



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Why One Job Gets Quoted **\$600** and \$4,000

Why two quotes for the same job differ fourfold, what every line in a rendering quote actually means, and a worksheet for comparing them like for like.



START HERE

Same brief, four times the price — both honest

You send one brief to four studios and the quotes come back at wildly different numbers. The usual conclusion is that someone is overcharging. Usually nobody is: the four studios have quoted four different jobs, because the brief did not settle the six things that decide the price.

WHAT ACTUALLY DRIVES THE NUMBER		TYPICAL SPREAD BETWEEN QUOTES
01	Who builds the model	The single biggest line. Receiving a clean model versus building from drawings can be most of the difference on its own.
02	How exact the specification must be	Library dressing versus every named product sourced and modelled.
03	Revision rounds included	Two rounds versus unlimited is a different commercial product, not a discount.
04	Output size and count	Resolution, aspect ratios, and whether variants count as separate images.
05	Timeline	Compressed schedules are paid for in overtime somewhere.
06	Rights and reuse	One campaign versus perpetual, and whether a third party may use them.

The cheapest quote is often the most expensive one

Not because of quality. Because a low quote usually excludes model-building, includes one revision round, and delivers at web resolution — and each of those becomes a variation at full rate once the project is running and you have no leverage left.



Maverick Frame production render.

LINE BY LINE

What each item in a quote means

LINE	WHAT IT COVERS	WHAT TO WATCH
3D modelling	Building the geometry from your drawings.	The line most often absent. If it is missing, they have assumed you supply a model. Confirm in writing.
Model clean-up	Repairing a model you supplied.	Reasonable and honest. Ask what happens if yours is worse than expected — hourly, or re-quoted.
Materials & texturing	Surfaces, from library or authored.	Ask which named products are authored specifically. That distinction is most of this line.
Lighting & camera setup	Scene lighting and shot framing.	Usually per scene, not per image. Extra angles in the same room should be much cheaper than the first.
Environment & context	Landscape, neighbouring buildings, sky, people, vehicles.	Real surveyed context costs far more than generic. Say which you need.
Rendering	Machine time at final resolution.	Should scale with resolution. If it does not, resolution was assumed — ask what it is.
Post-production	Grading, compositing, clean-up.	Should always be present. Its absence means you are getting raw output.
Revisions	Included rounds.	Needs a definition of "a round", not just a count. See question 04 on the next page.
Project management	Coordination, reviews, handover.	Either a line or built into the rate. Fine either way; it should not be both.
Licence / usage	Where and for how long you may use the images.	Often missing entirely, then raised when a partner wants to use them.

A quote with two lines — "6 renders" and a number — is not cheaper or simpler. It just means every question on the next page is still open, and they will all be answered later, by them.

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Twelve questions that move the number

Ask all twelve of every studio, in one email. The answers make four incomparable quotes comparable.

- ☐ **01** Does this include building the model, or do you expect one from us?
- ☐ **02** If we supply a model and it needs work, how is that charged?
- ☐ **03** Which named products will be modelled exactly, and which are library stand-ins?
- ☐ **04** What counts as one revision round — a batch of comments, or each comment?
- ☐ **05** What is the rate for a round beyond the included ones?
- ☐ **06** At what resolution and aspect ratio is each image delivered?
- ☐ **07** Is a second angle of the same room a new image at full price?
- ☐ **08** Is real surveyed context included, or generic surroundings?
- ☐ **09** Do we see a clay or grey-box view before lighting starts?
- ☐ **10** What happens to the price if the geometry changes mid-project?
- ☐ **11** Where may we use these images, for how long, and may partners use them?
- ☐ **12** Do you keep the scene, and what does a second batch cost in a year?

The two with the largest effect

Questions 01 and 04. Modelling is the biggest single cost in most quotes, and the definition of a revision round is what decides whether the final invoice matches the quote. Everything else is smaller than these two.

The one people regret skipping

Question 12. If there will ever be a phase two, the cost of the second batch depends entirely on whether the scene still exists and who may use it. Asked now it is a sentence; asked in a year it is a renegotiation.

COMPARING

The normalisation worksheet

Put the answers side by side and adjust each quote to the same job. What looked like a fourfold gap usually closes to something much narrower — and occasionally reverses.

	STUDIO A	STUDIO B	STUDIO C
Quoted total			
Modelling included?			
+ add if not included			
Revision rounds included			
+ cost to reach 3 rounds			
Delivered resolution			
+ cost to reach print size			
Named products modelled			
+ cost to match the spec			
Usage rights granted			
+ cost to match your need			
Like-for-like total			
Second batch, in a year			

What we see when people run this

The cheapest quote usually moves the most. That is not a case against cheap studios — plenty are excellent, and the ranges on the next page show why the spread is legitimate. It is a case against comparing headline numbers, which is what a fourfold gap almost always turns out to be.

WORKING WITH A STUDIO

Cost, and how to brief it

Two things people ask us before anything else. Both answers are short.

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

Market ranges we are willing to publish. Turnaround and revision-round figures are deliberately not in this table: ours vary too much by project type to state as a benchmark, and an invented number here would be worse than none.

How to brief it — shorter is better

This is the opposite of what most people assume. Four things:

- What you need — **how many images, and of what**
- The plans and elevations, as they are
- A few reference images for mood and light
- One clear line on what the images are *for*

Inflating a small job into a fifty-page specification backfires: taken literally it comes out ugly, and it misleads the people doing the work. Tell them the intent and let the team that does this daily handle the detail.

The mistake that costs the most

The biggest failure we see is not choosing the wrong vendor. It is **timing**. People start looking only after the first supplier has already failed and the deadline is on fire, then choose in a panic.

Line up and vet rendering partners **before** you need one. One, ideally a few, briefed and ready to take work. It costs an afternoon now and saves a project later.

10+

YEARS RENDERING
VISUAL STORYTELLING

350+

BRANDS & AGENCIES
EMPOWERED GLOBALLY

95%

CLIENT
SATISFACTION RATE

40%+

OF OUR COMMISSIONS NOW
INCLUDE MOTION OR 360

When the image has to hold up, **talk to us**

We are a CGI studio: architectural and product rendering, 3D modelling, animation, 360 tours and VR. Ten years, 350+ brands and agencies, and the kind of work that still looks right when somebody counts the windows.

Send us the plans and a line on what the images are for. You get a scope and a price, and no obligation to use either.

START HERE

maverickframe.com/contacts

SEE THE WORK

maverickframe.com/gallery

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Maverick Frame production render. · Cost ranges are market ranges as of 2026 and are not a quotation.