

# Branford Castle Carves Handi Quilter from Blue Point's Premier Needle Arts

The sale to Branford Castle adds to Handi Quilters private equity lineage and follows ownership by Blue Point, High Road, Hanover Partners and Tuckerman Capital



Handi Quilter sells longarm quilting machines, tables and frames, and accessories including replacement parts, scissors, rulers, templates and patterns

**SOURCE:** *Getty Images*

*By John McNulty*  
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The logo for Handi Quilter, featuring the brand name in a white serif font on a dark blue background with a subtle geometric pattern.

**Branford Castle** has acquired **Handi Quilter**, a manufacturer and designer of quilting machines, from **Premier Needle Arts**, a portfolio company of **Blue Point Capital**.

Handi Quilter sells both branded and private label longarm quilting machines. The company also produces quilting tables and frames as well as quilting accessories including replacement parts, scissors, rulers, templates and patterns.

Handi Quilter's machines and related technology are sold through the company's e-commerce platform and through more than 1,000 worldwide locations including independent retailers, international distributors, and OEM partners. The company was founded in 1999 by **Laurel Barrus** and is headquartered in North Salt Lake, Utah.



Source: Handi Quilter

Investing alongside Branford Castle on this transaction are members of Handi Quilter's management team including CEO **Mark Hyland**, and President and COO **Darren Denning**.

“Every day our team is focused on listening to and working with passionate makers from around the world. This allows us to live up to our founder’s philosophy – ‘designed by quilters for quilters.’ Handi Quilter supports its local retail partners to provide world-class education, best-of-class products, and feature-rich technologies for all quilt makers,” said Mr. Hyland. “Having a partner in Branford Castle that understands the passionate enthusiast market is critical. We are excited for the next stage of the Handi Quilter journey.”



Mark  
Hyland



**Premier Needle Arts (PNA)** was formed by Blue Point as a holding company when it acquired Handi Quilter from **High Road Capital Partners** in 2014. From 2008 to 2014, Handi Quilter was owned by **Hanover Partners** and **Tuckerman Capital**.

With the sale of Handi Quilter, the remaining pieces of PNA include **Superior Threads**, a Utah-based supplier of threads used in quilting and sewing (acquired in April 2016); **Quilt Pro Systems**, a Texas-based provider of digital and electronic design projects (acquired in December 2016); **Crafts Americana Group**, a Washington-based supplier of knitting, crochet, quilting, and sewing products (acquired in February 2017); and **Berroco**, a Rhode Island-based supplier of knitting and crochet yarns and patterns (acquired in October 2021).

“It is important to find financial partners who have the same core values as Handi Quilter,” said Mr. Denning. “Branford Castle aligns in every way with the Handi Quilter values and will continue to support and provide resources as Handi Quilter continues its growth in the coming years.”

“We are excited to partner with Mark, Darren and the Handi Quilter leadership team, honoring the joy and passion of quilting across the globe,” said **Ceon Francis**, a vice president at Branford Castle. “The company’s position as the leader in the longarm quilting market, along with their customer-oriented focus and approach, make it an exceptional platform for continued growth.”



Ceon  
Francis



New York City-based **Branford Castle** invests in companies that have enterprise values of up to \$100 million and EBITDAs of less than \$15 million. Sectors of interest include consumer products and services, commercial distribution, industrials and specialty manufacturing, business services, and logistics.

The buy of Handi Quilter is the third platform acquisition for Branford’s second fund, **Branford Castle Partners II LP**, which is now 30% invested. Branford Castle’s first fund, which closed in 2016, has completed its platform investing and is a top-quartile fund for its vintage year, as measured by **Preqin**, with gross IRRs of 47% and net IRRs of 30%.



**BLUEPOINT**

**Blue Point** invests in companies that are active in the industrial, business services, consumer, and value-added distribution sectors and have from \$30 million to \$300 million in revenue and EBITDA greater than \$7 million. The firm has offices in Cleveland, Charlotte, Seattle, and Shanghai.

Senior debt financing to support the buy of Handi Quilter is being provided by **Apogem Capital** and mezzanine debt financing is being provided by **Siguler Guff & Company**.

**Stifel Nicolaus** was the financial advisor to Handi Quilter on this transaction.