

THE ISRAEL TOURISM

PLAYBOOK

*TOUR
PLANNING AND
PROMOTION
GUIDE*

ISRAEL...
"I care. And I'm going."



One of Its Kind

Visiting Israel is a unique experience. Rare is the destination whose impact reverberates in the lives of so many people before, during and after a visit.

For the Jewish community in North America, visiting Israel embodies the vital connection between the community of Jews living in the Land of Israel and those living in the Diaspora. For the individual tourist, a visit may be an act of solidarity, an expression of pride, a personal spiritual journey, a relaxing vacation, or all of the above. The impact often lasts a lifetime and inspires others to make the journey.

This **Israel Tourism Playbook: A Tour Planning and Promotion Guide** contains the practical guidelines necessary to organize and promote a group trip to Israel. In addition, it includes ideas on how you and others can help promote existing trips, as well as key actions you can take while in Israel to encourage visits to the Jewish State. By promoting tourism to Israel, you make a lasting and positive impact on the lives of community members.

We look forward to seeing you in Israel soon!

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What makes Israel unique? Why do so many people the world over travel to Israel? What is it about this tiny country that is so impressive? Why, in short, should my community strive to visit Israel this year and, in fact, every year?

- **Our Jewish Past, Present and Future** - For every Jew, Israel provides a unique window to our historic and ancient past. Israel is a living and vivacious embodiment of our present and an investment in our future. The creation of Israel is arguably the most significant achievement of the Jewish People in more than two millennia, and every visit to this wondrous land becomes a powerful, meaningful personal experience.
- **The Land** - Geographically tiny yet topographically diverse, Israel offers visitors virtually any experience desired. From the snow-covered Hermon in the north, to the heat of the lowest point on earth — the Dead Sea — in the south, Israel offers accessible diversity. The rolling green hills of the Galilee are a quick, comfortable drive away from the expansive Negev desert.
- **Civilizations** - Israel is an archeological treasure chest, where you can effortlessly examine the telling remnants of history's greatest empires.
- **Religion and Spirit** - The wellspring of three major monotheistic religions — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — Israel is also the world capital of the Bahai faith and a major center for the Druze. The concentration of so many varied places of worship makes Israel truly unique.
- **The Cities** - Jerusalem's permeating presence is an experience unto itself — rare is the person who is unmoved by her beauty. The modern city of Tel Aviv is an action-packed powerhouse, truly a city that never stops. Haifa's evergreen Carmel Mountains and Bahai Gardens are must-sees, as are Eilat, the Galilee and so many other areas.
- **The Stunning Seas** - Four of them have defined Israel's geography from time immemorial: The azure Mediterranean in the west, the fresh water Sea of Galilee (Kinneret) in the north, the remarkable Dead Sea in the east, and the tropical Red Sea in the south. Whether sun, scuba or spa is your thing, Israel has it all.
- **A Cultural Cornucopia** - Museums, opera, and symphony orchestras, along with dozens of theater, dance, chamber music and contemporary music companies, define culture in Israel today.
- **The People of Israel** - A colorful mosaic of culture, character and language, the people of Israel are as unique as they are varied. Sometimes boisterous and always vivacious, it's the personal connection with Israelis that drives many people to return again and again.

ISRAEL: For Every Reason in the World!

Getting Started

Whether you are an established rabbi or a committed community member, you can organize a trip to Israel. The first step is **an unequivocal decision on your part to go to Israel**. As you work toward your goal, you will find that others are attracted to and encouraged by your explicit and public commitment to travel to Israel.

Why should I be interested in organizing a trip?

Organizing a trip to Israel provides a sense of great personal satisfaction that comes when you “do good” for yourself, your community and Israel.

A. Synagogue/Temple/Congregational Trips.

There are many reasons why a group from your synagogue should make a visit to Israel in the near future.

For Rabbis:

1. A trip to Israel is an excellent way to forge deeper, more meaningful relationships with your congregants.
2. It provides outstanding opportunities to interact with trip participants in exciting ways not normally possible.
3. Where else could you pray at the Western Wall on Friday night, and then eat a festive Shabbat meal at a hotel overlooking Jerusalem’s Old City walls?

For Congregants:

1. A trip to Israel can personalize and deepen their connection to Israel and Judaism, leading to a richer Jewish life.
2. Traveling with the rabbi and others from the synagogue provides a chance to develop new relationships, ultimately strengthening your congregation.

For everyone, a trip to Israel is an important opportunity to be in the heart of Jewish life and to have a great time!

B. Regional/National Organizational Trips.

Regional and national organizations are key figures in the landscape of the Jewish community. Organizational trips are excellent tools for fostering relationships and cooperation among geographically dispersed constituents, highlighting Israel-based projects supported by the institution and encouraging increased lay leader involvement. Additionally, Israel trips are an exceptional way to attract new members and bolster the organization’s reach, strength and profile.

Who will help me plan a trip to Israel?

We will! First, this guide is designed to help you from start to finish. In addition, the Israel Ministry of Tourism has a comprehensive website (www.goisrael.com) that features a special section

to help you plan a trip. Also on the site you will find an updated list of travel agents and tour operators (www.goisrael.com/planningyourtrip/findtouroop.asp) who provide services for the Israel-bound tourist. In this guide, we provide helpful tips on how best to select a tour organizer. And, you are always welcome to contact the Ministry of Tourism regional offices across the U.S. and Canada.

What are some of the flight options?

Numerous airlines service Israel. El Al Israel Airlines, Continental Airlines and Air Canada, for example, all offer non-stop service from select North American gateways. In addition, nearly 20 European carriers fly from North America to Israel via Europe. Compare carriers by price, convenience of departure gateways, and overall time spent en route.



How can you strengthen Jewish life in your congregation?

Bring your congregation to Israel!

How can you raise more money for critical community or organizational needs?

Bring your constituents to Israel!

How can you really help Israel?

Organize a trip to Israel!

How far in advance should a trip be planned?

Your departure date should be coordinated with your tour organizer. The rule is to work far enough in advance to allow ample time to plan and — more importantly — to promote your trip to Israel.

When is the best time of year to visit Israel?

It is always a great time to visit. There are special times to be in Israel, such as during the Jewish holidays and festivals. In terms of climate and weather, consider this: From April to October, Israel has virtually no rain, and in the summer months the weather is temperate to hot. From November



LOCALE	JAN.	MARCH	JULY	NOV.
Jerusalem	43-54	47-61	70-90	54-66
Tel Aviv	48-66	51-68	75-95	55-75
Haifa	46-63	47-70	70-86	56-73
Safed	37-50	43-55	65-84	54-66
Tiberias	48-65	51-72	73-98	59-78
Dead Sea	53-69	60-78	83-102	65-80

through March, the weather is usually cooler with some rain. Aside from enjoying off-season rates during the winter months, tourists often get to enjoy the other treats of the Israeli winter — abundant flowers, lush green grass and, occasionally, light snowfall in Jerusalem and other high grounds.

How can I afford a trip?

Aside from the knowledge that you are actively helping Israel and simultaneously making a difference in the lives of those who travel with you, it's possible to arrange a tangible reward for your efforts — namely a free trip. Many tour operators will offer a free trip for every set number of paid trips. If you are the driving force behind a group trip to Israel, your trip can be a well-earned benefit.

How long should the tour last?

The options vary, depending on the overall purpose of the trip. Trips designed for first-time tourists or those desiring a more in-depth exploration should last between 7–14 days. Remember that once you have paid the airfare, extra days cost very little.



Who will meet and guide the group?

Your tour operator has representatives in Israel who will meet your group upon arrival and handle necessary arrangements in the country. They will also arrange for an English-speaking, government-licensed tour guide to accompany your group. Israeli tour guides are required to complete an intensive two-year training course and pass exams to prove a multifaceted knowledge of Israel — from archaeology to Zionism. If you know of a particular guide you would like to have on your tour, let your travel organizer know.

Is it safe to visit Israel?

Yes. In the search for striking stories, the media rarely portray the reality in Israel. What's the reality? First, that millions of people live normal, everyday lives in Israel. Israelis send children to school, go to work, eat in restaurants, go to movies, meet with friends, fall in love — in short, they live lives just like yours.

Second, even during the recent tourist slump Israel experienced, more than 3 million tourists visited Israel and returned safely home. Put succinctly, visiting Israel is a safe, enjoyable and uplifting experience. Just ask someone who has been to Israel recently — and come and see for yourself!

Step-by-Step

Organizing and Promoting a Customized Tour to Israel

The following section provides information to help you plan and promote a trip to Israel. Common elements essential to planning and promoting trips developed by various institutions — synagogues and organizations — are discussed in detail below and information relevant to specific institutions is noted as necessary. Read the following information, and when you start planning, feel free to use the step-by-step checklist found in the **appendix** pocket.



Step 1

Establish the Leader, Set Goals and Enlist Support

A. The Leader. The first essential step is to identify the person (or team) in your institution with the interpersonal skills and enthusiasm to drive the overall process. No experience is necessary to qualify — only the will to succeed.

1. **Synagogue Trips** - The leader of a congregational trip is often the rabbi. If not, the selected leader should always coordinate the trip planning process with the rabbi and synagogue leadership.

2. **Community and Organizational Trips** - Since planning and promoting a community trip involves cutting across organizational lines and synagogue affiliation, a small Israel tourism committee should be established, consisting of key community members who are associated or have excellent relationships with leaders throughout the community. The greatest challenge in planning and promoting regional or national organizational trips lies in effectively reaching a geographically dispersed constituency. Therefore, it is essential that the tourism committee consist of local, personable, well-connected individuals who maintain strong ties to the central office that is sponsoring the trip.

B. The Goal. The leader or tourism committee, together with other key support people, should define a concrete goal for the trip being planned. For example: "Our organization will send a group of at least 45 people on a mission to Israel this November."

C. Enlist Support. To attain your goal and make your efforts more effective, enlist the active support of recent "returnees" from Israel, as well as other motivated people.

1. **Create a Tourism Committee** - It is essential to organize a tourism committee or a promotion team. Include as many recent visitors to Israel in this group as possible, as their experience and enthusiasm are invaluable assets. Make sure your team includes a variety of people with excellent interpersonal skills and key relationships within the community.

2. **Assign a Point Person** - It is essential that there be a primary contact person available for fielding questions and providing information about the trip. This may be the trip leader or a member of the tourism committee or promotion team. The point person is responsible for:

- Responding to trip inquiries received by phone, fax, email or sign-up sheet;
- Ensuring that material is sent to people expressing even a slight interest;
- Creating and maintaining a list of all people who have expressed interest in the trip and organizing that database by "trip status" (for example, Going, Considering, Not Going). It's important to save this database for future trips — perhaps those who have decided not to travel now will do so in the future. Additionally, you'll want to enlist the support of those who did travel for promoting future trips.

Step 2

Determine Trip Type and Preferred Travel Period

The type of trip you choose to implement can determine the best travel period, as well as the number of people joining you and their characteristics. Therefore, selecting the trip type is an important step in the overall planning and promotion process.

You can craft an endless variety of trips by targeting one or more demographics, focusing on a particular issue or theme, or merging a demographic with a specific issue. In addition, different types of institutions can work together, adding another dimension.

The following table illustrates the various factors that may influence your trip type. Use it to determine the components that are right for your community or organization. Your travel organizer will then use these components as the guide to help you draft the right itinerary for your trip.



New Approaches Work!

The Combined Jewish Philanthropy of Greater Boston and Hadassah teamed up with American and British physicians to create an international medical conference in Israel, attracting doctors and leaders from around the globe.

Trip Type = Institution(s) + Demographic Target(s) + Trip Focus		
Institution	Demographic Targets	Trip Focus (or Theme)
Synagogue	<p>Age: Bat/bar mitzvah, teens, students, young adults, adults, seniors</p> <p>Family Status: Singles, couples, family, mixed</p>	<p>Jewish: General Jewish, pilgrimage holidays (Passover, Shavuot or Succot), Judaism through the ages, future of Judaism, Zionism</p>
Region/ State/ City/ Community	<p>Gender: Men, women</p> <p>Israel Experience: First-timers, repeat visitors, former Israelis, potential immigrants</p>	<p>History: Ancient and/or modern history, politics and peace, in the footsteps of Israel's heroes</p>
Regional/ National Organization	<p>Membership Status: Members, new members, non-members, outreach</p> <p>Involvement Status: Major givers, young leadership, lay, project, potential leaders</p> <p>Geographic Location: Local community members, joint venture with other communities or organizations, regional or national trip</p> <p>Profession: Doctor, lawyer, professionals, business executives, hi-tech, biotech, investors, real estate, brokers</p>	<p>Israeli Society and Culture: Business, medicine, technology, architecture, high culture, haute cuisine, aliyah and absorption, explorations of Sephardi or Ashkenazi culture</p> <p>Wellness and Action: Spa, sports, adventure, ski, scuba/snorkel, fun and sun, biking</p> <p>Nature and Ecology: Hiking/trekking, bird-watching, desert ecology, water issues, wildflower spotting, etc.</p>

Step 3

Select a Travel Organizer, Consider Pricing Options and Create a Promotional Schedule

Your travel organizer is probably the most critical component of planning and executing a successful trip to Israel. Following are some clues that will help you select the right travel service professional. Use the checklist in the **appendix** pocket as a working tool (you may want to make photocopies for future use).

A. Who is a Travel Organizer? A travel or tour organizer is either a travel agent or tour operator who assists you in planning and implementing your trip to Israel.

1. **A tour operator** will specialize in providing tourism services in Israel (and often other destinations). As such, they have a staff in Israel who work to meet your trip's requirements and will run the tour from start to finish. By working with them directly, you usually end up saving money. Most operators work nationally, not locally.
2. **A travel agent** is usually locally based, may or may not specialize in trips to Israel, and works as a middleman between you and the tour operator. As such, travel agents usually take a commission, adding to the overall cost of the trip. However, since they are locally based and may work with several tour operators, you may benefit from convenience and selection.

For your convenience, visit the "Planning Your Trip" section on our website at www.goisrael.com.

B. Selecting a Travel Organizer.

1. **Get Several Proposals** - Ask a number of travel organizers to prepare and send you travel proposals based on your group's plans. Make sure the proposal covers deadlines for trip deposits, as well as refund conditions. You will also want to inform your tour organizer of special considerations to be included in the final pricing (like wheelchair accessibility, dietary requirements etc.).
2. **Compare Quotes** - Compare the proposals on the basis of price and services. Price discrepancies might appear because one tour operator offers fewer meals or more modest hotels than another. The number of "days of leisure" might also account for price discrepancies, as it means fewer guided tours are included in the price. The same applies when optional tours are included in a price quote. Make sure that all tips, taxes and transfers are included in the pricing, as well as entrance fees to all national parks, museums and galleries.
3. **Get it in Writing** - After selecting a proposal, make sure that all changes beyond the original proposal are also confirmed in writing.



C. Trip Pricing Considerations. As your travel organizer prepares a trip quote, keep in mind the following elements that can be built into the pricing:

1. **Free Trips for the Group Leader/Organizer** - Check if your travel organizers will offer a free trip for every set number of paid trips. You may also decide to ask for an additional number of free (or discounted) trips to be built into the overall cost — perhaps as "giveaway" marketing incentives. However, since these costs are distributed among all the paying passengers, care must be taken to maintain competitive pricing.
2. **Fundraising Through Trip Costs** - A trip to Israel is often used as a way to raise funds for synagogue, community or organizational projects. By letting your travel organizer understand your needs, these costs can be built into the pricing. Again, care must be taken to maintain competitive pricing.

Step 4

Prepare Trip Marketing Materials



In order to effectively promote your trip to Israel, you'll need effective marketing materials. Aside from the excellent promotional materials you can order for free from the Israel Ministry of Tourism, for best results it is also important to create simple and effective materials specific to your tour.

A. Order Free Marketing Materials. The Israel Ministry of Tourism provides free promotional materials for those planning a trip to Israel. For more details about each piece, see the order form in the **appendix** of this guide. To order, fax the form, order online at www.goisraelshop.com, or call us toll free at 1-888-77-ISRAEL.

Our free ready-to-use marketing materials include:

- 1. Promotional Brochures and Leaflets** - Full-color, inspiring and information packed, ranging from detailed visitor companions and magazines to simple essentials, such as country and city maps.

3. Invest in the Future - In order to attract a greater number of participants, some organizations will subsidize the cost of a trip to Israel. Since the trip often leads to greater personal involvement and financial commitment upon return, organizations can recoup the investment over time.

D. Create a Planning Timeline/Schedule. Once you have the people and information in place from completing the previous steps, create a schedule that details when and how to best execute your promotional efforts, which follow below. Work with your tour organizer to set key milestones and deadlines — for example, a deadline for receiving deposits. After setting these dates, plan backwards to ensure you have enough time for planning and promoting the trip.



Free Materials! *The Israel Ministry of Tourism has colorful ready-to-use materials just for you.*

Call toll free 1-888-77-ISRAEL or order online at www.goisraelshop.com

2. **Promotional Videos** - Use our promotional videos to help bring Israel alive. From testimonials designed for different age groups to videos about Jerusalem and Israel's history, these videos will attract, explain and inspire potential travelers to make the trip.

3. **Trip Promotion Shells and Letterhead** - Print your trip's key information and itinerary on these colorful shells. Each shell contains beautiful photographs relating to the following types of trips: general, Jewish interest, adventure, health/wellness, as well as bird lovers. We can even provide you with the official Israel letterhead that you can use to promote your trip!

B. Prepare Additional Trip Promotion Tools. There are many easy, budget-minded and effective ways to enhance your promotional efforts:



1. **Promotional Letters and Emails** - Alter the promotional letters in the **appendix** of this guide or draft original letters to promote your trip. Use our letterhead for promotional letters and always make sure to provide local contact information (particularly important for regional or national organizations).

2. **Press Release About the Trip** - Write a short press release (covering the basic what, when, where, why and how of the trip), include quotes from key leaders traveling, and tourism figures, and send it to the local Jewish newspaper, as well as the general community paper.

- Target the appropriate editor, giving the focus of your trip: religion, business or community.

- Send to local neighborhood circulars and publish in synagogue newsletters and websites.

- Regional and national organizations should provide a boilerplate press release that local tourism committees can alter to suit their community by attributing quotes to local leaders and the like.

- You may want to visit the American Jewish Press Association web directory at www.ajpa.org to find local and regional Jewish papers.

3. **Talking Points** - Draft a list of key talking points for use in recruitment efforts. Tourism committee members should have a copy. For synagogue trips, talking points should be incorporated into the rabbi's weekly sermon. See sample talking points in the **appendix**.

4. **Promotional Flyer/Ad** - Create a simple one-page flyer summarizing your pitch in a graphically pleasing way. Use photographs and provide contact information. Print or photocopy on brightly colored paper and distribute widely. The flyer can also be resized and published as an ad for the Jewish newspaper or synagogue bulletin. Organizations promoting a regional or national trip should leave space on the flyer/ad for locally based tourism committees to add their specific contact information.

5. **Promotional Table** - Prepare the components necessary for a trip promotion table in high-traffic areas of synagogues and other Jewish institutions. The table should remain throughout the trip promotion period. Use a large Israeli flag as a tablecloth to attract attention. The successful promotional table includes:

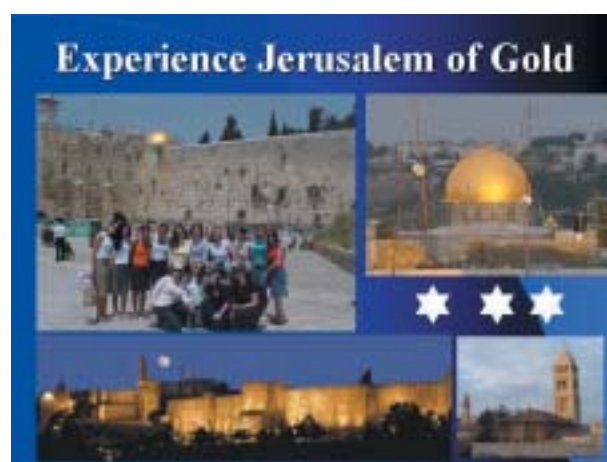
- Trip flyers, information, the itinerary, official invitation letters, as well as leaflets and brochures;

- **A**TV/VCR with a promotional video running on a continuous loop;
- **P**hotographs (from prior trips to Israel or from any other source) in a photo album;
- **Y**our PowerPoint presentation (described below) can be played on a continuous loop if a computer is available, or as CD handouts;
- **T**rip sign-up sheets and pens so that people can list their contact information if they are interested (collect name, phone number, email and full address). Tourism committee members should collect the sheets frequently to make sure that inquiries are answered promptly;
- **A** prominently displayed list of constituents and leaders who will be making the journey to Israel;
- **S**tores and articles highlighting previous trips or other items that make travel to Israel accessible and desirable;
- **I**sraeli treats such as candy — to give a taste of Israel — can usually be purchased in local kosher supermarkets or online.

6. PowerPoint Presentation - Create a simple PowerPoint presentation with images of sites you will visit and motivational messages about the importance of joining the trip to Israel. Email to constituents so they can view it at their leisure and encourage them to distribute it widely to their email contacts. Burn copies of the presentation on CD and distribute on the promotional table or via mail. Use it for group promotional opportunities, such as at trip information evenings. Download great photographs for your presentation at the photo gallery at www.goisrael.com.

7. Dedicated Web Page - Create a simple web page with photographs and key information about the trip. The page should be linked prominently from the institution's home page. Community and organizational trip organizers should request that local Jewish institutions — synagogues not officially affiliated with the organization, for example — also link to the information from their websites. Make sure the information on the web page is up to date and always publicize the web address on flyers and information. Provide the names and email addresses of local primary contact people. Listing the names and email addresses of people who have decided to join the trip might be an effective way to extend your marketing reach. Post your PowerPoint presentation for viewing and downloading.

Quick Help: A colorful PowerPoint presentation highlighting key sites can be an effective promotional tool.



Step 5

Implement the 3-Rs: Reach Out, Register and Retain

Now that you have prepared the materials you need to promote your trip, it's time to put them to use. Although there are countless ways in which you and tourism committee members can market the trip, there are three key thrusts, which we call the 3-Rs:

- **Reaching out** to potential participants;
- **Registering** travelers [e.g., turning interested people into fully registered and committed travelers];
- **Retaining** the registrants until departure.

A. The First R - Reaching Out. This refers to raising awareness about and generating interest in your trip. Aside from spreading the word, it is essential to obtain the names and contact information of as many people as possible who express interest in the trip, *whether or not they will actually travel*. This list will become the basis of a long-term Israel tourism recruitment effort that will get easier over time. Here's how to raise awareness about your trip:

1. Talk About It -

- **From the Pulpit** — It is important for the rabbi to emphasize in weekly sermons the importance of going to Israel. The sermon is the best opportunity to illustrate how Israel is relevant to the congregant's Jewish identity and personal spiritual life. It is also a good time to announce the names of the people who have committed to join the trip and direct congregants to the synagogue's trip promotion table.
- **In Friendly Conversations** — While conversing with congregants, constituents, friends, family and acquaintances, let them know about the trip, why you are going and why it is important for them to join you.
- **To Community and Movement Leadership** — Make sure leaders throughout the community know of your trip — particularly if it is open to individuals not affiliated with your synagogue or organization. Synagogue trip organizers should certainly inform their movement's national leadership and synagogue's president, who can often provide assistance in trip planning, recruitment or implementation.



Promote today's Israel trip with tomorrow's visit in mind.

Those who respond, "Israel? Not at this moment," are the basis for future trips.

- 2. Mail Promotional Letters** - Mail letters to constituents and other contacts. It's important to send three or four mailings — or even as often as once a month — to keep potential travelers informed of trip plans and to encourage participation. Include trip brochures, highlight interesting sites on the itinerary, and list the people who have joined the trip. Always provide the contact information of the local tourism committee, primary point person and website in a prominent area of the letter.
- 3. Send Email Notification** - Use email lists at your disposal to send letters to constituents. Include as attachments the promotional flyer, your PowerPoint presentation, and a link to your website. These mailings should be spread out over time to further drive interest.
- 4. Publicize in Synagogue Bulletins and Shabbat Program Leaflets** - Promote the trip in synagogue bulletins mailed to member households. Use the press release and create a permanent ad to be published in each edition of the bulletin during the recruitment period. Make sure a small ad or important information appears in the weekly leaflet distributed on each Shabbat to members and guests.

5. **Distribute at School and Educational Venues** - If the administrators of area Jewish schools and/or informal youth groups agree, provide the children with a trip brochure and ask them to give it to their parents for consideration.

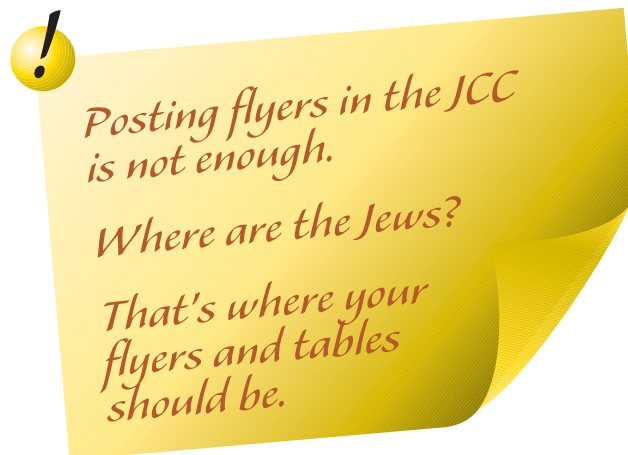
6. **Post Promotional Flyers** - Enlist members of the tourism committee to canvass your community and post the promotional flyers in areas frequented by the Jewish community, like public bulletin boards in grocery stores, drugstores, markets and bookstores. Ask the owners of smaller kosher supermarkets, butchers, bakeries and restaurants to allow you to post the flyer in the window near the entrance or on the door. The same goes for Judaica shops, bagel shops, delis, restaurants, Jewish bookstores, the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Federation building, Jewish schools and local travel agents. If you are promoting a specialty trip (business and hi-tech, for example) distribute flyers to relevant affinity associations and groups. Remember to check on your flyers every so often, as they may need to be reposted if they are removed.

7. **Activate the Promotional Table** - Set up the promotional table and use a mobile version for promoting the trip at community-wide events like Israel Independence Day celebrations. Set up a table in potential areas, such as the lobby of the local Jewish Community Center or even in front of a bagel shop on a Sunday morning!

8. **Approach Key Individuals** - It is important to approach key individuals with a sincere and thoughtful invitation to join you on the trip. Consider in advance why you believe this person would benefit from the trip and what you think his/her contribution would be to the group traveling — and let them know.

9. **Issue the Press Release** - Have an individual with ties to the management of newspapers and media deliver the press release to ensure that it gets published, and perhaps more prominently placed.

10. **Arrange Media Appearances** - After offering information about your trip to the local media, follow up with an offer to be interviewed on TV, cable and radio talk shows



Flyers and Brochures:

This colorful flyer provides key information about a community-wide mission to Israel.



and Jewish radio shows. Consider why your trip should be of interest to each media outlet, and target your pitch for media coverage accordingly. Ask media outlets if they would be interested in receiving updates from Israel or to interview you after the trip, or both.

11. **Hold Parlor Meetings** - Organize and hold small group meetings for a select number of potential participants. Ask members to host the event in their house. Show the PowerPoint presentation, answer questions, show a video, and distribute maps and other colorful materials to build excitement.
12. **Special Promotional Events** - To build excitement, invite an outside speaker to address congregants about Israel and the upcoming trip. The Israel Ministry of Tourism will be happy to help with making possible contacts or send a representative to speak to your potential travelers.
13. **Give Away a Free Trip** - As mentioned, you can include in the cost a free or discounted trip (or domestic weekend away) when negotiating with your tour organizer. Use it as a giveaway to garner wider publicity and provide an added incentive for people to sign on. You may decide to allow everyone to enter the sweepstakes in order to maximize the number of people signing up for more information about the trip.

B. The Second R - Register Travelers. Registration is the stage in which people who have expressed interest now make a firm commitment to join the trip. That commitment usually involves a completed form and a trip deposit. Work with your travel organizer to determine the amount of the deposit, the deadline for payment, and deposit refund conditions.

1. **Provide Registration Forms** - Make sure that registration forms are always available. Forms should be posted on your web page for download, emailed to those interested in the trip, and included in major mailings to lists in the possession of your synagogue, Federation or organization.
2. **Ask for the Deposit** - Make clear that a deposit is required to reserve a place on the trip. If people have not sent in the deposit on their own accord, tourism



Giveaways create buzz. Use a free trip to Israel to drive excitement and obtain the contact information of those interested in a trip to Israel now - or later.

committee members should ask for the deposit. If your trip is limited in space, remind people that it's "first come, first serve."

3. **High Level Personal Appeals** - Sometimes it will take a special appeal to convince someone to join the trip. Be sensitive to which potential travelers might need a heartfelt personal appeal from the rabbi or other community leader to join the Israel tour.
4. **Appeals by Registrants to Others** - There is no one better to promote your trip than those who are already



committed and excited to go! Think of organizing a group of personable and well-respected trip registrants to personally call those who are undecided about traveling to Israel.

C. The Third R - Retention of Registrants. “Retention”

refers to actions that ensure that those people who have registered follow through on their commitment to travel. Retention efforts are important since the promotion period for a trip can sometimes last for months.

1. **Communicate Regularly** - Send information about the trip regularly to registrants. Include interesting facts about Israel and sites that you will visit, and articles and essays about Israel — all to deepen knowledge and generate excitement. Always include a growing list of those who have decided to join and make an appeal for each recipient to invite others to join the trip.

2. **Provide Trip Details** - As early as possible, provide practical information about the trip. Details include: an itinerary and map with trip route, a brief biography of your tour guide, packing lists, hotels and hotel contact information, money issues and even weather forecasts. Make sure the itinerary is written as a marketing document — not a technical itinerary with extraneous information used by trip planners.

3. **Pre-Trip Educational Programming** - Use your community’s educational capabilities to provide a handful of short, punchy classes for trip registrants on subjects as varied as Hebrew or the history of Israel. Classes help maintain excitement, as well as create and deepen relationships between the travelers long before departure.



Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee

Photo: Itamar Grinberg

4. **Involve Registrants in Trip Planning and Promotion** - Some registrants might like to join the tourism committee. Registrants can make excellent trip promoters and gain valuable experience that can be used in the future when organizing additional trips to Israel.

5. **When Necessary, Acknowledge Bad News** - If news out of the Middle East is bad, it is important to be in touch with registrants. Here are some ideas of what can be communicated:

- Acknowledge anxiety if expressed by registrants.
- Reaffirm your personal commitment to going.
- Review the safety precautions that are integrated into most organized tours to Israel.
- Reiterate the “big picture:” the fact that tourists are safe in Israel and that millions visit annually and enjoy.
- If necessary, consider hosting an orientation meeting to address concerns and review trip plans.
- Provide good or interesting news about the trip — more members joining or new sites added to the itinerary.

!
Initiate optional Hebrew lessons to the group before the trip. It's a fun and practical way to foster retention.

Step 6

While in Israel

While in Israel, you can begin laying the foundation for future trips by taking the following actions:

A. Send Regular Updates from Israel. Before leaving home, have trip participants create a contact list of individuals whom they think would like to receive updates about their trip to Israel. Then allow time every other day for participants to summarize their thoughts and communicate updates. Any of the following will do:

1. **Email Updates** - Emailing reports about your experiences in Israel is perhaps the easiest way to communicate with friends and family (see sample in the **appendix**). The computer savvy can augment emails with digital photographs and short videos. Spice up your updates with beautiful electronic postcards of Israel for free from our website at www.goisrael.com.
2. **Fax Communications** - Send one fax to a trusted source back home who will then fax-forward your report to the intended recipients.
3. **Telephone Calls** - Personal phone calls to friends in North America are not as expensive as one might think. Those receiving the call from Israel will be thrilled and are bound to get a good sense of the viability of traveling to Israel themselves. Calls also allow an opportunity for candid questions and quick, real-time responses.
4. **Postcards and Letters from Israel** - Take a few minutes to pen a letter or send a quick postcard to friends and family.

Postcard with Pizzazz.

Send unique postcards that make Israel come alive!

- B. Take Digital Photographs.** Make sure someone on the trip is capturing highlights on a digital camera. Send the photos as updates and use them for a PowerPoint presentation summary of your trip. Use this presentation as a promotional tool for your next trip!
- C. Create Your Own Video.** Use a video camera (digital or tape) to create your own promotional video about the trip. Interview participants, asking them to comment on what they like most about Israel, how they feel in terms of safety, and how the trip has impacted them.
- D. Establish Contact with Israelis.** Whether native born or immigrants from your community, make sure your group has contact with Israelis, since it's often the personal connection that drives people back.
- E. Explore Options for Returning while in Israel.** Factor in time in the tour to explore options for returning to Israel. Leaders of synagogue trips that include student or teen participants should arrange an Israel Programs Fair and visit the campus of an Israel program. For adult trips, consider visiting centers for adult education or similar venues.



Step 7

Upon Your Return

After returning from your trip to Israel, you are poised to make regular trips to Israel an integral part of your institution's values. Build on the enthusiasm and excitement of your recent trip to make marketing and recruiting for future trips an easier process. Try the following:

- A. Talk About It.** At every opportunity — from the pulpit to casual conversations — speak about the trip, its highlights and the impact it made on you and others. Encourage constituents to follow your example and visit Israel.
- B. Thank and Honor Participants.** Write a letter to all participants and thank them for joining you. Also, thank by name members of the tourism committee and anyone else who made this trip a reality. Encourage people to join the tourism committee for future trips.
- C. Write About It.** Publish your thoughts about the trip in synagogue bulletins, community papers and organizational newsletters. Send a press release to local media and Jewish papers. The same media outlets



MISSION WITH A MISSION

A Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) solidarity mission brought 105 Conservative rabbinical students and faculty from New York to Israel, including Jerusalem. The participants, sponsored by Israel's Ministry of Tourism, have committed themselves to becoming "tourism ambassadors" upon their return to the United States. ■

Post Trip Publicity:

Publicity about your trip upon return is essential for organizational PR and sends a positive message about touring Israel.



It's NOT over when it's over.

Successful trip promotion is ultimately an ongoing endeavor.

contacted during your promotional efforts should be encouraged to publish your first-hand impressions of Israel — or host you for an interview.

- D. Set the Date for the Next Israel Trip.** Build on the enthusiasm generated by the trip to launch recruitment efforts for the next trip. Consider a trip for a different demographic segment or with a different focus.
- E. Post Names of Participants.** Post the names in a prominent place at your institution, and in publications, so people can talk to them.
- F. Hold Group Reunions.** Why not relive the good times? Get together for a reunion six weeks after the trip to share experiences, photographs and videos. Use the event to organize interested participants into a new trip planning and promotion team to help you promote future trips to Israel.
- G. Provide Educational Options.** Encourage tour participants to further their knowledge of Israel, Judaism and Zionism through community-based, online and Israel-based educational opportunities.
- H. Solicit Feedback About the Trip.** Get feedback from participants about trip quality and marketing efforts. Make changes where necessary and consider new ideas to make the next trip even more successful.

Teen Trips

Tips for Promoting Teen Trips to Israel within the Community

Synagogues, Federations, communities and regional and national organizations operate and/or sponsor trips to Israel for teenagers. Trips for teenagers can serve as a key element of a child's Jewish education, strengthening Jewish identity and laying the foundation for return trips in the college and post-college years.

Teens themselves enjoy making friends on the trip, touring Israel, and experiencing life away from home. Trips are almost always a horizon-expanding experience for teenagers who learn a great deal about Israel, Judaism and themselves.

Working with Teenagers

Those working directly with teenagers have an important opportunity to inculcate a strong desire to go to Israel and develop a meaningful connection with the land and the people. The following actions can be undertaken to motivate teens to visit Israel.

- **Early Intervention** — In school and at home, start the Israel educational process as early as possible, thereby inculcating for the longest period the notion that going to Israel during the teenage years is just “what is done.” Parents can take advantage of community funds and savings plans that offset trip costs and make “saving for the Israel trip” a part of a child's upbringing.
- **Inspiration and Ideology** — Throughout their educational upbringing, teens should be exposed to inspirational historical characters and the ideological underpinnings of Israel.
- **The Israeli Connection** — Create an email connection between teens in North America and Israel. Educators can help guide interaction with the ultimate result being a greater desire to go to Israel.
- **Use the Media** — Have teens returning from Israel write letters in the local media or the school newspaper about their experiences. Utilize the Jewish press and wider community media, as well.
- **Speaking Tours** — Arrange for articulate returning teens to speak at synagogues and various schools about their experience and the importance of going to Israel.
- **Honor Those Who Go** — Honor and celebrate the teens who are currently in Israel, those planning to go in the near future, and those who have recently returned.



A trip to Israel is an integral part of a Jewish child's education. It can be as effective as years of schooling.



Parents

Sending children to Israel is a classic high-involvement decision as it creates anxiety on a number of levels. As such, all efforts must be made to mitigate the anxiety felt by parents in making the decision to send children to Israel on educational programs. Consider the following points:

- **Parent Involvement** — Enlist parents of teens who recently returned from Israel to help in actively communicating with families considering a trip for their teenage children. Through informal parlor meetings,



phone calls or even email communications, these parents can help families overcome concerns about sending a child to Israel and focus instead on the lifelong educational and spiritual benefits that traveling to Israel provides.

- **Trips for Parents** — Arrange parent trips to Israel, both as a means of increasing communal involvement as well as educating them about Israel. Such trips will undoubtedly lower parental anxiety about trips to Israel for their children.

- **Effective Messaging** — Crafting and sending messages relevant to parents. For example:
 - An educational experience in Israel is an integral part of the Jewish education that you give your child and is a proven tool for strengthening Jewish identity.
 - Israel trips are about connecting to that which transcends the individual — Jewish history. The only way to experience Jewish “history-in-the-making” is to go to Israel.

Addressing Safety and Security

Concerns about physical safety in Israel account for decreased tourism rates during times of turmoil. For some, overcoming this fear and anxiety is a serious challenge. There may be times when you'll need to effectively address those concerns. A few actions you can take to help potential visitors think about safety in Israel in a positive light include:

- A. Returnee Speaking Tour.** People who recently returned from a visit to Israel can help provide realistic and timely perspectives of what travel to Israel really entails. By relating experiences and feelings regarding personal well-being and trip safety while in Israel, as well as the fears they may have harbored in advance of going, returnees can lower the anxiety of potential visitors. Therefore, it is essential to integrate returnees into tourism committees.
- B. Safety Guidelines and Itineraries.** Provide potential visitors with detailed guidelines of safety and security measures taken on Israel trips. Speak to an Israel tour operator to get the details and perhaps even invite tour operators to speak directly to those considering a trip.
- C. Maps and Other Comparison Tools.** Provide tourists with tools to make comparisons and better understand the situation in Israel. For example, offer a map showing where groups are based and which sites are visited, as well as the safety record of tour groups in Israel. Additionally, call us (1-888-77-Israel) to get statistical information, demonstrating that millions of tourists visit each year.
- D. Information Fairs and Parlor Meetings.** Hold special information fairs (or more intimate parlor meetings) and invite a representative of the Israel Ministry of Tourism or Israeli Consulate to attend. Direct exposure to Israelis can boost confidence and tourism.
- E. Celebrate Tourists from Your Area.** Explore ways to publicize the names of people in your area who are now in Israel, are going in the near future or who have returned recently. This can enhance trust that “people just like me” are going to Israel — an understanding that ultimately





fosters increased travel. If the returning tourists agree, publicize their contact information as a means to increase communication between returnees and potential tourists.

- F. Organize a Mock Tour.** A novel idea is to organize a tour in your city or area to simulate a tour in Israel. For example, a guide would accompany the tour, “boundaries” would be set when walking as a group, and participants would “count-off” upon returning to the bus. This tour could either take the group into parts of town otherwise to be avoided or, alternatively, tour attractive, busy areas of town that simulate a bustling Israeli street. The tour can be crafted into an effective recruitment tool for future tours inasmuch as a guided tour of your city is likely to be an enjoyable experience. Either way, it would allow potential tourists to experience the comprehensive security measures taken by the Israel tour operators. This tactic might be particularly suited to parents of teen travelers.
- G. Effective Messaging.** Craft and send messages about the aggressive steps taken to ensure the safety of program participants, as well as others, that cast Israel’s security concerns in a different light.
- H. Reposition Israel’s Security Challenges.** In conversations, remind people that traveling to Israel is safe. A few statements that might be of use are:
 1. Risk permeates our lives — for example, driving is very dangerous. All of us assume reasonable amounts of risk if there is a greater benefit or payoff. The risk assumed by touring Israel is minimal, and the payoff is invaluable to you and our community — securing the Jewish future.
 2. The real “security” issue is not of trips to Israel, since historically they have been extremely safe. The true challenge is the “security” of our Jewish future, and visits to Israel remain the best method of engendering lifelong commitment to and identification with Israel and the Jewish community.



Congratulations!

You now have at your disposal all the tools you'll need to plan a moving, exciting, and memorable trip to Israel. With this playbook and a healthy dose of enthusiasm, you're ready to warm the hearts of all Israelis, provide tangible support to the State of Israel and its citizens, and offer your community the opportunity for the vacation of a lifetime in the Jewish homeland.

We at the Israel Ministry of Tourism thank you for your commitment to and interest in traveling to Israel. We hope that when you visit, you'll come by and let us express our gratitude in person.

Thank you for saying: "Israel. I care. And I'm going!"

Organizing and Promoting a Customized Tour to Israel: A Checklist

Step 1:

Establish a Leader, Set Goals and Enlist Support

- Establish a trip leader to drive the overall planning and promotion effort.
- Set a concrete and specific goal in terms of travel dates and desired number of participants.
- Enlist the active support of others by creating a tourism committee consisting of recent “returnees” from Israel and other key leaders.
- Appoint a primary contact person to respond to trip information inquiries and manage a database of potential travelers.

Step 2:

Determine Trip Type and Preferred Travel Period

- Use the trip type formula (Pg. 7) to create a unique and attractive trip.
- Determine the desired travel period and work out the exact dates with your tour organizer.

Step 3:

Select a Travel Organizer, Consider Pricing Options and Create a Schedule

- Determine which service professional best suits your needs: travel agent or tour operator.
- Select a tour organizer by comparing proposals on price and services delivered. Get it all in writing.
- Together with your tour organizer, set the price of the tour after considering all components.
- Define a deadline for trip deposits and conditions for refunds.
- Establish a trip promotion timeline/schedule by working backwards from the deposit deadline date.

Step 4:

Prepare Trip Marketing Materials

- Use the order form (in this pocket) to order free marketing materials from the Israel Ministry of Tourism.

- Prepare simple and effective trip promotion tools, such as:

- Letters to potential travelers;
- Press releases for local, Jewish and national media;
- Talking points about your trip;
- Trip sign-up sheets for collecting names of interested people in all promotional venues;
- A PowerPoint presentation replete with trip information and beautiful photographs of Israel (available at the photo gallery at www.goisrael.com);
- A dedicated web page, linked prominently from synagogue, community and/or organizational websites;
- Flyers (can be resized or altered to be used as advertisements);
- A promotional table for use in local Jewish institutions, as well as a “mobile” table for special events such as Israel Independence Day celebrations and other community events.

Step 5:

Implement the 3-Rs: Reach Out, Register and Retain

- Reach Out** — Spread the word about your trip to attract interested participants:
 - Talking and speaking opportunities — from the pulpit to casual conversations, the trip needs to be a central and sustained message;
 - Inform community and national leadership about the trip;
 - Send promotional letters and emails to prospective participants;
 - Use mailing lists and email lists and encourage recipients to tell their friends;
 - Publicize the trip regularly in the synagogue bulletin and in leaflets distributed on Shabbat;
 - Arrange to distribute information to parents through children attending Jewish schools and participating in Jewish oriented informal educational programs;
 - Post flyers around the community in businesses frequented by the Jewish community (kosher restaurants, butchers, etc.) and in buildings of the Jewish community such as the Federation and Jewish Community Center;

- Take your promotional table out to where the community congregates — at community-wide events and even bagel shops;
- Issue press releases to local and national (if applicable) Jewish and general media outlets;
- Arrange media appearances and interviews on local and Jewish radio programs, newspapers, and TV stations (cable and network);
- Hold promotional parlor meetings to establish relationships and build confidence and trust;
- Approach key individuals with a personal invitation to join the trip;
- Celebrate and publicize those who have decided to join the trip;
- Hold special events to publicize the trip, such as a keynote speaker, Israeli musician or Israeli film that draws a large and diverse crowd;
- Consider giving away a free trip as a marketing device to generate interest and provide a way to capture the contact information of people who may consider a trip now or in the future.

Register — How to get “interested” people to commit to joining the trip:

- Provide them with a registration form that includes information on deadlines for registration and trip deposits;
- Let people know that space is limited and is filled on a “first come, first served” basis, and the trip deposit is the only way to reserve space;
- Use recognized leaders and registrants who have given a deposit to make a special appeal to those still wavering;
- Hold Israel trip orientation meetings to generate enthusiasm and commitment.

Retaining Registrants — How to ensure registrants ultimately participate on the trip:

- Communicate regularly and enthusiastically with registrants;
- Provide detailed information, such as a marketing-oriented itinerary, trip route, brief biography of your tour guide, packing list, money issues, hotel contact information and more;
- Enlist the support of community educational institutions to provide educational programming to registrants — a mini

course in Hebrew or history of Israel, for example — to maintain high enthusiasm;

- Involve motivated registrants in trip planning and promotion efforts;
- Acknowledge troubling news emanating from the Middle East or Israel and use it as an opportunity to reaffirm your personal commitment to go, and review the trip safety precautions.

Step 6:

While in Israel

- Encourage participants to send regular updates about their experiences to friends and family by email, fax, phone or mail.
- Take digital photographs to share in email updates and for promotion purposes for future trips.
- Create a trip video — including sites and testimonials regarding the trip and personal safety — to use for promoting future trips.
- Make contact with Israelis and establish a personal connection to the people.
- Explore options for returning to Israel while on your trip, including educational and specialty tour options.

Step 7:

Upon Your Return

- Talk about the trip’s impact on the personal and communal levels and encourage others to go.
- Write about your experiences for synagogue news bulletins, as well as local and Jewish media.
- Personally thank the participants who joined you on the trip and honor the efforts of tourism committee members.
- Set a date for the next trip to Israel and build on the excitement generated by the tour to launch a new recruitment campaign.
- Hold group reunions to reminisce, share photographs and encourage participants to form a tourism committee for future trips.
- Encourage tour participants to further their knowledge of Israel through community-based, online, and Israel-based educational opportunities.
- Solicit feedback from trip participants about the program and the overall recruitment effort to make improvements.

Guidelines for Selecting a Tour Organizer: A Checklist

Use these guidelines to select the tour organizer who is best for you.

- Determine which professional service you want to use: travel agent or tour operator.
- Generate a list of questions regarding your trip that you would like the tour organizer to answer in the proposal.
- Solicit written proposals from several tour organizers; review them and clarify issues before comparing quotes.
- Compare proposals on the basis of price and services delivered.
- Ask for references — speak to others who have used the tour organizer for a trip similar to the one you are planning.
- Frequently asked questions to tour organizers include:
 - What* does the price include?
 - Are* tips, taxes and transfers included?
 - How* many “days at leisure” (days without group touring) are built into the tour and why?
 - What* services are provided on “days at leisure?” Meals? Shuttle transportation?
 - How* many “optional tours” (tours on days of leisure) are built into the trip, and what are the costs to participate in them?
 - How* many meals are included in the tour? Note: “continental breakfast” is a light meal and should not to be confused with the famous “full Israeli breakfast.”
 - At* which hotels will we stay? To what quality level in North American hotels are they comparable? Do you have a brochure or web address of the hotels for further review?
 - What* is the single supplement?
- What* are the air travel arrangements? Which carriers will be used? Is it a non-stop flight? If there is a stopover, where and for how long? Are there special arrangements that need to be made during a long stopover — kosher food, for example?
- How* much is the trip deposit? Will it be held in escrow or spent immediately?
- What* is the cancellation policy? What about extenuating circumstances?
- What* insurance coverage do you hold and what do you suggest for travelers?
- If you negotiate additions to the original proposal, make sure these are also in writing in a new or updated quote.
- Consider incorporating into the overall price free trips for the organizer (rabbi or trip leader) and/or a free or discounted trip to give away as a marketing incentive.
- Find out what sort of special events, such as lectures or receptions, the tour organizer can offer your trip while in Israel.



Israel Ministry of Tourism Marketing Materials Order Form

You may order free marketing materials from the Israel Ministry of Tourism in three ways:

- Complete this form and **fax to 212-499-5665**
- Order online by signing in at **www.goisraelshop.com**
- Call toll free **1-888-77-ISRAEL**



(Please Print Legibly)

First/Last Name: _____ Institution and Position: _____

Please Mail Materials to:

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Telephone(s): _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Promotional Brochures and Leaflets

Quantity (Limits apply)	Item Name	Description	Item Code
	Israel — A Visitor's Companion	An essential all-you-need-to-know guide about traveling to Israel.	158/1
	Your Next Vacation — Israel	Learn more about Israel's different geographic areas and landscapes.	166/1
	Israel General Leaflet	A colorful leaflet showing the variety that Israel offers visitors.	614/1
	Discover Israel	A magazine featuring Jewish interest articles about Israel. Rich with photographs, this magazine is an essential promotional tool for the Jewish market.	DISC
	Israel. I Care and I'm Going (Rabbi's Tools)	Read about the tools available from the Ministry that can help you take a group to Israel.	528
	Galilee Leaflet	Explore the variety and contrast of Israel landscape in the glorious Galilee region.	606/1
	Letterhead — No One Belongs Here More Than You	Letterhead that helps you present your trip to Israel in a colorful and professional way.	NOB
	Touring Map of Israel — General	A detailed road map and city maps of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa.	340
	Jewish Sites Map	Includes holy sites of interest to Jewish visitors, such as ancient synagogues, tombs of "Tzadikim," museums and more.	342

Promotional Videos

Quantity (Limits apply)	Item Name	Description	Item Code
	Israel — A Holiday Tradition	A video highlighting the opportunities for celebrating Jewish holidays or a bar/bat mitzvah in Israel.	VHT
	Jerusalem — The Magic	A colorful video of sites of Jewish interest in Jerusalem.	VJM
	Jerusalem — Present for Eternity	Learn about Jerusalem's glorious past, dynamic present and promising future.	VJPE
	We Miss You	Meet Israelis — your extended family — and answer their call to come and visit — they miss you.	VWMY
	I Care. And I'm Going	A CD ROM that features testimonials from participants of various Jewish missions to Israel. Covers issues like trip safety and the importance of solidarity with Israel.	CD
	Video Youth 2002	Videos that include testimonials from members of a youth group visiting Israel.	VY
	Torah Shield	This video includes testimonials from college students participating in the Torah Shield project.	VTS

Trip Promotion Shells

Quantity (Limits apply)	Item Name	Description	Item Code
	Jewish Interest Shell	To help you market your trip, print your key information and itinerary on a brochure shell that best represents the focus of your trip.	529
	Adventure Shell		532
	Health Shell		533
	Conference Shell		535
	General Sites Shell		536
	Bird-Watching Interest Shell		540

Talking Points

These talking points can be used “as is” or altered to suit your specific needs, target audience and trip type. If you are creating a customized tour, have members of your tourism committee craft a set of talking points for use by all team members and in all promotional materials.

Context of the Talking Points	Suggested Talking Points
Synagogue Trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>srael embodies and unifies all the traditions that we follow, all of the Torah that we study, and much of what we hope for our people’s future. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>T</i>he Torah comes alive in Israel — Israel provides the context for truly understanding our liturgy, language and history. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A</i> trip to Israel is a way to show solidarity and deepen our involvement in Jewish life here and in Israel. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>T</i>raveling with fellow congregants to Israel allows all of us to develop new relationships and deepen existing ones, ultimately strengthening our community. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>T</i>ogether we’ll learn first hand about the issues of greatest concern to Israelis and to our community. The first step in solving such issues is to acquire an understanding that takes into account their complexity.
Federation/ Community Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>n Israel, we witness how our community’s investments in Israel-based projects make a difference in the lives of ordinary Israelis. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>srael missions allow various parts of our community to come together in mutual friendship and support. As we tour, we strengthen our connections to Israel, as well as our own Jewish community. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>B</i>y going to Israel as a community, we send an important message to our community — Jewish and non-Jewish — that our relationship to Israel is unshakable. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>C</i>ommunity-wide Israel trips illustrate to our youth that we care enough about this small country thousands of miles away to make it a key item of our communal agenda — and encourage our youth to actively explore their relationship to the Jewish State and their own Jewish community.
Regional or National Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>n Israel, we witness how our organizational projects are making a difference in the lives of ordinary Israelis. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>srael trips strengthen our organization by providing members from various communities the opportunity to meet and develop rewarding relationships. It is also a key time for members to share experiences and best practices in organizational matters that can benefit everyone. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>B</i>y traveling together we can address the main issues of most concern to our constituency in an in-depth manner — something that might not happen otherwise.
Why Israel (General)	See the “Why Israel” section of this guidebook.
Solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>srael and Israelis appreciate seeing friends, family and supporters during good and tough times alike. Visitors are often warmly welcomed and thanked for coming. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>t’s precisely when challenges arise that it is most important to be with friends and family. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>B</i>y a margin of two to one, Israelis cite “visiting Israel” as the most important type of support Jews in the Diaspora can offer — more important than lobbying or sending contributions. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>O</i>ur sages say that employing a person is the highest form of “tzedaka” (charity) possible. Tourism helps the Israeli economy immensely — in fact, every planeload of visitors creates 15 permanent jobs in the tourism industry. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I</i>t’s hard to show your support to the average Israeli when you are thousands of miles away. By visiting Israel, you express that support personally — and experience first hand the appreciation of Israelis for your decision to visit.

Talking Points (continued)

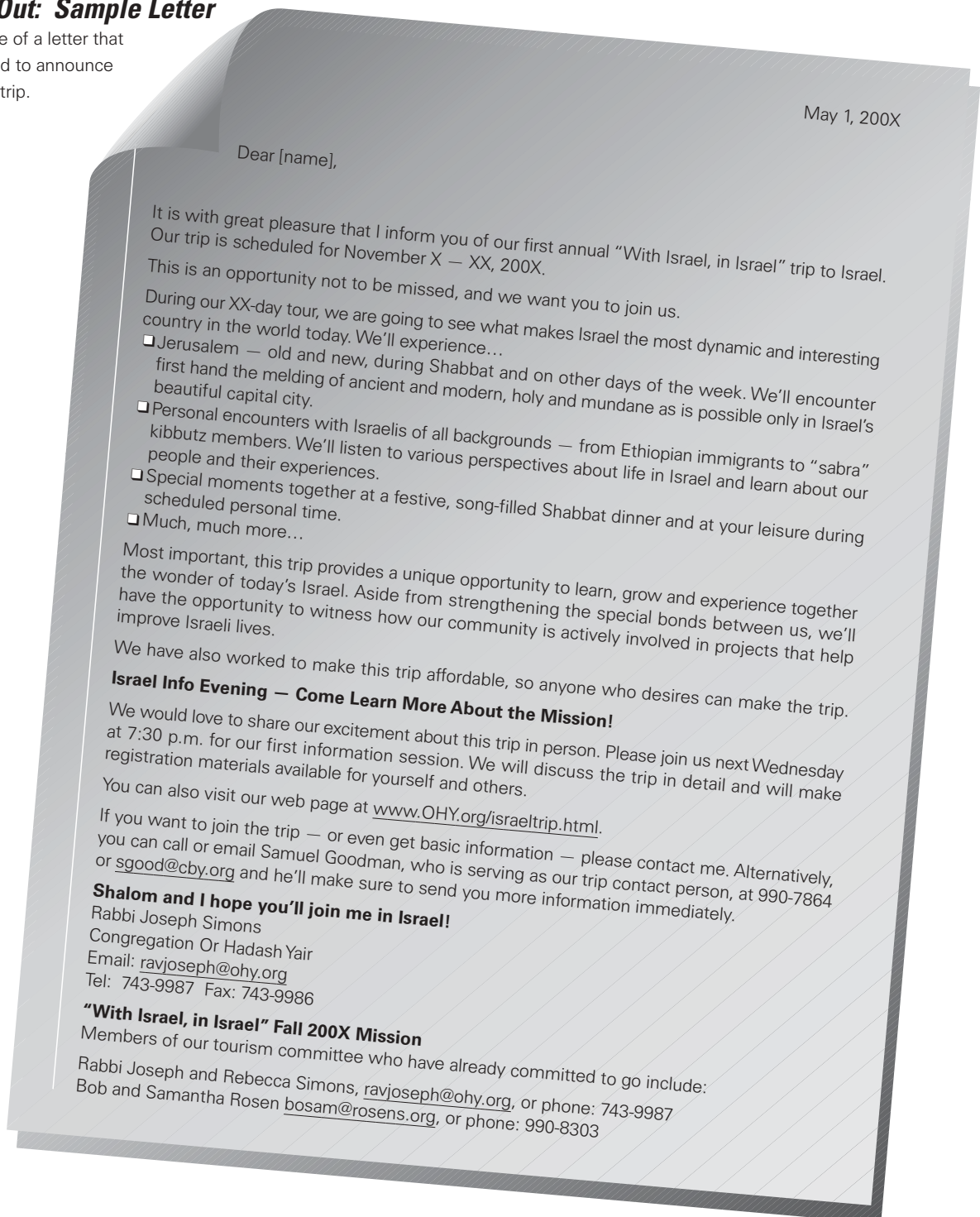
Context of the Talking Points	Suggested Talking Points
<p>Jewish Teens</p>	<p>Directed at potential teen travelers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Israel is the only place on earth where thousands of years of Jewish history come alive. <input type="checkbox"/> Israel is exotic. Where else can you swim with dolphins in the tropical waters of the Red Sea, trek through desert mountains, ride a camel and swim in clear spring-fed pools? <input type="checkbox"/> Israel is cool — the weather is great, the sun is always shining and the Mediterranean waters are sky-blue! <input type="checkbox"/> A trip to Israel is a great way to make new friends — when else do you get to travel with a group of your peers? You'll learn about the peace process first hand — and finally get a handle on what's really happening in Israel! <p>Directed at the parents of potential teen travelers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A trip to Israel is an integral part of your child's Jewish upbringing. It drives home all the formal and informal Jewish training you've invested in them over the years in an educationally sound, socially rewarding and exciting way. <input type="checkbox"/> Israel is a proven, most powerful tool for strengthening the Jewish identity — and you'll want that, as teens turn into young adults and contemplate key decisions in life. <input type="checkbox"/> Educational experiences in Israel help ensure your child goes off to college with a stronger Jewish identity and deepened desire to associate with Judaism during the key college years. <input type="checkbox"/> Teens often make new friends on Israel trips, enriching their lives forever. <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Israel trips always expand learning horizons and drive home how much fun it is to learn about the world's cultures, languages and people. <input type="checkbox"/> A trip to Israel is a long-term investment in the educational, cultural and Jewish upbringing of your child.
<p>Safety of Travel to Israel</p>	<p>See the "Addressing Safety and Security" section of this guidebook.</p> <p>Additional points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The best way to assess the "safety" issue is to ask someone who recently returned from Israel how they felt (offer to point to such people). <input type="checkbox"/> Even during the most challenging years for Israel's tourism industry, more than a million tourists came to Israel, learned, enjoyed and returned home safely. <input type="checkbox"/> Organized trips to Israel are exceptionally safe. In fact, most organized trips to Israel include the following safety precautions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A well-planned itinerary; <input type="checkbox"/> A chartered bus for the duration of the trip; <input type="checkbox"/> A private tour guide who is an expert on trip routes and knowledgeable about Israel's current situation; <input type="checkbox"/> A security escort who is also a trained medic in the case of illness or minor injuries; <input type="checkbox"/> Quality hotels with security personnel at entrance points; <input type="checkbox"/> Many trips fly El Al and other Israeli airlines, which have excellent safety records. <input type="checkbox"/> Perhaps our best cue to safety in Israel is how Israelis live — and Israelis live normal lives. They send children to school, go to work, go to movies and theatre, eat in restaurants, visit malls, tour the country and visit friends and family.
<p>Jewish Young Adult</p>	<p>See the Jewish Teens section above for points that may be suitable for this segment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Travel to Israel and Israel programs look good on your resume. It illustrates international experience in an increasingly global business environment. You can even learn Hebrew in an ulpan and further distinguish yourself. <input type="checkbox"/> Get an in-depth experience in Israel by studying in an Israeli university — earn full college credit, take classes taught in English, meet peers from across the world and have a great time. <input type="checkbox"/> Israel provides an opportunity to explore your heritage on your own terms, and in a supportive environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of participants leave Israel programs with a worldwide network of lifelong friends. So next time you are in Paris or Amsterdam, you will have a friend to visit! <input type="checkbox"/> Israel is just a few hours flight from key travel destinations in Europe and the Middle East. Many students stop over in Europe at little or no extra cost on their way back from Israel.

Sample Promotional Letters

Alter these promotional letters to suit your particular target audience and trip type. Each letter corresponds to a stage in the promotion process — Reach Out, Register and Retain. You can send the letters on official Israel Ministry of Tourism letterhead or your own personal/organizational stationary. The letters could be sent as email, as well.

Reach Out: Sample Letter

An example of a letter that can be used to announce your Israel trip.



Register: Sample Letter

This is the type of letter to send once an individual has expressed interest in joining the trip by signing up at a promotional table or sending an email inquiry about the trip. Please remember not to give out an individual's contact info without their explicit permission.

Dear [name],

June 15, 200X

Thanks for your interest in our inaugural "With Israel, in Israel" mission, which will take place November X – XX, 200X. Enclosed is the brochure that outlines in detail trip highlights and our itinerary. It also includes the registration form and deposit information.

We are very excited at the prospect of you joining us. As one who has traveled to Israel several times, I can assure you that each experience has left me deeply moved. The country's natural beauty, archeological wonders, accessible history and cultural diversity are so striking that it always leaves one wanting more.

Please review the enclosed information and let me know if you have any questions. Keep in mind that this special inaugural trip is limited to XX travelers — and the only way we can reserve a place is to receive your completed registration form and trip deposit.

We will hold our next trip information session in two weeks, on Tuesday, June 30th at 7:30 p.m. Aside from learning more about the trip, the Israeli Consul General will deliver an update about Israel and the latest on the regional situation. In addition, four young adults who just returned from a year studying in Israel will be present to share their experiences. Light refreshments will be served. Please join us — it's sure to be an enlightening and enjoyable evening.

If you have any questions, please let me know or contact Samuel Goodman, our trip contact person, at 990-7864 or sgood@cby.org. Either of us will be happy to help!

Shalom and I hope you'll join me in Israel!

Rabbi Joseph Simons
 Congregation Or Hadash Yair
 Email: ravjoseph@ohy.org
 Tel: 743-9987 Fax: 743-9986

Joining "With Israel, in Israel" Fall 200X Mission

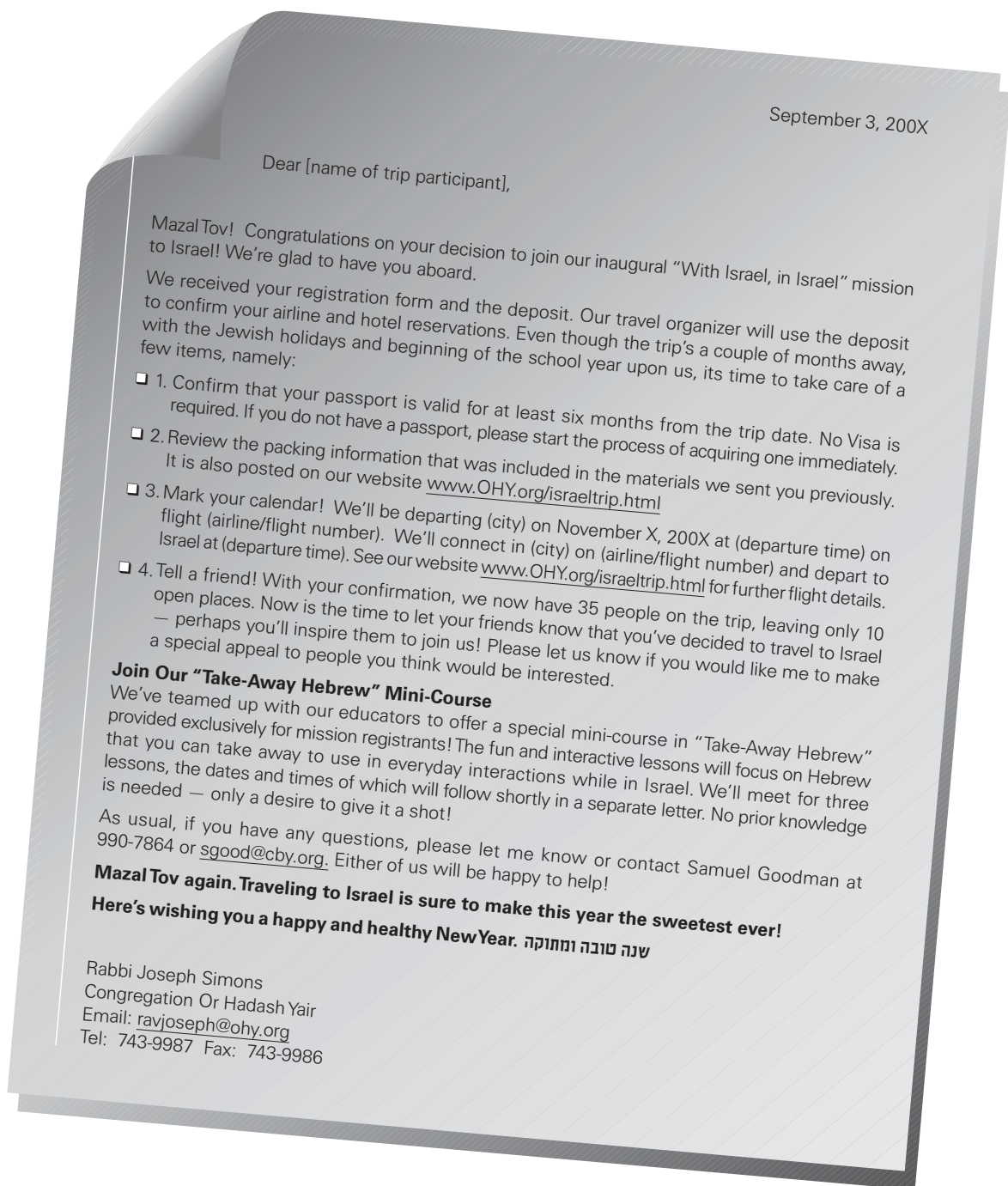
The following community members are joining us in Israel this November. Feel free to contact any of the participants!

Rabbi Joseph and Rebecca Simons, ravjoseph@ohy.org, or phone: 743-9987
 Bob and Samantha Rosen, bosam@rosens.org, or phone: 990-8303
 Samuel Goodman, sgood@cby.org, or phone: 990-7864
 Eliyahu Bentsi, E_Bentsi@upside.net, or phone: 897-3324
 Stephanie Glickstein, Sglickstein@aoli.com, or phone: 873-0091
 Michael and Hadas Citrin, MandHCitrin@netpoint.com, or phone: 738-9980
 Darren and Miriam Shpeilman, Darren_S@tgc.org, or phone: 382-0998
 Hirsh Gutman, Hirsh@netpoint.com, or phone 377-9833
 Norman and Robin Klein, TheKleins@yahoo.com, or phone 623-9238
 Ben and Lauri Goldman, LauriG@hotmail.com, or phone 232-0432
 Randy and Jennifer Cohen, Cohen48@netpoint.com, or phone 984-2920
 Stephen Meadow, meadowland@hotmail.com, or phone 774-6289
 Martin and Rivka Seigel, rms@netpoint.com, or phone 837-9873
 Adam and Marni Hirsh, adam_hirsh123@yahoo.com, or phone 775-9034

Retention: Two Sample Letters

Two sample letters designed for retaining participants once they have registered are provided here. The first is a general letter. The second is an example of how one might address troubling news emanating from Israel in advance of your trip.

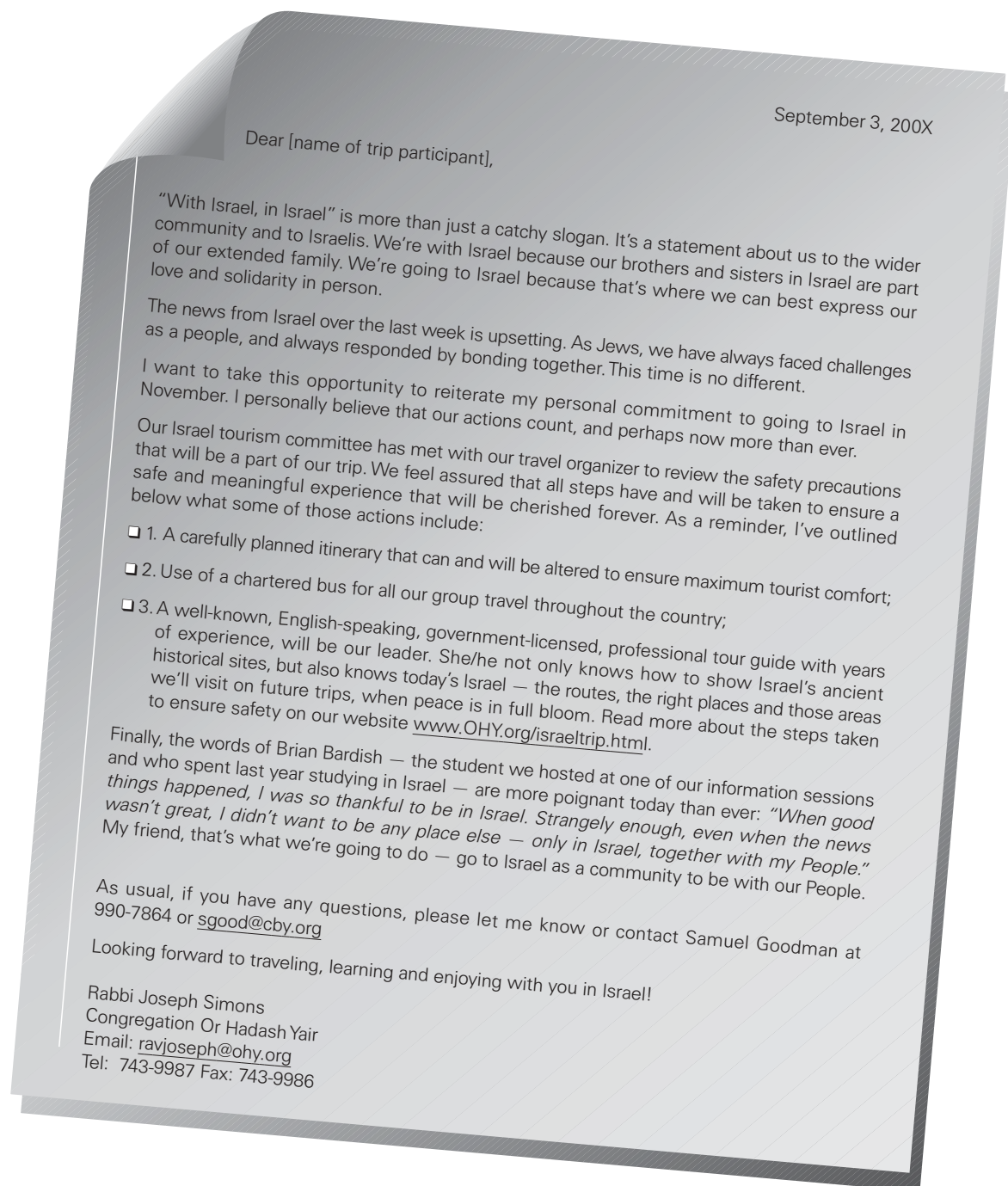
Retention Sample I



Retention: Two Sample Letters

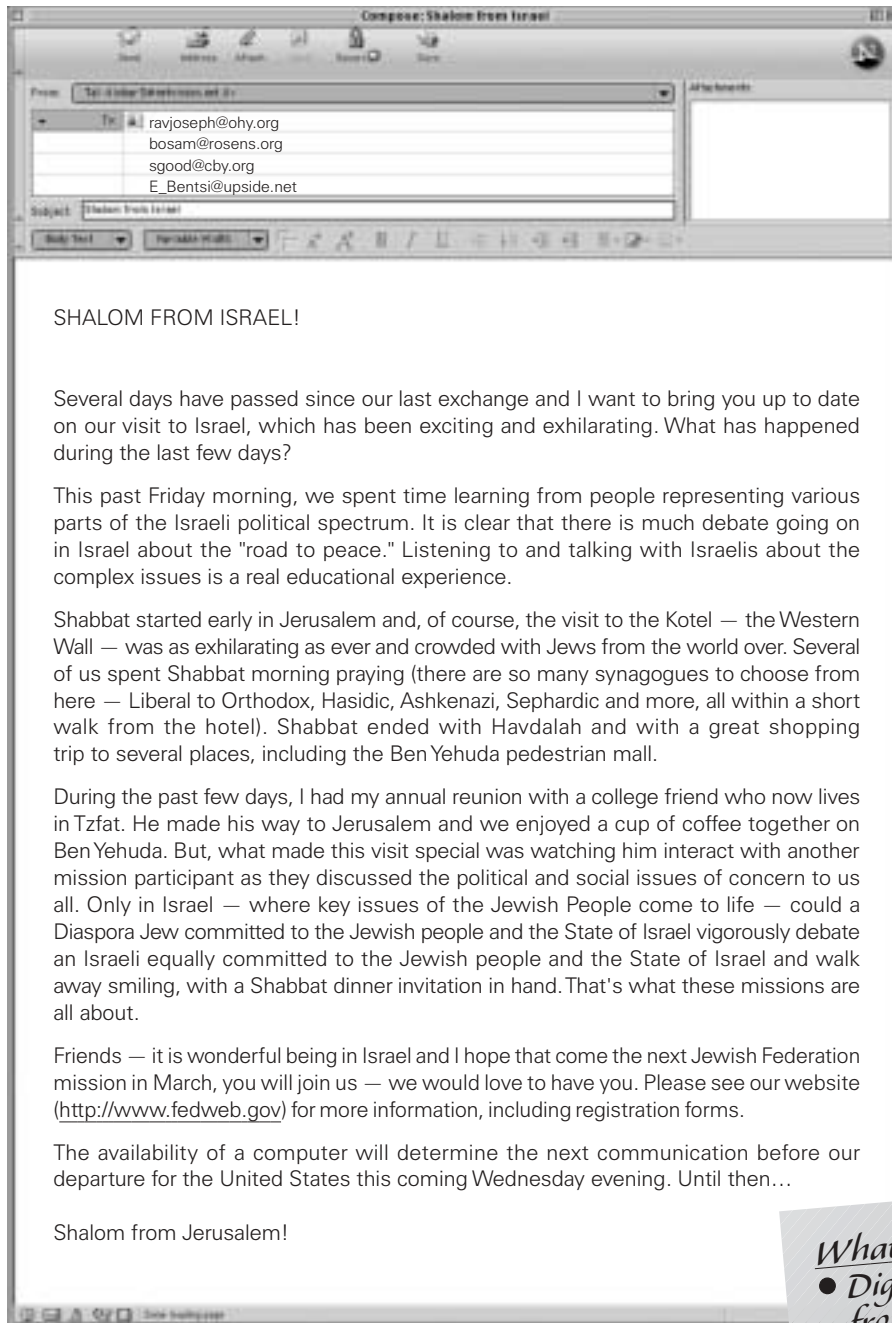
Retention Sample II

You might consider using a letter similar to the one below if news from Israel or the Middle East is troubling.



Email Update from Israel: A Sample Letter

The CEO of a large Jewish Federation wrote the following (slightly modified) email update during a visit to Israel. It was sent to the Federation's email list and provides a nice example of what an email update can be (see notes on the text appearing at right).



Notes on Email Update

- ◀ A series of email updates is more effective than a single letter.
- ◀ Sharing group experiences and letting others know how much one can learn in Israel.
- ◀ This section conveys that tourists are in Israel and major sites like the Western Wall and Ben Yehuda in Jerusalem are open and fully accessible.
- ◀ Imparting personal thoughts and experiences helps make Israel seem closer and a trip more likely.
- ◀ The date for next trip is already set and being advertised.

What Could Be Added?

- Digital photographs from the trip
- A short digital movie of the group saying "Shalom from Israel."

List of Helpful Resources

Organization	Services Provided	Contact Information
Israel Ministry of Tourism	Free information, materials and guidance in planning trips to Israel.	Israel Ministry of Tourism Information Center 800 Second Avenue New York, NY 10017 Tel: 1-888-77-ISRAEL Fax: 212-499-5665 Email: info@goisrael.com Web: www.goisrael.com

Regional Information Centers of the Israel Ministry of Tourism

Northeast Region 800 Second Avenue New York, NY 10017 Tel: 212-499-5650 Fax: 212-499-5655 Email: lgtonewyork@imot.org	Western Region 6380 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1700 Los Angeles, CA 90048 Tel: 323-658-7463 Fax: 323-658-6543 Email: igtola@imot.org	Canada 180 Bloor St. West. #700 Toronto, ON M5S 2V6 Tel: 416-964-3784 Fax: 416-964-2420 Email: info@igto.ca
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Organization	Services Provided	Contact Information
Tour Organizers	A searchable list of travel agents and tour operators who provide individual and group travel services to Israel.	A list can be found on the "Planning Your Trip" section on the Israel Ministry of Tourism website: www.goisrael.com
American Jewish Press Association	The AJPA website lists contact information for more than 150 Jewish newspapers throughout North America. Use for sending press releases and developing relationships with local Jewish media. See the directory located on the AJPA website: www.ajpa.org/2/direct.html .	American Jewish Press Association 1828 L St., NW, Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20036 Tel: 202-785-2282 Fax: 202-785-2307 Email: info@ajpa.org Web: www.ajpa.org
United Jewish Communities (UJC)	United Jewish Communities (UJC) represents 155 Jewish Federations and 400 independent communities across North America. For a list of future missions to Israel, see www.ujc.org/travel_home.html	United Jewish Communities P.O. Box 30 Old Chelsea Station New York, NY 10113 Tel: 212-284-6500 Email: info@ujc.org Web: www.ujc.org
Israel Program Center	This online special guide to Israel programs provides details about numerous short- and long-term programs in Israel designed for students and young adults.	Israel Program Center www.israelprograms.org