

Thirty

Our company's registration date is September 15, 1985. That's when Turbo Computers and Software Co. Ltd. officially started working. Inexperienced and naive, we chose the silly name "Turbo," taken from a revolutionary programming compiler that was just out: Turbo Pascal. We were a software house then. We surely didn't think we'd last very long, but we have, and we're still around, although we do totally different things. For one, we publish *This Week in Palestine*, and we're a design firm commonly known as Turbo Design.

In the mid-eighties, Ramallah was directly occupied by Israel (and the effect of that occupation is still felt today). When I used to go to the tax authority, there were Israeli soldiers with machine guns greeting people at the door. There were even Israeli banks in downtown Ramallah. It took us well over two years to get a landline. No mobiles, no Facebook or Twitter; imagine! IBM personal computers were the "in" thing, and believe it or not, there were no Macs. With all this, somehow, life was simpler; much simpler in fact. My drive to work from Jerusalem to Ramallah was a breeze (no Qalandia checkpoint and far fewer cars), and the commute for employees coming from Bethlehem was no big deal.

Thirty years have gone by since our inception, and what a journey this has been. I could probably write a book on our experience; but if there is one thing that stands out during the entire three decades, and which I am most proud of, it is the quality of the people who have worked at Turbo Design. How can I put it? We've simply been blessed with amazing human beings who could have easily excelled anywhere in the world. There is no way I can even remember all those who have worked at the company. But at risk of forgetting some, I would still like to pay tribute to some of the heroes. First and foremost is Victor Serna, my walking-encyclopedia brother-in-law whose IQ is at least double mine, and who happens to be my dormant partner. Taisir Masrieh, our art director who is still putting up with me after 28 years! Maher Salah, Michel Abu Zuluf, and Khader El-Atrash, the trio of wizards who programmed our multi-lingual typesetter back in 1986, which, in fact, actually paved the way for us to become a design firm. Raed Al-Bitar who for thirteen years was our computer anchorman. Nader Khoury (currently running Zeinatech), who had the solution to every technical problem. Shehadeh Abdallah, who for over thirteen years now has been, among other things, our rock of quality control and a remarkable graphic designer with extensive experience in layout. Hasan Nasser, our exceptionally gifted graphic designer, and recently, Tala Abu Rahmeh, our superb and sensitive poet who is also *This Week in Palestine's* current content editor.

Last but not least, a word of tribute is in order for Riyam Kafri AbuLaban, *This Week in Palestine's* former content editor, who has moved on to deservedly become the principal of the Friends Boys School, one of the most important schools in Palestine. Having worked with Riyam and seen first-hand her qualities, I would like to see her become Palestine's prime minister! Riyam's compassion, intellect, sincerity, and devotion have added value to the magazine and to the company in an invaluable way. Thank you, Riyam.

I shall not end without mentioning that the most prestigious publications would kill to have our world-class language editor (who, intriguingly, prefers to remain anonymous). I am humbled that this person has been part of our family for many years.

Thirty years down, ??? to go!

**Sincerely,
Sani P. Meo
Publisher**

