Case Studies

Case Studies

How a portfolio startup and the accelerator behind Runway put live financial data to work.

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Contents

Executive summary

Runway is the live financial dashboard behind two very different jobs: a founder deciding whether the company can afford its next move, and an accelerator deciding which portfolio company needs help this week rather than next month. These two case studies look at both sides of that same dataset.

At a glance

ORGANISATION	ROLE	WHAT RUNWAY REPLACES	WHERE IT SHOWS UP
The Hype Loop	Founder	Manual weekly cash reconciliation across two revenue lines	Live runway/burn, WhatsApp alerts, investor data room
lvl1 Accelerator	Accelerator	Monthly, self-reported founder spreadsheets	Portfolio dashboard, cohort tracking, one-click reports

Illustrative case studies. Both describe how a real Runway portfolio company (The Hype Loop) and lvl1 Accelerator, the accelerator behind Runway, are set up to use Runway's actual product features. Specific figures, examples and quotes are representative and illustrative rather than disclosed financials or verified, on-the-record testimonials.

CASE STUDY 01 · FOUNDER

The Hype Loop

India's largest Digital OOH ad network runs its cash position out of Runway, not a spreadsheet.

SECTOR	HQ	STAGE	FOUNDED
AdTech · Digital Out-of-Home	Chennai, India	Pre-seed · lvl1 Accelerator portfolio	2024

2
revenue lines tracked live: ad bookings + screen SaaS

39,000+
digital screens on the network

Daily
cash position, on WhatsApp, no login needed

Overview

The Hype Loop is building the "Airbnb for Digital Out-of-Home advertising" — a two-sided marketplace that lets advertisers book screen space across apartments, cafés and malls in minutes, while the owners of those screens monetise idle real estate through Hype Loop's plug-and-play CMS. Founded in Chennai in 2024, the company is part of lvl1 Accelerator's portfolio and now runs campaigns across more than 39,000 screens nationwide.

The challenge

Two-sided marketplaces are unusually hard to run financially, and The Hype Loop's is no exception. Money moves in two directions at different speeds: advertisers pay per campaign through Razorpay, often with a short delay before settlement, while the company keeps a commission plus a smaller SaaS fee from publishers for the CMS. Add city-by-city sales and ops costs, and "how much cash do we actually have, and for how long" stopped being a question the founders could answer by eyeballing the bank balance.

- Two blended revenue streams (commission + subscription) with different margins, tracked manually in spreadsheets out of date within a week.
- Collections lag between a campaign closing and Razorpay settlement landing, making the bank balance a lagging, not leading, indicator of cash health.
- Burn spread across city teams, screen-owner payouts and product spend, with no single live view of net burn or runway.
- Accelerator and investor updates assembled by hand before every check-in, pulling numbers from three different places.

How The Hype Loop uses Runway

The Hype Loop connected Razorpay during onboarding — a 10-minute setup that gave the founders a live read on bookings, commission revenue and settlement timing without a manual export.

A single live number for runway and burn

Instead of reconciling a spreadsheet before each leadership sync, the founders open Runway and see current cash, net burn and runway in months, recalculated automatically every time new transactions sync in. Because commission and SaaS revenue post separately, they can see which side of the marketplace is actually funding growth.

Cash checked from WhatsApp, not a dashboard login

The team uses Runway's WhatsApp assistant for the day-to-day: a morning brief with revenue, burn and one action item, and a proactive alert if runway ever tightens past a set threshold — before it becomes a surprise in a board deck.

Answers, not just numbers

When a founder asks Runway "what happens to our runway if we add two more city teams," or "which revenue line is actually profitable after payouts," the AI assistant answers in plain English from the connected data, instead of someone rebuilding a model in a spreadsheet.

Always investor-ready

Because the numbers are always current, sharing an update with lvl1 Accelerator or a prospective investor is a one-click live data room instead of a week of prep — no stale PDF, no "let me get back to you with the latest number."

The impact

Same-day

visibility into cash position, replacing a weekly manual reconciliation

1 alert

replaces the ad-hoc "are we okay on cash" thread before it starts

Minutes

not days, to prep numbers for an accelerator or investor update

The clearest example of the shift: because both revenue lines and burn sit in one view, the founders could see a run of unusually slow Razorpay settlements early — and hold off a new city launch by a few weeks rather than discovering the cash gap after committing to new hires. That is the kind of decision Runway is built to support: not a bigger dashboard, but a faster one.

> *We didn't need another spreadsheet. We needed to know, on any given day, whether we could afford the next decision — and to find out before it became urgent, not after.*
>
> THE HYPE LOOP TEAM

What's next for The Hype Loop

As The Hype Loop adds more cities and, eventually, more payment rails beyond Razorpay, the plan is to keep every revenue stream flowing into the same live view — so the number the founders make decisions on, the number lvl1 Accelerator sees, and the number a future investor sees in the data room, are always the same number.

CASE STUDY 02 · ACCELERATOR

lvl1 Accelerator

How the accelerator behind Runway sees its portfolio's numbers before a founder has to say a word.

SECTOR	HQ	PROGRAM
Startup Accelerator	Chennai, India	Multi-cohort, pre-seed accelerator — and Runway's home

20+
portfolio companies visible in one dashboard

0
spreadsheets chased from founders each month

Before
a founder has to ask — not after they escalate

Overview

lvl1 Accelerator runs a hands-on, pre-seed accelerator program in Chennai, backing early-stage founders (including The Hype Loop) with mentorship, a structured cohort program, and capital. Runway itself is a product of lvl1 Accelerator, built first to solve the accelerator's own problem: knowing how its portfolio companies were actually doing, financially, without waiting for a founder to raise a hand.

The challenge

Every accelerator hits the same wall once it has more than a handful of portfolio companies: founders are heads-down building, updates arrive late or not at all, and the numbers that do arrive are self-reported, inconsistently formatted, and already weeks old by the time they land in an inbox.

- Portfolio reviews depended on founders sending a spreadsheet, on their own schedule, in their own format.
- By the time a startup's runway problem surfaced in a monthly update, the accelerator had already lost weeks of the window to help.
- Producing a portfolio-wide health report for a demo day or an LP update meant manually collating a dozen inconsistent spreadsheets.
- No consistent way to compare startups across a cohort — who's growing, who's burning too fast, who needs a mentor conversation this week.

How lvl1 Accelerator uses Runway

One dashboard, every startup, standardised

Every startup in the cohort connects its own payment gateway, accounting tool or bank feed to Runway. The accelerator team sees revenue, burn and runway for the whole portfolio on one screen, computed the same way for every company — so a comparison across the cohort is genuinely apples-to-apples.

Cohort and batch management

Startups are grouped by intake batch or program track, so the team can see a batch's overall health at a glance, and move a startup between cohorts as it progresses, without rebuilding a tracker.

Signals before the check-in

Because the data updates continuously rather than at the next scheduled review, the team can see a portfolio company's runway tightening or burn spiking in real time — and start a mentor or bridge-financing conversation while there's still runway left to act on, rather than after a founder finally sends the "we have a problem" email. Each founder controls what the accelerator can see, and every view is logged, so this happens without anyone feeling watched.

Reports in one click, not one week

Demo day decks, LP updates and program reports that used to take a week of manually collating spreadsheets across a dozen startups now generate from the same live portfolio data in a click.

The impact

Real-time
portfolio view, replacing monthly self-reported spreadsheets

Earlier
runway/burn signals surface while there is still time to act

1 click
to produce a portfolio-wide report for demo day or an LP update

The shift isn't just speed — it's posture. The accelerator moves from reactive (waiting for a founder to escalate) to proactive (seeing the signal and starting the conversation first). That's the difference between helping a portfolio company steer around a cash problem, and finding out about it after the runway is already gone.

> *The best support we can give a founder is the conversation they didn't know they needed yet. Runway is what lets us have that conversation in week one of the problem, not week eight.*
>
> LVL1 ACCELERATOR INVESTMENT TEAM

Why lvl1 Accelerator built Runway this way

This is also why Runway is free for accelerators managing up to five startups, and priced to scale from there: the accelerator's incentive and the founder's incentive point the same direction only if neither side has to choose between visibility and trust. Founders keep control of what's shared; accelerators get the live view they actually need to be useful.

ABOUT

About Runway

Runway is the financial cockpit for founders: real runway, true burn, and what's actually safe to spend, on one always-live screen. It connects Razorpay, Stripe, Cashfree, Tally, Zoho Books, QuickBooks and 19+ other tools in about 10 minutes, and is free for founders, forever. Accelerators and incubators get a free portfolio dashboard for up to five startups; investors and partners pay for deeper monitoring and marketplace access. Runway is built and backed by lvl1 Accelerator, Chennai.

Talk to us

For ecosystem partnerships, accelerator/incubator integrations, or to see a live walkthrough for your portfolio, reach out at **arunrajiah@lvl1accelerator.com** or visit **runway.lvl1accelerator.com**.

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