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★ NEW

RM VISHAKHA ⁴⁷

Managing director and CEO, IndiaFirst Life Insurance



Just about seven years old, IndiaFirst is one of India's youngest life insurance companies. It has had its share of teething troubles, including some procedural violations. Vishakha, with more than 25 years of insurance experience, took over a little over two years ago and turned the company around from a loss-making entity into a company that recorded a profit of Rs 35.2 crore in FY17. Today, IndiaFirst is one of the fastest growing life insurers in the country with a year-on-year growth rate of 82% in individual retail annual premium equivalent [APE] during 2016-17, up from 38% in 2015-16.

Apart from that, Vishakha has also overseen new business growth of 148% in individual retail APE in the first quarter of the current fiscal. The company's total assets under management crossed Rs 10,000 crore in March. Like any other leader today, she's a votary of digitisation, which she believes will not only improve customer experience but also encourage value-addition from employees. She's not just a turn-around CEO, she's also a good team leader. She says she strives to create a flat organisation to give employees a sense of ownership. She credits much of her success to a combination of her strong academic grounding [she's a qualified chartered accountant], her never-say-die spirit, and her penchant for details.