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Featured Startup Pitch: TeamRunner wants to take the headaches out of sports team travel and tap into a potentially huge market

March 2, 2015 by [Editor](#) [Leave a Comment](#)



By [Colette Kuhnsman](#), [TeamRunner.com](#) co-founder and VP marketing

ELEVATOR PITCH

TeamRunner is the first truly integrated cloud-based solution that connects athletes, teams, sports organizations and businesses to make sports travel easier and more streamlined for everybody.

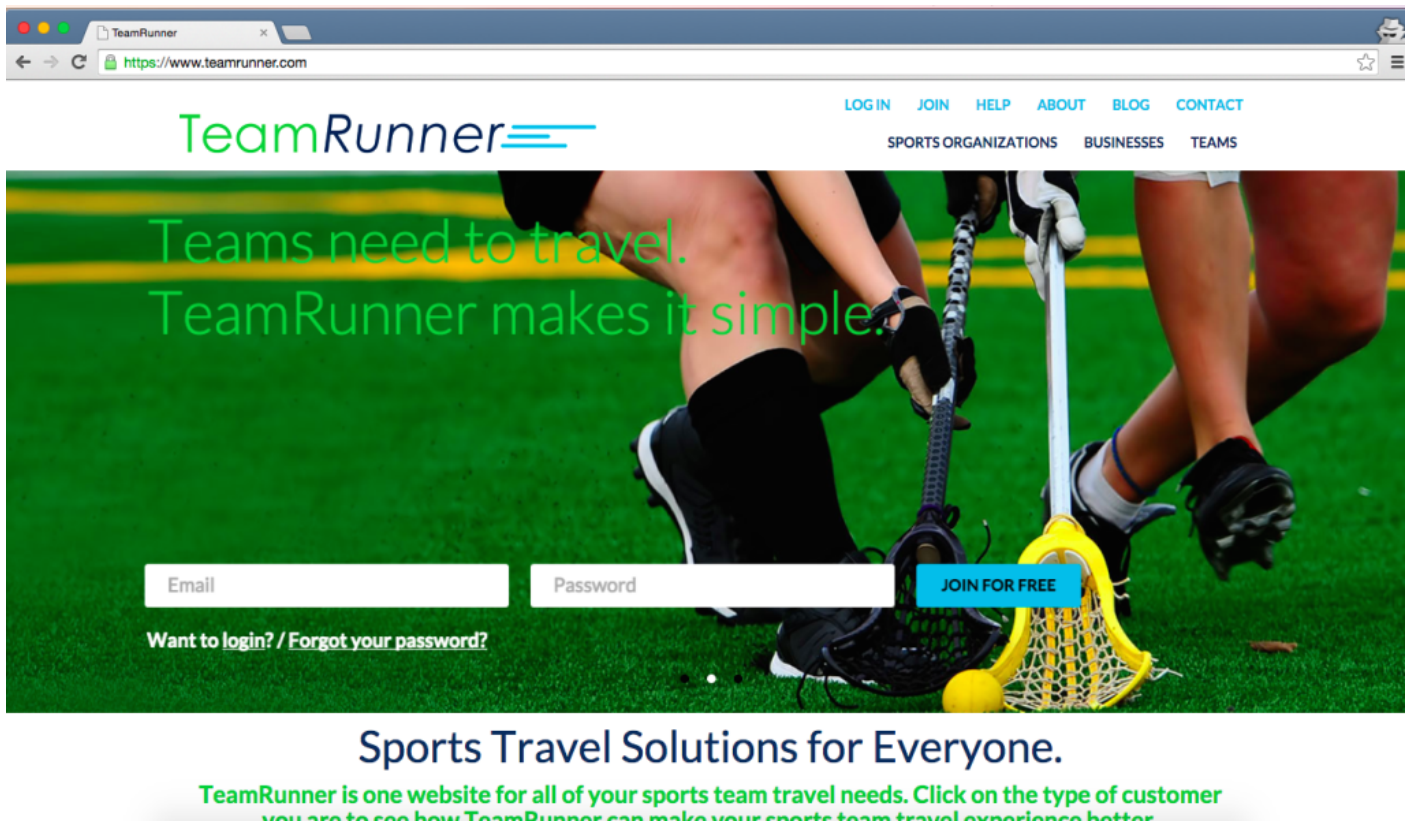
PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION

TeamRunner is a cloud-based service built on Ruby on Rails with a responsive web interface. It is a platform designed around the needs of the sports group travel space and was created with the goal of eliminating the middleman to make team travel more efficient for athletes/sports organizations, and to enhance revenue for our business partners.

Currently, TeamRunner manages the hotel and restaurant component of team travel. Eventually, TeamRunner will encompass all aspects of group sports travel, from ground and air transportation to business, entertainment, and merchandising services. This one-stop-shop greatly benefits sports teams/leagues, and simultaneously supports local businesses and commerce. We also give a percentage of our revenue back to sports organizations to fund athletic scholarships for youth in need.

FOUNDERS' STORY

The idea for TeamRunner stemmed from personal experience with the complexities of booking group sports travel. I met Ziad Tleimat because our sons played on the same soccer team for many years. Ziad had been a coach and was frustrated with many of the challenges around sports team travel. He came to me with the thought of creating a technology solution. Having experienced many of the same issues booking and managing team travel myself, I knew he was on to something. After much research it became clear that a solution didn't exist for a 'one-stop travel shop' for sports teams, but an opportunity to create one did. We brought on another co-founder, David Anderson, and with his Oracle database technical support experience and our combined professional backgrounds in software, technology startups, business, and marketing, TeamRunner was born.



MARKETING/PROMOTION STRATEGY

We build a core team for each business model—hotels, restaurants, and other business services; this allows us to ramp up quickly across the country. We place seasoned and highly influential sales directors in regional areas to drive adoption. We have applied this approach successfully in California, and are currently developing the Las Vegas and the Midwest markets. We are also developing partnerships with established tournaments and club management software providers to expedite penetration across the country.

MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Sports related travel accounts for 27 percent of all travel in the U.S., and is an estimated \$182 billion industry. Youth sports in particular is one of the fastest-growing segments of the travel industry, with many families trading vacations for youth sports travel. Currently, TeamRunner works with youth/collegiate sports leagues, athletes, and organizations across the U.S.

HOW WE'RE UNIQUE

The concept for TeamRunner is a one-stop shop for team travel, and currently there are no travel technology options designed for this specific market. We are a true travel technology company not a travel agency with a website front, and we include more than just hotels—we are building restaurants, service providers, retail merchandising, and entertainment aspects. Using an integrated technology platform that simplifies the process and redefines team sport travel, TeamRunner's offerings allow the ease of managing all sports travel needs. Members waste less time managing the process and more time enjoying the benefits. Local communities, business, and sports organizations mutually benefit, and it provides opportunities for kids who want to play sports but do not have the resources available to do so through a charitable component of the site.

BUSINESS MODEL

We continue to increase the numbers of teams and sports organizations joining TeamRunner. Additionally, we provide them with more-and-more opportunities to fulfill all their team needs from the website (hotel, dining, merchandise, entertainment). Our revenue is based on a standard commission rate on all transactions conducted through the TeamRunner platform for hotels and restaurant bookings. In the future, we are working on several other revenue streams including advertising options, premium placement, and access to data mining. We are a fully accredited travel provider with [IATAN](#), a certified seller of travel and maintain a [Travel Consumer Restitution Fund](#) (TCRC).

CURRENT NEEDS

We are looking to raise outside capital to expedite our product development, continue to grow our customer base, expand our offerings, and develop and complete the TeamRunner app. We have been fortunate to acquire some incredible customers so far, and in order to continue to expand the business, an infusion of capital will help us reach all the organizations that have expressed interest in partnering with TeamRunner.

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HEADQUARTERS: Redwood City, California

WEBSITE: www.teamrunner.com

FOUNDERS: Ziad Tleimat, CEO; Colette Kuhnsman, VP marketing; David Anderson, VP engineering

INVESTORS: Unnamed Seed investors

YEAR FOUNDED: 2012

TWITTER: @MyTeamRunner

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/MyTeamrunner



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