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Jewish Internet Defense Force



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The **Jewish Internet Defense Force (JIDF)** is an organization that uses social media to mobilize support for campaigns against websites and Facebook groups that promote or praise what it describes as **Islamic terrorism** or **antisemitism**. The group's website describes the JIDF as a "private, independent, non-violent protest organization representing a collective of activists".^[3] The JIDF's work has been termed "**hacktivism**" by some media outlets.^{[4][5]}

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Jewish Internet Defense Force (JIDF)



Type of site [Online activism, Israel advocacy](#)
Website www.thejidf.org
Alexa rank 4,534,043 (August 2015)^{[1][2]}

Organization and methods

According to the JIDF, the organization "formed as a grassroots effort in 2000, to mount mass e-mail campaigns, in response to the outbreak of the Second Intifada."^[6] The website is run by a person who identifies himself as "David Appletree."^[7] According to a reporter from *The Jewish Week* in 2009 he "will not say if that is his true surname". In the same article Appletree accused Facebook administrators of antisemitism for closing down his account. A Facebook spokesperson replied that the account was terminated because the website did not believe he was using his real name, which is a breach of Facebook's "real name culture". Appletree went on to say that he maintains approximately 40 Facebook groups focused on combating terrorism and antisemitism.^[7]

The group says they "specifically target hateful material or material which blatantly promotes hatred or violence, no matter where it can be found."^[8] The "About" page of the website says "We believe in direct action both to eradicate the problems we face online and to create the publicity that will cause those with companies like Facebook and Google to take the needed action themselves."^[3] The group focuses its attention on websites like [Facebook](#),^{[9][10]} [YouTube](#), [Google Earth](#), and [Wikipedia](#).^[11] The JIDF has redirected anti-Israel Facebook groups to other pages it prefers and changed the names of Muslim members of such groups to "Mossad collaborator," among other actions.^[12] A website spokesman told Haaretz that they don't break any laws and that the JIDF "prefers the terms 'seize control,' 'take over' or 'infiltrate' to 'hack.'"^[12]

In another article, Appletree maintained, "The main reason the JIDF exists is to promote Israel and fight Jew hatred as well as Islamic terrorist trends online," and stated, "we are a grassroots organization that reaches the hearts and the minds of normal, everyday Jews and Israel supporters who haven't been bamboozled into supporting the Jewish establishment that has completely failed Israel and the Jewish people in every way imaginable."^[13]

On Facebook

During 2007, a controversy on Facebook was reported involving "the drop-down list of places members can use to show where they live".^[14] A Facebook group, "Palestine Is not a country ... Delist it from Facebook as a country!", had been formed in 2007 which petitioned Facebook management to remove Palestine from Facebook's list of countries. Several [Facebook groups](#) formed to support or oppose this removal including "Israel is not a country! Delist it from Facebook as a country". Matt Hicks of Facebook responded by saying: "As long as the groups meet our terms of use, they can stay up. But we encourage users to report anything that is racist or objectionable."^[14] The JIDF claimed the "Israel is not a Country" group was antisemitic and mobilized supporters to complain to Facebook in an effort to have it deleted.^[11] After Facebook refused to shut the group down, the JIDF said it somehow took control of the group in July 2008.^[6]

According to a November 2008 article in *Haaretz*,^[12] the JIDF forwarded lists of Facebook groups that it deemed promoted hatred or violence to the website's administrators, hoping they would be removed. According to a man named "David" quoted in the Haaretz article, Facebook either did nothing or waited months before taking action. "David" told Haaretz that his group then decided to try to technically "intercept Facebook groups and make them impossible to access." The JIDF was particularly upset about Facebook groups praising the shooting of [students at Jerusalem's Mercaz HaRav Yeshiva](#) in March 2008.^[9]

In July 2009, the JIDF and [Avi Dichter](#) took credit for successfully pressuring Facebook into removing a fan page for [Hizbullah](#)

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13. [^] ^{http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/137769}[↗]
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23. [^] Christoph Gunkel, *Antisemitismus im Web 2*, Frankfurter Allgemeine FAZ.NET 14. Oktober 2008 [↗]. Quotes are taken from the authorised English translation, Facebook and Google Earth: Anti-Semitism in Web 2.0 [↗] published at Zionism On The Web, seen 2: November 2008
24. [^] Must see Religion of "Peace" Photo of the day [↗] JIDF website, May 19, 2010.
25. [^] During Ramadan Celebrations, Obama Supports Ground Zero Mosque (as do the "protesters"...just not at Ground Zero) [↗] JIDF website, August 14, 2010
26. [^] ^a ^b Lisa Respers France, Facebook urged to remove Holocaust-denial groups [↗], CNN.com, May 8, 2009.

External links

- Official website[↗]

Categories: Jewish websites | Non-governmental organizations involved in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict | Arab–Israeli conflict | Political websites | Antisemitism | Jewish political organizations | Zionist organizations | Internet-based activism | Blogs critical of Islam | Internet manipulation and propaganda

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