

As the Premier Designer and Manufacturer of High-End Custom Awards for Prestigious Clientele, Society Awards' Customers include Fortune 500 Companies Across the US and some of the Biggest Names in the Entertainment Industry

**Business Services
Customer Awards
(Private)**

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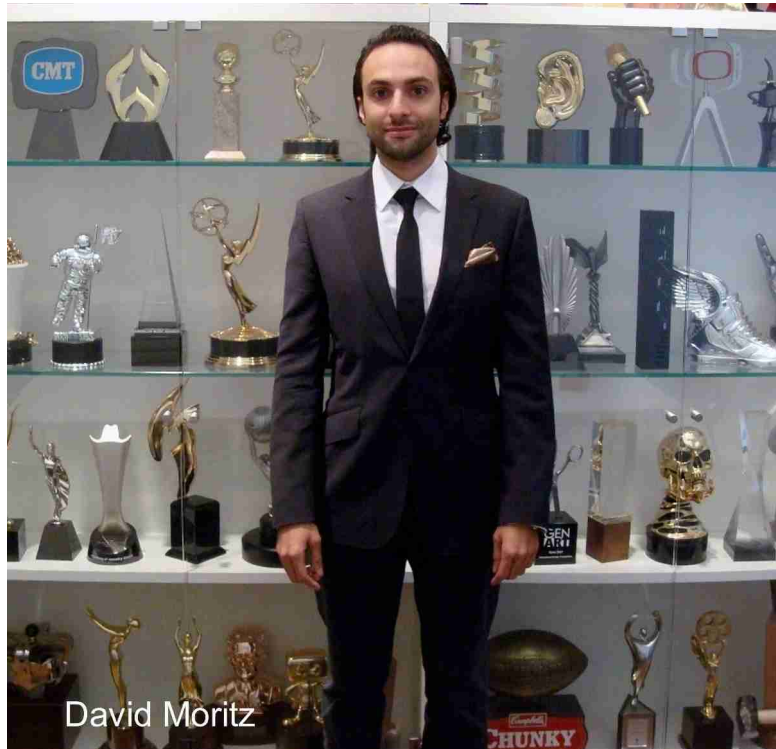
**David Moritz
CEO**

helm, Mode has transformed the standard for design studios; securing high profile clients including Pepsi, Lipton, Playboy, Marc Jacobs, Patrón, Skyy and Colgate.

Moritz quickly realized the profitable marriage between his two companies and set out to create his own luxury products which include a vodka, sparkling wine and champagne. He opened Ambition Beverages and launched the American-made Vision

products, and many other luxury objects of desire. Its prestigious clientele ranges from televised entertainment programs, charitable organizations and Fortune 500 corporations all over the country. Society Awards counts high profile award shows including the Golden Globes, MTV Video Music and Movie Awards, Emmy Awards, CFDA Awards, GLADD Awards, American Music Awards and many others as clients. The company strives to produce the most innovative, aesthetically pleasing products, always keeping in mind the importance of luxury and style.

BIO: Entrepreneur David Moritz is the founder and CEO of three successful businesses: Society Awards, Mode Design Group and Ambition Beverages. With a Bachelor's degree from NYU and a JD from Cardozo School of Law, Moritz turned his passion for luxury and design into a thriving businesses empire. His first company, Society Awards, was founded in 2007 and grows by over 50% every year. Under his leadership, the company continues to grow at a rapid pace, and was included on Inc. Magazine's 2012 500/5000 list of the fastest growing companies in the country.



David Moritz

Moritz followed up this successful business by launching a sister company, Mode Design Group. Mode is a full-service design firm specializing in brand strategy, brand innovation and package design. With Moritz at the

Vodka and Gabrielle Wine. Moritz completed his trifecta with Noblesse, a luxury French champagne.

Company Profile: Society Awards is the premiere company that designs and manufactures high-end custom awards, recognition

**Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse
Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine**

CEOCFO: Mr. Moritz, would you tell us about Society Awards?

Mr. Moritz: Society Awards is a designer, manufacturer and creator of high-end custom awards recognition products as well as sculpture and limited edition high-end custom works.

CEOCFO: What is the potential customer range and what is the competitive landscape?

Mr. Moritz: The types of clients that would be good clients for Society Awards specifically as opposed to other businesses are clients that need a nicer kind of recognition product. If all you need is a very inexpensive plaque or something along those

lines, we can handle that as well. The funny part is that we can make it very well and probably better than most, if not all, other companies but that is not really where our focus is. Our focus is on if the product is higher quality and more complicated, custom made, or especially if it a metal casting, which would be one of the areas where we really excel and pull apart from any other possible option. The types of clients that could use that work would be anything that is on television. If you have a product that is on television then that means it needs to be impressive, it needs to be nice, iconic, and of the highest quality. If it is a corporate award or for a corporation, then the more important it is to you that the award is spectacular and unique. There are many companies which do not really bridge the gap and understand the difference between manufacturing something and filling in all the customer service needs. Often times you are designing something new or bringing someone's idea to life and you have to ask yourself if it is beautiful. It may be what the customer described to you, or literally, what the client said, or a version of the idea, but it has to be beautiful. Besides fulfilling a request, you need to be sure that it is something that everyone would want and that everyone can be proud of. There is no other company which does that to the level that Society Awards does.

CEO CFO: Would you give us a history of the company?

Mr. Moritz: I was in law school and was doing entertainment law. When I graduated from law school, I was working for an entertainment lawyer and firm. I was intrigued about the business behind the deals, I liked that about entertainment law, being able to put together a deal. We did a lot of independent film financing working with directors and things like that. I realized that I just wanted to be in business and maybe strictly speaking, writing contracts and practicing law was not exactly my calling. Although I was very good at it and I had enormous respect from the clients and the

people that I worked with, I just felt like I needed something more expansive. I could do more and I wanted to do more. I was not very particular about what kind of business, I just wanted to do something where I could really make a difference and do something better. If it was design related, it would be better because I have always been interested in aesthetics and design. The first market opportunity that I came across was this business of high-end fancy awards that are on television where they do not really have fancy companies that provide the awards to them; it is just kind of a grumpy factory. I realized that would be an area that I could make a disruptive company in the market and offer something better to improve things for the industry. I

When we sell, we sell that the client doesn't just receive a product, but that they utilize Society Awards to the full extent of what we can offer. That is all we want. We want you to make a partnership with our company. We want you to rely on and be aligned with Society Awards to handle your account, all of your needs and everything that you need to do with recognition products including the award show and anything else you need along with that. We do not sell by trying to get a customer to pay more, they tell us what they have and we show them what is possible. - David Moritz

created Society Awards and that was the first business I created in the design and manufacturing industry.

CEO CFO: Has the use of awards changed much over the last few years?

Mr. Moritz: Society Awards has been an enabler of change. There are different markets for awards. There are the televised award shows, of which there are more of now than in the past. There are also corporate awards and recognizing people for all different types of endeavors. I think there are two levels to that question. On some level, awards are part of the fabric of western culture. It goes back to Homer, the Trojan War, having contests on the beach even before the Olympic games, and that there is a trophy for the winner that would be a precious metal goblet or cup or just a bag of money. The prize was the

value of the gold or the silver in it. Eventually people came to keep the cup and not melt it down because it represented victory. The idea of giving people awards, giving people prizes, holding contests, is just a part of what we do. If you put a bunch of people from any western culture on an island, they would eventually hold a number of contests. Regarding the awards on television, I think that Society Awards has been an enabler of change as I said before, because it is traditionally difficult to have custom sculpture made and to do that well and to do it in a practical timeframe with a reasonable budget. We are so good at bringing these ideas to life and we push the envelope so far. We tied together so many different manufacturing expertises to be able to

bring to life reliable, beautiful sculptures that were not possible before in any realistic timeframe or budget. Because these interesting organizations and television networks can dream up new award ideas and we can actually bring them to life, I think we have enabled people to feel comfortable about trying to start up new shows and have beautiful sculptures for them.

CEO CFO: They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

When Society Awards is creating an award, how do you weigh how it looks to you as compared to the taste of client as well as how the award may come across on television?

Mr. Moritz: That is a factor when we are designing these things. One of the first questions that we will ask people is if it is going to be on stage or camera. The way something looks on camera is definitely different from the way it looks in person. Unfortunately, the major difference is that you just cannot see a small statue clearly enough on stage, on camera, with someone waving it all around. It does not mean that you want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. You want it to look good from a distance and with a relatively unclear shot of it, as well as for it to have fine details and features that the recipient can see when they pick it up on stage and you

will see that in their face and reactions. There have been so many times that we have seen award shows and they get a trophy, and the person does not really look at it - but on the other hand when we see our awards and we have so many examples of it, where the person is just staring and admiring. That is fun for everyone, everyone wants it to be a good prize, it is important that people win and that they are honored with the recognition but also what they are getting needs to be good. You want to make sure it is appropriate for whatever context it is going to be given and displayed. You want to think about where these are going to be displayed later, whether it is in a home, office or trophy case. You want to make sure that they are manageable, that people can hold them properly, and there are many factors that go into that. Those are all practical things. How we make sure that it is beautiful to the viewer is to the extent that we have control over that and obviously other factors come into play. It is not completely up to us what the final design will be. When we do have a lot of influence, we control that at the model stages. In the polish and the finish, the quality of the finish of a work has much to do with whether people think it is beautiful. It is about much of my personal aesthetic critique. Statistically speaking, what I like, most of our clients also like. Sometimes when you start seeing the same things repeatedly, you just want something to be different and you do not care whether it is beautiful, you just want to see something new. I have to be careful that it does not affect my judgment. Obviously, you want everything to be unique but you want to make sure that you do not fall into the pitfall of doing something just because it is different and not taking into consideration that it is also attractive. Fortunately for us, I also have a design company Mode Design Group, which is branding, brand strategy, design packaging, a completely different business but synergistically related. We work with consumer brands, major consumer packaged goods companies, spirits, and all different types of industries. We do branding, positioning, and product design and packaging for them. I have designers and my crea-

tive director there. When it comes to awards, they are more like the public; they do not design awards everyday and look at that so we are able to show them things and ask them what they think about it and if they love it. Since they have good aesthetic taste as well, the chances are we are in the right direction.

CEO CFO: You manufacture in a variety of places. Is it strictly because of the materials involved?

Mr. Moritz: There are different factories all over the world that specialize in different materials. There is quantity; certain factories will be better at making a small number of items. Certain factories can only make a very large number of items so that is a huge factor as to where you are going to do it. Timing is a huge factor, some factories are much more expensive but much faster, other factories need more time but can have a better quality and price. The fastest and most expensive is not always the highest quality. We need to balance all of these factors when we are going into a project and we need to select the place that is overall going to do the best job. I only work with factories where I have a personal relationship with the owner. With some of the factories that we do a tremendous amount of business with, we have our own employees right there at the factories. We only have our select go-to places around the world that are our trusted partners which we have deep relationships with and we know how to combine all the talents of all the different places as well to get pretty much anything made.

CEO CFO: How do you manage what a client is willing to spend with what you are looking at from an aesthetic point of view and when it does not match what do you do?

Mr. Moritz: When we sell, we sell that the client doesn't just receive a product, but that they utilize Society Awards to the full extent of what we can offer. That is all we want. We want you to make a partnership with our company. We want you to rely on and be aligned with Society Awards to handle your account, all of your needs and everything that you need to do with recognition products including the

award show and anything else you need along with that. We do not sell by trying to get a customer to pay more, they tell us what they have and we show them what is possible. If they ask for something that is not possible with the budget that they have, then we show them what they asked for and what the price of that would be and the information and then we come up with ideas of how to come up with alternatives to meet their budget. If they have a completely unrealistic budget then we will have to tell them that from the beginning and just suggest a completely different idea. Typically speaking, if you love what we are about, if you love our company, our branding and our value proposition, then we want you to be able to work with Society Awards and to have a product made or provided by Society Awards. Even if it is a relatively small budget, we will come up with something else, it is not like we are going to make a golden statue on any budget but there may be a small piece of crystal that a person can have that is still very beautiful, something like that. We are just reasonable about it; we just tell them if you want a statute, this is what it costs.

CEO CFO: Do people come back to you year-after-year?

Mr. Moritz: Yes, everyone comes back.

CEO CFO: What do you see that might be different in a year or two for the company?

Mr. Moritz: We are constantly increasing our services and capabilities and our logistical strength and turnaround time. We are already by far the industry leader in all of these areas but we are constantly improving. The bigger our business gets, the bigger our company gets, then the better all of our costs become and we pass that along to our customers. We just get faster and more capable at doing more things. We are going to continue to do that and then we will continue to expand some of the stock available product offerings. Some clients will call us and have a great budget but they only need one or two big beautiful sculptures. Even if you have a big budget to make just one cast sculpture, it has such a high set-

up cost for the molds and everything that goes into it, which can be prohibitive, and you would think that would be enough to get an awesome design but it really is not. What we want to do is have exclusive limited addition, pre-made lines of unique and beautiful awards that our customer base could call us and they would be available off-the-shelf. They would be limited edition as well as unique. These would be available for people that do not have the time or do not have the budget for a new setup to make molds and models. There are always a thousand things going on. If I were to list everything new that we are doing it would take a couple hours.

CEOCFO: With continued growth, how will Society Awards be able to provide the personal touch and the

involvement that you have with each customer and product?

Mr. Moritz: The truth is that even as of now, I do not handle every single detail with all of the clients. There are a few clients for whom I will be still their main, but not exclusive, point of contact and I have a wonderful team in place. They have all learned the values of the company, the customer service and the care, and they believe in what we do, they believe in service and quality. These people are very capable of handling all the day-to-day customer needs. When it comes down to giving an aesthetic judgment on a new design, I obviously will always have time for that, although we do have other people that can participate. My main role in the company is quality control. Everything that we do here I am aware of and I want to make sure is up to our standards.

That is something that I am able to do for the near future practically on an unlimited basis. Even if the client is not talking with me every day, there is still my personal touch on everything because I am still watching what goes on behind the scenes. My VP of Sales has a Harvard undergraduate and Harvard Business School degree. We just brought on one of my great friends who also has an MBA and a CPA, he is from the hedge fund industry and he is going to be my partner in everything that we do. Most of the senior staff has MBAs or advanced degrees and we just have an all-star team here. We will continue to find people that have the same values that we have.



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