

More Than Able: Challenging Disability Stereotypes

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It is through this ableist gaze that we visualize a global community of over 1.3 billion people— a massive population that the media either completely overlooks or represents without dignity or the nuance they deserve. What's overlooked are the full lives rich with love, friendship, connection, successes, and failures – an abundance of diverse stories to tell.

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Aptly referred to recently in a [Fast Company article](#) as the "original hackers," this is a community of individuals who have consistently had to innovate "in a world that wasn't designed for them." They live active lives working, parenting, traveling, learning, leading and so much more. Beyond that, people with disabilities come from all over the world in different shapes and sizes, ages, races and ethnicities, with different socioeconomic status, sexual orientations, gender expressions and identities. These are the things we as an industry need to acknowledge when we are representing this community visually.

We must move away from one-dimensional, reductive visual storytelling surrounding this community. People with disabilities are so much more than their disability and it is vital that this reflected in the imagery we see every day.