

## Mixing community with business

Ad club chief back in the corporate world after hiatus

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One of Beryl Israel's recent advertising gigs called for making ear hairs sexy.

The House Ear Institute of Los Angeles wanted to launch a campaign to educate teenagers about noise-induced hearing loss. They needed something hip, not preachy, yet instructive about a problem most teens don't even know they have and don't care about.

Most advertising executives would have run screaming from the room.

Israel couldn't.

The account involved a former client and long-time friend. It was health-related -- Israel's passion. Finally, it was for a nonprofit that benefited the community and it was a challenge she couldn't pass up.

So Ear Bud was born. Israel created a spot that ran on MTV with a walking ear in red high tops. Ear Bud tries to alert a "plugged-in teen" to turn his music off so he can talk to two cute girls who are trying to catch his attention.

It was a hit. A third-party research organization reported that the spot increased awareness of noise-induced hearing loss by a whopping 39 percent, tremendously successful in the world of marketing campaigns, reports Marilee Pottoff, director of marketing for The House Ear Institute and a friend of Israel who is now vice president, account services for 3marketeers Advertising Inc. on The Alameda in San Jose.

"We would never have come up with that type of [ad]. Most agencies we interviewed would never have come close. She does her homework," Pottaff says.

Pottoff met Israel when Israel was CEO of the Carter Israel agency in 1998. Pottoff was working for a valley tech company for which Israel did some work.

Mixing community work with business, making friends of clients and clients of friends, and following the old adage, "do what you love and the money will follow," all seem to be ingredients in Israel's recipe for success.

"All of my worlds touch," Israel says. "My community world touches my professional world which touches my personal world. They all touch, they all get along and they all benefit each other."

That type of big picture approach seems to define Israel's life. It has helped her survive the bankruptcy of a company she poured almost her entire career into, the dotcom bust, and even family tragedy.

At 8 a.m., when Beryl meets for this interview, she has already done her Pilates workout, gotten her 12-year-old son off to school and launched her business day at 3marketeers. It's easy to see how she has grown such a large community of friends in the valley.

Her broad smile and engaging eyes draw you in as she talks passionately about her career, community work and the advertising industry.

She earned a journalism degree from the University of Oregon. But after a few freelancing jobs back in the Silicon Valley, she went to work for Waxman Wool Advertising in 1987. Partner Mark Waxman gave her the opportunity to do work in almost every aspect of the business, from answering the phones to paste up and accounting.

Then Waxman Wool merged with Carter Callahan in 1990, forming Carter Waxman Advertising & Public Relations. Partner Peter Carter became Israel's mentor. And When Mark Waxman left to join SK Consulting, Carter asked Israel to become his partner.

"Peter really opened up his kimono to me in terms of the community. He introduced me to all his community relationships, hence the love affair with community work," Israel says.

She has embraced it wholeheartedly with an emphasis on health-related efforts.

"She has a big orientation to the community," says Chuck Toeniskoetter, founder and chairman of Toeniskoetter & Breeding Inc., a San Jose development company. "She spends a lot of personal time in the community and knows so many people. She does it really because she likes it. It means



Dennis G. Hendricks  
Beryl Israel of 3marketeering Advertising and Ad+ of Silicon Valley follows the old adage "do what you love and the money will follow" by mixing community work with business and making friends in both worlds.  
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something to her and she gives it her all."

Toeniskoetter was a client of Israel's when he asked her to do some work for The Stroke Awareness Foundation, an organization he helped found after suffering a stroke himself.

She was in the process of building the organization's Web site when her mother-in-law had a massive stroke and died nine days later.

"I was building out the Web site with very different glasses. There was more of an emotional buy-in," Israel says.

Today Israel is chairman and executive director of the foundation which has succeeded in getting seven local hospitals certified as stroke centers. That's one of the highest numbers of certified stroke centers for a metropolitan area in the nation. Israel also volunteers for The Health Trust which has an ambitious mission to "transform Silicon Valley into the healthiest region in the country."

When that nonprofit formed, it called on Peter Carter to help with the marketing and Israel had another opportunity to impact the health of local residents.

She has built such a reputation as a health-related communications expert that when Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools Colleen Wilcox developed an idea for fighting childhood obesity, she called Israel.

Israel helped The Health Trust and Healthy Silicon Valley launch a program called Fit for Learning in 2005 targeted initially at fifth-grade students. The program provides teachers with a resource guide to help them incorporate healthy nutrition and physical education into their curriculum.

While Israel's community endeavors were thriving, a decade into her career with Carter, the business started suffering from some bad decisions, compounded by a faltering economy. Carter Israel was acquired by The Corsi Agency Inc. of La Jolla at the height of the tech boom in about 2000.

"For many reasons we were unhappy with that and sought and received a legal rescission," Israel says. Then a couple of years later Carter Israel bought Battenberg, Fillhardt & Wright.

"We would say that sale never finalized," Israel says. BF&W sued Carter Israel.

In the end, Israel was spending all her time with lawyers and simply didn't enjoy going to work anymore. After much deliberation with Carter, Israel decided to quit.

"We both knew when I left, it was the beginning of the end of the agency. Carter filed for liquidation bankruptcy on Feb. 11, 2005, stating that legal costs overwhelmed the company.

"You would never have convinced either of us that we would be enjoying the peace of mind we do now," says Israel, who maintains a good friendship with Carter.

After leaving the company, Israel took 18 months off from the corporate world and threw herself into her community work.

And all that time, Jeff Holmes, CEO and creative director of 3marketeers Advertising Inc. of San Jose kept calling. Carter, a friend of Holmes, encouraged Israel to take the job. In January, she did. Now as vice president, account services, Israel is back doing what she loves.

And this time she's got more technology up her sleeve when she meets with clients. 3marketeers developed eTrigue, an application service provider that allows salespeople to generate more leads and, by plugging in criteria about potential clients, salespeople are alerted when those clients should be receptive to a sales pitch.

Israel likes the way the industry is moving away from just doing print ads and Web site design to a more strategic partnership with clients, a more holistic approach. And with clients like eTrade, Kodak, and Wavelight on board, she figures 3marketeers must be doing something right.

Israel is also president of the Ad+ Club of Silicon Valley, a group that had to change its format to accommodate all the unique players in marketing and communications roles today.

One of the most important perks of her job is that she is still able to do her community work. And while that often leads to business, it's not the reason she does it. In community work, many people seek to effect meaningful change for the long term, she says.

"I buy into that. But having said that, how can we have a meaningful effect today? Lots of times people are hesitant to reach out today, to touch today, to do that good deed today."

Her son Ian is following her act-now lead. He was doing some community service work at an Alzheimer's center recently.

"He learned early on that you get more out of service than you give," Israel says. He was helping out during Thanksgiving and Christmas and it was apparent that in that short span of time the patients had forgotten the kids had come at Thanksgiving.

"I asked him how he felt about that and he said, "They were smiling and it made me feel good.""

Snapshot  
Beryl Israel  
President  
Ad+ of Silicon Valley San Jose

Age: 41

Born: Manhattan

Lives: Fremont

Hobbies: Yoga, Pilates, classical flute, reading, acrylic painting of any subject, journaling.


Education: Journalism degree from the University of Oregon.

Professional experience: Waxman Wool Advertising; Carter Waxman Advertising & Public Relations; Partner and CEO at Carter Israel Advertising and Public Relations Inc.; Chief advancement officer at The Health Trust; Vice president, account services for 3marketeers Advertising Inc.

Volunteer work: Board of directors, Stroke Awareness Foundation; President, Ad+ of Silicon Valley

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