The Reply Loop

SAMPLE DATA, NOT REAL RESULTS **Sample brand:** Sample Co., a small-batch home goods shop

A routine for reading, answering and learning from customer replies, so what people tell you changes what you do.

WHAT IT IS
A simple system that moves replies from the inbox to a log, then to themes, then to changes in messages, products and the site.

HOW TO USE IT
1. Use a real reply-to address. 2. Check it daily. 3. Log each reply. 4. Group them into themes each month. 5. Act on the top theme and tell customers what changed.

WHY IT MATTERS
Replies are the clearest sign that a message feels personal. They also tell you what to fix, in the customer's own words.

Service levels to set

WHO ANSWERS	HOW FAST	WHERE IT IS LOGGED	WHO READS THE THEMES
One named person, with a backup.	Within one working day.	One shared sheet or your helpdesk.	The owner of messages and the owner of the product.

Most replies are not complaints. Questions, thanks and ideas are worth logging too.

Reply log

SAMPLE DATA

One row per reply. Keep the customer's words short. Remove personal details before you share the log.

DATE	WHERE IT CAME FROM	WHAT THEY SAID	THEME	ACTION	CLOSED?
Sample: Mon	Reply to welcome email	Do you ship to Canada?	Shipping	Add a shipping page link	Yes
Sample: Tue	Reply to cart reminder	Shipping cost surprised me	Shipping cost	Show cost earlier	Yes
Sample: Wed	Reply to order email	Loved the packaging	Praise	Share with team	Yes
Sample: Thu	Reply to review request	I did not get my order yet	Delivery delay	Escalate, send update	Yes
Sample: Fri	Reply to shipping update	Can I change the address?	Order change	Add to FAQ	Open

Theme tracker

SAMPLE DATA

Count themes monthly. The biggest theme is the first thing to fix or explain better.

THEME	COUNT THIS MONTH	EXAMPLE, IN THEIR WORDS	CHANGE TO MAKE	OWNER
Shipping cost	14	Shipping cost surprised me	Show shipping earlier and in the reminder	Store manager
Delivery delay	9	Where is my order	Proactive delay notice	Support lead
Sizing and fit	7	Is it big enough for two	Add a size guide link	Email manager
Praise	12	Loved the packaging	Share and thank	Marketing lead

Action plan and review rhythm

SAMPLE DATA

Turn what you found into a short list. Fix the highest impact items first, and give every item an owner and a date.

#	ACTION	LINKED FINDING	EFFORT	IMPACT	OWNER	DUE
1	Set a monitored reply-to address and a backup	Service levels	Low	High	Support lead	Week 1
2	Add shipping cost to the cart reminder	Theme: shipping cost	Low	High	Email manager	Week 2
3	Write a short answer page for the top three questions	Theme tracker	Medium	Medium	Support lead	Month 1
4						

Review rhythm

DAILY
Answer replies. Log them.

MONTHLY
Count the themes. Choose one change.

QUARTERLY
Tell customers what changed because of what they said.

Next: the Lab Routine shows how to test a change before rolling it out.