



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Twelve Questions Before the Renders Change Your Fronts.

Ask them before you sign a kitchen rendering contract. A studio worth hiring answers all twelve in one email. The wrong one goes quiet when you ask how it matches your oak sample.

START HERE

Every failure was visible before you signed

Kitchen rendering projects rarely fail on image quality. Sunlit islands and marble worktops are in every portfolio. They fail on the five things below, and every one of them could have been spotted in the first email, if anyone had asked.

WHAT THE SALES CALL PROMISED	WHAT YOU FIND OUT IN WEEK THREE
01 "Photoreal finishes, of course"	The oak is too orange, the matt fronts shine and the marble is not the one on your price list. Clients order from a picture your factory cannot deliver.
02 "Variants are easy"	Each new front or worktop is quoted as a new render, and the twelfth colourway costs as much as the first. The range never gets its full catalogue.
03 "We work from any file"	Your planner export is rebuilt by eye. Handles move, plinths change height and the appliances are library models that look like nothing you sell.
04 "We will style it beautifully"	Empty, over-lit rooms with the same three props as every other studio. The kitchen looks like a showroom, not a home anybody wants to cook in.
05 "Changes are no problem"	The range changes a handle a month before print, and the scene lives with someone else. The new image no longer matches the rest of the catalogue.

You are not choosing a portfolio. You are choosing a process.

The twelve questions on the next two pages test the process. Each one maps to one of the failures above, and each has an answer you can check.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE TEST, PART ONE

Questions 1 to 6: the drawings, the samples, the date

Send these as they are. You are not looking for enthusiasm; you are looking for numbers, names and dates. Vague answers are an answer too.

ASK THIS	A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE	WALK AWAY IF
1. What do you need from us to render the kitchen?	Drawings or a planner export with elevations, the finish list for fronts, worktops and handles, appliance models and two references.	"Just send a photo of something similar."
2. How do you match our finishes to the real samples?	Materials built from your samples, codes or scans, checked for colour, grain and gloss before final rendering.	"Our library has lots of nice oaks."
3. Will the cabinets follow our dimensions exactly?	Carcasses, plinths, handles and gaps modelled to your drawings, with any change agreed with you first.	"Close enough, nobody measures a render."
4. When would I see the first draft, counted from a complete brief?	A number of working days, 3 to 5 for a still, 2 to 3 weeks for a set of 5 to 8 views, and what "complete" means.	"As soon as possible" or no number at all.
5. What happens if the catalogue deadline moves forward by a week?	A rush option with a price, roughly half the time for around 40% more.	"We'll make it work" with no price attached.
6. How many revision rounds are included, and what counts as one?	A fixed number, typically two at draft and one on the final, with a round defined as one consolidated list.	"Unlimited revisions."

Why questions 2 and 3 matter most

A kitchen is bought from the image and delivered from the factory. If the render shows a different oak or a different handle, the complaint lands on your showroom, not on the studio. Both are decided by what the studio asks for, and promises to keep, before it starts.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE TEST, PART TWO

Questions 7 to 12: variants, styling, files

ASK THIS

A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

WALK AWAY IF

7. How do you price finish and colour variants of the same view?

A price per variant on a camera already rendered, far below the first image, because the scene is reused.

Every variant quoted as a new render.

8. When the range changes a front or a handle, what do you update?

The existing scene: the part is swapped in the model and the same cameras are rendered again.

A new quote for each change, from scratch.

9. How do you style and light the kitchen?

Styling agreed with you from references, daylight set by the room's windows, people and props only where the scene needs them.

"We use our standard set."

10. Which formats do you deliver for print, web and the configurator?

Print resolution for the catalogue, web files, social crops and clean configurator layers, agreed before cameras are framed.

"We send JPEGs, you resize them."

11. Can a kitchen film or 360 view come from the same model?

Yes, with a storyboard and a camera path before rendering, and the length stated up front.

"We'd bring in a partner for that."

12. Who exactly will model and render the project, and is any part passed on?

Named roles on the studio's own team, or an honest "yes, the appliance models" with the reason.

"Our network", a pause, or silence.

10 - 12

GOOD ANSWERS: HIRE, AND ASK FOR THE FIRST DRAFT DATE IN WRITING

7 - 9

ASK FOR ONE PAID TEST VIEW BEFORE COMMITTING THE SET

0 - 6

WALK AWAY, HOWEVER STRONG THE PORTFOLIO LOOKS

The question studios dodge most often is number 12

Subcontracting is common and not always bad. Hiding it is the problem, because you cannot fix a wrong veneer or a missed catalogue date with a team you are not allowed to talk to. Ask it plainly and listen to how long the answer takes.



Maverick Frame production render.

SEND IT

One email, three studios, one day

You do not need a call to run the test. Paste the email below, attach what you already have, and send it to the three studios on your shortlist at the same time. Replies arrive within a working day, and the difference between them is usually obvious by the second paragraph.

THE EMAIL TO SEND

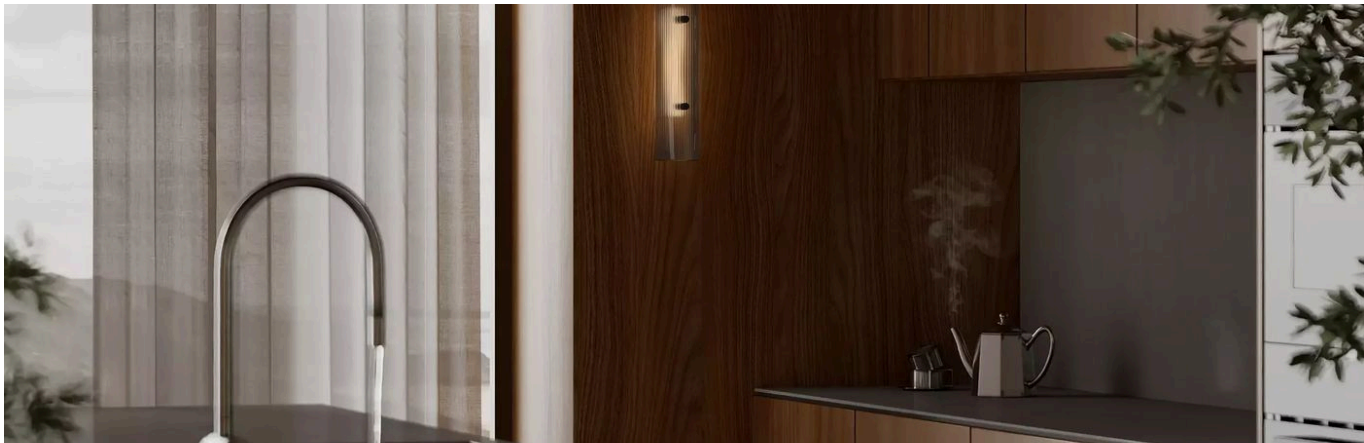
01	Subject	Kitchen renders for [range or project], quote and twelve questions
02	Line 1	We need [number] views of [a kitchen range / a client's kitchen / show-kitchens / our product in a kitchen] for [the catalogue / a client presentation / the launch / the website] by [date].
03	Line 2	Attached: the drawings or planner export, the finish list with sample codes, the appliance models and two references.
04	Line 3	Please answer the twelve questions below with numbers and names, not ranges.
05	Line 4	Paste questions 1 to 12 from pages 03 and 04.
06	Line 5	We will decide within a week of receiving all three replies.

What good replies have in common

They are short. They answer in working days and dollars, name the people, and ask you one or two questions back about your samples and how many variants the range has.

What we would answer

Our own numbers are on the next page, in the same format, so you can score us with the same test.



Maverick Frame production render.

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/
Kitchen work	maverickframe.com/solutions/kitchen-rendering/
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.