The War Room quickly became a hot spot on campus, and many students spent the duration of the operation here logged onto Facebook and Twitter, and trolling international media sites.

“This turned into a real social media war,” said David Bador, 20, from Closter, New Jersey, describing how he responded to reports “in places like CNN, BBC and Al-Jazeera. “When they were saying horrible and inaccurate things, we blogged back at them on their pages, telling them what the real truth is, and countering those who portray Israel as the monster in this conflict.”

Oran Kochavi, a fourth-year student in law and business at IDC, and one of the War Room creators, who has worked in social and digital media, regularly briefed the volunteers on web etiquette and what he believes is the most effective online approach. War Room participants were briefed on a very specific social media strategy, Kochavi said. The more personal the connection, the better, he said.

“I told the Israeli students, ‘Almost all of you took a post-army trip to a place like the Far East and South America and made friends you are in touch with on Facebook or LinkedIn. Get in touch with them. Explain to them what you are going through in Tel Aviv, what life is like with sirens and missiles, tell them your brother got called into the army reserves. Let your friends around the world know what you are going through,” Kochavi said.

Similarly, the foreign students were encouraged to discuss the situation with friends and family and former classmates back home, sending a personal touch.

The War Room’s biggest and most lasting accomplishment, he believes, was the idea of making the archive advocacy materials publicly accessible via Dropbox. Its online storage of documents, graphics, and videos, which participants have translated into multiple languages, will remain there to help in future efforts as well.

Kochavi says another benefit of the project, which will last beyond the operation, was the bonding that took place between foreign students at IDC and the Israeli student population. The campus has a significant presence of students from around the world, but because they attend classes in English separately, they don’t always interact, and they generally travel in separate social circles. In the War Room, they became team members. “When something happens in Israel, all Jews are the same,” Kochavi says. “They want to help.”