

## Q&A with Richard Andolshek, Co-founder and CEO, and Albin Andolshek, Co-founder and President of Brick, Inc. providing Digital Advertising and Marketing, Web Design and Development to help Brick and Mortar Businesses, Retail and B2B Firms Increase their Overall Business



**Albin Andolshek**  
Co-founder & President

Brick, Inc.  
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Interview conducted by:  
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor  
CEOCFO Magazine

**CEOCFO: Mr. Andolshek, would you tell us about Brick?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** The idea behind Brick is to apply enterprise software, the latest technology, internet advertising and marketing to essentially help businesses impact online presence, gain awareness, gain new customers, increase the sales that they make from their customers and by delivering it in a way where you are getting information to individuals on such a granular level where personalization is attainable with every business goal. It is best practice in terms of today's digital infrastructure. We leverage the best in enterprise software and the best in communications.

**CEOCFO: How do you evaluate so you can provide the best tools for your clients?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** We know it is challenging to determine what the word best means. We use trends where we know the reference point, context or benchmark. From there, we are approving it from the appropriate context such as online traffic, engagement, business revenue, conversions or sales. We are getting back to the basics of business measurement which is sales, topline revenue, and increasing bottom line profits. We apply today's technology and communication infrastructure to your business. When we see indicators going in the right direction based on the programs we are running, we can be confident that those are in fact today's best ways to target individuals who are interested in that particular business. In a world that is ever-changing, the iterations and evolutions of the changes on these technologies and ways to use them is always in flux. The ways that we have to learn as a business is changing in the fact that we have to learn constantly every day, hour and week.

**CEOCFO: You define Brick as a boutique digital media marketing agency. What does that mean for Brick?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** What that means for Brick is we are positioned as a specialty boutique in that there are a great many internet firms, software firms and enterprise Software as a Service firms. The goal of our business is to help brick and mortar businesses, retail and B2B firms increase their overall business. We do work for enterprise or commercial firms and specialize in helping them be successful, without having to take your business and actually change it. There has been a lot of news over the past ten to twenty years specific to changing human behavior supported by grocery ecommerce, virtual reality, not having to leave your home, and business initiatives such as IBM having remote employees around the world come into virtual workplaces. Many ideas of this virtual society are not exactly where we are going as civilization or as a business society. Yet leveraging these online platforms and solutions to enhance business using age old strategies and tactics that have been used for centuries or thousands of years. Just because technology can help assist or facilitate, individuals interested in business products and/or services still like a friendly face or engagement with people. The

boutique is about, we are not going to change your business, your brick and mortar presence or how your business exists, we will enhance it with technology and align with your business goals, objectives and benchmarks.

**CEOCFO: Do you see trends showing that people are looking for the interaction?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** Chat bots (eg. Siri, Alexa, etc.) is a good indication of this and they are basically algorithmic learning of real human interactions. Chat bots can leverage knowledge bases, FAQ, wiki databases and then they learn from human interaction. In most cases we may not even realize is we are talking with AI (Artificial Intelligence) through some of these applications, it feels like a human. Some people trying to get information actually see the interaction as if it was with a human but I think that every situation is unique, people are unique and we want to be treated as such. Another example that people enjoy shopping is online grocery shopping which still represents about 5% of sales in this vertical and it represents about 20% of everything else retail. People still go into stores to buy their goods and services. That is a good indication because retail sales in America is over \$4 trillion in total sales. This indicates most people are making their purchasing decisions with other people in stores but they are highly influenced by the information they get online.

**CEOCFO: Are clients turning to you because they understand the difference in the Brick approach?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** I think they are making decisions based on some of the testimonials that we have from clients. It is referral based, it is data driven and relationship based. We understand the goals and objectives of our clients and we get them outcomes that they understand. We can help them understand how that translates into digital success and conversions, referrals and reviews.

**CEOCFO: What is your geographic range today?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** Today we do business all the way from New Jersey to Nevada so we are in quite a few states across the country. We do have some business in the Midwest but I would say we are pretty much coast to coast.

**“We really get close to your business and help identify success. By identifying what makes your company successful and how you operate, we can really transfer that to getting a successful digital presence and strong digital marketing strategy and campaign put together to really get you an awareness and identity in this digital world is always changing.” - Albin Andolshek**

**CEOCFO: Would you walk us through a typical engagement?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** We have a group in wholesale and what they do is they work with over 2000 retailers across the country. They were looking for an enterprise solution to manage their digital presence or digital properties ranging from email to websites to marketing communication that would come directly from those businesses. They also look to us to manage the internet advertising portion of it through the other offsite communications. The company turns to us because they need a solution for a very complex group of businesses; you have basically two to three hundred locations that might want to have two to three hundred different messages on four or five of the mediums that these businesses would typically engage in. We have created a very simplistic solution for a complex group of businesses. That is something they have engaged with us initially for and they have been pleased to see the evolution. We have an awareness campaign letting people know we are a part of this community and that we have fifteen locations. We give them information about our stores and what we sell in them and we inform them of the promotional items that we carry. We have done a lot of branding and we are currently doing some branding for a trade association with over 250 business groups and that really is just awareness. We get awareness types of projects. Everything from branding and direct response to everything in-between.

**CEOCFO: What surprised you has Brick has grown and evolved?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** What surprised me is the rate of noise, the rate of change. For instance, this Saturday I got a phone call from a client that wanted to know about something new on the internet. Social media is highly concentrated with one company which is Facebook. When these large companies make decisions to change or they are in the news, for example I am writing a release about a treatment facility that we work with and the New York Times comes out with an article that says Google is changing the way that they will offer advertising. Technology changes are happening a much more rapid pace. There is a learning curve and all the noise in the industry is very challenging.

**CEOCFO: How is business?**

**Mr. Andolshek:** Business is going well. We have done a great job for our clients and we are typically looking at about one-year engagements. We see a strong renewal rate because it takes a good six months to get clients comfortable with this type of marketing and advertising, and just managing your enterprise digital presence because it includes a lot of

different facets. I think the other challenge is finding talent in terms of employees in business that are able to learn and keep up with clients. Business is fun but also challenging with the noise and the learning curve.

**CEOCFO: *Brick was named one of the Best in Business companies in Minneapolis. What do you like about being based in Minneapolis?***

**Mr. Andolshek:** I looked at a lot of metrics in the past and for some reason Minneapolis has higher discretionary income spending on shopping, primarily grocery shopping. In Minnesota we like to shop, we have the Mall of America, and we have a great deal of retail headquartered here, so there is a strong sense of retail brick and mortar. There is creativity, art, entertainment, and there are four seasons. There are many good things about being in Minneapolis and getting that traditional Midwest feeling and at the same time we have a lot of strong medical companies and strong retail companies here. It is kind of a quiet place to be here in the center of the country. One thing that keeps us on our toes here is the weather is always changing with the seasons so that may prepare us for other areas in life that are always changing.

**CEOCFO: *Why choose Brick?***

**Mr. Andolshek:** We really get close to your business and help identify success. By identifying what makes your company successful and how you operate, we can really transfer that to getting a successful digital presence and strong digital marketing strategy and campaign put together to really get you an awareness and identity in this digital world is always changing. We are out there making sure that when those changes take place that those changes are benefitting you as a business, you as a website owner as opposed to being put into the clutter which takes place every day. We help you come out of that digital clutter and be a recognized business in the community.

