

# Teaching dragon the tricks of IT

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**A**mong the few Indian companies who have been successful in running their business in China, one has been NIIT China. Like many other Indian companies this IT training giant also came to China for initially exploring opportunities and to understand the education market. But, soon after the culmination of initial gestation period of adjustment to the language and the culture, the company hasn't looked back and has been continuously scaling new heights in the field of IT and IT training. In an exclusive interview with ET, **Mr. Prakash Menon, president, NIIT China,** revealed the success formula of the company and the some lessons to learn for Indian companies before entering the Chinese market. Excerpts:

**Kindly share with us brief overview of NIIT operations in China and its experience working here?**

The company entered into China in 1997 and it was not easy for an Indian company to scale the Great Wall of China and enter its vast education market. We made a quiet entry into China and for the initial years we focused on the marketing, training and analyzing the growth prospects in the country. The whole purpose of doing that was to build an NIIT brand and gain the mindshare of the student

community, the Chinese IT industry and the government. Those were tough and challenging times as our team had to grapple with issues such as language and cultural differences, but the fact that the Chinese government was aware of our credentials and the global image of India IT companies, helped us to gradually firm our presence in China. Today, we have a pan-China presence and our curriculum and franchisee model has become a benchmark for others to follow.

**Considering that NIIT operates across 32 countries, how different was the working experience in China in comparison to any other country or India?**

The Chinese market is different from any other market in the world, if you try and force your concepts, you are dead. This country is different, you should know to do the things in Chinese way, but this leads to another question, as what is the Chinese way? For that to understand you have to be present in the market, learn their ways and change your style accordingly. We also tried to analyze the market for initial period and eventually decided to localize the content accordingly.

We adopted a different model called "NIIT Inside" to impart knowledge in China. And today, NIIT offers high-quality state-of-the-art IT courses through this unique model in 129 universities and colleges across the country.

Another difference which is very fundamental in China is that you have to build a relationship. Everything runs on relationship, you might be having best product or the best service but without the trust and relationship it's not possible to work with any Chinese.

**According to you what can the synergy areas between the China and India?**

With the rapid rise of both the countries, we now have two largest markets in front of us. It's there, the two countries can come together to leverage their strengths and attain common goals.

Both India and China have one common advantage over the others - its people. With the combined effort these two most populous nations can convert its population to skilled manpower through innovations and common synergy.

And the fact that NIIT understands Western thinking, comes from an Indian origin and at the same time, has a sound knowledge of Chinese market, that gives us a great advantage to play an important role in preparing the two societies for future.