



# The 2013 Influencers: Dave Moskowitz

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## The startup guru

### Dave Moskowitz

"I come from the Warren Buffet school of PR," says Dave Moskowitz, the California-raised, Wellington-based startup investor. "I want to make sure everyone owes me a favour."

He's joking, but be assured many of our entrepreneurs owe the man a debt, particularly in the capital where Moskowitz has devoted so much energy and capital helping others get their bright ideas off the ground.

Dan Khan, programme director at tech accelerator the Lightning Lab, in which Moskowitz is a hands-on investor, describes him as a cornerstone of the Wellington scene.

"He has brought together not only the startup community, but also the investment community. If it wasn't for Dave I don't think we'd have as vibrant an ecosystem in this city. And he's helped push Startup Weekends all over New Zealand, which have been a massive beacon for entrepreneurship."

Moskovitz has founded or co-founded several companies - not all successful, he notes, but then failure can provide lessons.

His ventures include The Web Limited, one of Wellington's early internet startups, and the Appreciation Engine (MusicHype), which provides a social analytics platform for large retail brands.

He's invested in at least 10 startups here and is happiest chipping in at the early stage, before poor choices or lack of resources and experience can scupper things. "I want to take that spark of wonderfulness and help it shine from the start."

What does he bring to the role? Experience in web technologies, for a start.

"When my kids' friends ask what I do, I always say I'm a software developer. But I have experience in trying to sell things to people, in the investment space, in how to take an idea and put a team around it and help it grow, in contract negotiations - lots of skills."

And he's got plenty of good will, almost always offering advice free. "I just really like helping people see how far they can take an idea."

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