



# LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL®

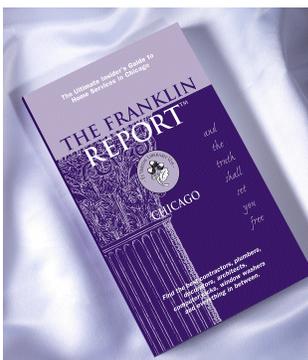
CLIP

## THE ROVING EYE

### Help For the House

It's a Zagat guide for homeowners. Folks undertaking renovations of their homes or just interested in maintenance or redecorating can now consult "The Franklin Report."

Originating in New York last year, the latest edition will be available for Los Angeles in October. A Chicago version has also been published. The book's editors have culled over 1,200 reviews from a number of sources, including customers, industry professionals and a company's peers. The guide has 23 "home service" categories varying from architects to upholsterers to security system installers.



#### Home: Frank advice.

Former Wall Street investment banker Elizabeth Franklin came up with the concept while renovating her Park Avenue apartment. "I was a manager at an investment firm and was closely evaluating people's performance for bonuses. Meanwhile I had decorators, electricians and window washers waltzing in and out of my apartment with no accountability."

The book aims to avoid just that. Companies are rated on a scale of 1 to 5 and are based on quality, cost, value and recommendations. For example, an entry in the interior designer category listed a designer's background, style, and preferred color schemes. The emphasis is on the recommendation category, so getting in the guide means consistent praise from numerous sources.

Franklin said a swimming pool category was created just for L.A. Also, Los Angeles decorators, designers and architects take great interest in gardens and yards.

The reviews include pithy quotes in Zagat tradition. Working with one Los Angeles decorator was described as being like experiencing "Chris Rock's humor in (handbag designer) Kate Spade's body."

Said Franklin: "You would never hear a comment like that in New York."

— Samantha Lee