

Pricing for a Commission Quilt

Cindy Roth

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When I started getting inquiries on “start to finish” quilts I knew I had to come up with a simple pricing structure for verbal “ball park” estimates. You know, “Will you make a quilt for me. It will be really simple.” Then you find out that they want a King Size Double Wedding Ring or something equally complex.

After talking to some other professional quilting friends, I came up with a MINIMUM square foot price of \$15.00 per square foot. If the quilt was a simple pattern such as Log Cabin (made from 2 ½ inch strips) or some other simple rotary cut pattern, I may lower the price to \$13 or \$14 per square foot. If it were a more complex pattern, the price would go up accordingly. For a Double Wedding Ring I would quote about \$25 - \$30 per square foot. This square foot price includes ALL phases of creating the quilt.

This is an estimate I recently gave to a customer that reflects this pricing:

QUILT NAME: Hearts – from the book “Say It With Quilts” page 34
12 inch blocks, 7 blocks across, 8 blocks down, 3 inch borders
QUILT SIZE: 90 X 102 (approximate finished size)
63.75 square feet, rounded up to 64 square feet

ESTIMATE OF CHARGES	
Fabric for quilt top	\$150.00*
Piecing Labor	\$200.00
Quilting (body of quilt) @ .03 cents psi	\$275.00
Batting - Queen Size Warm & White	\$25.00
Thread	\$15.00 +/-
Backing fabric 3.5 yards @ \$14.35, 108" wide	\$50.00
Binding - hand stitched back	\$100.00
Shipping *	\$25.00
* more or less depending on current prices	
TOTAL	\$840.00

I would round up the estimated price to \$900. \$900 divide by 64 square feet = \$14.06 per square foot which is slightly less than my minimum of \$15 per square foot. But, the piecing pattern has triangles and some small pieces so I would still price the project at \$15 per square foot. At \$15 per square foot, this project of 64 square feet would equal \$960. When I quote a price to my customer, I would quote it at \$975 - \$1,050. I figure the extra money would be for the “frustration factor” that is built into every quilt or use the extra money to upgrade the quilting.

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I also include a color “drawn” example of the quilt block and finished quilt using EQ5 and an estimate sheet that I make from QuickBooks. This makes the estimate look very professional and more business-like. Date the estimate and indicate for how long this estimate will be valid.

If the customer provides the fabric, I would reduce the price accordingly.

A few more things I would like to add –

- Make sure you write up a COMPLETE invoice (or other documentation) about this quilt project. Include EVERYTHING you can possibly think of – name, address, phone, fabric colors and swatches if applicable, batting, quilting designs, etc. Even if you think you have too much information – add more (Ask me how I know this!!)
- HAVE YOUR CUSTOMER SIGN AND DATE THIS INVOICE!!!! This becomes a legal document and it will hold up in court. You keep the original and give the customer a copy.
- Insist on a NON-REFUNDABLE deposit (write that on the invoice also) to equal HALF of the price of the quilt. Remember, you have a TON of work to do to this quilt before it ever gets on the quilting machine. When the quilt top is pieced, and before it goes on the quilting machine, require another payment of ¼ of the fee and the final ¼ is paid when the quilt is picked up.

If you have any questions or comments about this article, please send an email to Cindy Roth at longarmu@aol.com