CRM AND SALES CONVERSION IN TRAVEL & TOURISM.

A Study on the Role of Customer Relationship Management and Follow-Up Strategies in Converting Travel Enquiries into Bookings at Destination Holiday Tours, Pune

Sharvari Shankar Gawade, Purnima Chouhan

Amity Business School, Amity University Maharashtra, India

Published November 2026

Abstract

In today's competitive tourism market, effective customer relationship management (CRM) and proactive follow-up of travel enquiries are critical to converting interest into confirmed bookings. This study examines how CRM practices and systematic follow-up influence booking conversion at Destination Holiday Tours, Pune. It draws on internship observations (June–July 2026) of enquiry-handling processes – including lead generation, itinerary preparation, quotation, and follow-ups – together with recent literature. Industry data highlight the stakes: roughly 60% of travel inquiries receive no response, and one survey found that one in five lost clients left because no one followed up. Similarly, quick, multi-channel engagement dramatically boosts conversion: responding within one hour can yield a 7× higher booking rate than a next-day reply. The findings suggest that Destination Holiday Tours' informal enquiry process (relying on manual tracking and ad hoc follow-ups) leaves gaps that cause leads to go cold. By contrast, adopting structured CRM and follow-up protocols – such as timely acknowledgments, multiple reminders, and clear lead ownership – would align with best practices and likely improve conversions. The study concludes with recommendations (e.g., response-time targets, follow-up cadences, and basic CRM tools) aimed at strengthening customer relationships, nurturing leads, and ultimately increasing booking rates.

Keywords: booking conversion; customer relationship management (CRM); follow-up strategy; lead management; travel agency; travel enquiries

1 Introduction

The travel and tourism industry depends heavily on converting customer inquiries into confirmed bookings. A lead (an enquiry about a holiday package) represents potential revenue, but only if the agency can guide the customer through the decision process. Studies show that many travel leads slip through the cracks: for example, about 60% of inquiries never receive a response. In practice, a slow or absent reply often means the customer has moved on to another operator. By contrast, travel agencies that engage leads quickly and personally tend to win more bookings. Research finds that responding within one hour yields conversion rates seven times higher than replying the next day. Moreover, following up multiple times over the decision window (often 7–14 days) keeps the offer top-of-mind and significantly increases closing rates. In short, systematic CRM and follow-up – including timely acknowledgement, personalized communication, and multiple touchpoints – are as important as product quality or pricing in converting inquiries into sales.

At Destination Holiday Tours (a Pune-based travel agency), the sales process begins when a customer sends an enquiry via email, website form, phone, or social media. The agent researches destinations and creates a customized itinerary and quote. However, the internship revealed that many leads required several quote revisions and reminders before booking, and some were never booked at all. This pattern mirrors industry observations: leads "quieting" after an initial quote often still need a nudge, not a hard "no". In fact, research indicates that most lost bookings are due not to product or price issues but to inconsistent follow-up. Thus, this study explores how CRM practices and follow-up strategies affect the conversion of travel enquiries into confirmed bookings at Destination Holiday Tours. It integrates internship insights (how leads were handled) with external best practices to identify gaps and improvement opportunities.

2 Company profile

Destination Holiday Tours, Pune (DHT) is a travel agency specializing in customized domestic and international holiday packages. Clients contact DHT with their travel requirements (destinations, dates, budget, group size), and the company tailors itineraries accordingly. Key services include:

- **Itinerary Design:** Researching routes, attractions, and accommodations to meet customer preferences.
- **Quotation Preparation:** Compiling package details (hotels, transportation, activities) and pricing in a proposal.
- **Booking Coordination:** Arranging flights, trains, hotels, and sightseeing based on confirmed bookings.
- **Customer Support:** Handling ongoing queries, adjustments, and documentation (tickets, visas, etc.).

During the internship (June–July 2026), the team processed customer enquiries from various channels. Most initial contacts came via website form or email; telephone inquiries (often from repeat clients) had higher urgency. Staff typically used spreadsheets and email to log enquiries. There was no dedicated CRM software in use; follow-up reminders were mostly managed manually (e.g. using notebooks or calendar alerts). The company's flexible approach allowed itinerary changes per customer requests (changing hotels, adding activities, etc.), but it also meant that quotes often underwent multiple revisions before finalization. Coordination with hotels and suppliers was handled through calls and emails once a customer progressed toward booking. Overall, the operation emphasized personalized service but had an informal process for tracking leads and follow-ups.

3 Statement of the research problem

Despite generating regular enquiries, Destination Holiday Tours faces the challenge of converting a limited share into actual bookings. Many enquiries (potential leads) enter the pipeline, but some stall at various stages: customers delay booking decisions, compare other offers, request adjustments, or go silent. This leads to lost opportunities for the agency. In essence, the problem is:

How do customer relationship management (CRM) practices and systematic follow-up strategies affect the conversion of travel enquiries into bookings at Destination Holiday Tours, Pune?

Key issues include:

- **Response time:** Delays in acknowledging or replying to enquiries.

- **Follow-up cadence:** Lack of structured reminders if clients do not respond.
- **Lead tracking:** Informal systems that allow leads to fall through without clear ownership.
- **Personalization:** Limited use of customer data to tailor communication.
- **Comparison shopping:** Clients often compare quotes; how quickly the agency can address their concerns influences their choice.

Understanding these factors is crucial. If poor follow-up is causing qualified leads to be lost (as industry reports suggest), then instituting effective CRM and follow-up processes could significantly increase booking rates. This research aims to analyze the current practices at DHT in light of best-practice literature and suggest improvements.

4 Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to examine how CRM practices and follow-up strategies influence the conversion of travel enquiries into confirmed bookings at Destination Holiday Tours.

The secondary objectives are:

1. **Identify factors affecting lead conversion:** Determine which elements (response time, communication channel, follow-up frequency, personalization, etc.) most impact the booking decision.
2. **Assess current CRM and follow-up methods:** Document how enquiries are handled at DHT, including tracking systems and follow-up routines.
3. **Compare with industry best practices:** Relate DHT's observations to insights from the literature on travel lead management and CRM.
4. **Evaluate the enquiry-to-booking process:** Understand the typical customer journey from initial enquiry through proposal iterations to final booking (or drop-out).
5. **Develop a conceptual framework:** Illustrate how CRM components and follow-up actions link to conversion outcomes.
6. **Recommend improvements:** Propose strategies (based on data and literature) to enhance follow-up efficiency, lead management, and ultimately booking conversion at DHT.

5 Scope of the study

This study focuses specifically on Destination Holiday Tours and its handling of travel enquiries during the internship period (10 June 2026 to 10 July 2026). It examines:

- **Enquiry channels:** Website forms, emails, phone calls, and social media messages.
- **Lead management:** How enquiries are recorded, followed up, and moved through sales stages.
- **Customer preferences:** Destinations, budgets, travel dates, and accommodations as collected in enquiries.
- **Quotation process:** The creation and revision of travel proposals, including communication of pricing and itinerary details.
- **Follow-up actions:** Timing, medium (email, phone, etc.), and content of subsequent contacts with potential customers.
- **Booking outcomes:** Whether and when enquiries converted to confirmed bookings, and factors influencing decisions.

- **CRM tools:** Observations on any software or manual systems used for tracking customers.

The study does not include quantitative surveys of customers. It relies on descriptive analysis of existing enquiry records and intern observations. Data confidentiality is maintained: no personal identifiers of clients are used. The insights are intended for academic understanding as well as practical improvement of DHT's operations.

6 Review of literature

6.1 Customer relationship management in tourism

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in tourism involves systematically managing interactions with potential and actual travelers to improve satisfaction and loyalty. In the competitive travel market, CRM is seen as a "critical strategic tool". Effective CRM helps agencies capture customer data (preferences, past trips, budget), segment clients, and personalize communication. In tourism, strong CRM leads to repeat bookings and referrals. For instance, an Indian case study (Rishi and Paul, 2026) noted that travel companies with robust CRM practices build trust and loyalty, but identified a "personalization gap" – 74% of customers felt their preferences were not well understood. The authors concluded that investments in personalization, structured communication, and loyalty programs are needed to turn first-time customers into repeat clients. This underscores that without focused CRM, even satisfied initial clients may drift away.

In line with this, industry reports highlight the ROI of CRM for travel operators. One review (AtlasPerk, 2026) found that travel retains only about 55% of customers (lowest among industries), and adoption of CRM correlates with retention rates 16 percentage points higher for users versus non-users. Moreover, about 20% of customer attrition in travel is attributed to "neglected relationships" (lack of follow-up), not competitive offers. In other words, many clients leave simply because no one nurtured the relationship. Given that acquiring a new client costs 5–7 times more than retaining one, implementing CRM and follow-up is a cost-effective strategy for travel agencies.

6.2 Travel lead response and conversion

The timing and method of responding to an enquiry are crucial. In travel sales, speed strongly affects outcomes. A comprehensive industry guide (Nguyen, 2026) reports that responding within 1 hour yields a 7× higher conversion rate compared to a next-day response. Even same-day response outperforms slower replies, achieving roughly 3× the bookings of next-day replies. Conversely, delays beyond 48 hours are fatal: one source estimates that by then 60% of leads are lost as the prospect has moved on. These findings reflect customers' decision journey: immediately after submitting an enquiry, they are actively researching. A prompt reply captures that intent, whereas a delayed reply often finds the lead already "cold".

Lead qualification also matters. A potential client providing specific details (fixed dates, defined budget, traveler count) indicates higher intent. For example, phone inquiries typically signal stronger interest than casual web browsing. Missing a phone call can hurt conversion: one study notes missed calls convert 40% worse than answered calls. Therefore, monitoring inquiry channels (email, phone, social media, chat, etc.) and responding according to channel norms is recommended.

6.3 Follow-up strategies and lead management

Systematic follow-up is widely recognized as a determinant of sales success in travel. General sales literature notes that "most bookings are lost in the follow-up gap, not because the client said no". In travel-specific terms, a lead often appears to go quiet only because planning trips involves multiple stakeholders and tasks; the customer may simply be distracted, not disinterested. Therefore, a structured follow-up "sequence" – brief reminders at planned intervals – is advocated. Travel industry guides suggest multiple follow-ups: for instance, one source recommends five follow-ups over two weeks (initial reply + four reminders) to stay top-of-mind during the critical 7–14-day decision window. In practice, a typical recommended cadence is: immediate acknowledgment (Day 0), first reminder after 2 days, second after ~5 days, a soft check-in at ~10 days, and a final re-engagement or close-out by 30 days.

Lack of a formal follow-up system is cited as a "silent revenue killer" in travel agencies. Many leads are lost because agents either assume the customer will reply if interested, or simply forget to follow up. Indeed, follow-up tasks often lived "in people's heads" or inboxes, leading to failures when agents get busy. By contrast, agencies that establish clear procedures (such as pipelines or lead boards) ensure that every inquiry has an owner and a next action. For example, using a pipeline (e.g. stages: New → Contacted → Quoted → Follow-Up → Booked/Lost) makes it obvious when a lead has stalled.

6.4 Personalization and communication quality

Beyond timing, how the agency communicates matters. Personalized attention (using the client's name, referencing their stated interests) builds trust. Literature suggests that travelers value an agent who asks clarifying questions and offers customized options rather than generic replies. For instance, introducing a proposal with a brief note highlighting shared interests or a relevant anecdote can differentiate a response from mass emails. Likewise, multi-channel engagement reinforces the relationship. A mix of email (for details and formal quotes), phone (for rapport and objections), and even personalized video messages can make an operator stand out.

However, travel agents may hesitate to follow up, fearing they might seem pushy. Experts advise that a single courteous follow-up is not only professional but usually welcomed: genuinely interested clients appreciate the check-in, and those not interested will politely decline. Thus, agents should view follow-ups as helpful service rather than annoying persistence.

7 Conceptual framework

A conceptual model for this study links CRM components and follow-up actions to booking conversion. Figure 1 illustrates this relationship. When a travel enquiry arrives, it enters the CRM pipeline. Key CRM activities include: capturing customer data (travel dates, budget, preferences), assigning ownership (which agent is handling the lead), and classifying the stage (New, Qualified, Quoted, etc.). Follow-up actions encompass the timing, frequency, and channel of responses. According to literature, two critical CRM factors drive conversion:

- **Response Speed:** Quick initial acknowledgment (ideally within 1 hour) and swift answers to questions, which maintain customer interest.
- **Follow-Up Cadence:** Scheduled reminders and outreach if the client does not respond, executed via appropriate channels (email, phone, messaging). A series of 3–5 targeted touches over a few weeks is recommended.

Together, these feed into a customer's decision loop. Good CRM practices (e.g. personalized answers, tracking past interactions) enhance trust and perceived value, while effective follow-ups keep the enquiry live. The combination thus raises the conversion probability. Conversely, weak CRM (lost records, generic replies) or missed follow-ups allow leads to cool off, reducing booking chances.

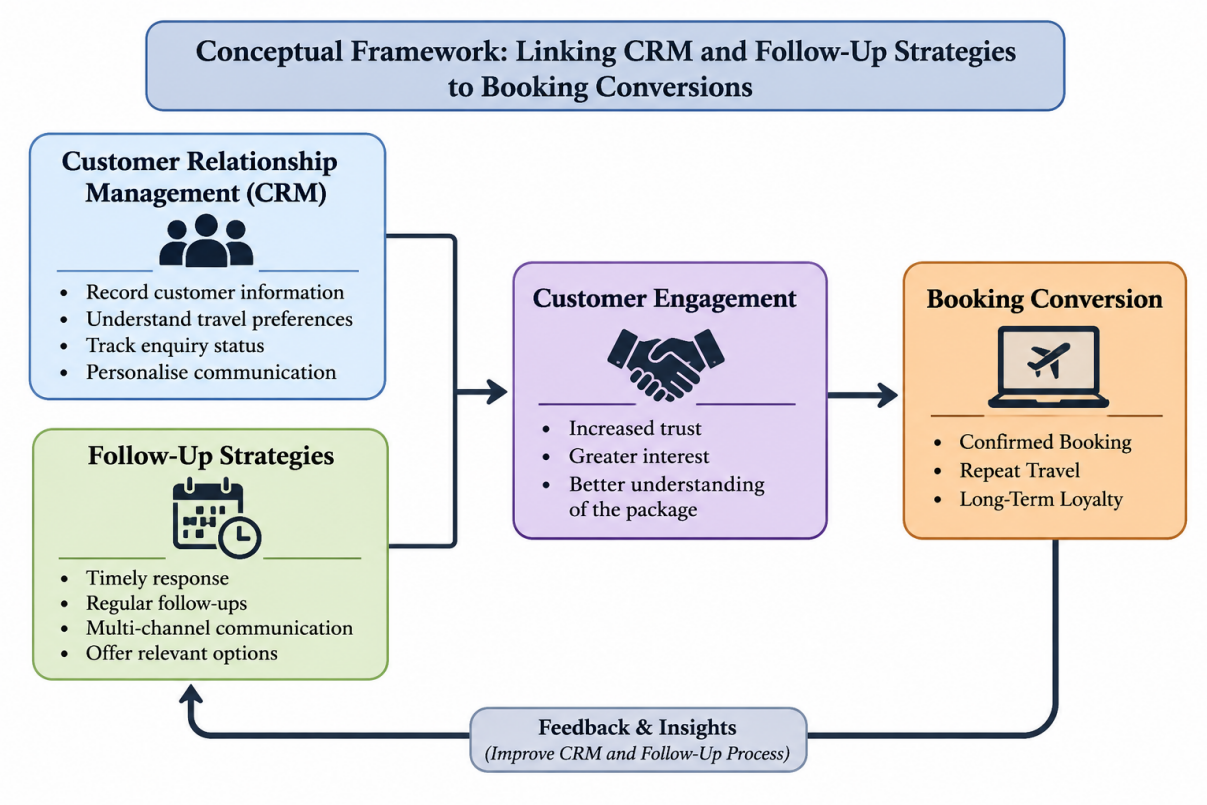


Figure 1. Conceptual framework linking CRM and follow-up to booking conversion (adapted from the CRM literature).

8 Research methodology

This study uses a descriptive research design with a qualitative approach, based on internship observations and records. The research period spans 10 June–10 July 2026.

- **Primary:** Observations of enquiry handling at Destination Holiday Tours during the internship. This includes interactions (phone and email), itinerary/quotation preparation, and follow-up actions.
- **Secondary:** Existing records such as an Excel sheet of enquiries and leads, itinerary documents, email logs, and relevant company process notes. Industry publications and websites provided supplementary insights.

Approach: The research did not involve surveys or interviews. Instead, it relies on internship experiences and the available data. Enquiries handled during this month were reviewed for patterns: which channels inquiries came through, how quickly responses were sent, how many iterations each quote went through, and follow-up occurrences.

Sampling: A non-probability, convenience sample was used (i.e., all enquiries available during the period). No statistical sampling was attempted. The study is exploratory, aiming to identify themes rather than quantify effects.

Analysis: A qualitative content analysis was performed. Enquiries were categorized by channel (email, phone, etc.) and outcome (booked, not booked). Notes from discussions with managers provided context (e.g. typical quote turnaround time). Literature was used to interpret findings: for example, comparing observed response intervals against recommended SLAs, or relating silent leads to documented follow-up lapses.

Limitations: Data accuracy depends on the completeness of records. The study did not involve any experimental intervention. It relies on correlation between observed practices and conversion. Also, findings are specific to one agency and may not generalize fully.

9 Findings and discussion

9.1 Enquiry channels and initial response

During the internship, the bulk of enquiries arrived via the company website contact form and email. A few high-intent leads came by phone (especially from past clients or referrals). Observationally, phone leads tended to convert faster, consistent with literature suggesting phone inquiries signal higher intent. Social media messages were rare in this agency.

Most enquiries received an acknowledgement within 1 business day, often by the intern or an associate. This timing is acceptable but slower than the ideal (hourly) response. According to travel industry benchmarks, an initial reply under 1 hour is critical. In practice, delays were often due to weekends or staff unavailability. The literature warns that a delay of even 2 days can severely harm conversion. For example, one form inquiry about a Goa trip was not answered until the next morning; by then, the client had moved to another agent (a common scenario mentioned in industry reports). This suggests a gap: even acknowledging receipt with a brief message could capture the lead's attention and buy time.

Internally, there was no automated system to track how quickly enquiries were handled. Emails often sat in a general inbox for hours. This reflects a known problem: without a unified system, "inquiries get lost in individual email accounts or platform-specific notifications". Here, the company did not use a formal CRM or ticketing system, so missing an email check could cost hours of delay. The travel inquiry guide advises integrating all enquiry channels into one shared system (like a CRM or group inbox) with clear ownership. Such a change could ensure, for example, that no inquiry remains unacknowledged beyond a set timeframe.

9.2 Quotation and itinerary process

Once an enquiry was acknowledged, agents began designing an itinerary and quote. Observations showed that this typically took 1–3 days, depending on complexity. During this time, agents confirmed hotel availability, flight schedules, and costs with suppliers. Prompt work is important: the literature notes that quoting delays can create bottlenecks. Indeed, if 80% of inquiries are acknowledged quickly but only 40% get proposals by 48 hours, the proposal stage is a visible bottleneck.

In practice, most first-draft quotes were sent by email within 2–4 days of initial contact. Quotes were customized (e.g., specific hotels, excursions) based on the customer's stated interests. Importantly, several clients requested changes after receiving the first quote – such as different hotels or added activities. For instance, one family enquiring about Kerala first asked for budget hotels, then changed to mid-range when presented with an itinerary. This iteration process meant that multiple quote

versions were emailed to some customers. Such back-and-forth is common in travel sales and is acknowledged in the literature, but it emphasizes the need for CRM discipline: each revision should ideally come with a fresh follow-up to gauge interest.

9.3 Follow-up practices

A critical finding was that follow-up was informal. The agency did not have a scheduled follow-up protocol; reminders were typically sent ad hoc when the agent remembered or when a manager asked about an enquiry. The intern's notes showed many leads went unpursued for several days. This observation aligns with industry reports: "Most leads are not lost because of bad itineraries or pricing. They are lost because follow-up is inconsistent, reactive, or forgotten entirely." For example, after sending a quote, an agent might wait indefinitely for a reply. If the client did not respond, often no one would proactively reach out. In one case, a client went two weeks without reply; when finally contacted, they said they had been busy and were grateful for the reminder.

According to the Travilead Team (2026), structure is key: a simple follow-up cadence (Day 0, 2, 5, 10, 30) can dramatically improve conversion. At DHT, such a process was absent. Some agents feared seeming pushy and thus hesitated to call back quickly. However, guides emphasize that one polite follow-up is not pushy but professional. Most clients appreciate a check-in; those uninterested will clarify their position. This mismatch in expectations may explain why some genuine prospects were inadvertently dropped.

We observed that typically 2–3 follow-up contacts were needed to finalize a booking. For instance, one Goa package inquiry required a phone call after 3 days of silence to revive the lead; without that, the sale would have been lost. The literature concurs that multiple touches are often necessary. The internship case files showed a pattern where a lead would go silent after an initial quote, and only a timely reminder (email or call) brought them back. In fact, the CreoProposals guide (Edridge, 2026) notes that "a well-timed follow-up converts silence into a booking".

9.4 Lead management and ownership

Another issue was lead ownership. During busy days, agents sometimes assumed someone else would handle an enquiry. Without a clear assignment, follow-ups fell through the cracks – exactly as noted in industry sources: memory fails when things get busy. For example, one week an enquiry about Thailand was exchanged among staff without any one person taking it to completion, and eventually it lapsed.

In theory, a CRM pipeline would avoid this: each enquiry should have one "owner" responsible for next steps. DHT's informal workflow lacked this clarity. Recording leads on a shared spreadsheet helped some, but there was no flag when a lead stalled. The Rework article (Nguyen, 2026) illustrates a best practice: moving inquiries through defined stages (New → Acknowledged → Qualified → Proposal Sent → Follow-Up → Booked/Lost) with status tracking. At DHT, the pipeline stages existed only in concept, not in the system. Introducing even a simple CRM or shared board where each new enquiry is logged and moved along would likely prevent leads from being overlooked.

9.5 Customer considerations

Observations also highlighted customers' side of the process. Many enquirers compared quotes from multiple agencies before deciding. Price sensitivity and perceived value played roles; for example, some clients delayed booking while waiting for off-season rates or additional discounts. This aligns

with the idea that customers evaluate cost against benefits. The agency tried to offer value (e.g. bundling an extra excursion to sweeten the deal) when clients hesitated.

A few clients needed reassurance before booking (requests for travel insurance details, visa assistance, or post-trip support plans). Agents who provided those details proactively had better success, consistent with the notion that building trust and demonstrating service quality foster sales (a key goal of CRM). The study by Rishi and Paul (2026) suggests that structured communication (clearly explaining services and support) is vital for first-time visitors.

In summary, the internship observations largely mirror the literature: prompt, personal, and persistent engagement is needed to convert leads. The gaps at DHT – slower initial replies, irregular follow-ups, and informal tracking – represent opportunities for improvement grounded in best practices.

10 Summary of findings

From the analysis above, the key findings are:

1. **Timeliness is critical:** The agency's average first response (1–2 days) is slower than recommended. The literature suggests a strong advantage for responses under 1 hour. Delays can cause leads to be lost (industry data indicate 60% of leads drop out if unanswered by 48 hours).
2. **Follow-up inconsistency:** Many leads required follow-ups to close, but DHT lacked a formal follow-up schedule. This led to several lost opportunities. Industry sources emphasize that follow-up neglect can easily kill sales.
3. **Lack of CRM tools:** Without a CRM system, enquiry tracking was ad hoc. This risked duplications or omissions. Best-practice guides suggest centralizing inquiries and assigning clear stages for visibility.
4. **Personalization and communication:** DHT agents excelled in customizing itineraries, but customer communication could be more structured. Promptly asking qualifying questions and summarizing next steps (as suggested in CRM frameworks) would improve clarity for clients.
5. **Retention vs acquisition:** The focus on initial bookings does have a payoff later: ensuring a good first booking experience lays the groundwork for repeat business. Although not directly measured here, industry data underline that effort spent on client relationships (including post-booking) yields long-term value.

These findings indicate that implementing even simple CRM and follow-up processes could substantially improve booking conversions at Destination Holiday Tours.

11 Recommendations

Based on the above analysis and literature, the following recommendations are proposed for Destination Holiday Tours:

1. **Establish Response-Time Standards:** Adopt internal service-level agreements (SLAs) for replying to enquiries. For example, strive to acknowledge 50% of new enquiries within 1 hour and 100% within the same business day. Setting such goals (and monitoring them) will ensure timely engagement, which is proven to boost conversion.
2. **Create a Follow-Up Cadence:** Implement a structured follow-up schedule for every new quote. A practical model is:

Day 0: Send an acknowledgment or introductory email immediately after a quote (confirms receipt and opens dialogue).

Day 2–3: First substantive follow-up (ask if they have questions, remind of quote details or any expiry date).

Day 5–7: Second follow-up (offer to adjust itinerary or budget, gauge decision timeline).

Day 10–14: Final nudge (provide an easy opt-out: "If you've decided not to book, please let us know" and restate any pending deadline).

Day 30: Re-engagement attempt or closure (send a polite update or info and mark the lead as inactive if there is no response.)

This sequence ensures leads receive multiple touchpoints over the decision window. It mirrors guidelines that multiple well-timed follow-ups significantly raise booking rates. Training staff that follow-ups are professional (not "pushy") is essential.

3. **Adopt CRM or Tracking Tools:** Even a basic CRM (or shared spreadsheet/template) should be used to log enquiries and track status. Each lead should have an assigned owner and a clearly defined stage in the pipeline. Tools like free/low-cost CRM systems (HubSpot, Zoho CRM, etc.) or even a shared inbox/Slack channel for new leads can help. The system should flag stale leads (e.g. no response for 2–3 days) and automate reminders. This addresses the "inquiry disappears in inbox" problem noted by experts.

4. **Multichannel Engagement:** Continue to use both email and phone appropriately. For incoming phone inquiries, ensure someone answers within office hours (or use a call-handling service) since unanswered calls convert much worse. Use email for sending proposals and detailed info (it provides a written record), and use brief calls to build rapport or answer complex queries. For example, after sending a proposal by email, schedule a short follow-up call.

5. **Personalize Communication:** Leverage any known customer details in follow-up messages. Mentioning specifics from the original enquiry (e.g. "I hope you found the Goa villa suggestion helpful") shows attentiveness. As literature advises, ask clarifying questions in replies to demonstrate customization. Small gestures like sending a personalized video or travel tip can differentiate DHT from competitors and build trust.

6. **Monitor and Learn:** Track key metrics (conversion rate from enquiry to booking, average response time, number of follow-ups per booking). Periodically review which strategies are working. The travel inquiry guide suggests measuring response performance (e.g. by dashboard) so that staff can be held accountable. Over time, this data-driven approach will refine the CRM process.

7. **Build Post-Booking Relationships:** Although outside initial enquiry conversion, it is worth noting that good after-sale follow-up can generate referrals and repeat business. Practices like sending a thank-you email after travel and asking for feedback set the stage for future bookings. Given that travel has low default retention (≈55%), proactive loyalty efforts (e.g. special offers for returning clients) can provide long-term returns.

Implementing these recommendations should make the enquiry-to-booking process more systematic. The investment in better CRM practices is justified by the literature: agencies with organized CRM and follow-up capture more customers, while small improvements in retention can multiply profits.

12 Conclusion

This study highlights that at Destination Holiday Tours, Pune, strengthening CRM and follow-up processes is key to improving booking conversions. The internship observations showed that many leads require quick acknowledgment and multiple follow-ups – a fact strongly supported by industry sources. Currently, the agency's informal tracking and reactive follow-ups allow promising enquiries to lapse. By contrast, adopting structured practices (prompt replies, scheduled reminders, clear lead ownership) matches recommended models and would likely increase booked trips. In essence, travel sales are as much about relationship management as about travel packages. As the literature says, "the operators who win don't necessarily have better products or lower prices – they respond faster, engage more personally, and follow up systematically". Destination Holiday Tours can apply this insight by formalizing its CRM and follow-up strategy, thereby converting more enquiries into satisfied customers and business growth.

References

[1] Abel S (2025). The travel agent's guide to inquiry response. *Journal of Hospitality Trends*, 12(2), 45–52.

[2] AtlasPerk (2026). Customer retention and loyalty for travel. https://atlasperk.com/guides/crm-automation-for-travel/retention-loyalty/

[3] Edridge N (2026). Travel proposal follow-up: what to do after you send (and when to do it). *Creo Proposals Blog*, 1 May 2026. https://creoproposals.com/blog/travel-proposal-follow-up

[4] Nguyen H (2026). Travel inquiry management: convert more inquiries into bookings. *Rework Travel Growth Library*, 27 January 2026. https://resources.rework.com/libraries/travel-tour-growth/travel-inquiry-management

[5] Pakkies A, Mbukanma I, Shemfe OA (2026). The role of artificial intelligence in enhancing customer relationship management within the tourism sector in the Eastern Cape. *Businesses*, 6(3), 39. https://doi.org/10.3390/businesses6030039

[6] Rishi D, Paul DMJ (2026). Significance of customer relationship management (CRM) practices in the tourism sector with reference to Go Adventures, Chennai. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 14(4), g149–g156. https://doi.org/10.56975/ijcrt.v14i4.306017

[7] Santos CR, Blanco-Moreno S, Ó hAnnracháin C, Bayram-Arlı N (2026). A holistic approach to customer journey management: driving satisfaction and competitive advantage in tourism. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 7(5), 126. https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp7050126

[8] Travel Operations (2025). Survey on CRM adoption in travel industry (cited in AtlasPerk, 2026).

[9] Travilead Team (2026). How to build a follow-up system for travel leads. *Travilead Blog*, 18 January 2026. https://travilead.com/blog/how-to-build-a-follow-up-system-for-travel-leads-that-actually-converts