



In December 2007, while enjoying a few beers on a casual Friday afternoon at the local pub, the question was raised, "*If you could do anything you wanted, what would be your dream job?*". My response, the same as it's been for the last 15 or so years, was "*Open a quilt store!*". That response resulted in total silence followed by "*Wow's*" around the table from my fellow web developers. I'm not sure if the shock was what I said, or how quickly, and without reservation, I responded.

Walking home later that afternoon, I starting thinking about owning a quilt shop. Where would I want it located? What would it be called? How much capital would I need to raise? How long would it take me to raise it? Would my dad build my fabric shelves? And, would my mom help me set up the store? Who would I hire? What kind of classes would I offer and who would teach them? The list went on and on.

Of course, reality set in after the beer had worn off, and I had crunched some numbers, that it would be many years before I could open a store. I wasn't willing to give up my travels and other life experiences to save the much-needed capital. I also came to the conclusion that I really wanted quilting back in my life on a regular basis.

So, what did I do? I created the [Quilting Gallery](#). An opportunity for me to combine my two passions: quilting and [web development](#).



In February and March of 2008, I had the good fortune of escaping the cold winter in Ottawa and heading to Argentina for six weeks. This semi-sabbatical allowed me to research and plan my new site.

I very quickly discovered the huge quilt blogging community. The fabulous inspiration, wonderful tutorials, swaps, challenges and friendships had sucked me in. I soon had a blog roll on my site in the hundreds and realized this wasn't going to work. I needed a way to organize these blogs, not just for me, but for other quilters to find each other too.

In May 2008, I created the [Quilting Bloggers](#) directory. It's organized and searchable by country, state and province. The quilting community loved the idea and now there are more than 3,200 bloggers listed from 66 countries and more added each day.

Last August, I did a long-distance road trip to Nashville, TN for the [AQS Quilt Show](#). Wow, what an experience that was. I had never attended a big quilt show before. There was so much to see and do. I was overwhelmed with meeting new friends that I had "met" on my blog, all the glorious fabrics, kits, new tools and techniques. I don't think I slept more than a few hours the entire time.

It was at this show, that I started telling people about my vision for the [Quilt Shop Locator](#). You see, I love to travel and I'm a visual person. I like to plan my driving route based on all the interesting stops I can make along the way. This is my desire for the Quilt Shop Locator. Pull up a map of the state, province or country you are visiting and see exactly where the stores are.



In May 2009, I attended my first-ever [Quilt Market](#), and officially launched the [Quilt Shop Locator](#). I met so many wonderful people at that show, and left feeling inspired, energized and filled with lots of ideas for the future.

I love featuring [projects and tutorials](#) that other quilters have created on the Quilting Gallery blog. The [swaps and contests](#) have been a great challenge for me to expand my skills and have helped build the community and foster friendships. I've featured several [guest bloggers](#) with wonderful stories to tell.

Will I ever open my own quilt shop? I guess time will tell. For now, I'm happy building the [Quilting Gallery](#) community. I have learned so much over the past year and made such wonderful friendships. It has given me focus and I wake up excited each day.

I would like to thank Kim for this wonderful opportunity to be featured here on **Women on Quilts**. I look forward to the day when our paths will cross in real life.

Happy Quilting,
Michele

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