In 2005, Shawn Askinosie left a successful career as a criminal defense lawyer to start a bean to bar chocolate factory and never looked back.

Askinosie Chocolate is a small batch, award winning chocolate factory located in Springfield, Missouri, sourcing 100% of their beans directly from farmers. The only chocolate maker working directly with cocoa farmers on four continents, Shawn travels to regions of Ecuador, Tanzania and the Philippines to source cocoa beans for his chocolate. This allows the chocolate to be traced to the source and labeled authentic single origin. It also enables Askinosie Chocolate to profit share with the farmers, giving them a “Stake In the Outcome,” a principle he learned from author/entrepreneur Jack Stack.

Recently named by Forbes “One of the 25 Best Small Companies in America”, Askinosie Chocolate has also been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, on Bloomberg, MSNBC and numerous other national and international media outlets.

The Askinosie Chocolate mission is to serve their farmers, their neighborhood, their customers and each other, sharing the Askinosie Chocolate experience by leaving the world a better place than they found it. The company is currently sustainably feeding over 1,600 students per day in Tanzania and the Philippines, without any donations. Founded at the forefront of the American craft chocolate revolution and regarded by many as a vanguard in the industry, Askinosie Chocolate sets the standard: they are one of the few chocolate makers in the world who press their own cocoa butter (to make their chocolate truly single origin) and the only American craft chocolate maker to produce a natural cocoa powder; they were the first American craft chocolate makers to create white chocolate, as well as a chocolate hazelnut spread (says The New York Times: “one spoonful of Askinosie’s Chocolate Hazelnut Spread and all memory of Nutella is gone”).

Shawn was named by O, The Oprah Magazine "One of 15 Guys Who Are Saving the World." They said, "Why we're fans: The philanthropically-minded chocolate entrepreneur aims to get students thinking about business ethics in a way that could have ripple effects for generations." For his efforts in "Advancing food standards... by creating social, economic, and environmental impact", Shawn was awarded Top Business Leader of the Year in 2013 by the Specialty Food Association. Shawn has been awarded honorary doctorates from University of Missouri-Columbia and Missouri State University. In 2015, Askinosie Chocolate was awarded a complimentary membership to the Clinton Global Initiative for
the company’s social efforts around the world. Seth Godin, entrepreneur and author, recently praised the company's model: "[Shawn] has built a practice of creating a worthwhile luxury good that directly benefits people. Not sort of. Not a little. But directly."

Askinosie Chocolate has received 2 Good Food Awards, considered to be the Oscars of food; 6 silver awards from the Specialty Food Association; and 7 International Chocolate Awards, including the Gold World Award for the Dark Chocolate + Licorice bar. The small team at Askinosie works directly with all of their retailers and sells their chocolate into specialty food stores, luxury boutiques, and high-end grocery chains throughout the US in nearly all fifty states and across the globe.

In addition to being a chocolate maker, Shawn blogs for Huffington Post and passionately engages in a few other life pursuits. He is a Family Brother at Assumption Abbey, a Trappist monastery near Ava, Missouri and the co-founder of Lost & Found, a grief center serving children and families in Southwest Missouri.