

UNCLASSIFIED//

ENVELOPE

RAAUZYUW RUEIFBS5828 2691141-UUUU--RUZDZWC.

ZNR UUUUU

HEADER

R
261141Z SEP 13
FM OSC RESTON VA

TO RUZFNEL/547IS NELLIS AFB NV
RUZDADA/AFIAA AMHS BOLLING AFB DC
RUEPPOG/CDR PSYOPGP FT BRAGG NC//ASOF-POG-SB//
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE
RHMCSII/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUZFMXI/CDR USTRANSCOM INTEL CELL SCOTT AFB IL
RUEPNGA/CDRNGIC CHARLOTTESVILLE VA
RHMCSII/CDRUSASOIC WASHINGTON DC
RUEPWDC/DA AMHS WASHINGTON DC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC//IN-1//
RUEPTRX/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

(b)(3)

RHMCSII/GISA FT BRAGG NC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RUZDJWC/JWAC DAHLGREN VA
RUZDQAN/MARCORINTACT QUANTICO VA
RUZDNAI/NASIC WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH
ZEN/NGA WASHINGTON DC
RUETIAA/NSACSS FT GEORGE G MEADE MD
RUCXONI/ONI WASHINGTON DC//2140//
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI
RHMCSII/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHMCSII/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//INR//
RUZEADH/UDITDUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE
RUMICED/USAFCENT INTEL SHAW AFB SC//A2//
RHHJRAP/USARPAC INTEL FT SHAFTER HI//APIN//
RUCQSAB/USSOCOM INTEL MACDILL AFB FL
RUZEUAA/UTAIS RAMSTEIN AB GE//INOW//
ZEN/CIA WASHINGTON DC
BT

CONTROLS

UNCLAS

QQQQ

UNCLASSIFIED//

4

UNCLASSIFIED//

CITE OSC RESTON VA 117397

WARNING: TOPIC: MILITARY, TECHNOLOGY, TELECOM
SERIAL: PLL2013092641136713

BODY

COUNTRY: ISRAEL

SUBJ: (U) ISRAEL: NEW INITIATIVE IN IDF'S SECRETIVE UNIT 8200 DRAWS
Lessons From Microsoft, Google, Facebook

SOURCE: Tel Aviv Haaretz.com in English 0230 GMT 26 Sep

13 (U)

TEXT:

[(U) Report by Inbal Orpaz: "Preserving the madness' in IDF
intelligence"]

[INTERNET]

[OSC Transcribed Text]

(U) This product may contain copyrighted material; authorized use is for national security purposes of the United States Government only. Any reproduction, dissemination, or use is subject to the OSC usage policy and the original copyright.

A new initiative in Israeli military's secretive Unit 8200 draws lessons from Microsoft, Google, and Facebook on how to constantly foster creativity and fend off complacency. 30 young people, divided into eight teams, are peering into their screens, energetically engaged in computer programming. Although some of them were complete strangers to the group, together they are now building creative projects that will prove to be either revolutionary or forgettable. By the fifth day of an intensive week, they will have produced something, usually a software program, that can be showcased and marketed. This is not a description of a software developer's marathon - "hackathon" in the lingo of start-up incubators - nor of an undertaking at Microsoft or Google. Despite the squarely entrepreneurial and civilian atmosphere, the week described above took place in a Unit 8200's secret military intelligence base.

8200 is an elite unit known for using state-of-the-art technology to gather intelligence. For many years, 8200 has served as a hotbed for computer experts who take the knowledge and skills they acquire in

UNCLASSIFIED//

UNCLASSIFIED//

their military service and go on to work for the leading companies in Israel's private high-tech sector. Though companies cull their finest talent from 8200's graduates, the commanders feel the unit the talent comes from began suffering from a bloated bureaucracy and complacency. The two intelligence figures spearheading a change in direction cannot be named. Their titles, however, reveal enough about the intention to create something new within the shell of an IDF unit bogged down by tradition. Lieutenant Colonel K. is 8200's Chief Technology Officer, a title usually found in the high-tech industry, while T, a civilian working for the unit, who use to be a soldier there, bears the demanding title: Head of the Department of the Law for Preserving Madness. He is responsible on a daily basis for strategic innovation in the unit. This is how their tasks are divided: T. ensures the ideas thought up by the unit are the "right" ones, while K. is in charge of screening ideas, developing them and then eventually execution. Behind the new forum tasked with fostering innovation is the understanding that Unit 8200 must remain at the cutting edge. Innovation is essential for two main reasons according to K: the dynamic environment of Middle East and the rapid evolution of technology.

"There are instances when you have to know how to quickly adopt new technologies and there are instances when you have to know how to invent them, " he said. "In any event, we cannot allow ourselves to lag behind the market." Not only can 8200 not afford to lag behind but it must reinvent the game. "In a business like ours, there is almost no one that we can emulate; therefore, we have to produce the innovation on our own," K. said. But what happens when using advanced technology to gather intelligence becomes routine? "There is a built-in tension between efficiency and innovation," T. said. "If you want to be efficient, everything has to function with the smoothness of a machine and there must be a work plan. In an environment like that of Unit 8200, it is difficult to be dynamic and to launch projects. Ironically, Unit 8200's very success forced it to become institutionalized turn serious and square."

Thinking outside the box for five days

8200 began to look at the world's major high-tech companies for inspiration on how to encourage innovation. One idea under study was Google's "20 percent time" principle by which employees take time out of their day to work on creative projects. However, it was quickly realized the idea is not applicable in a military unit devoted to monitoring ongoing and pressing security matters. Ultimately, the mechanism that won out was SOOB, short for SIGINT Out of the Box. For those who lack an expertise in the field of intelligence, SIGINT is

UNCLASSIFIED//

UNCLASSIFIED//

signal intelligence, or the gathering of data by intercepting communication signals. The name of the project comes from Microsoft's Out of the Box Week, which puts engineers to work together creatively, even if what they come up with is not productive. The week has a uniform structure: On Day 1, the idea is crystallized, on Days 2 and 3 the product is turned into an archetype. On Day 4 a presentation is prepared and on Day 5 the development is shown to the relevant players - partners, investors, managers in the company and anyone else who might be interested in the product and commercializing it. Many outside of Microsoft now participate in the software giant's event. 8200 is using the format of the OOBW, including a presentation at the end of the week of the successful projects to senior intelligence commanders, and to leaders in the high-tech industry. Over the past three years, ten such events have been held, with 30 soldiers participating in each. More than 80 ideas have hatched. Of all the ideas so far, ten have been adopted and five of those have had a major impact on Unit 8200 - telling of the long sifting out process necessary to reach truly good ideas.

Soldiers submit ideas to the unit-wide system, called Abracadabra system. The ideas can seek to improve both the unit's operations or bureaucracy. A proposal typically outlines the manpower necessary for the task. Others in the system can respond by developing the product's technical features and to formulate a user interface. Ideas that mobilize people are invited to the SOOB week. One of the most interesting ideas draws from Facebook, illustrating how social media influences intelligence work. "In recent years, there is a crazy global revolution in social media in how information is produced and disseminated," T. said. "The intelligence community has understood that Facebook is source for intelligence gathering; however, up until now, the community has not looked at Facebook and blogs and said, 'Perhaps I can publish my information in this manner because it presents several advantages.' The IDF's Military Intelligence's role is to process data after all. We created a rich social network intelligence-oriented platform that has been designed very much like Facebook - not because we deeply admire Facebook's design but rather because 18-year-olds come here and they intuitively know how to use it." In this social network used in the military intelligence world, the dissemination of data changes and the data is open to all relevant players. Anyone tapped into the network can use their expertise to analyze the information coming in and start discussions. As is the case in open social networks, the information is archived and remains accessible. Such a system facilitates the sharing of information and allows to draw conclusions among bodies that don't typically work together.

UNCLASSIFIED//

UNCLASSIFIED//

At 8200 they know, however, there is a distance between theory and practice. Coming up with ideas is not enough - they must be implemented. "Part of the beauty is the fact that, during such a week, people are willing to take risks; they are not opening up a major project that requires massive resources," K. said. "Therefore, this week enables the participants to deal with many ideas that are high risk; an idea or two ultimately comes out that is sufficiently low-risk." However, T., who is charged with the task of persuading the unit's commanders to implement the ideas and to make them operational, admits that the "easy part is to free people for a week. The hard part is to persuade the organization to buy the idea."

[Description of Source: Tel Aviv Haaretz.com in English -- Website of English-language version of Ha'aretz, left-of-center, independent daily of record; URL: <http://www.haaretz.com/>]

(U) This product may contain copyrighted material; authorized use is for national security purposes of the United States Government only. Any reproduction, dissemination, or use is subject to the OSC usage policy and the original copyright.

CABLETYPE: FBISEMS ACP 1.0

ADMIN

BT

#5828

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED//