In late March and early April, I posted the following survey on the Longarm University website. The survey was hosted at Survey Monkey www.surveymonkey.com and the responses were collected, tallied and the percentages were calculated with Survey Monkey. The survey was online for several weeks. Notices about the survey were sent to those on the Longarm University mailing list and advertised on the Gammill Owners Yahoo Group and the Machine Quilting Professional Yahoo Group. I know that many respondents passed the information about this survey on to fellow quilters and other internet groups/lists/forums. No personal information was collected in this survey and there was no way to tell where the people who responded were located.

I want to thank all of those who responded – a total of 670 of you did respond! This number is mind boggling and quilters from all around the globe responded (see Question # 10 responses) Your answers are thoughtful, intelligent and insightful. I know that when quilters look at the responses to this survey, they will get ideas and information on how to make their quilting business better and more profitable.

So pour yourself a cup of coffee, a cup of tea or a cold beverage and take some time to put your feet up and to read through the responses of this survey. I know you will learn a lot about this exciting, vibrant and growing industry!

I have created a Blog which you can view at http://mabusiness.wordpress.com/machine-quilting-business-report-2/

(if needed, copy and paste the address in your browser window). Please feel free to leave any comments or thought about this report or the survey in general at this blog. Or, send any comments to me at longarmu@aol.com

Cindy Roth

Longarm University
www.LongarmUniversity.com
Blog – mabusiness.wordpress.com

Question # 1

Do you machine quilt as a business?

670 people answered Question #1	
% Response	Answer
90 **	Yes (highest response)
10	No

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Question #2

If you answered yes (to Question #1), do you consider your quilting a full-time or part-time business?

604 people answered Question #2	
% Response	Answer
31.8	Full time
68.2 **	Part Time (highest response)

Question #3

How long have you been machine quilting as a business?

607 people answered Question #3	
% Response	Answer
17.6	Less than 1 year
30.1 **	1 to 3 years (highest response)
28.0	4 to 6 years
16.0	7 to 10 years
8.2	Over 11 years

Question #4

Where are you finding your customers?

Check as many as necessary

606 people answered Question #4	
% Response	Answer
89.8 **	Customer referrals (highest response)
67.0	Quilt guild or quilt groups
17.0	Churches or other groups
22.1	Advertising
36.5	Other

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To Question #4, "Other" there were 293 responses. I created a chart to track the responses. In the responses, there were several different issues listed. Here is an example of a response with several issues – "leaving business cards in local quilt shops, quilting for the shops, from my website and personal contacts." There are **four** separate issues in that response, and each issue was entered individually in my chart. I grouped the responses according to themes. Because of the many multiple issues in many of the responses, when I was finished with my chart, there were a total of 340 individual responses.

# Responses	Responses
	Referrals from:
22	Friends and relatives
1	Gift Certificates
22	Word of mouth
3	Repeat customers
	Internet Referrals from:
18	Websites
4	FaceBook
2	Blogs
4	Other internet sources such as Google Ad words, Google Places, Craig's List, Ebay etc.
3	Internet email groups, lists, forums
	Quilt Shops
118 **	Local Quilt Shops (highest response)
37	Fliers/brochures/business cards at local quilt shop
3	Quilt shop owner
2	Quilting Machine is located within local quilt shop
7	Samples at local quilt shop (free or at a discounted quilting to the shop)
	Quilt Guilds
12	Guild newsletters
6	Quilt show program/guide/brochure
12	Teaching quilting classes
	Local, Regional, National Quilt/Craft Show
3	Booth at a craft/quilting event
8	Business card/flyers/brochures at craft/quilting event
10	Enter work in Quilt Shows /local, regional/national (quilter's own quilt(s) or customers quilt(s)

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	Referrals from Charities
6	Quilts of Valor, Wounded Warriors, American Hero Quilts
4	Donated quilt(s) to charity fundraisers - church, school, other charity
	Information Directly from Quilter
1	Post cards sent to customer list
3	Quilters' own newsletter sent to customer list
2	Cards and other mailings
	Other
1	Personalized quilt bags
1	Magnetic car signs
1	Pay local quilt shop to put my flyer in each customer bag
5	Yellow Book Ad/ Phone Book listing or ad
1	WRBQ (We'd Rather Be Quilting) Book – www.WRBQinc.com
1	PLYB – Professional Longarm Yellow Book - www.quiltingprofessional.com/plyb
11	Local newspaper, Penny Saver, Country Register
1	Radio ads
4	Advertisement in national quilt magazine(s)
1	Quilt Retreat/Quilt Camp

The top 7 responses for this Question are:

# Responses	Responses
118	Local quilt shop
37	Fliers/brochures/business cards at local quilt shops
22	Friends and relatives
22	Word of mouth
18	Websites
12	Guild newsletters
12	Teaching quilting classes

Question # 5

Do you have a website?

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624 people answered Question #5		
% Response	Answer	
29.5	Yes	
70 **	No (highest response)	

Question # 6

If you do have a website, do you use your website for:

Answer as many as needed.

/ 1110 11 G1 G15	Allower as many as necessar.	
191 people answered Question #6		
% Response	Answer	
74.3	Advertising my quilting services	
75.4 **	Showcasing my work (highest response)	
25.7	Building a potential customer list	
38.2	Selling my products and services	
9.9	Other	

To Question #6, there were 37 "Other" responses and I created a chart to track the responses. In the responses, there were several different issues listed. Here is an example of a response with several issues – "info on pricing, size backing needed, publications, news" There are four separate issues in that response, and each issue was entered individually onto my chart. Because of the many multiple issues in many of the responses, when I was finished with my chart, there were a total of 43 responses. I placed the individual responses into groups that were similar for the final results. The results are listed from highest number of responses to the lowest number of responses.

# Responses	"Other" Responses (from highest to lowest)
7 **	Just starting to build a website - or rebuilding it (highest response)
5	Have a Blog instead of a website and use it to promote their quilting business.
5	Promote other quilting endeavors, such as piecing classes, retreats, online store, piecing patterns, quilting patterns, etc.
4	Quilter education.
4	Quilting information such as preparing the quilt for quilting info, shipping/drop off instructions, etc.

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3	Links to quilting techniques or other quilting info.
3	Information about pricing for quilting services.
3	Showcasing customer's completed quilts.
2	Have a Facebook page(s) instead of website.
2	Have Webshots or other photo sharing/storage websites in conjunction with website or no website, just photo sharing/storage site.
1	Haven't updated their website for one or more years.
2	Promote their machine embroidery or other crafts business (machine quilting is secondary business)
1	Website is still incomplete.
1	Website is to promote a writing career
1	Website has quilter contact information only

Question #7

Do you communicate with your customers on a regular basis?

605 people answered Question #7		
% Response	Answer	
51.6 **	Yes (highest response)	
48.4	No	

Question #8

What do YOU feel is the most important business related issue that you have at this time?

To Question #8, there were 544 responses! Because there were so many responses, I created a chart to track them. Many of those who responded expressed several business related issues. Here is an example of a multiple issue response – "finding new customers, keeping my current customers happy, keeping my machine working well and taking classes." There are four separate issues in that response, and each issue was entered individually onto my chart. Because of the many multiple responses, when I was finished with my chart, there were a total of 562 individual responses! I placed the individual responses into groups that were similar for the final results.

# of responses	Response
12	Said they had no issues or problems with their business at this time or were
	satisfied with the way their business is.

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	Customer Issues
84 **	Said that finding customers and keeping them happy was their biggest business
,	issue. (largest response) Are concerned with customer expectations and making sure the customer's quilts
6	look good.
7	Are concerned with customers spending less or customers on a limited income, not being able to spend as much as before.
21	Customer education and communication with customers
12	Poor piecing, "bad" quilts, bad backings, and difficult customers.
2	Customers not picking up quilts in a timely manner
	The Economy
14	Had concerns about the economy in general
	Price of Quilting
52	Had concerns about pricing their quilting. Some didn't know what to charge or how to determine what their prices should be.
9	Responded that they were not making/charging enough for their work.
5	Wanted to raise their prices but were concerned about their customer's feelings.
2	Said that their customers didn't understand what went into their pricing.
	Internet / Social Media
3	Expressed an interest in learning how to use the internet and social media to get more customers.
	Business Issues
27	Expressed strong concern about competition from other professional quilters in their area and from the home machine quilters
4	Had concerns about "underground" quilters. Those who are quilting as a business but have no business license and are collecting no taxes.
5	Are starting their machine quilting businesses but didn't know how or what to do.
17	Said they had too MUCH business
13	Said they had too LITTLE business
13	Had concerns about increasing their businesses and having a more consistent work flow. It is either too busy or too slow.
3	Had a hard time promoting their selves and their businesses
7	Had issues/concerns about insurance, both business insurance (what to get and where to get it) and health insurance.
2	Were concerned about quilter "burn out."
3	Wanted help with tracking customer information and customer service issues.

	Time Management
56	Responded with "time management". Nothing specific was indicated.
5	Had concerns about interruptions while they were working
3	Wanted to have time to work on their own projects
25	Wanted to know how to get everything done.
11	Were concerned about a quick turnaround time.
25	Wanted to learn how to schedule their work and work flow
14	Wanted to make time to practice, practice, practice and to keep up their self motivation and confidence.
1	Had concerns about the length of customer consultation time.
	Advertising
8	Wanted information about marketing (general) and were concerned about the cost of advertising.
5	Wanted to update their website or to create a website.
	Supplies
16	Had concerns about the (rising) cost of supplies and the location of their supplies (too far from them.) There were concerns about the quality of the supplies and controlling costs.
1	Adding products, batting, fabric, etc., for customers to purchase.
	Miscellaneous
13	Education – taking the time off to attend classes, the cost involved and travel issues. Leaning about new products and techniques.
12	Were concerned about the quality of their work.
9	Wanted information about bookkeeping/accounting systems and how to keep track of their business income.
9	Were concerned about taxes – reporting, collecting proper taxes, etc.
6	Were concerned about their physical condition and body part overuse from quilting.
5	Were concerned about keeping their machine running well.
4	Were concerned about customers coming over to their homes and lack of quilting space.
2	Felt bank loans were too difficult to get and hard to pay off
2	Wanted information about tracking thread and thread charges
3	Wanted to upgrade from a small machine to a larger machine or get a second machine

2	Wanted to upgrade to a computerized system.
1	Hiring staff to help with their quilting
1	Identifying self as a professional quilter, not a hobbyist.

The top 7 responses to this Question are:

84	Said that finding customers and keeping them happy was their biggest business issue.
56	Responded with "time management". Nothing specific was indicated.
52	Had concerns about pricing their quilting. Some didn't know what to charge or how to determine what their prices should be.
27	Expressed strong concern about competition from other professional quilters in their area and from the home machine quilters
25	Wanted to know how to get everything done.
25	Wanted to learn how to schedule their work and work flow

Question # 9

If you had a rich Uncle who gave you \$25,000 to build your business, what would you do?

To Question #9, there were 589 responses! Because there were so many responses, I created a chart to track them. Many of the responses had several suggestions/ideas of how they would spend the money. Here is an example of a multiple suggestion response – "get a web site, enlarge my work space, find new ways to advertise, buy a computer for my quilting machine." There are four suggestions in that response, and each suggestion was entered individually onto my chart. Because of the many multiple responses, when I was finished with my chart, there were a total of 833 individual responses! I placed the individual responses into groups that were similar for the final results.

# responses	Response
	General Responses
28	Had no idea how they would spend the money or were content with the way things are in their machine quilting business.
11	Would quit their day job and quilt full time.
54	Would spend the money on education. Either taking classes, attending conferences and using the money to pay for their travel to and from classes/conferences. Some said they would pay to have a teacher or two come to their studio for private classes.
3	Would work more on their own quilts and enter them into local, regional and national quilt shows.
5	Would take a vacation. Going fishing and a trip to Tahiti or a tropical location was suggested.

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	Financial Responses
11	Would save the money, either part or all, or invest some of the money. (How they
	would invest was not indicated.)
43	Would pay off their machine, credit cards, or loans to become debt free.
2	Would pay for their insurance. (type of insurance was not indicated.)
	Employees
22	Would hire an employee to help with their quilting business, or a CPA or other financial advisor/business consultant.
4	Would hire household help to clean their house so they could quilt more.
	Studio / Quilting Space
149 **	Would build, expand, remodel, re-do their studio or quilting space. Included were responses which were vague, such as "expand my studio", and other responses that were very specific, such as "knock out walls, add more electric outlets, etc." (largest response) Quilting Machines
87	Would get a new machine or a second machine. No particular brand was noted.
7	Would purchase a new Gammill machine.
3	Would purchase a new APQS machine.
4	Would purchase a new machine which they would rent out to others (no brand specified).
73	Would either purchase a computerized machine or ad a computerized system to their existing machine. (No brand of computerized machine/system was specified).
43	Would either purchase a Statler Computerized machine or add a Statler system to the existing machine.
14	Would either purchase an IntelliQuilter Computerized machine or add a IntelliQuilter system to their existing machine.
50	Would upgrade their machine (no specifics were give as to what upgrades they would make).
4	Would add a Stitch Length Regulator to their machines.
35	Would purchase "gadgets" for their machines. These would be templates, patterns, other add on equipment that needs to be purchased separately.
	Would purchase an embroidery machine or other type of sewing/quilting/embroidery
6	machine
6	machine Computers/Software
2	

	Business Purchases
50	Would purchase products (wholesale) to sell in to their customers, such as fabric (regular quilting fabric, wide backing fabrics), batting, thread, etc.
59	Would spend money on advertising more, better, or on marketing their business either locally, regionally or nationally.
59	Would create, upgrade, update a website or hire someone to do this for them.

The top 10 responses for this Question are:

#	Response
responses	
149	Would build, expand, remodel, re-do their studio or quilting space.
	Some responses were vague, such as "expand my studio", and other responses were very specific, such as "knock out walls, add more electric outlets, etc." This was the LARGEST response!
87	Would get a new machine or a second machine. No particular brand was noted.
73	Would either purchase a computerized machine or ad a computerized system to their existing machine. (No brand of computerized machine/system was specified).
59	Would spend money on advertising more, better, or on marketing their business either locally, regionally or nationally.
59	Would create, upgrade, update a website or hire someone to do this for them.
50	Would upgrade their machine (no specifics were give as to what upgrades they would make).
50	Would purchase products (wholesale) to sell in to their customers, such as fabric (regular quilting fabric, wide backing fabrics), batting, thread, etc.
43	Would pay off their machine, credit cards, or loans to become debt free.
43	Would either purchase a Statler Computerized machine or add a Statler system to their existing machine.
35	Would purchase "gadgets" for their machines. These would be templates, patterns, other add on equipment that needs to be purchased separately.

Question # 10

Do you currently belong to any organization or association that is associated with the machine quilting business or industry?

620 people answered Question #10	
% Response	Answer
49.8	Yes
50.2 **	No (highest response)

If yes (to Question #10), please specify.

There were 274 responses to this part of the question. Because there were so many responses, I created a chart to track them. Many of the respondents belong to several organizations. Each organization that was entered was listed. Because of the multiple responses, when I was finished with my chart, there were a total of 346 responses! I broke the responses into groups that were similar for the final results.

Note: the organizations are listed and spelled the way they were typed into the survey. A group may be listed two or more times with a different spelling of the name.

# responses	Response
	Group/Guilds/Associations
95 **	IMQA (highest response)
	International Machine Quilting Association, www.imqa.org
22	AQS
1	AQG
1	APWQ
2	INMQ
6	IAPQ / IPQA
1	NQA
2	Canadian Quilting Assoc
1	AMQF
1	American Quilters
1	GLMQA
1	Western Australian Assoc
56	Local/ Regional Longarm Group/Guild
3	Australian MQ Assoc
3	Carolina Longarm Assoc
1	Central Arkansas Longarm Assoc

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1	Centralia WA Longarm Group
1	Delmarva Longarm
1	Fairbanks Longarm Group
1	Houston, TX Longarm guild
1	Indiana Longarm Group
1	Kansas Longarmers
1	Longarm Quilters of NM
1	LCC Quilt Angels
1	McKinney TX Group
5	Mo-Kan Guild
4	MAPMQG (Mid Atlantic Professional MQ Guild)
1	NE PA Longarm Group
1	New England Longarm Group
1	New Zealand Longarm
1	Northern Stars Quilters, MN
1	Northwest Professional Quilters
2	Ohio Longarmers
1	Oklahoma Machine Quilting Assoc
2	Plano, TX Longarm guild
3	Puget Sound Longarm Quilters
1	Salt Lake Ogden Longarm guild
1	SE Michigan Longarm
2	Southern California Longarm Guild
1	Southern Oregon Longarm Assoc
1	Trails End Longarm Quilters
1	Tri Cities Longarm Quilters
1	Upper Midwest Machine Quilters
	STATLER/COMPUTERIZED GROUPS
21	SUGAR
3	No CA Statler Users
20	Statler Sisters/Siblings
3	Statler Users Group (SUGAR?)
1	Anne Bright Membership
1	IQ Users Group
1	Florida Statler Group
2	Northern Statler
1	SW Statler Sibs
1	Aussie Statlers

2	Tri State Statler Stitches Group
1	Ohio Statler Group
	Local Organizations
23	local "regular" guild
1	local quilt shop guild
	Internet Based Groups
7	Online Forums/lists
2	LongarmChat.com
3	MQResource.com
9	MQP List
2	APQS Forum
4	Gammill Yahoo Group
	Magazines
1	Machine Quilting Unlimited
1	Professional Quilter Magazine

The top 7 machine quilting groups are:

# responses	Response
95	IMQA
56	Local/ Regional Longarm Group/Guild
23	local "regular" guild
22	AQS
21	SUGAR
20	Statler Sisters/Siblings
9	MQP List

As you can see, this is a great listing of a very diverse group of machine quilting groups/guilds/organizations. I have begun a listing of groups and guilds on the Longarm University website at:

www.longarmuniversity.com/groups-guilds

If you have contact information on any of the groups listed above please send it to longarmu@aol.com and I will list it on the website.

Thank you to all who took the time to answer this survey.

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