



Banking/Fintech

How Accrue Savings Reinvented BNPL With A.Team and Raised \$30M

\$30M

Raised

77%

Boost in conversion rate

10mo.

Zero-to-one app build

The Challenge

Sixty percent of Americans save up for big purchases. But until recently, the only option embedded into ecommerce checkout was “Buy Now Pay Later” (BNPL), which is equivalent to taking on credit card debt

While others saw debt as an inevitable, Michael Hershfield, founder and CEO of Accrue Savings, imagined a world where saving was not just encouraged but rewarded.

“There are hundreds of ways that people are rewarded for buying on credit,” Hershfield explained, “but there has never been anything embedded in the retail experience that incentivizes people to save.”

Hershfield wanted to empower consumers to save for their purchases instead of burying them in debt. He called it “Save Now, Pay Later,” which turns the idea of BNPL on its head. However, transforming this bold idea into reality required cutting-edge fintech expertise. As a non-technical founder, Hershfield knew he needed a team of exceptional builders to build a product from 0 to 1 that would integrate seamlessly with large-scale retailers. First, he gave himself a deadline of 100 days to prove that the idea was viable.

“That time constraint forced me to focus on a very clear vision of what I wanted to see in the world, which was an embedded savings experience that incentivized consumers to save up for products,” said Hershfield.

“I have to give A.Team a lot of credit. When they built the initial team and then expanded my team to go to market, they made sure that there were people in this organization that understood the intricacies of launching a banking technology.”



— Michael Hershfield, Founder and CEO @ Accrue Savings

The Build

After 100 days, Hershfield had achieved his first goal: three retailers on board for testing, and multiple consumer studies indicating strong interest in the market. His next challenge became actually building the product.

Hiring a team of full-time engineers would take months, so he called on A.Team to fill in the gaps in expertise. A.Team brought together a team of experts who understood the specific challenges of building a banking product—compliance, regulations, and all.

As the product started coming together, retail partners expressed interest in onboarding. Those initial signs of success only increased Hershfield’s desire to go to market: “I wanted to be in market before the Christmas code freeze,” he said. He didn’t want to lose the early momentum that he’d worked so hard to build.

“It was so important for me to deliver with execution, speed, and comfort around both the financial technology and the e-commerce tool,” Hershfield said. “A.Team aligned along the way. They knew what needed to get done, and they knew we needed to be resourced and attract the type of talent that would allow me to do it at this speed.”

Outcomes

In just 10 months, expert builders from A.Team’s network delivered an efficient, user-friendly platform that could seamlessly integrate with several third-party services, empowering consumers to save towards their desired purchases while earning rewards along the way.

"A.Team really is a competitive advantage for us."



— Michael Hershfield, Founder and CEO @ Accrue Savings

Using the product A.Team built from concept to launch, Accrue Savings raised a \$4.7M seed round in November of 2021. That round was followed quickly by a \$25M [Series A led by Tiger Global](#) in January 2022 — a rare velocity of fundraising for a tech startup. Later that same year, Accrue Savings won the [Time Magazine's Best Invention](#) award. It ultimately became an embedded payment option for more than 35 major merchants, including major brands.

In less than 10 months, Accrue became a substantial business with multiple public and growth company partners. They also saw a 77% boost in merchant conversion and reached an abandon rate of less than 1%.

"We think that A.Team is a key reason for why we've been able to reach the momentum we've had, and certainly it will be in the future as well," Hershfield said. A.Team has allowed Accrue to scale their recruiting and engineering organization at a speed and pace that "for any other company would be impossible."