



Addressing Message Challenges for Jewish Nonprofit Organizations

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Who We Are

- Lisa Schneider-Friedman
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Message Challenges

- Your case for support changes
- You do a lot of different things and don't know which matters most to your donors
- What matters to your leaders is not necessarily what matters to your donors
- You can't control what Israel does
- The Jewish market is not a monolithic group



Effective Fundraising When Your Message Changes

Lisa Schneider-Friedman

*Hebrew Home of Greater
Washington*



The Hebrew Home – Then...



- Established 1910
- Mission: to pay room & board for homeless, elderly Jews
- Row house in Washington, DC housed 10 people

The Hebrew Home – 100 Years Later!

- Serving 1,000 seniors daily
- Charles E. Smith Life Communities Campus in Rockville, MD
- Independent Living, Assisted Living, Rehabilitation, Long-Term Nursing care



Changing Donors ... Changing Messages



100 Years Ago ...

- Before Medicaid and Medicare contributions funded operations
 - Gifts from the Jewish community
 - Community Chest!
 - Doctors and dentists volunteered services
 - Ladies/Women's auxiliary and Men's Clubs held fundraising events



“Among donations that appear frequently in the House Chairman Reports in the 1940’s:

- I. Feldman & Co. for turkeys at Thanksgiving and Simchas Torah
- Mr. Sam Higger for his many donations of candy, cigarettes and whisky
- Manischewitz Matzos Co. for their donation of 400 pounds of matzos
- Mr. A. Posin for bread and cake
- Premier Cleaning, for cleaning all the clothes twice a year
- Galblum Brothers for cleaning all the hats
- Mr. Zaslow for repairing shoes.”



Today

- Annual Operating budget
\$70,000,000
- Medicare and Medicaid
 - DO NOT COVER ALL OPERATING EXPENSES
- Donors are mostly individuals from the community
 - What they fund has changed



The change in messaging

Rosh Hashanah letters 2003-2009



2003 – Times are Good!

- No budget shortfall in operations
- Community saw Home as well-established and financially stable
- Donors asked to enrich the quality of life for residents



2003 Rosh Hashanah "Ask"

"You see, the programs that make the Hebrew Home the special place that it is are costly. But because of your financial support we can give our seniors and their families, holiday celebrations, Shabbat meals, and an on-staff Rabbi -- everything they need to feel comfortable and cared for."



2004 – Trouble in Paradise

- Operations budget shortfall for the first time
- Reduction in Maryland funding
- Increase energy and security expenses



2004 Rosh Hashanah “Ask”

“Recent developments have reduced the Home’s funding by almost \$1 million a year. These reductions in government reimbursements, coupled with increased operating costs, in areas including security, insurance and energy, have had a major impact on our budget.”



2008 – Need with Impact

- Budget shortfalls have continued – the donors are now “trained” in the new case for support
- Challenge to show donors the impact of their gifts
- Connect the budget gap with residents



2008 Rosh Hashanah “Ask”

“Unfortunately, Medicaid and other insurance reimbursements have never kept pace with the rising costs of nursing care – and that gap is growing greater every year. For every resident relying on Medicaid (and that is a majority of our seniors), the Home must raise an additional \$91 a day to cover the cost of their care.”



2009 – More cuts!

- Budget gap is almost “old news” to the donors
- Significant Medicaid reimbursement cut looming
- The ask was very specific



2009 Rosh Hashanah "Ask"

"You see, we just learned that the State of Maryland is proposing further cuts in Medicaid reimbursement. With 67% of our long-term care residents relying on Medicaid, that will translate into a loss of almost \$240,000 in funding for the Home in the final months of 2009!

These cuts mean that the gap between Medicaid reimbursement and the actual cost of the care we provide – a gap which is already significant -- will increase by another \$4.80 per resident, per day. Without the support of the community, this is a shortfall that could impact the residents and their families who depend on us."



Messaging Challenges

Who sets the agenda?

Bennett Samson
New Israel Fund



Inevitable tensions


- The story you want to get out
- The story you need to get out
 - Whether to combat misperceptions based on ignorance or worse
 - Smear campaigns
 - Lies



The intention



The challenge



Naomi Goldstone-Hazan

Fact! Without the New Israel Fund, there could be no Goldstone Report, and Israel would not be facing international accusations of war crimes

- Naomi Hazan's fund is behind 90% of the Goldstone war crimes allegations from non-official Israeli sources.
- In the past three years Naomi's fund has given \$8 million to 16 anti-Zionist Israeli organizations that volunteered to provide Goldstone incriminating "information" on the IDF's "war crimes" during Operation Cast Lead.
- Nearly one in four allegations in the Goldstone Report that IDF soldiers murdered civilians come from New Israel Fund organizations.
- Major NIF organizations signed a letter calling on Britain to prosecute senior IDF officers for war crimes.

All the truth about the N.I.F. : www.imfi.org.il

imTirtzu
THE SOURCE OF THE TRUTH



Huge stakes



Avoiding the trap, reaping the benefits

- Planning a message arc
 - Responding in the short term, but making sure to return to message asap
- Engaging supporters in the response
- Enlisting new allies



Coordinated response

| | PR | Web | Mail |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Direct response – debunk the lies | Get the facts out, especially from third parties | Information campaign, | Raise the issue, address the issue, get supporters to Fund the response |
| Transition from what we're not to what we are | Push achievements, demonstrate breadth of support, make the case (connect the dots) | Petition drive | Test – organizational history, accomplishments to the house file too, to remind people why they're there. Add survey |
| Back on message | The work, the case, the history (that was us) | Site redesign, ongoing action alerts | |
| | | | |

In the mail

**URGENT:
New Israel Fund under
attack in Israel!**

February 2010

Dear <Name>,

Attacks by right-wing groups against progressive organizations in Israel are escalating.

The latest strike was aimed directly at the New Israel Fund, and included a despicable personal attack against our president, Naomi Chazan.

Your help is urgently needed NOW. There is no time to waste.

Please rush your emergency gift to the New Israel Fund today so that we along with our partners can respond to these attacks and continue our essential fight for equality and democracy.

The most patriotic act any citizen can take against repression and abuse is to call loudly for their country to correct those abuses. That is what people do in true democracies. And that is what you and I, and our partners in Israel, must continue to do.

But, <NAME>, as you know, there is a disturbing trend in Israel today towards increasingly repressive and extremist ideologies.

Several weeks ago the director of the Israel Religious Action Center — the Reform movement's action arm in Israel — was hauled into a police station, fingerprinted and interrogated for holding prayer sessions at the Kotel with Women of the Wall.

A week later, Hagai El-Ad, head of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel — our flagship grantee — was arrested while monitoring a peaceful demonstration in East Jerusalem.

These civil rights leaders were arrested, held and interrogated for no reason other than exercising their democratic rights. They were targeted precisely because they are among the leading voices for social justice and human rights in Israel today. And now, the New Israel Fund itself is under direct attack.

With the financial backing of John Hagee Ministries, an organization called Im Tirtzu (over, please)

EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN - Please Respond Today!

YES, I agree, we must not allow extremist attacks to obstruct the vital work of social justice organizations in Israel. I am rushing my emergency gift to the New Israel Fund to defend Israel's democracy!

SXX SXX SXXX Other \$ _____

<Name>
<Address>

took out newspaper ads and mounted billboards depicting our own Naomi Chazan with a rhinoceros horn attached to her head bearing the letters "NIF." They also held a protest outside Chazan's home and are blaming her and the New Israel Fund for the United Nations' Goldstone Report on the Gaza offensive last winter.

For Im Tirtzu, the New Israel Fund is guilty simply because it supports the vital work of human rights organizations that wrote reports cited by Goldstone. Reports that were also utilized by the Israel Defense Forces and others.

The New Israel Fund is proud of our support for Israel's most respected human rights groups. These groups provided a vital service to Israeli democracy in carefully monitoring and reporting on the Gaza operation. Indeed they were among the first to declare the need for an independent Israeli inquiry into the events of Gaza.

There are those who still believe any criticism of Israel is a threat to its survival.

But the truth is, Israel today is most threatened by those who would deny its faults, hide its abuses and allow this great country to turn its back on our democratic principles.

Even those who would attack us acknowledge the good that the organizations we support do, combating inequality and injustice in many segments of Israeli society. We cannot allow a climate of repression and hatred to undermine all this critical work, and delay the dream of a democratic Israel for all its citizens.

The attack on us is the latest and most alarming evidence of a coordinated attack on the human rights and social justice community, and on the rights of free speech and dissent.

We need extraordinary resources in the days and weeks ahead to demonstrate to the extremists that we will not be intimidated by their heavy-handed tactics. So, please **rush your emergency gift today in the enclosed envelope.**

This is no time for complacency. I hope I can count on you to stand with me in support of our sisters and brothers in Israel at this very critical and dangerous time. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Daniel Sokatch
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. Please don't put this letter aside. Rush your emergency gift to the New Israel Fund today and help us fight back against these outrageous right-wing attacks. Thank you.

<Back of Reply form>


Credit card box



Email campaign

ABOUT NIF | ISSUE AREAS | SPECIAL PROGRAMS & PARTNERS | GET INVOLVED | MEDIA CENTER

Save Israeli Democracy: Tell PM Netanyahu We Want a Democratic and Pluralistic Israel



Take Action

Title First Last

* Name:

* Email:

Say Yes to a Better Israel! (check)

Prime Minister Netanyahu:

We, faithful American Jewish supporters of Israel, are deeply concerned. Israel is rightfully proud of its democracy, group of nations that value justice, freedom and the rule of law.

In recent months a disturbing picture has emerged of nationalist extremism that would stifle dissent and erode it become all too clear to anyone who connects the dots:

- Women led away from the Western Wall in handcuffs for daring to wear prayer-shawls there, and their husbands unlawfully detained for peacefully protesting in East Jerusalem, and the longstanding outbreak,
- A former Deputy Speaker of the Knesset detained in a virulent smear campaign against Israel's leading images reminiscent of propaganda from the darkest days of Jewish history,
- The fundamental freedom of Israel's vitally important civil society under threat from Knesset legislation that NGOs as "political" -- in the manner of Russia, China and Iran,
- Women forced to sit in the back of segregated buses with support from the ministry of transportation,
- Years of effort to achieve recognition for Reform and Conservative Jews again threatened by a proposed law preventing recognition of non-Orthodox conversions in Israel.

Israel is a Jewish and democratic state, and it must not jeopardize its standing as a democratic nation. As a democracy, the rights of all its citizens must be upheld and safeguarded, and freedom of speech, conscience and belief respected by the government and private citizens alike.

We call on you, Prime Minister Netanyahu, to stand with us and with all those working to strengthen a democratic and pluralistic Israel.

Sincerely,
[Sign Now. Add your Voice.](#)



הקרן החדשה לישראל
New Israel Fund
الصندوق الجديد لإسرائيل



Lemonade

- Activating the base – 10k petitions
- Rapid growth in email list, FB, etc.
- Revenue -- Appeal beat the prior year's both in response rate and average gift



Next steps

- Evolving messages in mail packages
- Ongoing action alerts in emails – conversion bill
- Fall ad campaign



To be continued...

Say YES to
a better Israel

הקרן החדשה לישראל
New Israel Fund
الصندوق الجديد لإسرائيل



Messaging with a Broad Mission

Hillary Waxman

UJA-Federation of New York



Why is the UJA-Federation messaging complicated?

- Concept of federated giving
- Three 'legs' to our mission
- Multiple constituencies and audiences



UJA-Federation of New York's messaging challenge:

How do we tell our story in a way that is:

- Simple
- Engaging
- Compelling
- Concise



UJA-Federation's Mission:

“UJA-Federation of New York cares for those in need, strengthens the Jewish people, and inspires a passion for Jewish life and learning.”

- Care for New Yorkers of all races, religions, and ethnic backgrounds, **and** Jews wherever they live
- Strengthens the Jewish people
- Inspires Jewish learning and the continuation of tradition and religious observance



How do we address the challenge?

1. Identify clear, compelling and timely messages

- *Focus Groups*
 - Avoid 'buzz words'
 - Don't over promise (e.g., all, always)
 - Be specific
 - Use examples that are current and relevant
- Quantitative Research
 - Understand messages by segment
 - Make fact based decision messaging decisions



How do we address the challenge?

2. Segment target audiences and customize messages

- Donors
- Prospects
- Lay leaders



How do we address the challenge?

3. Test messages in mail, email and phone

- Leverage learning from research
- Incorporate timely and relevant examples
- Keep sense of urgency



Next steps?

- Complete analysis of quantitative research
- Continue segmentation work
- Test messages against relevant segments



Wrap Up...Keep in Mind

- The case vs. the institution
- The impact of contributions
- The diversity of the audience
- The need to be specific
- The need to be truthful





Thank you! Questions?