

# THE JEWISH STATE

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## WORKING

Business, Finance, Consumer Issues, Earning A Living

### At Work

### Frumster

By Libby Barsky

SPECIAL TO THE JEWISH STATE

**Name:** Frumster

**Type of business:** Online dating service for Torah-observant and Traditional marriage-minded Jewish singles worldwide.

**Address:** Passaic.

**Website:** www.frumster.com.

**Number of employees:** Eight full-time and part-time employees

**Founded:** December 2001, by Canadian Grayson Levy, who was living in Israel.

**Top officers:** Ben Rabizadeh, director of business development; Derek Saker, director of marketing.

**How would you describe your business?**

"Frumster.com is the most successful online dating service for Torah-observant and traditional marriage-minded Jewish singles worldwide, with more than 340 members already married. We manage more than 15,000 screened members, 10,000 weekly e-mails, 150 new weekly applications and nearly 300 photos a week," said Derek Saker, director of marketing.

"Members conduct searches and contact potential matches anonymously through the private and discreet Frumster network. A dedicated team of professionals at Frumster provides continuous screening to maintain a quality service and considers the expertise, guidance, and authority of an Orthodox rabbi. Members must be sincere in their search for a marriage partner and accurately represent their observance level.

At Work profiles businesses serving the Central New Jersey Jewish Communities. To suggest a business for a profile, write to: At Work c/o The Jewish State, 320 Raritan Avenue, Suite 203, Highland Park, N.J. 08904. Or contact us by telephone (732/992-0023) fax (732/992-0026) or e-mail

Frumster draws sincere singles of all ages of all religious outlooks (hashkafas).

"In order to join Frumster, you must be Jewish and able to marry according to halacha or Orthodox law. You must be born to a Jewish mother or completed an Orthodox conversion. If born to a mother who is a convert, she must have completed an Orthodox conversion before you were born. You cannot be married or separated and if divorced, you must have a get (a divorce from a Jewish law court or bet din)."

**What makes your business special?**

"This is not a service for those merely looking to make friends. It is a service for those sincerely looking to get married. No other site demands such explicit absolutes at registration. The individual has to submit his full name and contact telephone number. We methodically screen the whole profile and make a judgment. Any Frumster applicant has to provide very detailed answers in the online questionnaire. These answers — which include areas of family background, religious background, religious practice, defining self and partner — all build a picture as to the sincerity and authenticity of the applicant. If there are any questions, or red flags, we will immediately contact the applicant by email and phone to verify an issue and general authenticity.

"Every communication on the Frumster network goes through a number of innovative computer checks, immediately bringing any

**Frumster Matches: 342 Members**  
Learn about Frumster  
Success Stories  
Singles Events

**Member Login**  
Email:   
Password:   
 Remember email  
  
[Forget your password?](#)

**Quick Search**  
Seeking: Men  
Age: 18 to 99  
Country: -CHOOSE ONE-  
Observance: -CHOOSE ONE-

**Member Lookup**  
Member ID:  or  
Display Name:

**VERY PICKY.** Frumster is very selective about who it allows to use its service. You must be a Torah observant or traditional Jew who wants to get married.

suspicious activity to the attention of our screening staff. Additionally, many safeguards are built in to prevent spammers and fraudsters from contacting our members. Every communication is stored in our database and can be referred to when researching complaints or reviewing profiles.

"Frumster measures success not by numbers of members, but by the numbers of marriages. As such, we provide a uniquely vigorous application review and ongoing screening process. We also have integrated a number of pro-

ensure as genuine a pool of membership as possible.

"The most important asset at Frumster is maintaining a pool of sincere individuals. We do not tolerate any form of insincerity or dishonesty on our service and we suspend or ban such individuals immediately.

"We offer a personalized service, where our professional staff directly communicates with members on an ongoing basis. Some of these services include: One-on-one dating advice, live online support, member complaints and reso-

highly interactive mediums where members can express themselves and promote themselves in a modest way.

"Posting a profile and picture and doing member searches are all free. In order to initiate contact or reply to an email, the client must upgrade to 'Premium Membership' which starts at \$8.95 a month."

**What goals do you have for the business?**

"Our goals are to increase the number of marriages among our members; to reach as many sin-

### At Work

### Frumster

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cere, marriage-minded Jews as possible by providing a kosher dating environment; to increase international membership; to address the many specific challenges faced by observant Jewish singles; to provide further dynamic off-line singles events nationwide.

"We also plan to offer new features and services — and soon we will be launching a "Member Pictorials — A Day in the Life" feature where any member can submit five photos to describe a photo essay of a typical day in his or her life."

**How has your business changed?**

"Although initially a site in cyberspace provides the attraction of anonymity, we have found

online dating users are in general becoming more at ease and willing to be more forthcoming. For instance, they will supply their own Social Security number to site administrators to validate the authenticity of their profile."

**What was your most important deal?**

"Bringing Frumster to the USA. Frumster was created by Canadian Grayson Levy who was living in Israel. Levy is still with the company as chief programmer."

**What changes do you expect in your business in the next 10 years?**

"We believe there will be more controls, consolidation and greater acceptability. Members now are demanding more security controls to secure their information as they provide a profile as genuine as

possible.

"Today, there are users who often list themselves on many different sites. Because of the time, more of these users will be inclined to focus their energies on the one or two sites that offer the most promise and provide the best service.

"There will be greater acceptability. Frumster already has become a trusted and mainstream dating alternative in the Orthodox world. That is because Frumster is not simply online dating — but an 'online dating for marriage' service, and is no longer seen as an 'awkward' medium of dating — but a very successful tool that has helped unite hundreds of members, young and old, never-married singles, divorcees, widowers,

together in happy marriages from across the neighborhood or across continents."

**What is the most important thing you've learned in your business?**

"Answers are not simple and people are often not that complex. I mean that every member has to be addressed uniquely given the individual they are, and the context of their life. At the same time, most singles — like married people — are positive, caring, thoughtful people just going through a life phase."

**What advice would you give to someone considering your line of work?**

"While it is an amazing opportunity to do such good, it is a very demanding work environment.

The challenge for a cyberspace service is to always create a welcoming response, so it's as if the person were just entering a physical space."

**Is there anything else you would rather be doing?**

"No. It is an exciting position in a dynamically growing service. Frumster provides such an invaluable service that has brought lasting simcha (joy) to the lives of thousands of families and communities worldwide. I'm originally from South Africa. I have lived and worked in England and Israel. This combined international marketing experience and residency within Jewish communities across four different continents has made Frumster a great work shidduch for me."