
Opening

In one sentence, what problem does your company solve and why did Cebu need it?

"ASV Business Solution created an All-in-One Business Platform that automates and digitize business operation, because many SME's in Cebu have the ambition to scale but lack access to the right digital tools.

ASV Business Solution built Cirquolus to help entrepreneurs succeed by giving them the tools to manage their people, finances, operations, and customers—because many businesses don't fail from lack of effort, they fail from lack of systems."

Take us back to the beginning: what was the moment you decided to build this?

The reason I started this journey was personal.

At 33 years old, with three children, I wanted to change our family's future. I was looking for freedom, stability, and the opportunity to create something of my own. My husband and I shared the same determination to improve our lives, and that became the foundation of our entrepreneurial journey.

But as we worked with more businesses, we discovered a bigger problem.

Many entrepreneurs don't fail because they lack passion, talent, or hard work. They fail because running a business requires balancing many moving parts.

Some are excellent at operations but struggle with employee management. Others are great leaders but lack financial visibility. Some have strong products but struggle with inventory, customer relationships, or decision-making.

The reality is that most business owners are forced to wear multiple hats every day, often without the tools or systems to help them succeed.

That's why we created Cirquolus.

We wanted to build a platform that serves as a guide for entrepreneurs—a system that helps them manage employees, inventory, finances, and customer relationships in one place. Our goal is not just to automate processes but to help business owners understand their business better, make informed decisions, and accelerate growth.

In many ways, Cirquolus was built because we believe entrepreneurs deserve a better chance at success.

On Building in Cebu

How has being based in Cebu shaped your product, your market, and your team?

"Cebuanos are smart business people. They won't buy something just because it's new or innovative. They want proof that it works. That forced us to become better builders. We learned to focus less on features and more on solving real problems and delivering measurable results. I believe that's one of the reasons we've been able to grow."

What does Cebu offer that Manila or other tech hubs don't—and what's still missing?

What made me fall in love with Cebu is that it offers something very unique.

First, it's the place itself. Only in Cebu can you experience the ocean, the mountains, and a thriving city all at the same time. That balance creates an environment where people can dream big while staying connected to nature, family, and community.

Second, it's the people. Cebuanos are hardworking, entrepreneurial, and resilient. We all hustle every day to build better lives for ourselves and our families. But what I admire most is that when adversity strikes, we rise as a community.

We've seen that during the earthquake. We've seen it during Typhoon Odette. In moments when people lost homes, businesses, and livelihoods, Cebuanos came together to help one another rebuild. That spirit of resilience and bayanihan is something that continues to inspire me as an entrepreneur.

And third, it's the culture. When people think about Cebu, they often think about lechon, puso, or siomai sa Tisa. But for me, the heart of Cebu is its faith. Whether you're selling banana cue on the sidewalk or running a multi-million peso company, you'll see people making time to honor the Santo Niño. That shared faith creates humility, gratitude, and hope—values that continue to shape the way we live and do business.

What is still missing? I believe we need stronger access to startup capital, mentorship, and growth opportunities for founders in the Visayas. We already have the talent, the resilience, and the ideas. What we need is more support to help local innovations scale beyond Cebu and into the national and global stage.

On Being a Woman Founder

Have you ever had to prove yourself differently because of your gender? How do you navigate that?

Yes, I've experienced it a few times.

I don't want to generalize because I've also worked with many amazing men throughout my journey, including my husband, who has been one of my biggest supporters.

But there were instances where some partners or resellers would naturally direct business discussions to my husband instead of me, even when I was the one leading the company. I've also seen the surprise on people's faces when they learn that I am the owner and decision-maker behind the business.

At first, I noticed it. Eventually, I learned not to take it personally.

I simply brush it off because, at the end of the day, I know my value, I know my business, and I know that the decisions ultimately rest with me. I don't spend my energy trying to convince people. I focus on delivering results, building trust, and letting my work speak for itself.

"I've learned that I don't need to prove that a woman can lead a company. I just need to lead well, and let the results speak for themselves.

What would you tell a young woman in Cebu right now who's sitting on an idea but hasn't started?

I would tell her that building a business is a lot like planning a trip to your dream destination.

When people see beautiful travel photos, they don't see everything that happened behind the scenes. They don't see the sacrifices, the planning, the budgeting, and the challenges along the way.

Entrepreneurship is the same.

First, you have to be willing to sacrifice. Sometimes that means giving up your time, comfort, or immediate rewards. It's like waking up at 3:00 in the morning because the cheaper flight gets you closer to your destination.

Second, you have to do your research. Before you travel, you study the map, the routes, the places to visit, and the things to avoid. In business, you need to learn,

ask questions, seek mentors, and understand the problem you're trying to solve.

Third, you have to invest in your dream. When you're traveling, there are moments when you skip the expensive meal because you'd rather save your money for the island hopping, the tour, or the experience you've been dreaming about. Entrepreneurship requires the same discipline. Sometimes you have to choose long-term growth over short-term comfort.

And finally, understand that not everyone will understand your journey. Some people may question you. Some may judge you. Some may even envy you. But always remember: you are pursuing your dream, not theirs.

The important thing is to start.

You don't need the perfect plan, the perfect timing, or complete confidence. You just need the courage to take the first step. The path becomes clearer as you move forward.

Don't be afraid to buy the ticket before you know every detail of the journey. Some of the best destinations in life are discovered along the way."

On Growth and Scale

What was the hardest thing about getting your first customer?

Getting our first customer was probably one of the hardest parts of our journey.

As a B2B company, we weren't selling a simple product that people could immediately understand. We were selling a vision of how businesses could operate better through technology.

There were moments when we questioned our life choices. There were moments when I seriously considered quitting.

One of the biggest challenges was helping people understand why we offered multiple solutions instead of focusing on just one product. We would often hear questions like, "Why don't you just focus on a single system?"

What many people didn't see was the bigger picture.

Our vision was never to build just another software product. Our vision was to create a platform that helps businesses grow. Business growth doesn't happen through one function alone. It requires managing people, finances, operations, inventory, and customers together.

At times, it felt like we were trying to convince people of a future they couldn't yet see.

But entrepreneurship teaches you patience.

Eventually, we found the right partners—people who believed in our vision, trusted our capabilities, and gave us the opportunity to prove ourselves. We also had the support of mentors, our community, and most importantly, faith that we were building something meaningful.

Looking back, I've learned that success is not always about having the perfect product. Sometimes it's about staying in the game long enough for the right people to find you.

Everything happened in its own time, and when it did, all the struggles suddenly made sense.

"There were moments when I wanted to quit, but I've learned that sometimes the breakthrough comes right after the point where most people give up."

Where is your company headed in the next two to three years, and what needs to be true for that to happen?

"Our goal is to continue expanding ASV's business automation solutions while growing Farmyra as a smart agriculture platform that helps modernize farming operations.

We want to demonstrate that world-class technology can be built from Cebu and can create impact across the Philippines.

To achieve that, we need strong partnerships, continued innovation, and more collaboration between startups, government, academe, and industry."

Closing

If you could change one thing about the startup ecosystem in the Visayas, what would it be?

If I could change one thing about the startup ecosystem in the Visayas, it would be creating a more founder-friendly environment, especially for early-stage startups.

First, I would like to see simpler and more efficient government processes. Entrepreneurs already spend a lot of time building products, finding customers, managing teams, and generating revenue. The easier it is to submit government reports, permits, and compliance requirements, the more time founders can spend creating jobs and growing the economy.

Second, I believe entrepreneurship education should be brought closer to communities. Many valuable programs already exist, but not every entrepreneur knows where to find them. Instead of waiting for people to discover information online, I would love to see more startup and business development activities conducted in cities, municipalities, and even barangays. There are many aspiring entrepreneurs with great ideas who simply need guidance and exposure.

Third, I hope we can provide more breathing room for startups. During the early years, founders are focused on survival, building products, and finding market fit. Many are operating with limited resources while creating employment opportunities and economic value. Support mechanisms such as startup incentives, reduced compliance burdens, or tax relief programs could help more businesses survive long enough to grow and contribute back to the economy.

The talent, ideas, and determination are already here in the Visayas. If we can make it easier for founders to start, learn, and grow, I believe we'll see many more successful companies emerge from our region.

> "Startups don't need shortcuts. They need support. Give founders room to learn, room to build, and room to breathe—and they will create opportunities not only for themselves, but for entire communities."

What is the Cebu Opportunity—in your own words?

Powerful version:

Cebu Opportunity is this:

World-class innovation can be built right here in Cebu. We have the talent, the grit, and the entrepreneurial spirit. What makes us different is that we don't succeed alone—we succeed together. When one founder rises, opportunities are created for many others. That's the power of Cebu: we hustle as individuals, but we rise as a community."