embedded in our operations. That trust allows us to shift focus to broader business priorities like integrating acquisitions, optimizing supply chain operations, and driving growth, without constantly worrying about what might be lurking in our environment."

Security That Scales with the Business

Rather than building a traditional in-house security operations center (SOC), ACR leveraged Ontinue's 24/7 managed SOC to provide nonstop protection without scaling internal headcount. Ontinue's close integration with Microsoft Defender, Sentinel, and Teams allows ACR to standardize controls, accelerate incident response, and maintain centralized visibility across its hybrid infrastructure.

" The ability to scale without sacrificing security has become a competitive advantage for us. Ontinue's 24/7 monitoring, AI-driven capabilities, and deep Microsoft integration allow us to focus on high-impact initiatives. Their innovation in AI combined with Thai's and our internal leadership have helped us take our cybersecurity program to the next level. "

Tom Boyles Jr.
Director of Infrastructure & Security

AI-Powered SecOps: From Manual Work to Autonomous Protection

Ontinue's ION MXDR service uses extensive AI-driven automation to augment human-led threat investigation and response, leading to faster, more comprehensive incident resolution. Every incident that reaches Ontinue's 24/7 Cyber Defense Center is first autonomously investigated using agentic AI, providing Ontinue's Cyber Defenders with a comprehensive analysis of the incident within minutes. By automating Tier 2/3 investigations, Ontinue's Cyber Defenders have a massive head start, allowing them to focus on hunting for the adversary with more speed and precision than would otherwise be possible. This advantage allows Ontinue to resolve incidents end-to-end, often without customer involvement.

The results for ACR have been transformative:

- 50% reduction in mean time to investigate (MTTI) incidents
- 30 hours of analyst time saved in just 90 days, freeing staff for strategic projects
- 28% increase in Microsoft Secure Score, now at 68—70% above the industry average
- Zero security breaches since partnering with Ontinue, despite growing operational complexity
- Consistent 2-month acquisition integration timelines, made possible by embedded security

Ontinue's proprietary Security Posture Improvement Framework, coupled with a designated Cyber Advisor, helped ACR reduce their attack surface and mature its security architecture by implementing critical controls aligned to NIST and CIS benchmarks.

"With the addition of a dedicated cybersecurity analyst, we accelerated the implementation of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, improved our CIS benchmarks, and began our journey into the NIST AI Risk Management Framework," said Boyles. "It reflects the shift we've made from reacting to threats to systematically building maturity across our security program."

Trust, Collaboration, and Innovation at the Core

The relationship between ACR and Ontinue is deeply collaborative. Through Microsoft Teams-based engagement, the Ontinue Cyber Defense Center communicates in real time with ACR's team, supporting fast, informed decision-making during incident response.

"Cybersecurity is no longer just about defense—it's about enabling the business to move faster with confidence," said Vong. "Having a partner like Ontinue, who understands our architecture and pace, allows us to navigate complexity without slowing down. Together, we've strengthened our risk posture while creating space for continuous improvement and innovation."

A Long-Term Partnership Built for What's Next

ACR's five-year partnership with Ontinue is a testament to the consistent value and high service standard that Ontinue delivers. As ACR continues its digital transformation, cybersecurity remains a foundational part of how the company grows, launches new platforms, and protects customer trust.

"At ACR, cybersecurity is part of our business model—not just a defense mechanism," said Vong. "Ontinue's approach gives us the clarity and assurance that our environment remains protected as we continue to scale."

> " Ontinue has helped us build a secure foundation that protects our environment around the clock. Their team feels like an extension of ours—proactive, responsive, and deeply embedded in our operations. That trust allows us to shift focus to broader business priorities like integrating acquisitions, optimizing supply chain operations, and driving growth, without constantly worrying about what might be lurking in our environment. "

Thai Vong
VP of IT and CIO (Acting)

Ontinue

About Ontinue

Ontinue offers nonstop SecOps through an AI-powered managed extended detection and response (MXDR) service. Ontinue ION MXDR combines powerful proprietary AI with the industry's first collaboration with Microsoft Teams to continuously build a deep understanding of our customers' environments, informing how we prevent, detect, and respond to threats.

Continuous protection. AI-powered Nonstop SecOps. That's Ontinue.

CONTACT US