

Custom Brick Case Study



Stacking Up The Appeal Of Brick

"I want brick on my house."

For many homeowners, brick has a certain appeal that is undeniable. Why? What makes brick attractive? Is brick all that it is stacked up to be?



For Paul and Nancy Janky, the appeal of brick was strong indeed. Understanding that a brick home connotes strength and carries with it a strong curb appeal – and, therefore, would be easier to sell in the future – the Janky's were committed to building their home with a brick exterior. "We were going to use traditional brick until I saw the price," said Mr. Janky.

Suffering from a case of brick-induced sticker shock, Mr. Janky wanted options. He was also concerned about several realities about brick that are too often overlooked by homeowners when weighing their exterior cladding options.

Brick is heavy, it requires more costly substrates, it can be difficult to obtain, it lacks color options and limits exterior design flexibility, it does not insulate well, and it is vulnerable to moisture intrusion, especially as the wall ages. Confronted with these problems, Dryvit supplied Mr. Janky with the best of all worlds: a Dryvit Custom Brick™

façade that offered numerous color choices, optimal design flexibility, superior insulating quality, and a flexible, high performance, lightweight exterior.



Dryvit's Custom Brick was applied to the Janky's 2,200 square foot ranch home and the final result, according to Mr. Janky, was nothing short of fantastic. "My wife Nancy was very skeptical at first. Now she loves it. I think it turned out great too."

The Janky's experience and well-reasoned decision got us to thinking. With Custom Brick being such a perfect option for brick lovers, why doesn't anyone who likes the look of brick build with Custom Brick instead? So we talked to someone who knows as much about the brick industry as anyone in the country to find out how brick really stacks up to EIFS.

We found out that brick's liabilities as an exterior cladding are well-known to Ken Dash, the former- President and CEO of the National Association of Brick Distributors, and a brick industry stalwart for more than 25 years before leaving the industry to run his own marketing firm in Maryland.

“When people think of brick they think of the three little pigs and the firehouse and schoolhouse around the corner from their home,” says Dash, who also helped create those perceptions as Marketing Director for the brick industry in his quarter century selling brick. “But there’s a lot more to brick than those perceptions. A lot more.”

According to Dash, compared to other cladding choices like vinyl siding or EIFS, brick is significantly more expensive than EIFS. He also says it is at least as vulnerable to moisture intrusion as any other cladding when proper workmanship is not employed. And Dash says that the quality of bricklayers has been in precipitous decline for more than a decade.

“Brick is an old industry, and almost all of the quality masons are retired or gone. The new guys don’t have the same values or skill, and the quality of brick home construction has been slipping for years. I personally visited more than 200 ‘sick’ brick homes in my years in the brick industry. Almost all of those homes suffered from moisture intrusion damage,” said Dash.

Dash said that many of brick’s presumed strengths are, in fact, myths:

◆ **Brick doesn’t have moisture issues like other claddings.**

Not so fast, cautions Dash. Brick itself is very porous. Like a sponge, it absorbs water. And when you consider that the average brick home has more than 25,000 openings, you begin to understand why the NAHB says all cladding choices have the same potential for moisture problems if the detail work is not done right the first time. Because brick is so porous and has so many joints and breaks in the exterior, it is arguably more vulnerable than any cladding to moisture - especially if it is not properly maintained. In fact, Dash notes that brick’s vulnerability to moisture is well documented on the industry’s web site (www.bia.org). If you go on the site and click on the Tech Notes section on the home page, it will lead you to at least seven tech

notes that explain brick's vulnerability to moisture. "Tech Notes are disclaimers that are virtually never brought to the attention of homeowners...who wouldn't read or understand them anyhow. In fact, the thousands of pages of Tech Notes possibly represent the longest legal disclaimer in the building industry," says Dash.

◆ **Brick gives the homeowner peace of mind in cases of fire.**

Peace of mind is important, but Dash notes that almost all fires start from within the home. A brick exterior is not going to prevent your house from burning down.

◆ **Brick has great insulation value.**

Not true, according to Dash. Brick offers very little R-value to a building compared to other cladding choices. Because it does not provide a seamless exterior curtain over the wall like EIFS, brick actually has very poor insulating qualities.

◆ **Brick just looks great.**

Yes it does. Lots of folks just love the look and texture of brick. But people like Paul Janky realize that you can attain the look of brick without all of brick's liabilities.

So if a homeowner loves brick and wants a brick exterior they will have to pay more and get less, right? Wrong. Thanks to Dryvit's revolutionary Custom Brick Finish, homeowners who like the look of brick can have a beautiful, high-performance exterior without all of brick's shortcomings. Just ask homeowners like Paul and Nancy Janky who loves the way brick looks on their home, but don't want to pay more and get less.

For more information about Dryvit Custom Brick, or any of the systems and products sold by Dryvit Systems, Inc., call Dryvit Customer Service at 1-800-556-7752 or visit us on the web at www.dryvit.com.

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