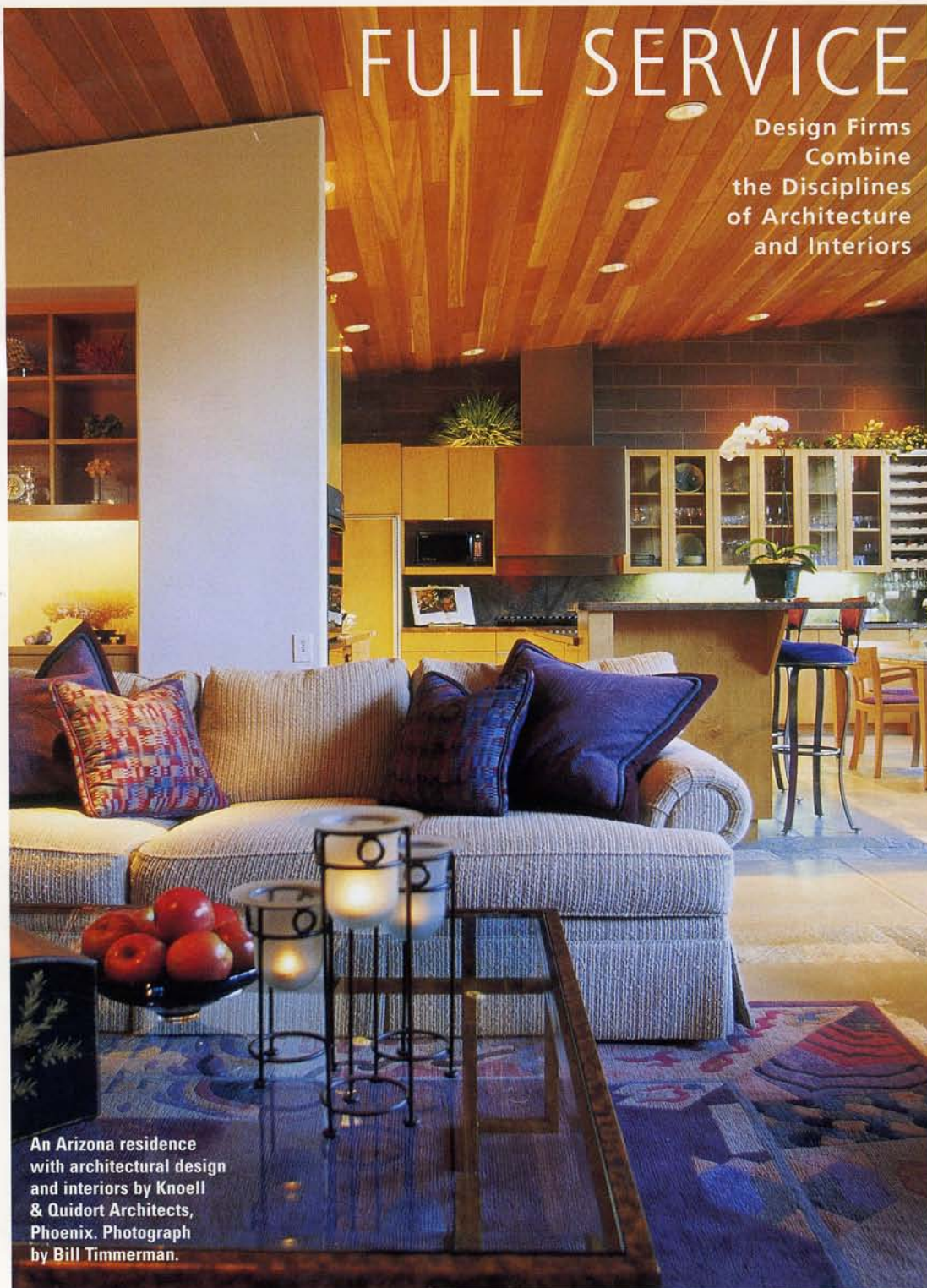


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An Arizona residence with architectural design and interiors by Knoell & Quidort Architects, Phoenix. Photograph by Bill Timmerman.

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THERE'S SOMETHING telling about the location of interior designer Sandra Evans' workspace at Knoell & Quidort Architects in Phoenix. Evans, ASID, a partner with the firm, is in the middle of the open office space. She's within easy conversation distance of the other partners, architects

Hugh Knoell Jr., AIA; Phillip Quidort, AIA, and Jack Leonard, AIA. Even if Evans isn't directly involved in one of the partners' projects, she's accessible for ideas and reactions — as, conversely, are the architects available for her.

This easy, non-compartmentalized flow has worked well for the small, 11-member firm, which added interiors in 1994 to its architecture and planning disciplines. The addition of interior services for this firm wasn't a conscious marketing or business strategy, according to partner Hugh Knoell. Rather, it was one of philosophy. "Design should be one thing, one gift to a client, not two interests pulling at one another," Knoell says. "We always want to enhance what we're doing — and when we met Sandra Evans, we realized she shared the same vision."

Knoell & Quidort's history dates back to 1978, when

Knoell & Quidort Architects
Phoenix

Knoell and Phillip Quidort felt that their backgrounds and experiences would be complementary. Knoell, who has bachelor's degrees from Notre Dame and Arizona State University, had roots in custom-home design. Quidort, who had graduated from Lawrence Technological University in Michigan, had worked on hotel and hospital projects for another metro Phoenix architectural firm.

The firm's first projects, recalls Quidort, were residential and small commercial jobs, which they handled together. Eventually, Knoell began to take on more of the residential work, while Quidort worked on commercial, medical and industrial commissions.

Leonard, a University of Arizona graduate, joined the firm in 1994, after working for Line and Space in Tucson and NBBJ in Phoenix, where he was involved in medical and school projects. He joined Knoell & Quidort just as the firm's business skyrocketed; he'd wanted to join a smaller firm where he could be involved in all aspects of a project, and in all types of work, ranging from residential to industrial.

Evans also joined the firm at the same time, but her path to interior design was a bit more circuitous. "I was a 'decorator,'" says Evans of the 25 years she spent helping her developer/builder husband do interiors of his residential projects. However, the longer she worked, the more she realized what she had to learn. "Picking pretty isn't the same as doing interior design. I realized I wanted to learn to do commercial interiors, and learn about architecture."

With her children grown, Evans went back to school full time, getting her degree in interior architecture from Arizona State University. After an

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Above, clockwise: Sandra Evans, Hugh Knoell, Phillip Quidort and Jack Leonard. Left: An Arizona residence with architecture and interiors by Knoell & Quidort. The home won a design award from AIA and *Sunset Magazine*. Opposite: Knoell & Quidort's architectural and interior design for another Arizona residence.



Knoell & Quidort Architects

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internship at an architectural firm in Santa Monica, California, Evans came on board at Knoell & Quidort to work on a care facility for Alzheimer's patients.

Since then, Evans' projects have ranged from medical facilities and offices to banks. She's even designed custom furnishings. The bulk of her work presently is on custom-home interiors; practice-wide, residences account for approximately one-third of the firm's business, with the balance being commercial, industrial and medical projects. Evans has one design assistant, but also utilizes the talents of the rest of the Knoell & Quidort staff. Like many interior designers within architectural firms, she's also free to pursue her own clients. Currently, about half of her work is for outside clients.

Though the firm certainly had a long history of awards and professional recognition prior to the addition of interior design services, projects in which the firm handled both architecture and interiors have recently been receiving a spate of awards, including most recently a Phoenix-area home that won the AIA-Sunset Magazine Western Home award and a Valley Forward award.

Within the tightly knit firm, the addition of Evans' interior design talents has brought to fruition its philosophy. "We have a great respect for interior design here at this firm," says Knoell. "We believe that architecture is more important for the space inside, rather than how a building looks on the outside."

"We don't think of interior design as just frosting," says Leonard. "Having it in-house lets us be able to be in on the same thought processes." ■

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