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Ernest Layman: Turning Indonesia's Waste Chain into a Measurable Business

Rekosistem connects households, waste workers, businesses and recycling operators through collection services and material-recovery infrastructure. Co-founder Ernest Layman is building for a sector where every handoff matters.

Ernest Layman · Co-founder and CEO · Rekosistem
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A service built from many small handoffs

Waste management is not one transaction. Material has to be separated, collected, transported, sorted and sold or processed. A missed handoff can send recyclable material to a landfill; a collection service that cannot document its route may struggle to show a customer what happened after pickup.

Ernest Layman and co-founder Joshua Valentino started Rekosistem in Indonesia in 2021 to coordinate more of that chain. The Jakarta-based climate-tech company combines collection, sorting, treatment and processing with a digital operating system. Its model connects households and businesses with waste workers, material recovery facilities and downstream recycling industries.

AFTER PICKUP

Ernest Layman

Layman is the company’s CEO and co-founder. Rekosistem’s press materials describe his earlier work in commercial and sustainability roles at Procter & Gamble and identify him as an industrial engineering graduate. That background offers a useful lens on the company: the task is to make a fragmented service legible enough for participants to coordinate, while still moving physical material at a viable cost.

The system has to work on the ground

Rekosistem’s offering includes waste collection for households and businesses, waste stations and facilities that process materials. The software layer can record activity and connect different actors, but the company still depends on people, vehicles, sorting capacity and reliable buyers. This is a logistics business with a technology component, not a digital platform detached from its physical work.

In May 2025, DealStreetAsia reported that Rekosistem raised US$7 million in a Series A round led by Saratoga Investama Sedaya and K3 Ventures, with other investors participating. Forbes Asia included the company in its 2025 100 To Watch list, describing a service that collects, sorts, recycles and tracks waste for Indonesian customers. The funding gives context to the company’s growth plans; it does not, on its own, show that the operating model is profitable or that every collected tonne was recycled.

Rekosistem’s own current press kit reports more than 200 business clients, 15 Reko Hubs, 40 Reko Waste Stations and over 600 partner locations. It also reports cumulative volumes for waste handled and recycled. Those figures are company-reported, and their definitions matter: “managed” waste can include material handled through multiple service stages, while “recycled” should be understood as a narrower outcome. A careful reader should not treat the two as interchangeable.

Growth means standardising the handoffs

Scaling across an archipelago creates operational complexity. A service designed for Jakarta may need different partners, collection routes and processing arrangements elsewhere. Corporate customers may ask for traceability and reporting; households may care more about convenience and clear instructions. The company needs both reliable field operations and data customers can trust.

This is where Layman’s business challenge becomes concrete. A waste-management system is only as strong as the weakest stage. More pickup points do not ensure that materials reach a suitable processor. Better reporting does not make low-value waste commercially attractive. The work is to connect service design, local logistics and end markets so that responsible handling can become routine rather than a special project.

GCEIP View

Rekosistem is trying to make a complex chain visible and manageable. Its next chapter will depend on transparent measures: how much material is collected, how much is recovered for reuse or recycling, what remains residual, and how its services work economically for customers and waste workers. Layman’s leadership can be judged by whether the network keeps those distinctions clear as it grows. In circular business, credibility begins with knowing where the material actually goes.