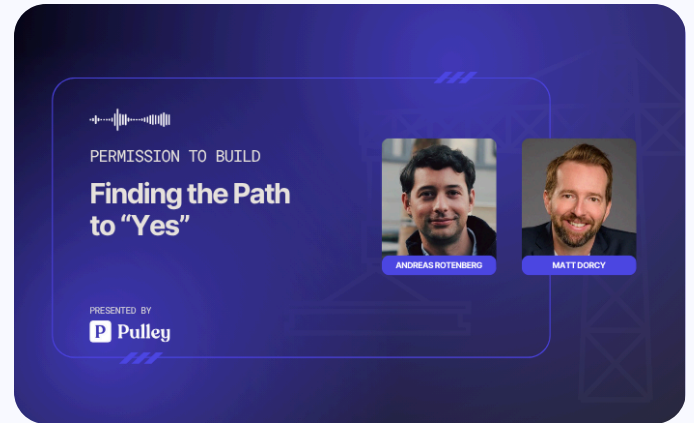


Videos

From Starbucks to Fuzion: How Retail Architect Matt Dorcy Finds the Path to Yes



Andreas Rotenberg
COO & Co-Founder

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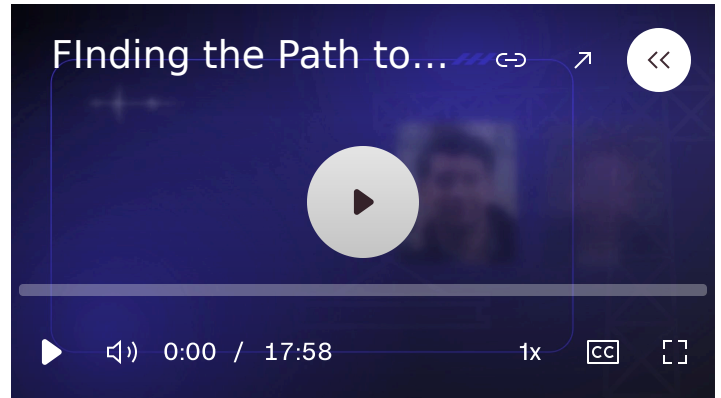
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Matt Dorcy is the co-founder and Vice President of [Fuzion Architectural Design](#). His past companies include Starbucks, T-Mobile, and notable design firms like Big Red Rooster and Fitch, and he's spent decades inside the world of retail architecture. Today, he leads a firm grounded in bold decision making, accountability, and empathy.

In this episode of *Permission to Build*, Matt sits down with us for a conversation on how he navigates the path to "yes" on big client



Where Architecture Has Changed, and Where it Hasn't

After graduating, Matt's career began in residential architecture, where he designed master-planned communities. His transition into retail architecture came with Starbucks, in the early 2000s, when the company was scaling rapidly. He joined Starbucks' store development team to support new licensed locations across North America, including creating some of the brand's first drive-through concepts.

Over the years, Matt has seen the field evolve with new technology. Today, his team works fluently in Revit, Autodesk Construction Cloud, and other advanced platforms. But he still sees value in staying hands-on. "I may not know how to use an exact software, but I can certainly help guide you through how to get to the right answer through just having decades of experience in doing it."

He carries that mindset as a mentor, and as a leader who's still deeply involved in the details of projects at Fuzion.

Fuzion was born from both a desire for a good challenge, and a drive to stay close to the work. "I constantly found myself thinking, I can do this as good, if not better, than these other firms that are out there...I just wanted to step up to that challenge," Matt explained.

He also knew he didn't want to sit at the top of an org chart giving direction. He wanted to build a team of doers.

"What I've really learned is, if you develop the right team and the right culture and bring the right people to the table, the work that you can do is just incredible. And you could outperform, people that are much larger than you." That culture is what makes Fuzion stand out. Instead of being focused on optics of the size or make of his team, Matt's locked in on executing with speed, creativity, and a human-centered mindset.

Fuzion's people-first approach and appetite for action align closely with Pulley's own values: *quick, kind, and crafty*. Both companies know that trust isn't built by promising perfection. It's built by showing up and solving problems, even when the path isn't clear yet.

Serving Clients and Finding the Path to "Yes"

One of Fuzion's new core values is "bold." That's because Matt has a propensity for saying "yes" to big challenges. "Big asks are

leans in with a yes. "A lot of times our clients do tend to come to us with these 'Mission Impossible' asks. 'Hey, we have to get this store open this year. It's in a jurisdiction that has long permitting lead times, what can we do?' I tend to say yes. I like to say yes to things," he adds.

As Virginia Maggiore, Principal of Store Planning at RDC, shared in a previous conversation,

[proactive planning in retail architecture is everything](#)

. Opening a store on time is critical to hitting growth targets, and timelines are often a pressure point. That's why for Fuzion, having the right partners makes all the difference.

"The relationship with Pulley takes a lot of pressure off of us when it comes to permitting and the hoops you have to jump through. They're a big part of the battle," Matt explains.

Permitting is often the least predictable part of a project, and it's also where accountability can get murky. "I think a problem that has persisted for a long time is just this over-reliance on email. 'Oh, I emailed that out, so I am now like not responsible for it anymore.'"

By giving every stakeholder visibility, Pulley's platform eliminates the guesswork and brings more urgency to collaboration. "You know that everybody else can see if they're waiting on you or not. It brings a lot of accountability to the process."

As architecture evolves and retail trends shift, Matt sees one constant: what matters most isn't the finishes, it's the experiences: "There's a higher value being placed on the human experience."

Great retail design today isn't just about layout or lighting, but also about hospitality. That comes down to everything, from how the space is staffed, to how teams are trained, and what customers feel when they walk in the door. This all requires architects to think differently.

It's not unlike roasting a good batch of coffee, something Matt also does in his spare time. The craft may be different, but the care, attention, and belief in serving people are the same.

Design and Permitting Are People-First Missions

Matt Dorcy's career in architecture has spanned residential and retail, on both brand and agency sides of the house. In his tenure, he's watched the tools used evolve, but the heart of the industry has remained the same. It's always been about the people: the team he leads, the clients he supports, and the customers his designs serve.

We're excited to be a partner for firms like Fuzion, who share our belief that speed and empathy aren't mutually exclusive. Good



Blog

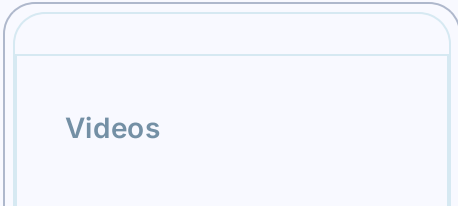
Retail Teams: Permit Delays Can Cost More than You Think

Permitting delays aren't just frustrating, they're incredibly costly too. For brick-and-mortar retailers, there are a lot of reasons to prioritize faster permits. Here's what permitting really costs retail teams.

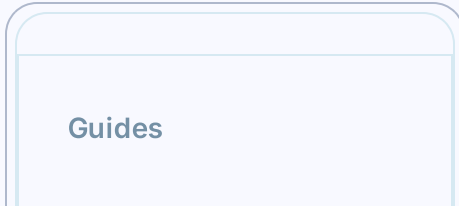
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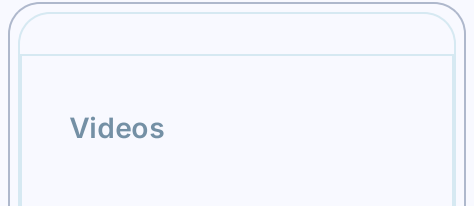
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Guides



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Retailer in the US, Old Playbooks Won't Do

Josh Dunning oversees hundreds of store openings per year for the fastest-growing retailer in the US and that scale, traditional approaches can create hidden risk. We chat about how he's evolved his strategy to design systems that create leverage instead of friction.

[Read more →](#)

Cycle Changes

The 2026 code cycle brings major shifts in energy standards, electrification, and climate resilience. This guide outlines the states adopting new codes, when they take effect, and what design and development teams need to prioritize to avoid redesigns, delays, and permitting risk.

[Read more →](#)

Without Losing Form

Lou, Director of Design & Construction, gives us a behind-the-scenes look at Solidcore's expansion program. It's a diligence-first approach with tight partner networks, and clear permitting visibility to keep openings on schedule.

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Let's Talk

