



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

One Model, a Counter, a Shelf, a Campaign: Forty Images.

The render plan for a cosmetics launch across e-commerce, retail and social, priced line by line from one set of pack models, with the one-page brief that gets it made.

START HERE

The launch is made three times over

A cosmetics launch usually buys its images from three places: a pack-shot studio for e-commerce, a photographer for the campaign and the retail design agency for the counter. Three budgets, three versions of the same bottle, and three slightly different colours of the same lipstick.

Brands overpay by having the product recreated for every channel. And they under-use renders by treating them as pack shots on white, when the same model can dress the counter, stock the shelf and star in the campaign.

BOUGHT SEPARATELY	FROM ONE MODEL
01 Pack shots reshot for every shade	One model per pack, with shades and sizes as material swaps at a fraction of a new image.
02 A campaign shot with pre-production samples	Campaign scenes built from the final dielines, so the pack in the advert is the pack on the shelf.
03 Counter drawings from the retail agency	The counter rendered in a store setting, for buyer presentations and retailer approval.
04 Social content made from whatever is left	Crops and short loops planned in the first brief, framed for 1:1 and 9:16 from the start.

The colour has to match the tube.

The most expensive revision in cosmetics is shade accuracy. Send physical samples and the colour references with the files, and agree which screen or printed proof is the judge before the first draft.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE SHOT LIST

The launch set, priced

A composite of the launch sets we price, at mid-market studio rates, for three SKUs, a serum, a cream and a cleanser, across e-commerce, retail and social. Forty stills and three loops, all from the same three models.

LINE	ITEM	BASIS	AT STUDIO RATES
01	Pack models from dielines and supplier CAD, three SKUs	3 x \$450	\$1,350
02	Hero pack shots on white, one per SKU	3 x \$350	\$1,050
03	Shade and size variants on white	14 x \$120	\$1,680
04	Texture and swatch close-ups: cream, gel, oil	5 x \$300	\$1,500
05	Campaign scenes, styled sets	3 x \$600	\$1,800
06	Campaign scenes reframed for 1:1 and 9:16	8 x \$80	\$640
07	Counter unit in a department store setting	2 x \$550	\$1,100
08	Shelf and gondola views with the range in place	3 x \$400	\$1,200
09	Shop-in-shop or pop-up space	2 x \$600	\$1,200
10	10-second product loops for social	3 x \$900	\$2,700
	Models and forty stills, 01-09		\$11,520
	Motion, 10		\$2,700
The full launch set			\$14,220
E-commerce first, rows 01-04			\$5,580

Row 03 is where the savings live.

Fourteen shade and size variants cost less than the three campaign scenes, because the model already exists. The earlier every variant is listed, the cheaper each one gets.

MISTAKES FROM YOUR SIDE OF THE TABLE

What beauty briefs say, and what to write

Seven lines we read in almost every cosmetics brief. Each one either multiplies the image count or turns into a late round of colour changes.

IN THE BRIEF	WHAT TO WRITE INSTEAD
01 Photorealistic, like a photograph	Say which photograph: send two references for light and background you already like. The word describes every render we deliver and decides none of them.
02 Match the brand colours	Send physical samples and the colour references for each shade, and name the proof that decides.
03 All shades, all sizes	List the SKUs and their shades as a table. A variant table turns forty images into a routine job instead of forty questions.
04 Luxury, clean, minimal	Name the counter or shelf it will sit next to and the price point. 'Clean' in a pharmacy and at a department store counter are different images.
05 Texture shots of the formula	Say which textures matter: cream, gel, powder, oil. Each is simulated separately and priced per texture.
06 Packaging to be finalised	Send the latest dieline and mark what may still change. Label copy can change late; the bottle shape cannot without a new model.
07 Content for all channels	List the channels and their formats. Framing for wide, square and vertical at once is cheaper than reframing afterwards.

One table beats forty emails.

A spreadsheet of SKU, shade, size and colour reference, sent with the brief, is the most useful attachment in cosmetics work. It sets the image count, the price and the name of every file we deliver.

THE ONE PAGE

What beauty brands actually send us

The clients whose logos sit on our service pages do not send specifications. For a launch they send something close to this, usually in the body of an email, with a box of samples on its way.

01	The launch	The range, the number of SKUs and the launch date. One line.
02	The files	Dielines and any CAD from the packaging supplier. Say which are final.
03	Samples	Physical packs, even pre-production ones, posted with the brief.
04	Shades and sizes	A table: SKU, shade, size, colour reference.
05	Textures	Which formulas need a swatch or close-up, if any.
06	What it is for	E-commerce, retail buyers, the counter, the campaign, social.
07	The retail setting	Where it will stand: pharmacy, department store, own shop.
08	Formats	Where each image will be published, and in which crops.
09	The date	The day the listings or the counter go live, not the launch party.
10	The budget	A figure or a range. It is the fastest way to a fitting scope.

Post the samples on day one

A physical pack on our desk settles more colour and finish questions than any file. Samples arrive, the model starts.

Plan the next launch into this one

If a range extension or a seasonal edition is coming, say so. A model built for variants makes the next launch mostly re-renders.

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 the dielines and a sample

Dielines, CAD from your packaging supplier, physical samples 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/
Retail and product scenes	maverickframe.com/services/3d-interior-rendering-services/
Or simply	reply to the email this guide arrived in.

Written by the people who read these briefs

Dim Kuzmenko is a co-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.