

Analyzing Low Sales of Walktoforest's Birdwatching Service and Formulating Business Solutions Using the Pirate Metrics Framework

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Abstract

This study applies a diagnostic problem-solving approach to diagnose the underlying causes of low sales performance at Walktoforest by analyzing customer behavior across the conversion funnel. The primary analytical framework used is the AAARRR Pirate Metrics model, which includes Awareness, Acquisition, Activation, Revenue, Retention, and Referral. Unlike conventional marketing research that depends on stated preferences, this study utilizes revealed preference data obtained from Walktoforest's internal digital analytics. The data sources include Instagram insights, Meta Ads performance reports, WhatsApp inquiry records, and transaction data collected over a defined observation period. Mapping customer behavior at each funnel stage enables the identification of critical friction points where potential customers disengage from the decision-making process. The findings indicate that low sales are not driven by product inadequacy or insufficient market demand, but rather by structural inefficiencies within the customer journey. Although the brand achieves high visibility with more than 63,000 impressions, the conversion from Awareness to Acquisition remains low at 4%, suggesting limited content resonance. A major bottleneck is observed between Activation and Revenue—where only 6% of interested users complete bookings—largely due to uncertainty avoidance, perceived risk, and unclear experience information. Conversely, Retention and Referral perform strongly, with a 75% referral rate, indicating high post-experience value. The study proposes behavior-driven funnel optimization strategies to improve customer adoption.

Keywords: Niche Ecotourism Marketing; Digital Customer Journey; Behavioral Adoption Barriers; Funnel Optimization Strategy; Social Enterprise Growth.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a global shift in tourist preferences toward more sustainable and meaningful travel experiences (Strathdee, 2024). Ecotourism—defined by its focus on nature conservation, education, and community empowerment—has become a growing sector, especially in regions rich in biodiversity like Indonesia. Despite this trend, specific forms of ecotourism, such as birdwatching, remain underdeveloped in the Indonesian market. While the country is home to more than 1,836 bird species, with 542 *Indonesia's endemic* (BurungIndonesia, 2024), and vast natural habitats, birdwatching as a tourism activity is often overlooked or misunderstood by domestic travelers and tourism providers alike.

Ecotourism has emerged globally as a sustainable response to rising demand for travel experiences that prioritize environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community empowerment (Hasana et al., 2022; Shi et al., 2023; Trianto & Adnan, 2024; Üzülmez et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2017), ecotourism has become one of the fastest-

growing sectors of the travel industry, accounting for more than 6% of global gross domestic product (GDP). The trend reflects increasing environmental awareness among travelers, a desire for authentic experiences, and a shift toward responsible tourism practices.

The global ecotourism market has shown significant growth in recent years and is projected to expand rapidly. From 2019 to 2023, the market experienced steady increases, reaching an estimated value of USD 337.88 billion in 2024. Forecasts indicate that it will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.5% during 2025–2032, ultimately achieving a size of nearly USD 998.20 billion by 2032 (MMR, 2025). This growth highlights the increasing demand for environmentally responsible tourism experiences worldwide.

In terms of traveler types, 2024 projections reveal that solo travelers contribute slightly more than group travelers to the ecotourism market, reflecting a rising trend of individual exploration and eco-conscious personal travel. Regionally, North America holds the largest market share in 2024, followed by significant contributions from Asia Pacific and Europe, while the Middle East, Africa, and South America remain emerging markets. These patterns demonstrate that ecotourism is not only becoming a mainstream global industry but also diversifying across regions and customer segments.

Indonesia, the world's second-most biodiverse country and home to over 50 national parks and thousands of community forests, positions ecotourism as a strategic sector for sustainable development (Buchholz, 2025). West Java, where Walktoforest operates—particularly in the conservation area of Bandung Basin—has significant potential due to its rich biodiversity, cultural heritage, and proximity to major urban centers.

However, despite the global growth of ecotourism, many small and community-based enterprises continue to face difficulties in introducing new types of tourism that emphasize educational and immersive experiences, such as wildlife observation through birdwatching. This form of tourism has the potential to offer a meaningful alternative to conventional mass tourism models, which often generate negative environmental and social impacts (Arevin et al., 2025; Kanupriya, 2024; PAIZULLAYEV & ZHUMATOVA, 2024; Pathmanandakumar, 2025).

Based on the final report of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (*KEMENPAREKRAF*, 2022), Deputy of Strategic Policy, notable variations emerge in how different tourism activities are perceived by Indonesian travelers. Golf emerges as the most popular activity, with 20% of respondents expressing interest and positioning it at the top rank. This suggests that, despite its niche nature, golf may appeal to higher-income travelers or those seeking exclusive experiences. Cycling follows in second place with a 14% interest rate, reflecting growing enthusiasm for active and health-oriented tourism. Nature-based tourism holds the third spot at 12%, indicating that outdoor experiences in natural settings continue to resonate with a sizable portion of the population.

In contrast, moderate levels of interest were recorded for sailing (10%), mountain hiking (8%), and whitewater rafting (7%). These activities typically demand a certain level of physical effort or geographic access, which may influence their popularity. More striking, however, is the significantly lower interest shown for several other categories: ecotourism and kayaking each received 4%, while diving garnered 3%. At the bottom of the ranking, wildlife tourism and backpacking attracted only 1% interest each, underscoring their current lack of mainstream appeal in the domestic market.

This data provides a clear empirical foundation for identifying birdwatching—typically categorized under wildlife tourism or ecotourism—as a low-awareness and low-interest product among Indonesian travelers. Despite Indonesia's exceptional biodiversity and potential for nature-based tourism, this form of tourism remains overlooked. As such, this finding supports the central argument of the study "*Analyzing Low Sales of Walktoforest's Birdwatching Service and Formulating Business Solutions Using the Pirate Metrics Framework*": that birdwatching, while ecologically valuable, requires a reimagined approach in design and communication to capture the interest of new market segments, especially younger and eco-conscious travelers. These conditions translate into low sales performance for new tourism products like birdwatching. Despite promotional efforts, Walktoforest struggles to convert awareness into bookings, making low sales the central business issue addressed in this study.

Walktoforest, a social enterprise promoting conservation and sustainable tourism, aims to bridge this gap by introducing birdwatching as a new experience offering. The company's mission combines environmental education with community involvement, making birdwatching an ideal fit both in terms of ecological value and tourism differentiation (walktoforest, 2024). However, launching this product into a market unfamiliar with the practice poses unique challenges. Awareness is low, and existing tourism habits tend to favor more popular or mainstream outdoor activities. Walktoforest seeks to understand how to design, introduce, and promote this experience in a way that resonates with a new audience, especially among younger, eco-conscious travelers.

In summary, while Indonesia holds exceptional ecological potential, birdwatching remains a low-awareness and low-demand activity. This gap is not only an issue of market unfamiliarity but also manifests as persistently low sales. For Walktoforest, whose mission depends on both ecological impact and business sustainability, addressing low sales becomes the most pressing challenge. This study therefore focuses on designing solutions to increase adoption and sales of birdwatching tourism using Pirate Metrics as a measurement framework.

METHOD

The research design employed in this study follows a diagnostic problem-solving framework, structured to systematically diagnose the root causes of low sales performance and formulate targeted interventions. As illustrated in Figure III.1, the research process flows sequentially from issue exploration to solution formulation, ensuring a logical connection between data evidence and strategic decisions.

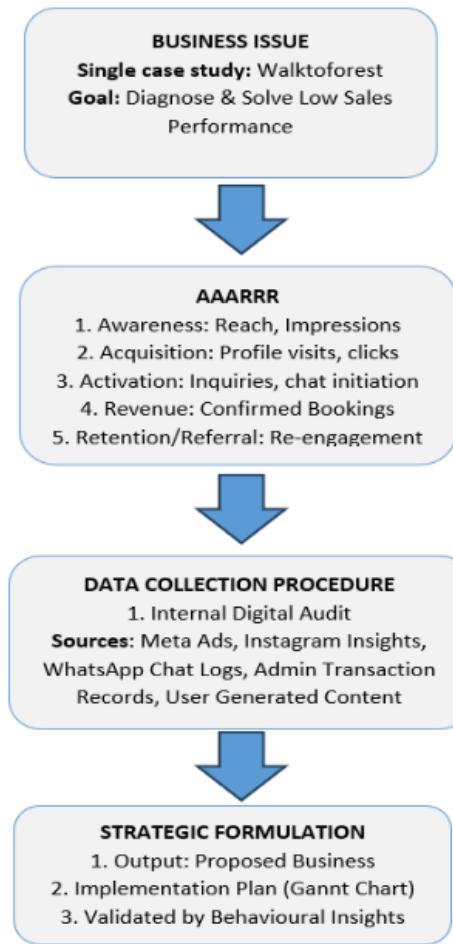


Figure 1. Research Design

The research design employed in this study follows a systematic diagnostic problem-solving framework, structured to logically progress from issue identification to strategic solution. As illustrated in Figure III.1, the research process is organized into four sequential phases:

1. Business Issue Identification: The process commences with the identification of the Business Issue, focusing on a single case study of Walktoforest. The primary goal at this stage is to diagnose and resolve the organization's low sales performance. This phase frames the research context and establishes the objective of transforming the current sales stagnation into sustainable growth.
2. Framework Application (AAARRR): To analyze the identified issue, the study applies the AAARRR (Pirate Metrics) framework as the diagnostic lens. This phase breaks down the customer journey into five distinct behavioral stages: Awareness: Measured through reach and impressions, Acquisition: Evaluated via profile visits and clicks, Activation: Assessed through inquiries and chat

initiations, Revenue: Measured by confirmed bookings, Retention/Referral: Observed through re-engagement behaviors.

3. Data Collection Procedure: The third phase involves a rigorous Data Collection Procedure designed to populate the AAARRR framework with empirical evidence. The study utilizes an Internal Digital Audit to gather primary behavioral data. Data sources include quantitative metrics from Meta Ads and Instagram Insights, qualitative interaction logs from WhatsApp Chats, administrative transaction records, and User Generated Content. This multi-source approach ensures that the diagnosis is based on actual user behavior ("revealed preference") rather than stated intent.
4. Strategic Formulation: The final phase is Strategic Formulation, where the insights derived from the data analysis are translated into actionable business solutions. This phase yields three key outputs: a proposed Business Solution to address specific funnel bottlenecks, a comprehensive Implementation Plan (visualized through a Gantt Chart), and final validation supported by behavioral insights. This structure ensures that the proposed strategies are directly linked to the empirical findings gathered in the previous stages.

Data Collection Method

This study employed a non-reactive internal data collection approach to support its diagnostic problem-solving research design. Consistent with the objective of identifying business issues and customer journey inefficiencies within Walktoforest, the research relies exclusively on internal behavioral and performance data as the primary source for problem identification and analysis. This approach enables the study to capture actual customer actions rather than self-reported perceptions, thereby increasing analytical reliability and relevance.

1. Primary Data: Internal Behavioral and Performance Data

Primary data in this research consist of internally generated records that reflect user behavior across Walktoforest's digital marketing and operational systems. These data include:

Digital Marketing Analytics: Data were collected from Instagram Insights and Meta Ads Manager, including metrics such as impressions, reach, content views, profile visits, link clicks, and engagement levels. These indicators are used to measure customer behavior at the Awareness, Acquisition, and Activation stages of the AAARRR funnel.

Inquiry and Communication Records: Records from WhatsApp inquiries and direct messages were collected to capture expressions of active interest and information-seeking behavior. These data represent key Activation indicators, reflecting the transition from passive engagement to deliberate consideration.

Booking and Transaction Records: Internal booking data were used to measure the Revenue stage of the funnel, including the number of confirmed bookings and

conversion rates from inquiries to purchases. These records provide objective evidence of monetary commitment and purchasing behavior.

Post-Engagement Interaction Data: Customer engagement after participation, such as continued content interaction and sharing behavior observed through social media analytics, was used to assess Retention and Referral stages. Given the episodic nature of ecotourism experiences, these metrics serve as proxies for ongoing engagement and advocacy. All primary data were collected from Walktoforest's internal systems over a defined observation period and organized according to the AAARRR customer journey stages.

2. Secondary Data: Contextual and Theoretical Support

Secondary data were sourced from academic literature, government reports, and industry publications related to ecotourism, consumer behavior, and tourism marketing. These data were used solely to provide contextual background and theoretical grounding, particularly in Chapters I and II. Importantly, secondary data were not utilized for identifying the business issue or diagnosing customer journey problems, ensuring consistency with the internal-data-driven research design.

3. Data Scope and Reliability Considerations

The use of internal behavioral data allows for accurate diagnosis within Walktoforest's operational context; however, the findings are not intended for statistical generalization beyond the organization. Instead, the data collection method is designed to support context-specific insight generation and strategic decision-making aligned with the objectives of a problem-solving thesis.

Data Analysis Method

The data analysis in this study adopts a funnel-based behavioral diagnostic approach, utilizing the AAARRR Pirate Metrics framework as the primary analytical lens. This method is designed to systematically identify customer journey inefficiencies that contribute to low sales performance in Walktoforest's birdwatching product. Rather than applying inferential statistical techniques or hypothesis testing, the analysis focuses on interpreting revealed customer behavior captured through internal performance indicators.

1. AAARRR-Based Funnel Diagnostic Analysis

The analysis begins by mapping internal behavioral and performance data onto the six stages of the AAARRR framework: Awareness, Acquisition, Activation, Revenue, Retention, and Referral. Each stage represents a distinct behavioral milestone in the customer journey and is operationalized using specific internal metrics aligned with Walktoforest's digital and operational context.

At each stage, stage-to-stage conversion ratios are calculated to assess how effectively customers progress through the funnel. This allows for the

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identification of drop-off points, or bottlenecks, where a significant proportion of potential customers disengage. These bottlenecks are interpreted as behavioral frictions rather than isolated marketing failures, providing insight into the underlying causes of low sales.

2. Stage-Specific Metric Interpretation

For the Awareness and Acquisition stages, metrics such as impressions, reach, content views, and profile visits are analyzed to evaluate exposure effectiveness and initial interest generation. The transition to Activation is examined through indicators such as link clicks, direct messages, and inquiry records, which signal deliberate information-seeking behavior. Revenue analysis focuses on confirmed bookings and inquiry-to-purchase conversion rates to assess transaction effectiveness.

Given the episodic nature of ecotourism experiences, Retention is analyzed using engagement-based indicators, including repeated content interactions and ongoing digital engagement rather than purchase frequency alone. Referral behavior is evaluated through observable advocacy actions such as content sharing and user-generated interactions, which reflect customer satisfaction and trust-based promotion.

3. Bottleneck Identification and Problem Definition

The core output of the data analysis is the identification of critical funnel bottlenecks. By comparing conversion ratios across AAARRR stages, the analysis highlights where customer progression weakens most significantly. These bottlenecks form the empirical basis for defining the primary business problem, ensuring that the problem statement is grounded in measurable behavioral evidence rather than assumption.

4. Analytical Output and Strategic Implications

The results of the funnel-based diagnostic analysis inform the development of targeted business solutions in subsequent chapters. Each identified bottleneck is translated into strategic focus areas aligned with specific AAARRR stages, enabling the formulation of actionable interventions. Importantly, the analysis does not seek to establish causal claims or predictive models; instead, it provides a diagnostic foundation for strategic improvement within Walktoforest's operational context. Overall, this data analysis method ensures analytical coherence between internal data, problem identification, and solution design, reinforcing the validity of the proposed strategies and their relevance to Walktoforest's business objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Awareness

Within the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, the awareness stage represents the foundation of the customer journey, where potential customers are first exposed to the existence, concept, and relevance of a product. In Walktoforest's context, awareness goes

beyond mere visibility. Given that birdwatching is a low-awareness and low-familiarity activity in the Indonesian domestic tourism market, awareness functions as an educational and reframing stage, rather than a purely promotional one.

For Walktoforest, awareness carries the critical role of introducing birdwatching as a legitimate, accessible, and meaningful tourism experience. Unlike mainstream outdoor activities such as hiking or cycling, birdwatching requires an initial cognitive shift from potential customers. At this stage, audiences are not yet evaluating price, itinerary, or logistics; instead, they are forming their first mental model of what birdwatching is, who it is for, and why it matters. Therefore, awareness in Walktoforest's business is closely tied to value perception, identity resonance, and relevance-building.

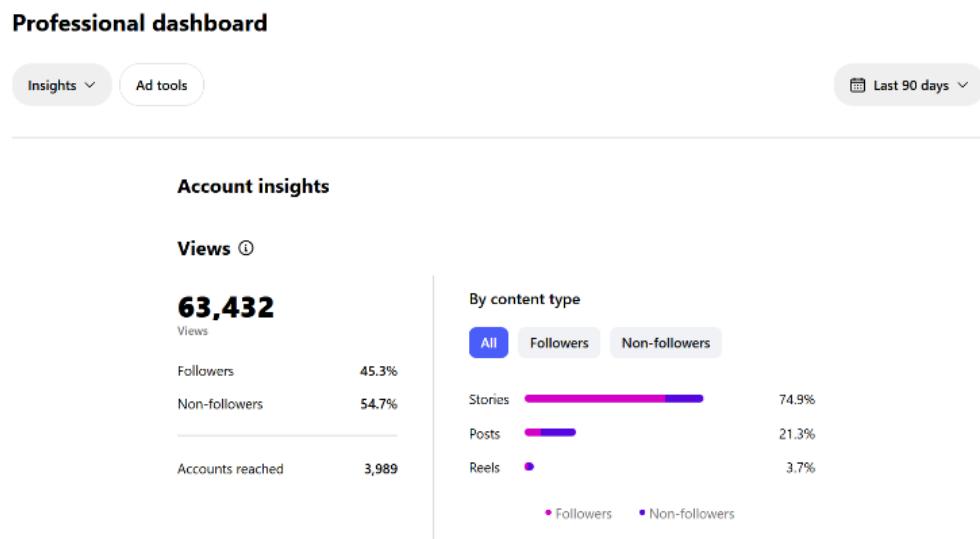


Figure 1. Account Insight of Walktoforest

The funnel data shows that Walktoforest successfully generates large-scale exposure, with 63,432 impressions, indicating that the brand is not operating in a low-visibility environment. However, the significant drop from awareness to acquisition suggests that much of this exposure reaches audiences without immediate relevance or intent. From a UNITE perspective, this implies that the core challenge at the awareness stage is not reach volume, but audience qualification. Awareness must progressively shift from broad exposure toward reaching individuals whose jobs-to-be-done (JTBD) align with nature appreciation, experiential learning, and mindful outdoor exploration.

The behavioral pattern observed at the Awareness stage indicates that most users encounter Walktoforest's content passively, primarily through algorithmic exposure on Instagram Stories and Reels. This reflects a low-intent audience whose interaction is driven by platform distribution rather than deliberate search behavior. Users at this stage demonstrate quick-content consumption tendencies, with limited cognitive engagement or evaluation of the birdwatching concept. The low transition from impressions to profile actions suggests that awareness remains superficial, where users acknowledge the existence of the content but do not yet perceive personal relevance or value.

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Based on the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, awareness growth should be driven by the efficiency of reaching the right personas rather than reaching the largest audience. In Walktoforest's case, awareness activities currently generate high exposure but insufficient relevance. This means that existing awareness efforts succeed in quantity but not in qualification. The framework recommends improving persona alignment, strengthening the narrative, and refining channels to reach users who have the appropriate Jobs-To-Be-Done (JTBD), such as nature-seeking urban professionals and experience-driven travelers.

Possible growth drivers that are still underutilized include storytelling-based Reels that emphasize beginner-friendliness, educational narratives about birdwatching, and consistent PR or partnership-based exposure. Strengthening these drivers would increase the proportion of high-intent users entering the funnel. Therefore, awareness improvement is not about expanding reach, but about increasing the relevance density of exposures.

According to the UNITE Pirate Metrics model, growth at the awareness stage is driven by channels that maximize both reach and relevance. In Walktoforest's case, the primary awareness channels include social media content distribution (Instagram feed, stories, and reels), organic sharing, and paid digital advertising. These channels determine not only how many people are reached, but also which people are reached.

The current performance indicates that Walktoforest's awareness growth is heavily supported by algorithmic exposure, particularly through short-lived and high-frequency formats such as Stories. While effective for maintaining visibility, such formats may generate passive awareness rather than curiosity-driven discovery. As a result, growth at this stage depends on optimizing awareness channels that can better convey narrative depth and experiential context.

Key growth drivers at the awareness stage therefore include the increased use of discovery-oriented content formats, particularly Reels, which are more likely to reach non-followers with aligned interests. Storytelling-driven wildlife content, behind-the-scenes documentation, and contextual explanations of birdwatching experiences also function as growth accelerators, as they help reposition birdwatching from a niche or abstract concept into a relatable and emotionally engaging activity.

In line with the UNITE framework, another critical growth driver lies in aligning awareness messaging with clearly defined personas. Rather than targeting a generalized outdoor audience, Walktoforest's awareness growth is strongest when content resonates with urban professionals seeking restorative nature experiences, learning-oriented travel, and meaning-driven leisure. Awareness growth, in this sense, is less about expanding the funnel indiscriminately and more about filtering in the right audiences earlier in the journey.

In the UNITE Pirate Metrics Funnel, success at the awareness stage is evaluated through both quantitative exposure indicators and their ability to feed subsequent stages of the funnel. For Walktoforest, awareness success is measured primarily through reach and impressions, with total impressions serving as the key indicator of market exposure.

During the observation period, Walktoforest recorded 63,432 awareness impressions, demonstrating adequate visibility for a niche ecotourism product. This level of exposure confirms that Walktoforest has established a digital presence capable of introducing birdwatching to a broad audience. However, in alignment with UNITE principles, impressions alone are insufficient to define success. Awareness metrics must be interpreted in relation to downstream conversion behavior.

Therefore, the effectiveness of awareness is indirectly validated through its conversion into acquisition-level actions. The observed 4% transition from Awareness to Acquisition highlights that only a small portion of exposed users perceive enough relevance to continue exploring the offering. This ratio becomes a critical diagnostic indicator, signaling that awareness content may still be attracting a wide but weakly matched audience.

Consequently, success at the awareness stage for Walktoforest should not be defined solely by increasing impressions, but by improving the quality of awareness. In practical terms, awareness success is achieved when exposure consistently delivers users who are more likely to progress toward acquisition and activation. This aligns with the UNITE framework's emphasis on identifying the main bottleneck and optimizing upstream stages accordingly.

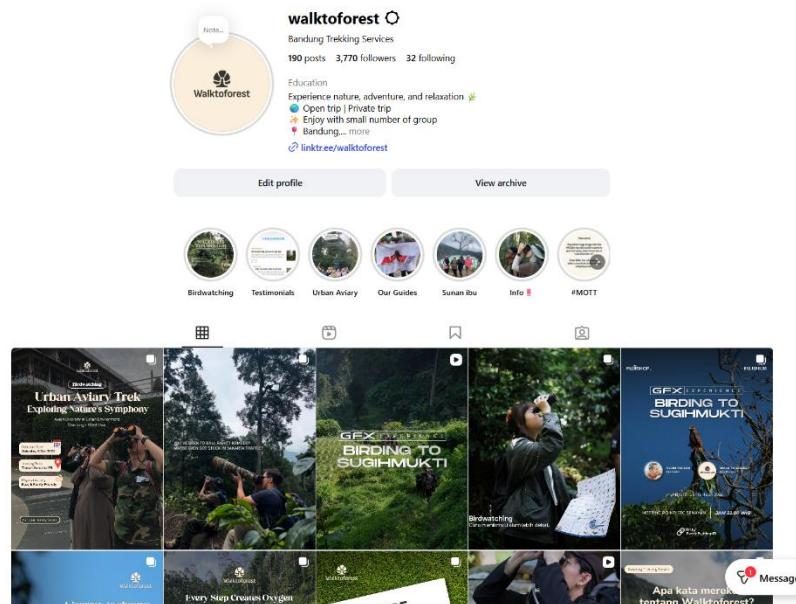


Figure 2. Walktoforest Instagram Profile

In summary, awareness in Walktoforest's business is successful when it functions as a relevance-building and expectation-setting gateway, rather than a vanity metric. The current performance confirms sufficient reach but reveals the need for stronger alignment between awareness content, target personas, and the experiential value of birdwatching. This insight provides the justification for examining the next stage Acquisition to assess how awareness translates into meaningful exploratory behavior.

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Acquisition

Within the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, the acquisition stage represents the point at which awareness transitions into active interest. Acquisition is not about immediate purchase intent, but about identifying whether exposure has been sufficient to motivate users to deliberately explore the brand. In Walktoforest's context, acquisition reflects the moment when potential customers move from being passive content viewers to becoming curious explorers of the birdwatching experience.

For Walktoforest, acquisition holds particular strategic importance because birdwatching is an unfamiliar tourism activity for most domestic travelers. At this stage, users begin to assess whether birdwatching is relevant to their personal interests, lifestyle, and expectations of leisure activities. Actions such as visiting the Instagram profile, browsing highlighted content, or clicking external links indicate that users are mentally evaluating the experience and seeking clarity beyond surface-level exposure.

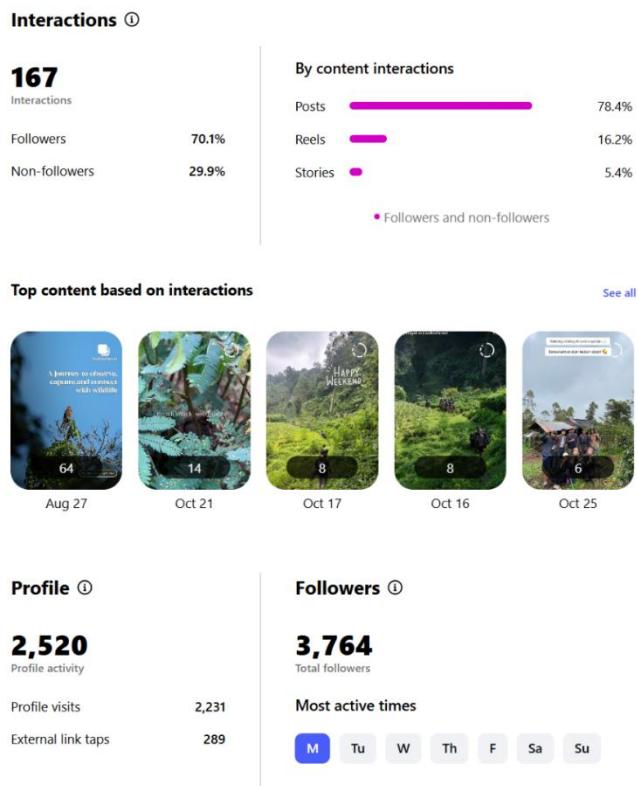


Figure 3. Activation Insight of Walktoforest

The funnel data shows that from 63,432 awareness impressions, only 2,520 users (4%) progressed into acquisition behavior. This sharp reduction reveals that acquisition functions as a quality filter, separating general exposure from genuinely interested audiences. Importantly, this does not suggest disinterest in birdwatching as a concept, but rather that only a small subset of exposed users perceive immediate relevance or resonance with Walktoforest's value proposition.

Behavioral responses at the Acquisition stage show that users who progress beyond awareness begin to exhibit selective curiosity. Their profile visits and highlight views indicate a shift from passive exposure toward intentional exploration. These users are actively trying to understand whether Walktoforest aligns with their interests, lifestyle, or expectations of a leisure activity. The relatively small number of users entering this stage reflects the filtering effect of relevance: only those who resonate with nature, outdoor learning, or slow-paced tourism continue deeper into the funnel. This indicates that acquisition behavior is characterized by early-stage meaning-making and personal alignment processes.

UNITE identifies acquisition as the process of transforming exposure into deliberate exploration. Currently, Walktoforest generates profile visits and link interactions, but acquisition volume is still low relative to awareness. This indicates that acquisition drivers such as clarity of positioning, persona-targeted communication, and ease of access to core information remain partially implemented.

Framework-recommended growth drivers include stronger call-to-action design, clearer articulation of user value, optimized profile layout, and narrative consistency across highlights and pinned posts. These components reduce cognitive friction and help visitors quickly form mental alignment with the experience. Walktoforest has begun implementing some of these elements but has not yet fully leveraged conversion-oriented profile structuring. Improving these growth drivers would increase the number of users progressing into meaningful activation.

From a business perspective, acquisition in Walktoforest represents the first stage where relevance, not reach, becomes the dominant factor. Users who enter acquisition have implicitly accepted that birdwatching may be “for people like them,” marking a psychological shift that is essential for progressing toward activation and eventual purchase.

According to the UNITE Pirate Metrics model, growth at the acquisition stage is driven by mechanisms that lower the cognitive cost of exploration and increase perceived relevance. For Walktoforest, acquisition growth depends on how effectively awareness-level exposure is followed by clear, accessible, and curiosity-inducing touchpoints.

Primary growth drivers at this stage include profile-level content quality, clarity of positioning, and immediacy of information. When users arrive at Walktoforest’s profile, they are met with a condensed representation of the brand: bio description, highlights, pinned content, and visual storytelling. These elements jointly determine whether initial curiosity is reinforced or abandoned.

Feed posts with explanatory narratives, visual previews of the experience, and contextual cues about who the experience is suitable for function as strong acquisition drivers. Compared to ephemeral formats, such content allows users to slow down and build an understanding of what birdwatching entails. Similarly, optimized link-in-bio structures and easy navigation reduce friction for users seeking further information.

Another critical acquisition growth driver lies in alignment with specific personas. When acquisition-stage messaging directly speaks to urban professionals seeking mindful

outdoor experiences, learning-oriented travel, or stress relief through nature, it accelerates the relevance judgment process. Conversely, overly generalized nature content risks attracting broad attention without leading to meaningful exploration. In this sense, acquisition growth depends less on volume and more on precision of audience targeting and message framing.

In the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, acquisition success is measured by the extent to which awareness translates into deliberate exploratory actions. For Walktoforest, acquisition is primarily evaluated through indicators such as profile visits, interactive engagements, and link-related activities that signal active interest. During the observation period, Walktoforest recorded 2,520 acquisition-level actions, representing 4% of awareness impressions. While this conversion rate appears low in absolute terms, it serves as a diagnostic indicator rather than a performance failure. The metric confirms that awareness exposure is functioning as a broad funnel, while acquisition selectively captures users with emerging interest.

Importantly, acquisition success cannot be assessed in isolation. Its effectiveness is also reflected in downstream behavior. The funnel shows that 54% of acquired users progress to activation, indicating that users who enter acquisition tend to possess genuine curiosity and readiness to engage further. This strong acquisition-to-activation conversion suggests that acquisition quality is relatively high, even though acquisition volume remains limited.

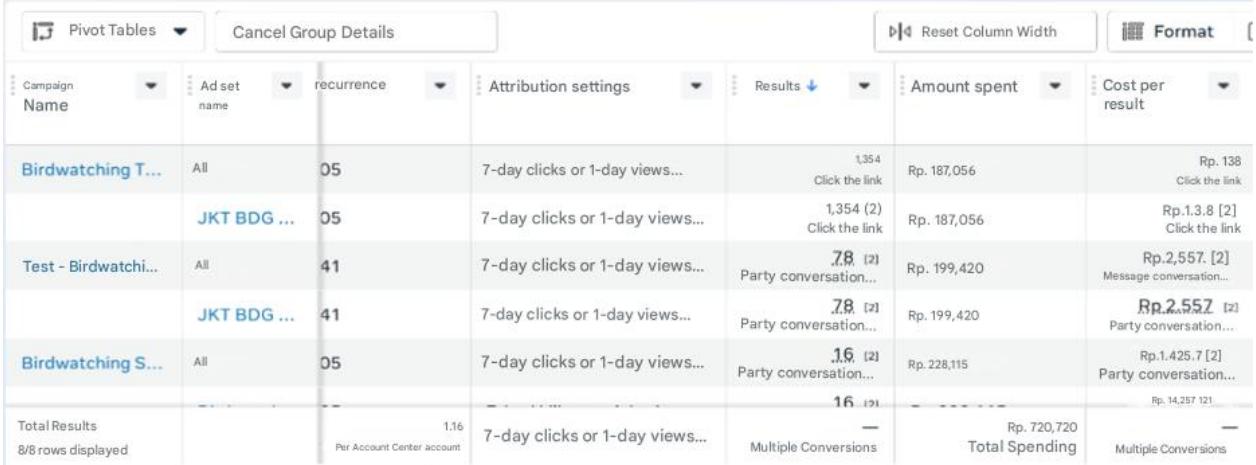
Therefore, success at the acquisition stage should not be defined solely by increasing the number of acquired users, but by improving the Awareness-to-Acquisition relevance ratio. In practical terms, acquisition is successful when the users who reach this stage are sufficiently aligned with Walktoforest's target personas and value proposition to proceed naturally toward activation. In summary, acquisition in Walktoforest's business acts as a strategic gatekeeper stage. It filters high-volume visibility into a smaller set of interested users and establishes the foundation for deeper engagement. Understanding how this filtering occurs provides a necessary bridge toward analyzing the Activation stage, where curiosity is tested through more deliberate user actions.

Activation

Within the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, activation represents the first moment when users shift from exploratory behavior to intent-driven action. While acquisition reflects curiosity, activation signals that users are beginning to seriously consider participation in the experience. In Walktoforest's context, activation corresponds to behaviors such as clicking campaign links, visiting detailed landing pages, or initiating direct messages to inquire further about birdwatching activities.

Activation is particularly significant for Walktoforest because birdwatching is a high-involvement and unfamiliar experiential product. At this stage, users are no longer asking "what is this?", but rather "is this something I can imagine myself doing?". This requires users to mentally simulate the experience, assess personal capability, and

evaluate whether the perceived benefits justify the required effort, time, and financial commitment.



Campaign Name	Ad set name	recurrence	Attribution settings	Results	Amount spent	Cost per result
Birdwatching T...	All	05	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	1,354 Click the link	Rp. 187,056	Rp. 138 Click the link
	JKT BDG ...	05	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	1,354 (2) Click the link	Rp. 187,056	Rp.13.8 [2] Click the link
Test - Birdwatchi...	All	41	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	7.8 (2) Party conversation...	Rp. 199,420	Rp.2,557 [2] Message conversation...
	JKT BDG ...	41	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	7.8 (2) Party conversation...	Rp. 199,420	Rp.2,557 [2] Party conversation...
Birdwatching S...	All	05	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	1.6 (2) Party conversation...	Rp. 228,115	Rp.1,425.7 [2] Party conversation...
				16 (2) Multiple Conversations	Rp. 720,720 Total Spending	Rp. 14,257.121 Multiple Conversations
Total Results 8/8 rows displayed		1.16 Per Account Center account	7-day clicks or 1-day views...	—	—	—

Figure 4. Meta Ads Analytics of Walktoforest

The funnel data shows that 1,354 users (54%) of those who entered acquisition proceeded to activation-level actions. This relatively strong conversion rate indicates that once potential customers perceive relevance, Walktoforest is capable of stimulating deeper curiosity and engagement. However, activation should not be interpreted as readiness to purchase. Instead, it functions as a cognitive validation stage, where users attempt to reduce uncertainty by seeking more concrete information.

Activation behavior reveals a strong interest but also heightened psychological friction. Users who click links or engage with detail-oriented content show clear intent to evaluate the feasibility of joining a birdwatching trip. They begin assessing factors such as difficulty level, schedule availability, expected outcomes, and personal capability. However, many users hesitate to initiate direct communication. This hesitation reflects uncertainty avoidance, fear of making the wrong choice, and the unfamiliarity of birdwatching as a tourism product. Activation behavior therefore embodies tension between curiosity and perceived risk, making this stage the most vulnerable to drop-off.

According to the UNITE framework, activation relies on delivering a compelling “WOW moment” and reducing uncertainty. Walktoforest’s activation stage attracts high click-through volume, yet very few users proceed to initiate conversations. This indicates that the WOW moment is not occurring early enough, and that key activation drivers such as onboarding clarity, simplified decision cues, and expectation-setting remain weak.

Possible growth drivers suggested by the framework include: (1) clearer itinerary visualizations, (2) beginner-assurance messaging, (3) strengthened social proof, (4) streamlined pathways to chat initiation, and (5) educational micro-content to reduce perceived risk. These drivers directly address the psychological friction that currently blocks users. Implementing them would transform activation from curiosity into confidence, unlocking significant improvement in mid-funnel performance.

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From a business perspective, activation is therefore the point where interest meets friction. Users are interested enough to explore but remain vulnerable to drop-off if the experience feels ambiguous, effortful, or misaligned with expectations. According to the UNITE model, growth at the activation stage is driven by factors that create a clear and compelling first meaningful experience often referred to as the "WOW moment." For Walktoforest, this does not occur during the actual birdwatching trip, but rather before purchase, when users interact with information that shapes their expectations.

Key activation growth drivers include clarity of value proposition, ease of information access, and reduction of psychological barriers. When users click an ad or a link, they enter a critical evaluation phase. At this moment, unclear messaging, dense explanations, or missing visual cues can quickly discourage further action. Conversely, simple explanations of itinerary flow, beginner-friendliness, safety level, and expected highlights help users form a concrete mental image of the experience.

Paid advertising performance supports this interpretation. Walktoforest generated 1,354 link clicks at a low cost per click, suggesting that ad creatives and targeting successfully stimulate curiosity. However, only 78 users proceeded to initiate direct conversations, representing a sharp drop within the activation stage itself. This indicates that while users are willing to explore, many hesitate when asked to take a more personal step, such as initiating communication.

From a UNITE perspective, this pattern highlights that activation growth depends not on generating more clicks, but on supporting users through the decision ambiguity that follows a click. Growth is driven by onboarding-like mechanisms even before purchase: step-by-step explanations, visual walkthroughs, social proof, and reassurance that the experience is accessible to beginners.

In the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, success at the activation stage is measured by behaviors that indicate intentional engagement, rather than passive interaction. For Walktoforest, key activation success indicators include link clicks, initiation of direct messages, and inquiry submissions.

During the observation period, Walktoforest recorded 1,354 activation-level link clicks, demonstrating that the business is effective at moving acquired users into deeper exploration. This metric confirms that activation volume itself is not the primary issue. Instead, the critical performance indicator emerges when examining activation depth. Only 78 users advanced to messaging behavior, representing approximately 6% of activated users.

This low progression highlights a quality gap within the activation stage. Success should not be defined solely by the number of clicks generated, but by the proportion of users who transition from information consumption to active inquiry. From a UNITE diagnostic standpoint, this indicates that the true bottleneck lies inside activation rather than between activation and acquisition.

Furthermore, the imbalance between low cost per click and high cost per conversation illustrates that meaningful activation is significantly more resource-

intensive than shallow activation. As a result, activation success must be assessed based on conversation initiation rate, not traffic volume alone.

In summary, activation for Walktoforest is the most critical friction point in the customer journey. While users demonstrate curiosity and exploration behavior, many fail to cross the psychological threshold required to seek direct interaction. This confirms that Walktoforest's low sales issue originates not from weak interest or poor product value, but from insufficient support during early decision-making. Understanding this activation bottleneck provides the analytical foundation for examining the Revenue stage, where only a small fraction of activated users ultimately convert into paying customers.

Solution for Awareness to Acquisition: Relevance-Based Awareness Optimization

The analysis revealed that although Walktoforest generates substantial exposure through Instagram content, the conversion from Awareness to Acquisition remains low due to insufficient audience relevance. Many viewers encounter Walktoforest passively without having the appropriate motivations or Jobs-To-Be-Done (JTBD) that align with birdwatching. This pattern reflects a misalignment between content reach and audience intent.

According to the UNITE Pirate Metrics framework, awareness should prioritize quality of exposure rather than quantity. The framework highlights the importance of persona targeting and meaningful first impressions, ensuring that initial exposure resonates with individuals who have a natural affinity toward nature-based, learning-oriented, or socially meaningful activities.

To improve acquisition, Walktoforest must strengthen its relevance signaling early in the funnel. This includes providing beginner-friendly educational content, concise explanations of the value of birdwatching, and clarity on what participants can expect from their first experience. Reframing the Instagram profile to highlight entry-level accessibility and emotional benefits rather than assuming prior knowledge will help attract viewers who can realistically transition into active explorers.

Tactically, this solution involves restructuring highlights, redesigning the bio with a clearer value proposition, and creating storytelling-driven Reels that emphasize simplicity, accessibility, and local empowerment. These adjustments aim to increase the number of viewers who perceive Walktoforest as personally relevant, directly improving the Awareness to Acquisition conversion rate.

Solution for Acquisition to Activation: Experience Clarity & Onboarding Enhancement

The second bottleneck occurs when users reach the profile or content but do not proceed into deeper engagement. The behavioral analysis demonstrated that potential participants often struggle to visualize the experience and evaluate whether birdwatching suits their preferences, physical capability, or available time. This friction reflects an information gap, not a lack of interest.

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The UNITE framework emphasizes that activation requires an early-stage micro-WOW moment, giving users a quick but meaningful glimpse into the value of the experience. Activation also depends on reducing cognitive load through clear onboarding, helping users form an accurate, reassuring understanding of what will happen during the activity.

To address this gap, Walktoforest should clarify the experience structure and reduce ambiguity. This solution includes creating simple visual itinerary explanations, short videos depicting real trip moments, and brief risk-effort level indicators. Providing this clarity allows users to determine fit and lowers the psychological cost of further engagement. These tactical interventions reduce friction by helping users imagine themselves participating. By making the first steps of engagement more intuitive and confidence-building, Walktoforest can significantly increase progression from Acquisition to Activation.

Solution for Activation to Revenue: Low-Friction Booking and Assurance System

The most critical bottleneck is the transition from Activation to Revenue. Users who reach this stage have demonstrated strong interest but hesitate to finalize booking due to uncertainty, fear of making the wrong choice, and a feeling of insufficient readiness. Birdwatching, as a niche and unfamiliar activity, naturally triggers uncertainty avoidancea cognitive bias where individuals delay decisions that feel ambiguous or demanding.

The UNITE Pirate Metrics model highlights two decisive growth drivers for this stage: a) Risk reduction mechanisms. b) A clear, compelling WOW moment delivered before the purchase decision.

To overcome hesitation, Walktoforest must introduce a booking pathway that feels safe, simple, and welcoming. This can be achieved through assurance messaging specifically designed for beginners, simplified chat-to-booking flows, and low-commitment starter packages that lower perceived risks. Providing concise FAQs, social proof, and visual cues of beginner successes further strengthens user confidence.

The tactical actions such as one-click WhatsApp contact buttons, beginner-focused product bundles, and clear reassurance messaging are intended to minimize friction and reduce cognitive resistance. These measures directly address the psychological barriers identified in the analysis, ultimately improving the Activation Revenue conversion rate.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to pinpoint the root cause of Walktoforest's low sales for its birdwatching experience and develop strategic solutions using the AAARRR Pirate Metrics framework through analysis of internal data, customer behavior, and funnel stages. The findings reveal that while awareness generation and product quality are strong, the primary bottleneck occurs between Activation and Revenue, where potential customers drop off due to psychological friction, unclear experiential expectations, and

unfamiliarity with birdwatching as a recreational activity, preventing conversions into bookings. Future studies could employ experimental designs, such as A/B testing of targeted onboarding tutorials or virtual reality previews of birdwatching sessions, to quantify the impact of reducing activation friction on conversion rates among Indonesian urban millennials, potentially integrating qualitative insights from user interviews to refine culturally tailored messaging.

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