

## Microtel Inns & Suites Goes the Extra Mile For Travelers with Disabilities

2006-01-05

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In order to better serve travelers with disabilities, Microtel Inns & Suites - the all-newly constructed, interior corridor chain of budget/economy hotels - now provides 'Access Microtel' pamphlets, 'Accessible Fitness' bags and Upper Body Ergometers for guests with special needs.

The Access Microtel guide offers specific information - both in large print and in Braille - about the accessibility features available at Microtel hotels. Accessible Fitness bags include three-pound hand weights, two types of stretch bands and a pair of handgrips. They are located in every Microtel hotel with a fitness center on-site, and are also available for guests to check-out and use in their room. The Upper Body Ergometer is a piece of equipment that offers travelers with disabilities a variety of options for upper body cardiovascular conditioning to complement their daily work-out. It is available at all new Microtel hotels with a fitness center.

"Microtel has made great strides in accommodating travelers with disabilities," said Roy E. Flora, executive vice president, franchise operations for US Franchise Systems, Inc. (USFS), parent company of the franchisor of the Microtel Inns & Suites brand. "We continue to be committed to providing this rapidly-growing market segment with quality, accessible hotel accommodations, and with a service culture prepared to make their stay with us an enjoyable experience."

Reservations among travelers with disabilities at Microtel hotels around the nation continue to grow. Last year, net revenues for ADA room nights increased by 42% over 2004. Internet hotel bookings for ADA rooms also increased significantly.

Microtel Inns & Suites offers three ADA-room designs throughout the chain, and a consistency of services to fit guests' needs, including employees trained in disability etiquette. Microtel is a sponsor of the Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality (SATH) and the Ohio Wheelchair Softball League, and sponsored Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania 2005. The hotel chain annually participates in the World Congress & Exposition on Disabilities, and is proactively involved in several other initiatives that target the needs of travelers with disabilities.

Microtel is the only budget hotel chain to implement the training program known as Opening Doors(R) systemwide. Opening Doors, developed by W.C. Duke Associates of Woodford, Va., is a value-added training tool used to enhance hotel customer service initiatives, so that staff can practice "attitude accessibility." Opening Doors emphasizes disability etiquette skills training that includes interactive activities and role playing using wheelchairs, blindfolds, earplugs and taped hands for employees to practice how to service customers with disabilities.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

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