

MEMO REPORT

1989 REMINGTON FIREARMS
BUYER SATISFACTION STUDY
AMONG 1990 FIREARMS PURCHASERS
(PG90-019)

SEP
Some interesting material.
Will photo cover with a lot of info.
Up
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BACKGROUND

In December 1989, 4200 questionnaires (a copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix "A") were mailed out to a sample of consumers who purchased Remington firearms in 1988 (obtained from product warranty card returns) to determine their overall satisfaction with the gun they bought. Questions included in the study concerned owner-satisfaction with various features of their guns, the importance of these features, their likes (and dislikes) and repair experiences with their guns. Demographic information about firearms buyers that is collected on the product warranty card is also included in the study. Of the 4,200 questionnaires sent out, 2177 (52%) were returned completed.

This study replicates studies done annually from 1982-1988 and tracks changes in the satisfaction levels of buyers of selected models of Remington guns. In 1989, questionnaires were sent to 600 purchasers of each of the following models:

- Model 870;
- Model 870 Express;
- Model 1187;
- Model 700 (ADL and BDL combined);
- Model 700 MTN;
- Model Seven;
- Models 7400 and Four combined.

Customer satisfaction with the Model 870, the Model 700, and Model 7400 have been tracked since inception of the study in 1982. However, prior to the 1988 study the sample for the Model 700 was limited to 600 purchasers randomly chosen from Models 700 ADL, BDL and Mountain Rifle combined. Although previous results were reported for M/700 combined, most of these purchasers had bought either an ADL or BDL as they account for the majority of M/700 sales. In 1988 the sample of purchasers of the Model 700 was expanded to 1200 buyers (300 buyers of M/700 ADL, 300 buyers of M/700 BDL, and 600 buyers of M/700 MTN) to permit a comparison of satisfaction with the three M/700 styles.

The M/1187, M/870 Express and M/66/77 were added to the study in 1988; the M/552, M/1100, M/Seven, M/Six, and M/7600 were dropped. In 1989 the M/Seven was added back in, while the M/66/77 was dropped. These changes in the models sampled in the past two years should be kept in mind when comparing customer satisfaction in 1989 with that for prior years.

In attempting to track changes over time for this study information on models which were dropped from the 1988 and 1989 studies is still included for 1982-1987/1988 where the models which replaced them were similar enough to make comparisons meaningful. Another wave of the buyer satisfaction study is planned for December, 1990.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most purchasers of Remington guns are satisfied with the firearms overall. Ten percent (10%) or less of the purchasers of any model surveyed in 1989 (M/870, M/870 Express, M/1187, M/700, M/Seven, M/4/7400) reported dissatisfaction. This is not to say that there aren't areas for improvement. The main dislikes or areas of dissatisfaction varied by model, but the most common responses centered on product quality (accuracy, gun jamming, action smoothness) and product features (location of safety, overall safety, and weight).

About one in ten Remington gun owners had had repairs/modifications done on their firearms. In 1989 though a trend which began in 1987, continued as a smaller percentage of work done on Remington guns was repair work due to functional problems while a larger percentage were modifications (primarily to the trigger). One must remember, however, that the 1989 sample was changed as the Nylon 66/77 was dropped and the M/Seven was added. It is likely that the M/Seven would require more modifications, and less repair work, than the Nylon 66/77.

Once again it appears that the M/870 Express is effective at attracting first time Remington purchases (42% of M/870 Express owners report that it is their first Remington). The M/870 (40%) and M/4/7400 (31%) also appear to be attracting first time Remington purchasers. For both of those models, though, the high percentage of first time Remington owners represent large increases over 1988 figures (In 1988 27% of M/870 and 29% of M/4/7400 owners reported being first time Remington owners). For comparison, in 1989 only about 20% of M/700 owners, 25% of M/1187 owners and 12% of M/Seven owners indicated that they were first time Remington owners. Owners of the M/870 Express and M/870 tend to be younger than other Remington customers. M/870 Express owners also tend to have a lower annual household income, as do M/4/7400 owners.

Overall, it would appear that the Remington business is doing a good job of addressing many of the areas which give rise to dissatisfaction and over which they have control. (Due to safety and legal concerns, some areas, such as triggers, may not be able to be fixed). Future work should be focused on those areas which are still causing dissatisfaction and which Remington owners consider important (such areas would include accuracy, action smoothness, ease of safety operation, and--for Remington shotguns--choke tube quality.)

FINDINGS

SATISFACTION

- As in prior years Remington gun owners continue to express high levels of overall satisfaction. In each of the eight years that the study has been conducted, nearly nine out of ten buyers were either "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied." (1989=89%; 1988=87%) [Table 1]
- However, of the models which were included in both the 1988 and 1989 studies, only the M/1187 (1989=40% "extremely satisfied" in 1989 versus 39% "extremely satisfied" in 1988) and the M/700 MTN (1989=45%; 1988=43%) exhibited improvements in buyer satisfaction in 1989 versus 1988.

DISSATISFACTION

- In 1989, as in 1988, only about one in twenty Remington purchasers are dissatisfied (either extremely or somewhat) with their guns. Dissatisfaction is greatest for the M/4/7400 combined (10%), and the M/1187 (5%). These models also had the highest levels of dissatisfaction in 1988* (M/Four/7400=7% dissatisfied in 1988; M/1187=6% dissatisfied)
- Only 1% of purchasers were dissatisfied with their M/870 Express, their M/700 ADL, or M/700 BDL.
- Dissatisfaction with the specific models appears to be due to: [Tables 3 and 3A]

M/Four/7400

- Action Smoothness (12% dissatisfied, 93% consider action smoothness very important).
- Accuracy (7% dissatisfied, 98% consider accuracy very important).
- Weight (9% dissatisfied, but only 68% consider very important).

* Other than the Nylon 66/77 which was dropped from the study in 1989.

- Overall Product Quality (7% dissatisfied, 92% consider very important). In particular, owners mentioned "Gun jams when loading/firing" and "Failure of shells to eject properly" as things that they disliked about the guns.

M/700 MTN AND M/700 BDL

- Ease of Safety Operation was a concern for both M/700 MTN (11% dissatisfied, 82% consider very important) and M/700 BDL (12% dissatisfied, 80% consider very important) owners.
- The trigger was also a concern for both M/700 MTN (10% dissatisfied, 87% consider very important) and M/700 BDL (11% dissatisfied, 87% consider very important) owners. Specifically, owners of both models mentioned that the trigger being hard to pull was something that they particularly disliked about the guns.
- M/700 MTN owners also mentioned accuracy as a concern (6% dissatisfied, 98% consider very important).

M/Seven

- The trigger (10% dissatisfied, 88% consider very important) and action smoothness (6% dissatisfied, 91% consider very important) were the main areas of dissatisfaction.
- Wood Finish (5% dissatisfied, 63% consider very important.)

M/700 ADL

- Wood Finish (7% dissatisfied, 59% consider very important.)
- Amount of Recoil (6% dissatisfied, 40% consider very important.)

M/1187

- Weight (11% dissatisfied, 61% consider very important.)
- Action Smoothness (6% dissatisfied, 93% consider very important.)

M/870 Express

- Location of the Safety (12% dissatisfied, 81% consider very important.)
- Ease of Safety operation (7% dissatisfied, 85% consider very important.)
- Wood Finish and Wood Quality (11% and 9% dissatisfied respectively): also were areas of dissatisfaction. However, less than half (46% in each case) of owners considered these areas to be very important.

M/870

- Location of Safety (8% dissatisfied, 69% consider very important.)
- Action Smoothness (6% dissatisfied, 95% consider very important.)

For all of the shotgun models (M/870 Express, M/870 and M/1187) the choke tubes appear to be a slight problem. In each case more than 70% of owners feel that the choke tube is very important while between 3% and 6% are dissatisfied.

LIKES

Most Remington gun owners (87%) mentioned something that they particularly liked about their gun. As in previous years "accurate gun/accuracy" is still the most important reason for liking a Remington. However, the percent of respondents who mention accuracy has fallen steadily from 20% in 1982 to 14% in 1989. Meanwhile, weight (1982-4%; 1989-10%) has risen steadily and is now the second most important reason for liking a Remington.

[Table 4]

As might be expected, the features liked, varied significantly by model of gun [Table 4A.] The M/700 ADL, BDL and MTN are all liked primarily for their accuracy (26% mentioned for ADL and BDL, 22% mentioned for MTN). In addition M/700 BDL owners like its overall looks/appearance (19%). Beyond accuracy, M/700 MTN owners like the light weight of the gun (31%) and the gun's handling (25%). The light weight of the gun was also important to owners of an M/Seven (66% mention). Handling (25%) and accuracy (17%) were also cited by M/Seven owners. The M/4/7400 is liked for its overall looks/appearance (22%) and product quality (primarily accuracy - 29%). Product features (36%) predominantly the ability to chamber different sized shotshells and the choke tubes were the most frequently mentioned likes about the M/1187. Both the M/870 Express and the M/870 are liked for their price (M/870 Express=37%; M/870=16%). In addition, product quality (M/870 Express=20%; M/870=25%) and overall looks/appearance (M/870 Express=25%; M/870=24%) were important likes.

DISLIKES

Sixty-three percent (63%) of Remington gun owners in 1989 indicated that there was something in particular that they disliked about their gun. This is comparable to levels over the past few years (1988=65%; 1987=60%). Also, as has been the case in past years, there was little change in the composition of specific negative comments. The categories "product features" and "product quality" continue to be the major dislikers.

[Table 5]

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Would going to a tang type
safety sell more guns? I
think so per easier to handle
for RH + LH shooters. Could this
tang safety concept ^{also} get as by
the plaintiff attorney? re: if you've
changed to your guilty ??? RH?

- The product features of greatest concern are location of the safety (M/870 and M/870 Express) safety (M/700 BDL, M/700 MTN, M/Seven) and weight (M/1187 and M/4/7400). Major concerns with product quality included gun jamming (M/4/7400 and M/1187) poor wood to metal fit (M/700 MTN) and lack of accuracy (M/700 MTN).

REPAIRS

- About one in ten (11%) Remington gun owners reported having had repair work done on their guns. This level is consistent with levels recorded in previous years [Table 6]. Also consistent with recent years, functional problems, as a category, continue to be the major reason for repairs (38%). However, the 38% level recorded in 1989 represents a 7% decrease from 1988 (45%) and a 16% decrease from 1987 levels. Modifications (36%) primarily work done on triggers (22%) are now almost as common a reason for repair work as functional problems. However, one must keep in mind that the sample was changed this year as the Nylon 66/77 was dropped from the study and the M/Seven was added. This may account for some of the shift from repair work for functional problems to modifications.

- Among the different Remington models in the 1989 survey, the highest reported incidence of repair work was for the M/700 MTN (18%) and the M/Seven (14%). [Tables 8 and 9A]. The 18% level recorded for the M/700 MTN in 1989 represents an increase over the 15% level recorded in 1988. Modifications to the M/700 MTN accounted for the bulk of repairs. Meanwhile, both the M/700 ADL and M/700 BDL registered major decreases in the incidence of repair work done in 1989 (M/700 ADL-7%; M/700 BDL-10%) versus 1988 (M/700 ADL-20%; M/700 BDL-21%). As in the case of the M/700 MTN, the bulk of the repair work done by M/Seven owners represented modification.

- As in prior years, Remington owners continue to stress product performance criteria in their purchase decisions with about nine of ten owners considering "accuracy," "workmanship/overall quality," "action smoothness," and "action strength" to be very "important." In addition, more than eight of ten owners reported that the "feel of the gun" and the "ease of safety operation" were "very important." [Table 3A]

Some important differences by model include:

- Sights are of relatively more importance to purchasers of shotguns (M/870, M/8970 Express and M/1187) than purchasers of centerfire rifles (Model 700 and M/Seven). The exception in this case is M/4/7400.
- Weight is a more important consideration to M/700 MTN and M/Seven purchasers.

BUYER RECOMMENDATION

- The percentage of Remington purchasers who would recommend the Remington model they bought to a friend (96%) has remained virtually unchanged throughout the eight years that this satisfaction study has been conducted. Further, this level of recommendation was uniformly high for all models.
- Likewise, the percentage of Remington gun owners who indicated that they would recommend a Remington gun to a friend (99%) has remained unchanged over the eight years that the study has been conducted. In addition, this level is consistent regardless of the current model owned.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BUYERS

- Owners of both the M/870 Express and M/870 are more likely to be first-time owners of Remington guns than owners of other Remington models. In addition, M/870 and M/870 Express owners tend to be slightly younger - and in the case of M/870 Express - have a lower annual household income for both the M/700 ADL and M/4/7400 owners also tends to be skewed lower, while that of M/1187 owners tends to be skewed higher. (Table 10)
- M/870 Express owners have a median household income of \$33,017 and a median age of 37; M/1187 owners have a median age of 43 and a median household income of \$40,750. The median household income for M/700 ADL owners is \$32,917, and the M/4/7400 owners it is \$33,171.

- Gun shops (35%) and sporting goods stores (27%) account for the majority of Remington gun purchases. However, both of these sources are less important for M/700 ADL and M/4/7400 purchases. In their case department stores (M/700 ADL-26%, M/4/7400-31%) and discount stores (M/700 ADL-36%, M/4/7400-22%) account for the majority of sales.

- Most Remington gun owners are married (79%), own their own home (82%), and one of two Remington owners have children living at home.

- Almost half (45%) of M/Seven owners live in the Northeast Region, the bulk of these being in Pennsylvania. This contrasts with the M/4/7400 owners of whom only 14% live in the Northeast Region (nearly a third [29%] live in the Southeast Region).