



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

One Set of Images, Three Audiences, Half of It Wasted.

What the client who signs, the planner who approves and the site team who builds each need to see, priced at studio rates, and which images none of them will look at.

START HERE

Each audience reads a different picture

Contractors tend to commission visuals late, for a tender deadline, and ask one set of images to do three jobs. The client wants to see the finished place. The planner wants accuracy from agreed viewpoints. The site team wants sequence and logistics. A beauty shot answers only the first.

So the set grows. Night versions for a panel that reads the bid in daylight, extra corners to be safe, phasing rendered with planting and reflections because the hero was. None of it is wasted effort by the studio. It is wasted money, because each audience keeps looking at the two or three frames that were made for it.

WHO LOOKS	WHAT THEY ACTUALLY NEED
01 The client who signs	Two or three finished views of the place in use: arrival, materials, the main space.
02 The planner who approves	Accurate views from agreed points, with neighbours and massing shown honestly. No flattering lenses.
03 The site team who builds	Clear phasing and logistics views. Clay or simple materials, with the stage labelled.
04 The tender panel	A short set that shows you understood the design, delivered before the deadline, not on it.

Photorealism is the wrong tool for half the job.

A phasing sequence does not need planting and reflections. Rendered to hero standard, it costs more than twice as much and reads more slowly on a site board.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE SHOT LIST

Three audiences, one priced set

Below is a composite of a mid-size commercial scheme, priced at mid-market studio rates. Rows 01-07 serve the three audiences from one model. The lines under them are what a set typically gains when nobody decides who each image is for.

	IMAGE, BY AUDIENCE	BASIS	AT STUDIO RATES
01	Client: hero view of the completed scheme	1 x \$550	\$550
02	Client: arrival and public realm view	1 x \$450	\$450
03	Client: main interior, reception or hall	1 x \$500	\$500
04	Planner: views from agreed viewpoints	3 x \$500	\$1,500
05	Planner: aerial massing in context	1 x \$600	\$600
06	Site team: phasing sequence, clay style	6 stages x \$250	\$1,500
07	Site team: logistics view, cranes and access	1 x \$400	\$400
	The set the three audiences use		\$5,500
	Phasing rendered to hero standard, 6 x \$350 more		+ \$2,100
	Night versions of the three client views		+ \$1,275
	Five extra corner views, 'to be safe'		+ \$2,125
	The set as usually ordered		\$11,000
	The set the audiences use		\$5,500

Order by deadline, not by department.

Tender images first, because that date does not move. Planning views next, once the viewpoints are agreed with the authority. Phasing last, from the same model, when the programme is settled.

MISTAKES

Mistakes from your side of the table

Bid teams write briefs under pressure, and it shows in the same few lines. Each is reasonable on the day and expensive by the end of the job.

WHAT CONTRACTORS WRITE	WHAT TO WRITE INSTEAD
01 'Architect's model attached'	Say whether it is the tender or the construction issue. Renders from a superseded model are a re-render, not a revision.
02 'Show it in its surroundings'	Say whether the planner will check the context. Surveyed context is modelled from data and costs far more than generic surroundings.
03 'Visuals for the tender'	Send the deadline and the scoring criteria that mention visuals. We shape the set to what is marked.
04 'Make it look impressive'	Say who signs. A public client and a private one are persuaded by different images.
05 'Phasing views, photorealistic'	Clay or simple materials, one fixed camera, the stage labelled on each frame.
06 'Everything by next week'	A first draft in 3-5 working days is realistic; a full set takes 2-3 weeks. Rush is half the time for about 40% more.
07 'Comments from the bid team'	One consolidated list per round, from the bid manager.

Book before the tender lands.

The most expensive visuals we see are ordered in a panic, after the first supplier missed the date. A short call with a studio when the bid is announced costs nothing and keeps the deadline yours.

THE ONE PAGE

What contractors actually send us

The contractors whose logos sit on our service pages do not send specifications. They send something close to this, usually from the bid manager with the drawings attached, and it is enough to quote from and to start work.

01	The project	Name, type and stage: tender, planning or construction.
02	Model and drawings	Which issue, and which one is authoritative.
03	Who signs	The client, and what they care about most.
04	Client views	How many, marked on the plan.
05	Planning views	Viewpoints agreed with the authority, if any yet.
06	Phasing	Number of stages, and the programme they follow.
07	Context	Surveyed or generic, and why.
08	Where it is used	Tender document, planning file, hoarding, client board.
09	The dates	Tender deadline, planning submission, the real ones.
10	The budget	A figure or a range for the whole set.

Build the model once

Client views, planning views and phasing all come from the same model. Ordered together, it is built once; ordered by three departments, it is often paid for more than once.

Plan the hoarding now

The tender hero is usually the best hoarding image you will have. Ask for print resolution at the start rather than a re-render later.

WHAT THINGS COST

Market rates and our terms, so you can check any quote

Ranges seen across the market in 2026, freelancer to studio. Use them to sanity-check any quote, including ours.

DELIVERABLE	FREELANCER	STUDIO
Single exterior still	\$100 - 300	\$250 - 600
Single interior still	\$120 - 350	\$300 - 700
Package of 5 - 8 views	\$600 - 1,500	\$1,500 - 4,000
Animation, per minute	\$1,000 - 3,000	\$3,000 - 8,000

Our standard timelines and revision terms. They are what we quote unless a project needs something else, and we say so before work starts.

STAGE OR DELIVERABLE	MAVERICK FRAME STANDARD
First draft of a still	3 to 5 working days from a complete brief
Finished stills, package of 5 - 8	2 to 3 weeks, drafts included
Animation, up to one minute	4 to 6 weeks, storyboard and preview first
Revision rounds included	Two at draft stage, one on the final image
What counts as a round	One consolidated list of comments, sent at once
Rush delivery	Half the time for about 40% more, when the schedule allows

Line up a studio before the deadline is on fire

The most expensive projects we see are not the badly briefed ones. They are the ones briefed in a panic, after the first supplier failed and the launch date did not move. Vet one or two studios while nothing is urgent.

A note on in-house: one artist needs around ten software subscriptions, a workstation and a stack of adjacent skills - modelling, lighting, post-production and client communication. It pays off only when that person is busy every day. Below that, the arithmetic favours outsourcing on its own.

NEXT

Send us what you already have

Plans, a model, photographs or a draft brief, in whatever state they are in. We will reply with a scope, a price and the questions that decide it - as a reply, not a sales call.

The contact form	maverickframe.com/contacts/
Construction visualisation	maverickframe.com/services/3d-exterior-rendering-services/
Or simply	reply to the email this guide arrived in.

Written by the people who read these briefs

Dim Kuzmenko is the founder of Maverick Frame Studio. The figures in this guide come from our own inbox and our own rate card, not from an industry survey.