



Home Improvements

Contractors: Can't Live With Them Or Without Them

(NAPSA)—Your home may be your castle, but what do you do when a home improvement project invites others to invade your private domain? Do you leave for vacation to escape the chaos? Do you stay home to watch over everyone? After the job begins, do you spend all your time cleaning up someone else's mess?

These were among the questions in a survey conducted on behalf of the SCOTT Rags in a Box business. The answers reveal a love-hate relationship with the people we hire to renovate and repair our homes.

The top three complaints about contractors from respondents who had used an outside contractor in their homes within the last few years were:

- Not showing up when they say they will.
- Jobs that take longer than expected to complete.
- Waiting a long time for work to be scheduled.

As for pet peeves, the biggest ones reported by this group were:

- Not cleaning up after the work is finished.
- The mess and the dust.

Respondents who had hired contractors were also asked to describe how they felt when contractors were in their homes. While one-third said it didn't bother them to have workers around, 17 percent reported feeling like they had to stay home all the time to protect their possessions from theft. Thirteen percent said they felt "creepy" with strangers roaming all over the house and nine percent said they wished they could leave for vacation and come back when it was over.

Overcoming Objections

How can home improvement contractors improve their image?



New survey reveals a love-hate relationship with the people who renovate and repair homes.

One way, according to eight in 10 respondents, would be for them to wear gloves, shoe mitts, disposable coveralls and provide their own clean-up products, such as drop cloths, pre-moistened hand wipes or disposable towels that remove dirt, dust and paint.

Despite these concerns most people will still need outside contractors because they don't have either the time or skills to do many home improvement jobs themselves. Nearly half of those who had hired contractors said they did so because of their own lack of skills, while one-quarter cited lack of time.

Overall impressions of the final outcome of a job by an outside contractor were largely positive, with close to half saying it generally met but did not exceed expectations.

Relying on Word of Mouth

Despite a proliferation of circulars, flyers and Yellow Pages ads, the vast majority of respondents (81 percent) said they would be most likely to hire contractors based on recommendations from neighbors, friends or relatives.