

## In The Beginning

### A N.Y. Minute

#### How To Make Israel Relevant

After a long, distinguished career in advertising, **Marcella Rosen** has been using her professional savvy to launch several initiatives in support of Israel. In 2002, she established the Campus Tolerance Foundation, researching and exposing anti-Israel bias in higher education. In 2010 she founded Untold News, highlighting inventions out of Israel. In 2013 she wrote and published "Tiny Dynamo," describing more than 20 Israeli innovative projects. Now she is focused on a media campaign, through Untold News, called #IsraellsOnIt (israelisonit.com), featuring timely, pithy advertising messages that promote ways Israeli efforts are benefiting everyone.

Rosen, whose hobbies include flying airplanes, was interviewed by phone and in person.

#### Q.:Your most recent ad in The New York Times seems all too timely.

A.: Yes, it's called "How to Read a Terrorist's Face," and it takes you to a two-minute video explaining an Israeli technology, currently in development, to improve airport security. It's called WeCU (pronounced "We See You"), which has the potential to save the lives of air travelers around the world. The equipment can detect emotional stress in a passenger, the kind of stress associated with people who plan acts of terror. The system can measure a person's blood pressure and other vital signs from a distance, and these involuntary reactions are noted and analyzed in real time. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security provided a grant to WeCU, an example of ways Israeli inventions can help mankind.

#### Who is your audience and how are you reaching them?

We are seeking a wide audience, and especially younger people, many of whom have grown up only hearing bad news about Israel. There are many small, pro-Israel websites out there but they tend to be ineffective because most people are not seeking information about Israel on the web, so few people see them. You have to reach people where they are with a simple, provocative message that is relevant to your audience. We have run several ads so far in our campaign – there are nine in all – and they have done very well. We found that



*Untold News founder Marcella Rosen: Many young people "have grown up only hearing bad news about Israel."*

COURTESY OF MARCELLA ROSEN

75 percent of those responding to our ads [by clicking on to the IsraellsOnIt website] placed in the New York Times online are under the age of 45.

#### What are some of the other themes of your ads?

They include "How To Drink Seawater," which describes Israel's advances in desalination and recycling of wastewater; "How To Freeze A Breast Tumor To Death," about a painless, 15-minute procedure that freezes and kills benign tumors and is experimenting with malignant tumors; and "How To Hack A Hacker," developed by an

elite Israeli army unit of cybersecurity intelligence experts. They have an innovative technique of protecting sensitive data by creating fake data and letting hackers think they have succeeded in obtaining important information.

#### Would it be more effective to produce ads that combat false statements about Israel, like it being an apartheid state?

We don't think that's the way to go. It would be spreading a negative image of Israel. Don't do your enemy's job. And as for countering negative headlines by arguing politics or military strategies, we lost that battle a long time ago. We prefer to accent the positive. Think about the success of ads for Volkswagen cars over the years. After all, it's an ugly car made by our former enemies. But the ads didn't say 'we're sorry for World War II,' they said, in effect, we make inexpensive cars that run well.

#### What's your plan going forward?

We need a long-term, well-financed media campaign. We are operating at present through small gifts and a grant of \$75,000. We are using top creative professionals but that's expensive. We think our work is long overdue and pioneering, but it can't be done with just a few ads. It's important for people to know that while Israel makes mistakes, like every country, it is striving to do good, and has come up with so many innovations that improve all of our lives.

**Gary Rosenblatt**