

[FEATURES \(HTTPS://STARTUPSMAGAZINE.CO.UK/ARTICLES/FEATURES/\)](https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features/)

# What my dad's corner shop taught me



BY [VARUN CRUZ \(HTTPS://STARTUPSMAGAZINE.CO.UK/AUTHOR/VARUN-CRUZ/\)](https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/author/varun-cruz/)  
MAY 6, 2026



I was seven years old, standing in my family's corner shop, when I asked my dad why we charged more for chocolate than it cost us to buy. To me, it was simple: if someone wanted chocolate, why not just pass it on?

My dad explained what a margin was, but not in textbook language. He explained rent, rates, electricity, stock, supplier terms, waste, and time. He taught me that the extra 30p was not greed. It was the difference between movement and survival. It was the business model.

That moment stayed with me because it made business feel real. From that age, I was helping serve customers and watching how people behaved. A corner shop is a brutal classroom because nothing hides. Customers tell the truth with their feet, their wallets and their habits. They say they want one thing, then buy another. They complain about price, but return for trust. They choose speed, familiarity and reliability long before they talk about innovation.

That taught me not to fall in love with ideas too quickly. Delivery is the proof. Behaviour is the data. It also taught me that revenue can lie. A shop can be busy all day and still be fragile if the margins are wrong, stock is sitting dead, waste is too high, or cash is trapped in the wrong place. Founders talk about growth, but growth without discipline just scales the leak. If you cannot respect 30p, you are not ready to manage millions.

Therefore at seven, I learned a chocolate bar is not just a product, it's a system. It's cost, margin, trust, risk and discipline. Those lessons still shape how I build NEUVIOR around systems and neurodiversity.

I learned business before I knew the language for it. I think about business as architecture: value, margin, trust, timing, behaviour, and systems. The environment has changed from shelves and tills to AI, healthcare, and complex operations, but the principle is the same. You are trying to structure reality into something useful, reliable and valuable.

As a neurodivergent founder, I know what fast thinking can do. It can connect patterns, spot opportunities and hold multiple layers of a problem at once. But I also know intensity is not execution. Potential is not delivery. If the system is weak, talent leaks.

Most workplaces are still designed around noise: vague priorities, constant meetings, interruptions, unclear ownership and performative busyness. That is inefficient for everyone, but for neurodivergent people it can turn ability into friction.

I did not design NEUVIOR around neurodiversity as a slogan. I designed it that way because clarity is a commercial advantage. It had to sit inside the operating system from day one.

That means written priorities. Defined decision points. Clear ownership. Work moving through stages, not floating as vague intent. Focus time protected from context switching. Compliance and discipline built into the system instead of treated as obstacles. The goal is simple: convert intelligence, creativity and energy into reliable output.

SEE ALSO



(<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/building-at-your-own-pace-a-different-blueprint-for-female-founders>)

FEATURES ([HTTPS://STARTUPSMAGAZINE.CO.UK/ARTICLES/FEATURES](https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features))

**Building at your own pace: a different blueprint for female founders**  
(<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/building-at-your-own-pace-a-different-blueprint-for-female-founders>)

That is the part many people miss. Neurodiverse design is not charity. Done properly, it creates better execution for everyone. Clearer systems reduce waste. Cleaner ownership speeds decisions. Better structure makes ambition safer to scale.

In many ways, I am still building from the same lesson my dad gave me over a chocolate bar. Respect the small numbers. Watch what people actually do. Remove waste. Earn trust repeatedly. Build systems strong enough to hold pressure.

The corner shop taught me that business is never abstract. It is design, discipline and reality. And if you can respect the 30p, you give yourself a real chance of building millions.

For more [startup news](https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/) (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/>), check out the other articles on the website, and [subscribe](https://i.electronicsspecifier.com/startupsmagazine) (<https://i.electronicsspecifier.com/startupsmagazine>) to the magazine for free. Listen to [The Cereal Entrepreneur](https://startups-magazine-the-cereal-entrepreneur.simplecast.com/) (<https://startups-magazine-the-cereal-entrepreneur.simplecast.com/>), podcast for more interviews with entrepreneurs and big-hitters in the startup ecosystem.

**f** [SHARE](#) [0 \(https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me\)](https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me)  
(https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?  
**t** [TWEET](#)text=What%20my%20dad's%20corner%20shop%20taught%20me&via=TheStartupsMag&url=https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me)  
**in**(https://www.linkedin.com/cws/share?url=https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me)  
(https://wa.me/?text=What%20my%20dad's%20corner%20shop%20taught%20me%20https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me)

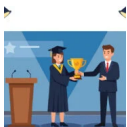


## Trending Articles



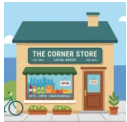
**VC Pi Labs backs five Agentic AI startups** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/vc-pi-labs-backs-five-agentic-ai-startups>).

MAY 6, 2026 · 3 MINS READ · 0 SHARES



**UNiDAYS names top 10 student founders** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/unidays-names-top-10-student-founders>).

MAY 6, 2026 · 2 MINS READ · 0 SHARES



**What my dad's corner shop taught me** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/what-my-dads-corner-shop-taught-me>).

MAY 6, 2026 · 3 MINS READ · 0 SHARES

## Upcoming Events

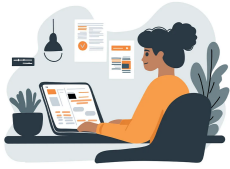
May 7 May 7 @ 9:00 am - May 8 @ 5:30 pm  
**EU-Startups Summit** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/events/eu-startups-summit>).

May 11 May 11 - May 13  
**MedTech World North America** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/events/medtech-world-north-america>).

May 11 May 11 @ 9:00 am - May 13 @ 3:00 pm  
**Podim Conference 2026** (<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/events/podim-conference-2026>).

[View Calendar \(https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/events/\)](https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/events/).





<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/your-financial-responsibilities-from-the-start>

## FEATURES

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features>

**Master your financial responsibilities from the start**  
<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/master-your-financial-responsibilities-from-the-start>



<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/the-uk-doing-enough-to-combat-its-growing-ai-gender-divide>

## DIVERSITY

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/diversity>

## FEATURES

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features>

**Is the UK doing enough to combat its growing AI gender divide?**  
<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/is-the-uk-doing-enough-to-combat-its-growing-ai-gender-divide>



<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/most-saas-founders-get-business-development-wrong>

## FEATURES

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features>

**Why most SaaS founders get business development wrong**  
<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/why-most-saas-founders-get-business-development-wrong>

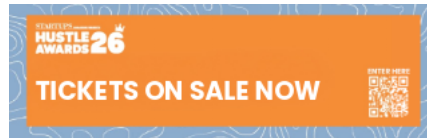


<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/legal-off-your-plate-how-founders-can-finally-focus-on-growth>

## FEATURES

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/articles/features>

**Getting legal off your plate: how founders can finally focus on growth**  
<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/getting-legal-off-your-plate-how-founders-can-finally-focus-on-growth>



**ABOUT**<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/about>

**CONTACT**<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/contact>

**PRIVACY**<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/privacy-policy>

**TERMS**<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/terms-conditions>

**STARTUPS**  
MAGAZINE

<https://startupsmagazine.co.uk/>



<https://twitter.com/thestartupsmag>



<https://instagram.com/startupsmagazine>



<https://youtube.com/channel/UCGGZTX350FFSYKREPV-PB901>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/startups-magazine>