



ENTREPRENEURSHIP LAB



Israel Entrepreneurship Initiative Summer 2017 Apprenticeship Journal

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Fall 2016-Spring
2017



Israel Apprenticeship:
July 28th 2017
-
August 28th 2017

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Introduction

First off, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Michael Dezer for providing me this once in a lifetime opportunity. During my month in Israel, I was able to gain firsthand experience in Tel Aviv's famous start-up industry, experience the hardships of starting an app, and explore the beautiful places Israel has to offer. Looking back, I am so thankful that I received this opportunity.

I have been working for OMGWhen in New York, and I was so excited to receive the opportunity to travel to Israel, my favorite country, to work for OMGWhen there. Also, although I spent most of my time at the OMGWhen offices and filming trailers for OMGWhen, I was also excited to meet Ayla, who introduced me to the start-up industry in Tel Aviv by taking me to events, and showed me the amazing work the MIT Forum does. I thought it was so fascinating that the MIT Forum focuses on entrepreneurship among minorities. It is a great way to integrate minorities into the start-up industry and into Israel's society. She also talked to me about the next start-ups that will be working with the Entrepreneurship Lab at Pace University, and both start-ups are unique and have a great amount of potential.

The opportunity for one student to go to Israel as an apprentice is amazing. Students get to see the beautiful places Israel has to offer, while exploring the constantly growing start-up industry in Tel Aviv. The media often portrays Israel in a different light, so I think it is so important that people get to see what a lovely place it is with their own eyes. Thanks to Michael Dezer, Pace University students are provided a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity.



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OMGWhen



OMGWhen is a web and mobile platform. Using artificial intelligence, it allows users to find events near their location. The platform collects events from all over the world. Using the artificial intelligence technology, the events and activities are flagged with a variety of tags to discover events quicker and more conveniently. The platform provides vendors an opportunity to find potential clients.

My apprenticeship with OMGWhen started in New York, where I was responsible for promoting the app on social media. I am in charge of the OMGWhen Instagram page (omgwhen.nyc), to promote the app to the US market. Furthermore, I filmed videos throughout New York City, edited the films, and made trailers to promote the app. Also, I spent a lot of time on finding bugs within the app and reporting it to Neta or Reut, who were in charge of what tasks I would complete.

Already before arriving to Tel Aviv, I was very excited to meet the team of OMGWhen. Located in Natan Yellin Mor Street, I made my way to the OMGWhen office. The office is located in a neighborhood called Montefiore, one of the oldest in Tel Aviv. It seemed to be an area where offices of various start-ups are based. The office was a 10-minute walk from Sarona market and from the Azraeli towers.



Sign at the front door of OMGWhen



Behind the main counter of the entrance room at OMGWhen

On my first day at OMGWhen, I was introduced to everyone, and Reut gave me a tour through the office. Everyone was very friendly, and there were around 20 people in the office. I sat in a room with four other people, and I actively assisted three of them: Tehila, Felix, and Talia. During my first week at OMGWhen, I was responsible for QA, so I was in charge of finding bugs on the app and on the website. I uploaded screenshots of bugs I found so the mistakes could be corrected. However, after spending my time looking for bugs, I talked to Reut, my supervisor, about possible jobs I could be doing. I wanted to film short trailers throughout Tel Aviv to promote the app. Also, I was very excited to find out that there was a higher amount of downloads in the United States, confirming the success of our promotional work in New York.

Aside from filming and editing, I also received assignments from Talia. She sent me Facebook pages of clients, and I had to familiarize with the content of the clients to write exciting and entertaining advertisement posts. I wrote them in English, and sent them to her to be translated into Hebrew. I was able to use my creativity to write funny posts that would catch the reader's attention. Talia was surprised at the speed of my posts, and continued to send me Facebook pages of clients to write more adverts.

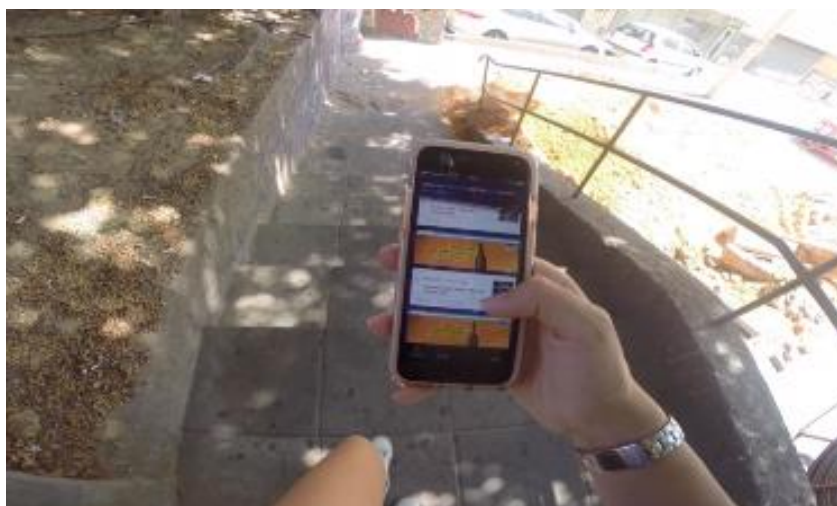
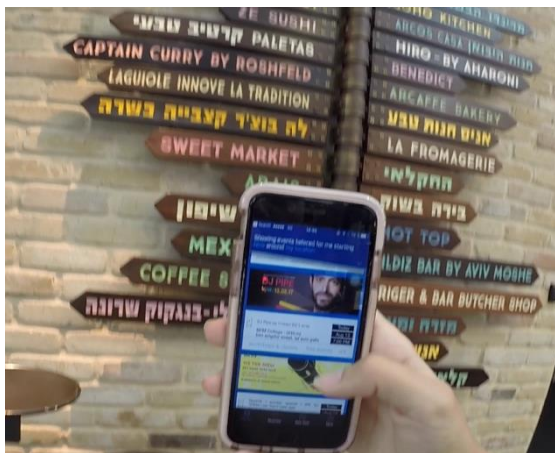
During our lunch break, whoever wanted could join Reut for lunch at a nearby restaurant. During the first two weeks I joined her, together with some other people from the office. This way, I got to know the team, and got to have a traditional Israeli lunch.



Scrolling through the app during our lunch break

In my second and third week at OMGWhen, I started collecting creative ideas for filming trailers. I spent the third week filming. I walked around Tel Aviv, and filmed my hand scrolling through the app at well known places in Tel Aviv. I went to places such as the Shuk HaCarmel, a big market, Sarona market, an indoor market, and other places. This way, the trailer would promote the idea that the app is useful wherever the user may go. Also, I got to see beautiful places at the same time. When I attended an event with Ayla, I made sure the event was posted on OMGWhen so I could film the event and use it in my trailer. After around a week of filming, I started editing the films. I had to cut videos, choose and add music, and edit the trailer to make it short and exciting, to convince people to download and use our app. On my last days at OMGWhen, I showed the team the trailers I made. They were all very positively surprised by the trailers I had edited, and decided to use them on all social media platforms OMGWhen has.

Although I officially finished my apprenticeship, I am still in contact with Eyal. If all goes well, Eyal or Boaz will come to New York in November to officially launch in the US. I will hopefully meet with one of them here to assist them in any way possible. Also, I am still in charge of the Instagram account of OMGWhen here in New York, and continue to post content to continue promoting the app. During my time in Israel, I also created a flyer to use in the US to promote the app.









OMGwhen

Want to know about events in
New York City?


★ ★ ★ ★ ★




WORKSHOPS & CLASSES




MUSIC & CONCERTS




NIGHTLIFE & PARTIES




LECTURES



CULTURE & VISUAL ARTS




FAMILY & KIDS





FOOD & DRINK

Choose from a lot of categories:



Download our free app now
and start discovering exciting events and things to do near you!

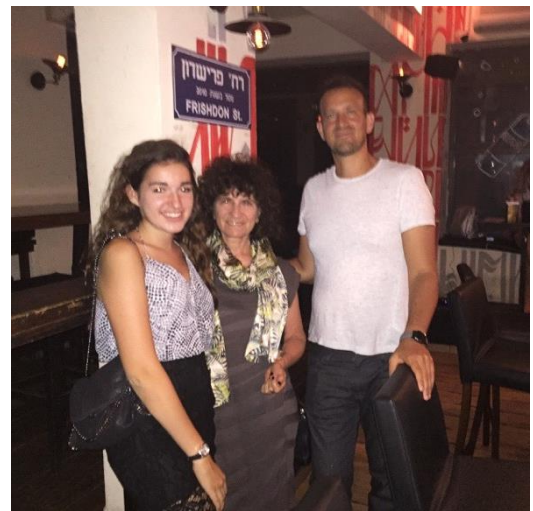
Flyer I created for OMGWhen promotion

Screenshots from the trailers I made



MIT Enterprise Forum

Although I spent most of my time in Israel with OMGWhen, I was excited to meet Ayla, who is in charge of the MIT Enterprise Forum. I also met Shira, who hosts Entrepreneurship on Tap events. I met her for a very interesting event of Entrepreneurship in Tel Aviv. We met at a restaurant/bar called Dizzy Frishdon for the 'Entrepreneurship on Tap' event. The guest speaker was Matteo Shapira, the co-founder and creative/technical officer of Replay technologies, a former start up that was sold to Intel for 175 million dollars. He gave an inspiring talk about the road to success of Replay followed by an interesting Q&A session. I always knew about Israel's booming start up industry, but this event provided me with an opportunity to meet one of Israel's many entrepreneurs. I was so thankful for this unique opportunity that Ayla provided for me!





Entrepreneurship on Tap



Matteo Shapira: Disruptive Technology From Science Fiction to Reality

Wednesday, August 9th, 2017
19:30, DizzyFrishdon
121 Dizengoff st. TLV



During my last week in Israel, I continued editing trailers for OMGWhen, but also went to the MIT Enterprise Forum at Tel Aviv University. Ayla awaited me there, and explained the work she does together with her graduate assistant, Noor. Their work is amazing! They encourage minorities such as the Arab and Chassidic (ultra orthodox) communities to join the start-up industry. I sat in a room with Noor, who assisted me in anything I needed. My job was to research funds that would potentially support these minorities and their start up ideas.

I was also very excited to be working on the Tel Aviv University campus. I was able to see the daily life of students there, and it immediately sparked my interest to potentially study abroad in Israel.



At the beautiful Tel Aviv University Campus



Exploring Israel

Although the humidity and the temperature were shockingly high, I was so excited to enjoy the beach on the weekends. Every sunset in Israel is unique and beautiful, and I tried to go to the beach for the sunset as often as I could. During my time in Israel, I visited different sites, travelled through the country, and met amazing people that I am still in touch with today.



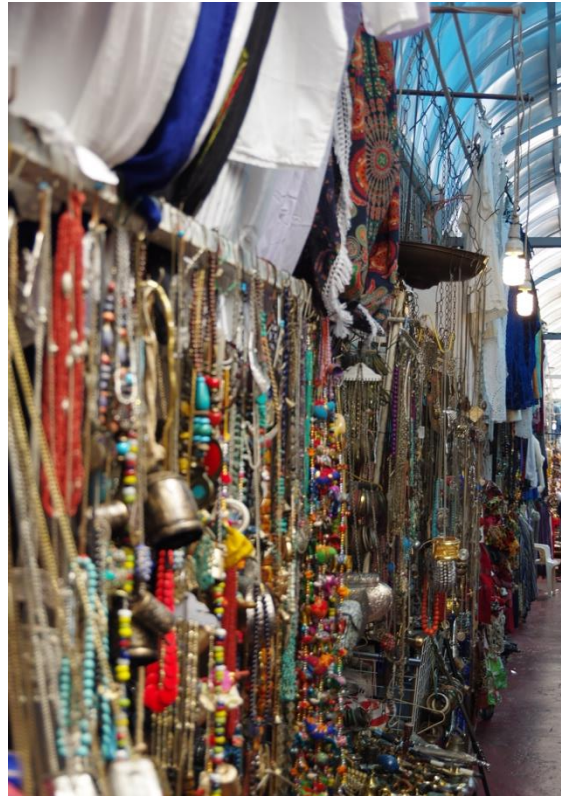
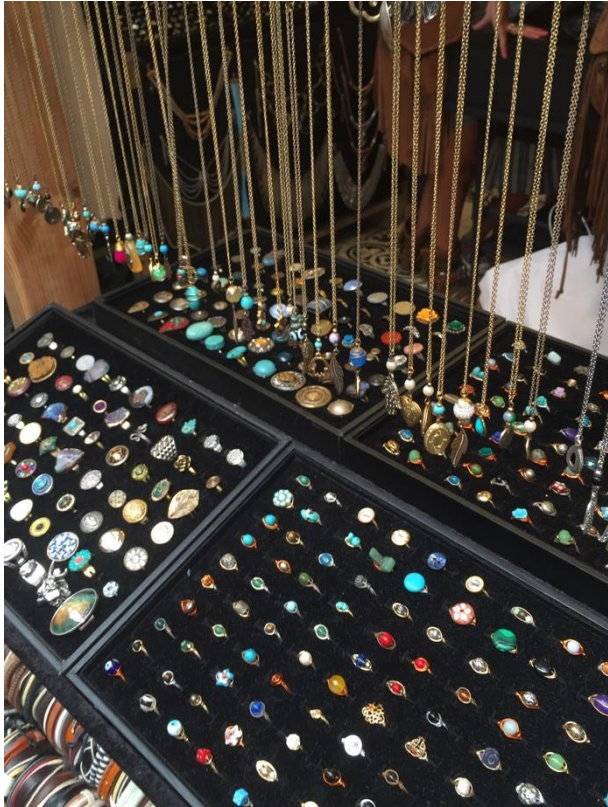
Jerusalem and the Dead Sea



I managed to take a day trip to the Dead Sea and to Jerusalem. As Jerusalem is on the way to the Dead Sea, I left Tel Aviv with my friend early in the morning, and took a bus to Jerusalem. We visited the Old City, and learned about the different quarters in the Old City. It was so interesting that the people from each religion live so close next to each other. We walked down small paths through the market near the Kotel, and were astonished by how quickly we entered a new quarter without even realizing it. I love Jerusalem, and I knew if I would visit the beautiful city, I must visit the Kotel too. So we walked to the Kotel, I went all the way to the front in the women's section, and wrote my wishes on a little piece of paper and stuck it to the wall. That is what people do there to have their prayers answered and so their dreams come true.

After around 5 hours in Jerusalem, we took the next bus from the Central Bus station in Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. The travel time was around an hour, and when we got off the bus, we were shocked by the heat. It was as if we were standing in front of a huge blow drier. We walked around 15 minutes until we reached Kalia Beach, where we changed into our bathing suits and went into the water. It was incredible, the feeling of floating and the feeling of our soft skin after laying in the Dead Sea! Soon, we got back on the last bus to Jerusalem, went to the 'shuk' there, the market, and then headed back to Tel Aviv. I loved this trip, because it really showed me how beautiful Jerusalem and Israel is. At the 'shuk', there was a Chassidic man playing the violin, and people passing by tossing coins into a small bag he had in front of him while the sun set behind him. It was such a beautiful moment that I will never forget.



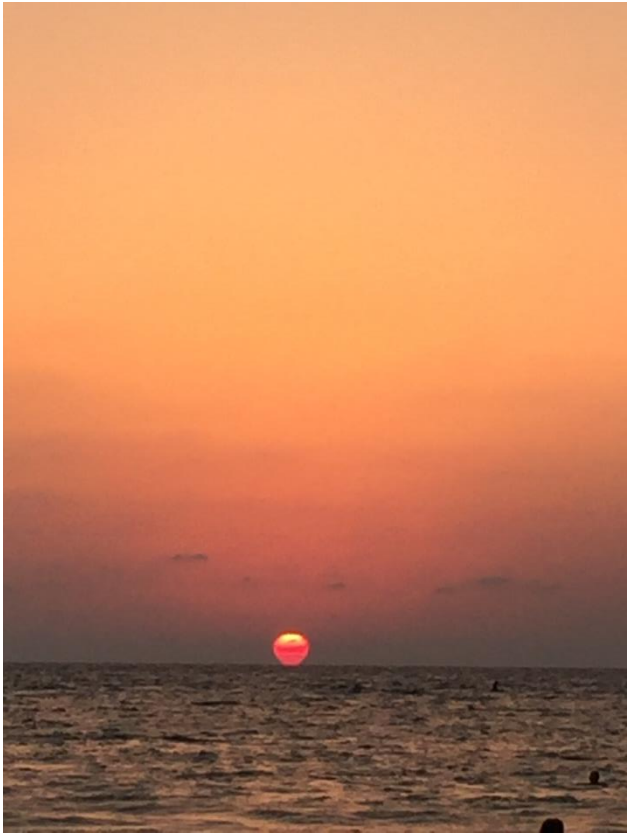


Aside from the Dead Sea, I visited Haifa, Jaffa, the oldest part of Tel Aviv, and En Perat, a beautiful nature reserve park in the middle of deserted land. My trip there fascinated me, because it seemed as if I was suddenly in the middle of a rainforest or in the middle of the woods, a few minutes after driving through the desert. In Jaffa, I enjoyed walking through the beautiful Jaffa flea market, and ate a traditional meal at a local restaurant there. What fascinated me the most in Jaffa was the coexistence of the three major religions. I saw nuns, Chassidic Jews, and religious Muslims all walking next to each other walking through Jaffa.





Day in Jaffa



Sunset in Tel Aviv



Trip to Jerusalem



Day at the Dead Sea

A Different Culture

Although I have been to Israel before, I am continuously fascinated by the Israeli culture. Not only is it a unique, and interesting culture shaped by the range of peoples' backgrounds, but it is also truly amazing how different religions coexist in one country. The media may only report the conflicts and attacks between specifically Jews and Palestinians when covering the situation there, but it was so fascinating to see the different religions living together in one country.

Israel is beautiful. The different landscapes, ranging from deserts to waterfalls to the lowest point on Earth with the saltiest body of water in the world, it is a country like no other. The food was classic middle eastern, I enjoyed the 'Israeli breakfast,' a tray of different healthy breakfast foods, savory and sweet, along with a fresh bread basket. A traditional dish is also the 'shakshuka', a pan of tomatoes in sauce with fried eggs on top. Of course I knew I had to try to find the best hummus, and I truly enjoyed every hummus I tried.

Israelis are so welcoming. Whether it was for Friday night dinners, the 'shabbat', or for asking for directions, Israelis are always here to help. Another fascinating and integral part about Israeli culture is that the army is mandatory, so it is completely normal to see hundreds of soldiers around train stations on their way to an army base. My best friend recently moved to Israel from New Jersey to volunteer to join the Israeli army as a female combat soldier, and I was lucky enough to see her for the two weekends she was allowed off base.

Israelis have a relaxed lifestyle, especially in Tel Aviv. Because of the army, people don't start studying until they are about 21 or 22, depending on the amount of time they spent in the army. After the army however, they usually travel to South America or Asia. They have a completely different mindset and attitude towards life. While here in New York, people chase the American dream, Israelis chase the sunset, and that is what I thought was so beautiful.

Conclusion

After a hands-on experience in the start-up industry in Tel Aviv, I can truly say I spent an amazing month in Israel. I got to meet and work with inspiring and hardworking people at OMGWhen, and am continuing to nurture the contacts I made there. I got to meet Ayla, an inspirational woman who addresses the importance of providing minorities with an opportunity to grow and contribute to the start-up industry. And I got to spend a month in a beautiful country, filled with people who are so friendly, open, caring, and made Israel feel like home the day I arrived.

Again, I would like to thank Michael Dezer and Bruce Bachenheimer for providing me with this opportunity. It showed me the hardships, but also the successes that come with creating a start-up, the multifaceted start up industry in Israel, and provided me with an experience I will never forget. I will continue to share my story, to tell people about my experience, because I believe it is so important that people know about the amazing contributions the start-up industry in Israel makes to the rest of the world. I realized that such a small country can make a huge difference, and as cheesy as it sounds, everyone can make a difference if they set their mind to it.



Why Israel? It's simply part of me. I'm in love with this thing. Israel-
Israeli. Our parents taught the four of us, my two brothers and my
sister, to aspire to make our dreams come true, whatever they are,
without pushing us in a certain direction, based on the belief that we
each need to find our own purpose.

They gave us a personal example of the right combination, to my mind,
between working to realize our aspirations and staying close to family
and friends. An appropriate balance between the goal and the path.

Asaf Ramon