Matt Morey
Calstone
Sunnyvale, CA

“What took you so long” was the first thing we heard from Matt Morey, President of Calstone after sharing he was going to be part of our 2018 Wall of Fame class. Of course, Matt was joking with his comment and went on to share his gratitude for thinking of him for this award. It was really an easy decision for us because Matt and Calstone have been phenomenal partners with Allan Block for over 25 years.

Matt has been in the block business most of his life, but really jumped back into the market in 1986. When you consider the fact that Calstone is a family business that his father ran for many years, and how Matt ended up in the block business is interesting. “I had no desire to work in the block industry. It seemed dry to me, block didn’t seem interesting and I wanted to do something else.” After completing college and earning a Physics degree, Matt decided to take his personality and skills directly to the technology community where he sold for an early Silicon Valley hi-tech business. It was only because he wanted to satisfy a request from his father of “trying this block thing out” that we have had the privilege to get to know Matt and even Calstone. What Matt believed “would be a two-week stint at the block facility” has turned into a career of over 30 years with one successful venture after another. “I never knew my background in Physics would be so applicable to what we were doing at Calstone and it continues to be exciting every day.”

How Matt and Calstone made their way to Allan Block is also interesting. Many of you may remember the 6.9 magnitude earthquake that rocked the Bay Area during game three of the 1989 World Series between the Giants and Athletics. The effects of that earthquake reached well beyond what many of us remember. The local economy struggled and for a company (Calstone) who opened a new block plant a short two weeks before the earthquake, times were difficult. Those challenges drove Calstone to review new products such as pavers and retaining walls which they could produce on their “small pallet, high speed machine.”
Competitive SRW systems had just entered the market and Matt really liked the Allan Block philosophy and specifically the lip and notch technology verses pins. Since Allan Block had no alliance in Northern California, Tim Bott and Bob Gravier of Allan Block agreed with Matt and the partnership began in early 1990. While there has been some ups and downs (as there are in all relationships) the reconfiguration of Allan Block in the early 90s and the development of the AB programs (Dealer, Contractor and Engineer) helped Calstone develop a widely successful market. Today, Calstone is operating four manufacturing facilities and in addition to masonry products they produce an assortment of paver and wall products that are made to a high-quality standard and with colors that many aspire to replicate.

Among many things, a good partnership includes open and honest communication along with mutual and beneficial results. Calstone and Allan Block have had this type of partnership for years. In fact, it was Matt and one of his staff members, Gene Webb, who instigated the idea of what we all now know as Dealer ABU. The initial thought of bringing dealers from all over North America to Minneapolis seemed a stretch, but Calstone’s commitment to AB and their local customers identified the need to develop a training platform to enhance the skill set of dealer customers. Today, that thought has helped thousands of individuals and businesses in our industry become better equipped to sell wall products to end users each day. Most recently, Matt and his team have been instrumental in new product development and working with Tim Bott on mold creation for the newest Allan Block product, AB Multi Wall. “I loved the entire process of developing AB Multi Wall and I knew partnering with Allan Block to capitalize on what they are best at, marketing, was going to help us launch this product.” Matt and Calstone’s commitment to develop a product with AB shows their commitment to the market and our partnership. This relationship is mutually beneficial and one that will no doubt continue for decades to come.

Matt, thanks for all you have done and continue to do. You have become a great friend and a valued business partner. We wish you all the success in the world as you continue to lead your business into its next chapter!