

Allan Block

Always Better Wall of Fame

July 2017



allanblock.com



Dan Ross
Block USA
Lawrenceville, GA

The entire family at Allan Block has been very fortunate to call Dan a friend and advocate for Allan Block. Dan's history in the concrete block industry dates back to April of 1966, starting his career with Concrete Manufacturing Co. in the Atlanta area. Dan was a mainstay in the company moving into a sales role in 1968 and working under several different flags as the operation changed hands. Williams Brothers, Blue Circle Williams, Blue Circle, Lafarge, GMS and now assisting Block USA in a part time capacity. Dan took control of the Allan Block program in Atlanta in April of 1989. Dan said the toughest part of the transition from grey block and architectural block to developing the hardscape business was getting buy in from upper management. "The SRW business took a different approach to market, that although additional work, provided us an opportunity to sell to a completely new customer group." Dan indicated that to service this new customer group management had to buy into providing the resources, initially molds, inventory, and sales support. "In the beginning, it took several years to get people to understand what it was going to take to get the Allan Block market going. We used to attend NCMA meetings ever year to see what new products were available that we should bring on board. Allan Block, from the beginning, always was ahead of the competition on providing us new tools to promote the products and the industry."

Dan reflects back on what made Allan Block different from all of the other new products he had work to bring to market in the first 25 years of his career in the block industry. "It was far more of a group effort than anything I had seen before. Allan Block helped with training of contractors, engineers, sales people, dealers, and provided a platform for everyone to come together for annual AB Summits. All of these events combined, provided a great way for us to develop markets from the ground up and to get to know other professionals in our industry doing the same thing." Dan took the challenge to heart in bringing education to the Atlanta market. For about ten straight years, up to six times each year, Dan manned the grill for all of the AB Contractor Certification Classes at their Austell plant. Although Dan was the Sales manager, he used this as an opportunity to get to meet all the new customers that his team brought in for training. As the sales grew year over year, he saw the benefit of having a trained work force that was growing.

Working with Hobart Spurling, Production Manager at the Austell plant, Dan pushed to be prepared. It was not just getting engineers, contractors and dealers on board he knew that when the market broke loose every spring they had to have product on the ground for the hundreds of customers they were creating. On one early spring day, Dan and Hobart had a plan to make Tim Bott nervous on inventory levels. Upon arriving at the plant Tim took his normal route to see what products were ready to ship, and noticed a very meager inventory in their normal location. Distraught at the problems inventory at this level would bring with the season just getting underway, Tim approach Hobart and Dan to see what the production plans were moving forward. Hobart asked if I would go look in the bone yard up the hill to see if any of the product that Dan rejected, in Tim's opinion, would be acceptable. Well the good old southern boys got the Yankee hook, line and sinker. The bone yard had been transformed into a sea of pallets of Allan Block. The main yard did not have sufficient room to hold the projected buildup of inventory, so they cleared out new yard space to ensure that they were well prepared.

This is just one of the many stories that spans a twenty-eight year working partnership with Allan Block. Dan commented on all the good people he can call on at any time to help at Allan Block, many of which he has worked with for over twenty years. Dan's interaction with the AB team, on a weekly and some days daily basis, help to provide a perspective that had a direct line to the customer and what additional support would help our customers and help to sell more Allan Block in the construction of good walls. Dan, every day, lived our motto of *Always Better, Always Allan Block*.



The company changed owners over the years, with Dan and Allan Block having a consistence presence.

From the entire family at Allan Block, thank you for your friendship, your commitment, your contributions, and your cooperation to make Allan Block the success built off your effort and the many efforts of the great people we have worked with.