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Magazine

NOVEMBER 2001



Diary of a Mad Housewife

It's hard to find good help these days, but one busy mom takes to the Web and gives Martha Stewart a run for her money

By Joanne Kaufman

No sooner had Jeremy cleared out than two fellows from Delmont Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning rolled in. I found the company through The Franklin Report, the online version of a publication that rates New York City home services based on industry and client comments. (A Chicago directory is coming out this fall, and there are plans for a Los Angeles edition.) Delmont lived up to its rating of four stars (out of a possible five). One of the guys even took it upon himself to realign the pad under the cumbersome living-room rug.

The cleaner my house got, the worse the windows looked. So I returned to The Franklin Report and found lanky Ronald Bates of Belnord Window Cleaning Co. Bates claimed that he has done work for Connie Chung, and says that she had disappointed him: "People don't tell you what kind of windows they have. I tell them to look at their windows before I come, to let me know, so I can bring the right tools, but they don't." Bates did a sparkling job at \$7 a window, but griped about various ancient frames, missing screws and child guards. "Replace those windows and get me back," he ordered.

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