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By Jan Wilson and Robert D. Greenberg, AICP

This year, Ted Moudis Associates (TMA) proudly celebrates its 20th anniversary. Ted Moudis, AIA, founder and principal, built this architectural and interior design firm's foundation upon the philosophy of establishing and maintaining long term relationships, which has been one of the main reasons for its continued success through both good times and difficult times.



Ted Moudis Associates

### BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

In 1990, at the depths of the last major recession, Moudis saw the opportunity to launch his own firm and he took it. "We built our reputation by providing superior design quality, innovation and an unsurpassed level of service. We developed solid client relationships that continue to expand today. Our firm has grown organically to service many of these firms across the country and the world as our clients take us with them. There can be no higher compliment."



Coty, Inc.

"Our business is founded on building and maintaining long term relationships," says Christopher Savoglou, Principal and business partner with Moudis for almost 30 years. "When times are good in this business, it's too easy to take relationships for granted. That's something we will never do at this firm."

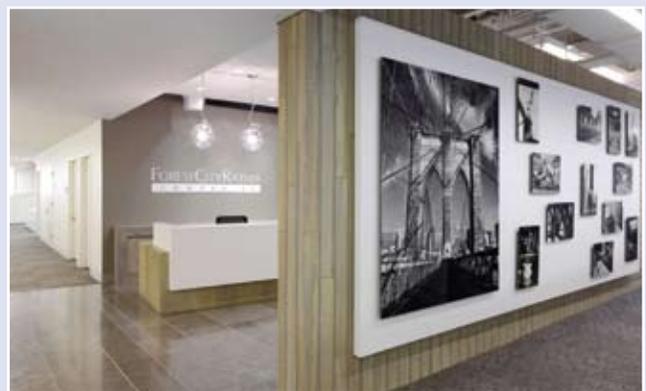
*"Our business is founded on building long term relationships."*

**Christopher Savoglou, Principal, Ted Moudis Associates**

The firm's success, in part, can be measured by both its growth in size and in geographic reach. With its headquarters in New York City, TMA is now licensed in 26 states. With an office in Chicago and an alliance in London as well, TMA services its clients nationally, as well as internationally. TMA has a diverse range of clientele with most of its focus in corporate interiors and an increasing amount of work in the retail sector.

Long term clients such as **Société Générale, Tiffany & Co., Kaplan, ING Investment Management, Coty, Morgan Stanley, Deutsche Bank** and **Rolex** continue to rely on Ted Moudis Associates for their strategic planning, architectural and interior design services. The firm has just completed a new **Tiffany & Co.** store in City Center Las Vegas and **Soigné K**, a new Madison Avenue boutique retail store among others. Retail now accounts for about 15 percent of the firm's total business.

TMA is growing and hiring again. "We have hired a person a week for roughly the last 10 weeks," says Savoglou. "We are certainly seeing business becoming more robust."



Forest City Ratner Companies

### A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

"The company fosters a culture of continual learning and improvement where no professional relies on only the good work they have done in the past," says Moudis. "Instead, we are always working hard, servicing clients, and planning how to do things better in the future."

TMA ensures that its professionals have top-notch skills

*“The greatest distinguishing factor that sets TMA apart is the daily active participation and accessibility of the principals. They listen to and understand our needs and develop the best team to support us and make our projects successful.”*

**Lawrence M. Palfini, CFM, Vice President,  
Tiffany & Co. Real Estate Services Worldwide**



Financial Services Firm

and are kept informed of current methodologies and technologies. Weekly continuing education seminars are offered and involvement in professional organizations and industry events is encouraged. “All of our employees work together as a team,” says Savoglou. “You can’t run a firm with principals instructing everyone else. Everyone has to be able to contribute to the process and communicate with clients. In order to do that, you must stay informed of current trends and best practices in the industry and apply them to your projects.”

*“Creativity and passion, professionalism and scrupulous work product...that’s what defines TMA as one of the avant-garde architectural firms of today’s world of business. Ted Moudis and Chris Savoglou have been the driving force of service excellence behind their teams and built a legacy of trust and confidence among their clients.”*

**Emilio Galanda, Vice President - Head of Facilities,  
ING Investment Management**

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

TMA’s highest priority is to ensure that their team of 100 employees provide superior services to its clients. “We always try to exceed our clients’ expectations,” says Savoglou. “We pick up the phone and say ‘how are we doing?’—we don’t wait for them to come to us with a question or a suggestion. We want to understand our client’s business, what defines their success, and help them achieve it.” Their clients certainly concur.

Both principals stress that there is no such thing as a ‘TMA look.’ “Based on our clients’ input, we come up with an appropriate solution,” says Moudis. Adds Savoglou, “Everything we do is designed with the client’s goals and objectives in mind,

that’s why listening to the client is so important.”

The firm boasts an impressive roster of clients across many industries including:

- **Newsweek**—this 165,000 SF project included a loft-style open plan environment with a multi-purpose room, cafeteria, ‘huddle’ rooms, and café/touchdown spaces, TV/broadcasting and audio studios, and a gallery to showcase past covers.



Newsweek

- **Coty**—this two-story, 87,000 SF office project featured an open plan workspace with perimeter private offices, cafés, pantries, an interconnecting stair, library, creative area and employee store.
- **Forest City Ratner**—located at Metrotech Center in Brooklyn, their headquarters was created to continue to foster the creativity and progressive thinking of one of the premier developers in the U.S.
- **ING Investment Management**—the primary goal of this 165,000 SF project was master planning and restacking to incorporate new technologies and create a more open work environment. The executive expansion project on the 13th floor achieved LEED Gold certification.
- **Tiffany & Co, Las Vegas**—the initial challenge of this 12,000 SF project was to incorporate Tiffany’s design elements, including a 24-foot high circular staircase, within the geometric building envelope.
- **Société Générale, Chicago**—Public areas were used to create a conferencing center ideal for both internal and client meetings, incorporating the latest video conference technology with refined yet comfortable surroundings that are conducive to collaboration.



Société Générale

- **Major League Baseball**—TMA created a design that is funky, eclectic and raw to reflect their image and unique Chelsea Market location.



Cottingham & Butler

- **Cottingham & Butler, Dubuque, Iowa**—A repurposing of an historic department store into a 21st century insurance office. The renovation included finely detailed millwork masses reaching towards the high ceilings, and ornamental ironwork to bridge the gap between the old and new.
- TMA designed a highly functional space for an **investment management firm** that helped enhance their image. The program consisted of private office and open plan requirements, conferencing facilities, with public and private 'break-out' spaces.
- For a **financial services firm** with an established, progressive image, TMA's design created a flexible space for growth.

*"I have worked with TMA for over 22 years on many complex and award-winning projects both domestically and internationally. They provide exemplary customer service and their staff's attention to detail and knowledge of the real estate, design and construction industry are unsurpassed."*

**Philip M. Bottega, AIA, Director - Deputy Head of Facilities, Société Générale**

### CATCHING THE WAVE UPWARD

The principals agree that clients' attitudes signify that the worst of the recession is over. "Senior managers' mindsets have shifted," says Moudis, "and they are more optimistic and willing to make plans for the future. That includes making changes to

their space or taking new space. You can build and buy less expensively right now. This is the right time to seize opportunity in the marketplace."

Savoglou adds that sometimes clients can move to another location for a lower rent and use that opportunity to "re-brand and energize their



Financial Services Firm

staff." Clients are now looking for their offices to be more collaborative and efficient by going to an open plan design. The benefits of this design include:

- Enhanced functionality and built-in flexibility
- More natural light
- A more efficient way to use limited square footage
- Less expensive and faster reconfigurations

As an industry leader in LEED design, the firm's principals note that clients are much more interested in incorporating sustainable design into their spaces as a matter of practice and support for the environment. "We have always thought that it was desirable to bring to the clients information about the newest sustainable products and features that could be used in their projects," says Moudis. "Most of our design professionals are LEED accredited and well educated and our library is cutting edge. We are always sitting down with our professionals to evaluate what works and what doesn't so that we can present the best options to our clients."

Moudis says that tenants don't have to wait to move into a LEED-certified building before they start thinking about these issues—they can take the initiative to make their own spaces as eco-friendly as possible. "This is the wave of the future in design," he says.



Tiffany & Co., City Center, Las Vegas

*"We know how to create a space that helps move the clients' business in exactly the direction that they want to take."*

**Ted Moudis, AIA, Senior Principal, Ted Moudis Associates**

### DESIGNING THE FUTURE

The principals at TMA are looking forward to a continued shift in the economic winds, and see the entire design industry getting back to work again soon. "Nothing pleases us more than when our competition is really busy," says Moudis. "This is what will bring the fees back to the level where they belong."

"Over the past two decades, what sets TMA apart is our ability to envision and service the needs of our clients, and create leading-edge design solutions that enhance workplace environments. We are looking forward to the next 20 years." ■

[www.tedmoudis.com](http://www.tedmoudis.com)