



it's a hybrid between a city
search and myspace.com

David Brown is a true Renaissance Man. He's an accomplished chef, noted photographer, formally trained sculptor and fearless cultural warrior. He's also the main force behind spacetaker.org, a young and fresh online organization that marries the power of the Internet with Houston's thriving and diverse artistic community.

But this self-effacing guy can't take all the credit. "The idea for [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) evolved from its roots as a collaborative art project that Will Bentsen, Paul Kremer and I developed to its current form as Houston's Culture Hub," he explains. **This hub connects the larger community with all that is new, different, exciting and important in local music, theater, opera, photography, sculpture, film, cuisine and a host of other arts.**

"It's a hybrid between a city search and myspace.com," adds Brown, [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org)'s executive director, "and we've developed a fantastic logic structure that will really take the arts into the digital age. With one button, I can contact 250 arts and cultural organizations, and more than 100 local artists," he says without bragging, "and that's pretty cool." The site's content is comprehensive, up to date and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to anyone with an Internet connection — from PCs, phones, PDAs, Blackberries or even tools no one has thought of yet.

[Spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) is also something of a time machine — it allows users to move forward to check out upcoming events and exhibits and explore the past with archived photographs of past activities. "It's interesting and powerful because the site provides a visual record of memories that might otherwise fade," he explains.

Simply put, [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) demonstrates the positive impact artists and artistic organizations are having on the community at large. And [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) works hard to support those "culture workers," with continuing education opportunities, marketing support, global exposure and a slew of tangible benefits that Brown works to create every day.

It's a full-time job. Brown's typical day is filled with meetings with museums, artists, schools, non-profit organizations, businesses, volunteers and potential charitable funding sources. This last group is especially critical as [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) relies on private support to achieve its goals. Having moved from an all-volunteer organization to having a full-time staff of two and 24 contract employees, Brown intends to continue building up the staff to manage the enormous amount of work to be accomplished. Last year, the organization received more than \$20,000 in personal contributions and recently obtained funding from Houston Endowment, Inc., and the Mayor's Office.

Houstonians of all stripes have taken note of [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org), and the accolades continue to pour in. Jason Makepeace, a local sculptor and teacher, enthuses, "[Spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) has been of great value to me by making me and my work highly accessible to the public. In a sense, my work can now reach so many more people." Even Mayor Bill White has jumped on the [spacetaker](http://spacetaker.org) bandwagon. "This project represents a special opportunity for Houston, and effectively highlights the rich fabric of our diverse community," he proclaims.

You, too, can get in on all the fun. "There are several ways for people and organizations to get involved," says Brown. "We really want people to interact with the site by submitting events to us. We are always looking for local writers and photographers to contribute work. We also just launched an artist registry and we really need artists to participate, so we can have a comprehensive look at the individual artists in Houston."



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