

## A hotelier is showing us how to be truly inclusive while running a profitable business

Lemon Tree headed by Patu Keswani currently has 15 per cent Employees with Disabilities (EwDs) in their team of 3,000. Their 2020 vision is to have at least 25 per cent of the total staff as EwDs.

Abhipsha Mahapatro Dec 6, 2015

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Anurag talking to his manager, Gayatri, through sign language. Courtesy: twoworldsmeet.wordpress.com



One fine day, a woman walked into Patu Keswani's office to thank him. She was the mother of one Lemon Tree's employees and had come to express her gratitude as her son had just got married. It was a big deal for her visually impaired son to have been able to get married in a society like ours, and this was only made possible because he had a job. She mentioned that most of his other friends with disabilities have been able to find either, job or partner.

Keswani realized how the boy's life changed because of employment. One opportunity had led way to many more. This led him to ponder and develop the inclusion mandate that Lemon Tree Hotels follow.

Award winning, Lemon Tree Hotels is among India's fastest growing hotel chains for upscale business and leisure accommodation, founded by Patu Keswani. As part of their Sustainability program they are now taking forward the inclusion mandate.

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In his talk at the India Inclusion Summit 2015, Bengaluru, Keswani says that because they have a problem doesn't imply that they can't pick up new skills. Lemon Tree works on this principle with their EwDs (Employees with Disability)- to work on skill development. Keswani also said that by 2016 Lemon Tree Hotels plans to run a new property in Gurgaon, which will be fully run by EwDs. This hotel will be the first of its kind in the country.



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Patu Keswani, Chairman and Managing Director Lemon Tree Hotels talks about the vision of Lemon Tree Hotels to drive #inclusivity. They have hired over 800 People With Disabilities as of 2015 and aims to ensure that by 2020, 40% of their workforce is People with Disabilities. #Caring Corporate Citizen in action! #IndiaInclusion #InclusiveIndia #IIS2015

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The company has been ranked as the Top 2 Best Companies in India for its Unique Initiative in hiring Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Their agenda is to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities as others to make full use of their potential.

Lemon tree currently has 15 per cent EwDs in their team of 3,000. The team works across different areas of the hotels like housekeeping, kitchen stewarding, etc. Their 2020 vision is to have at least 25 per cent of the total staff from the EwD category. Lemon Tree's focus for profit making is on being best-in-class in their cost structure, both in building and operating hotels. This will enable them to offer the best Return on Capital employed to their investors in the longer term.



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