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Charlotte's upscale high rises, the Carolinas' premier hotels,
world-class design, creative dining, unique destinations and more.

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AWARD SEASON

How David Moritz's impeccable vision and drive for innovation changed an industry.

words SUNNY HUBLER / photos AMANDA ANDERSON OR CAROLINE LAWSON

IN 2007, DAVID MORITZ WAS AN AMBITIOUS YOUNG MAN FRESH OUT of law school. Fifteen years later, he's the visionary behind a luxury design firm that puts out the industry's most iconic trophies and awards—the Emmy, the Golden Globe, the Dancing With the Stars trophy. In addition to an impressive roster of private and corporate clients, David's company, Society Awards, also designs the MTV VMA Moon Person Award, Koons National Arts Award, CFDA Fashion Award, Billboard Music Award, and the CMT Award.

In the past decade and a half, David explains that he's "had quite the education — in accounting, marketing, advertising, art and design... luxury brand building and strategy, and every busi-

ness operation in between." What started out as just him, in an office on Wall Street, has now grown into an industry-disrupting firm with more than 50 employees and two factories.

Society Awards, born in New York City, now calls Charlotte, NC its home. How David got here, and how he envisioned and then made manifest a business so successful and prestigious without any initial intention to become an entrepreneur is a story well worth telling. Here is David in his own words.

WHAT SETS SOCIETY AWARDS APART FROM THE REST OF THE INDUSTRY?
What sets me personally apart in the awards business is probably endurance, taste and professionalism. What sets Society



Awards apart is nearly everything — we're the only luxury brand focusing on awards, so it starts with being an actual valuable brand compared to generic, and it includes world class logistics, to award-winning (yes!) design, to the highest level of customer service, and expertise in all we do. From the quality of the products and the classiness of the service, to the unparalleled designs and artwork, you come to Society Awards for a luxury experience, and we build long term relationships.

WHAT IS YOUR DAY-TO-DAY ROLE LIKE NOW?

I still wear many hats, but thankfully I have great support and assistance all around. The collaboration effectiveness with my Co-Creative Director Vicky Fotopoulou is a work of art in itself, and everyone is contributing to our success in all departments. [There's] an aspect of quality control which I see as a major part of my function. In addition to supervising all the departments, I also act as the CMO, setting the course for the next big innovation.

HOW DID YOU END UP IN CHARLOTTE, AND WHY IS IT A GOOD HOME FOR SOCIETY AWARDS?

My wife Charlotte (coincidentally her name) and I basically "interviewed" towns all over the country to move to from New York City pre-pandemic. Charlotte has such a wonderful confluence of appealing traits. It's then become a great home for Society Awards for the same reason — great people, excitement about the future, pride in what we do. Society Awards always will be a New York City brand in style and passion.

HOW DID YOU FIRST BEGIN TO BRING ON SUCH PRESTIGIOUS CLIENTS?

Unbelievably, I did that first. That was my plan — first get the most visible prestigious clients, then use that to entice a large number of corporate accounts. Little did I know that I'd be so good at reworking the prestigious awards that I would spend about half our company's existence just doing that before we could turn attention to a wider audience. It's important to point out that so many of our corporate accounts are also



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prestigious. Prestige is all about context — there may be a professional association and the award we make for them is the most prestigious thing in their circle.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR OWN ARTISTIC TASTES?

Taste and style develops throughout your life, doesn't it? I wonder if my tastes have more or less settled now or if they will continue to evolve. My mother cautioned me, “Don't buy any expensive furniture when you're young, because your tastes will change four times before you're 40!” That was true! One of the strengths of our approach is to have the discipline to put aside personal preferences, while pre-

serving good aesthetic judgment across all styles. Society Awards has its own baseline style that is fairly recognizable. It's difficulty through simplicity, letting the form and material carry the beauty, timeless design within innovations, something Mid Century, but contemporary with a luxury tone.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT YOUR WORK?

The variety of tasks and how I've seen it grow from this idea to this tangible thing that others can see. What was in my mind is now in front of everyone's face. If we want to collaborate with another luxury brand, they see us as a



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peer right away. That is never easy to create whole-cloth, especially in a niche or a new category, and in only fifteen years. Now that it's here, it's very fun to work with!

HAVING ACHIEVED A "PINNACLE OF SUCCESS" IN YOUR FIELD, WHAT GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS REMAIN THAT KEEP YOU TRULY MOTIVATED?

Well that's very sweet to say, thank you! First, the world keeps changing so we have to keep at the forefront of innovation in all the areas that will matter to our clients, so that we can continue to provide them with this unparalleled experience. No rest for the weary in that regard!

Second, once you've created this powerful tool, you would want to use it right? See what else you can do with it and keep building it stronger! Who knows what Society Awards can do, who we could partner with or what collaboration opportunities exist for everyone's benefit. It might be that Society Awards can do things that only my kids will have the vision to see, as they grow up with new technology and new industries.

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