

New Thursday thru Sunday Format a Win/Win for World Quilt Show – Florida

West Palm Beach, Florida

On Thursday morning, November 10, Mancuso Show Management opened the doors at their third annual World Quilt Show – Florida to a large, enthusiastic audience. The crowd and the buying enthusiasm remained strong throughout the 3-day event that ran through Saturday.

There is an old French proverb, “Better to bend, than break.” It did not take long for David and Peter Mancuso, brothers/partners, to realize the original three-day Friday through Sunday format at their southeastern Florida venue was not working.

“We got a slight hint of it the first year when some of the vendors made their way up front to mention the concerns they had about poor Sunday sales,” stated Peter Mancuso.

By year two, the writing was on the wall. Not only were Sunday sales off, but Sunday attendance was also down. Mancuso Show Management has always taken pride in their ability to make lightning fast decisions; this is one of the advantages of a small business. The multi-year contracts with the Palm Beach County Convention Center were amended and the show’s format was changed to Thursday through Saturday.



This decision resulted in a strong November 2011 show. Public attendance increased by 15% over 2010 and the workshop registration also increased 10%.

The merchants in the vendor mall reported robust sales throughout all three days of the show. Paul Konchinsky of Critter Patternworks (Pennsylvania) stated that each year has improved for his business. “The attendees love the show and are surprised at the quality of the event,” Konchinsky related. “Going Thursday through Saturday was better overall.” He believes Sundays are a big family day in Florida and is not necessarily a good time for this type of activity.

Vivian Irwin of Quilters Choice (Jupiter, Florida), also a three-year participant, reported more traffic and more sales in the Quilters Choice booth. Irwin also stated that the vendors around her booth were all enthusiastic. She added that she felt many of the customers were anxious to see demonstrations on the Bernina machines, that Quilters Choice was very pleased with the event and they cannot wait to return next year.

Ethel King, representing Redfern Enterprises of Las Vegas, Nevada simply reported that they sold out of product. Their very popular Euro Steam Evolution Iron is a big seller among quilters and sewers.

First time vendors Joey Mettley and partner Margy Merle of the JaM Patch (Stuart, Florida) had a wonderful experience. “We got to see a lot of our customers and many new ones,” stated Joey. The firm specializes in fabric, quilting supplies, patterns, books and overall general quilting supplies. They are also anxious to return in 2012.

Other things that were a big hit in 2011 were the new luncheon presentation lecture and the hotel show package.

It seems Sunday in southeast Florida is not a good show day and judging by this year’s enthusiasm World Quilt Show – Florida will be here for the long run as a win/win situation for all.