



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Twelve Questions Before the Catalogue Goes to Print

Ask them before you sign a modular home rendering contract. A studio worth hiring answers all twelve in one email. The wrong one goes quiet when you ask how it handles your option range.

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START HERE

Every failure was visible before you signed

Modular home rendering projects rarely fail on image quality. Timber cladding and golden-hour light 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 TWO
01	"Photoreal, of course"	The house looks like a box on a white plot. Buyers who already think modular means cheap see exactly that.
02	"We follow your drawings"	Window sizes and module joints drift. The dealer spots that the render is not the model on his lot.
03	"Options are easy"	Every cladding and colour is quoted as a new view. Twelve options cost twelve times, and the cameras no longer match.
04	"Floor plans too"	The 3D floor plan comes from another vendor, in another style, with furniture that does not fit the rooms.
05	"We'll have it ready"	The images arrive after the trade show or the catalogue deadline. Neither date moves for a late render.

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.



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THE TEST, PART ONE

Questions 1 to 6: the drawings, the options, 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 start modelling a new house model?	Factory or architectural drawings, elevations and a floor plan; a Revit or SketchUp model helps. If the model is a concept, sketches and dimensions.	"Send us a finished 3D model first."
2. How do you keep module sizes, windows and joints true to the factory drawings?	Your drawings are the source of truth. The house is built once to them and checked against them on previews.	"We'll eyeball it from the brochure."
3. How do you price cladding, roof and colour options on the same model?	A price per variant from fixed cameras on a model already built, far below a new view.	Every option quoted as a new render.
4. When would I see the first draft, counted from complete drawings?	A number of working days, 3 to 5 for a still, 1 to 2 weeks for a first exterior and interior set, and what "complete" means.	"As soon as possible" or no number at all.
5. What happens if the trade show or the catalogue 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 modular home is sold as a product. A dealer compares the render with the model on his lot, and a buyer flips through every cladding on the option sheet. One wrong window or one camera that moves between options, and the whole catalogue looks unreliable. Both are decided by how the studio builds the model before it starts.



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THE TEST, PART TWO

Questions 7 to 12: plans, tours, communities, files

ASK THIS

A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

WALK AWAY IF

7. Can you make 3D floor plans for every model in the same style as the renders?

Yes, furnished 3D floor plans from the same model and materials, one consistent style across the range.

"Floor plans are a different team."

8. Can a virtual tour or a walkthrough film come from the same model?

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

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

9. How do you place the house on a site: a backyard, a forest plot, a community?

On a real plot from your photos or a typical site, and whole communities from one site model, phase by phase.

"White background only."

10. Which formats do you deliver for the catalogue, dealers, web and social media?

Print resolution for the catalogue, web and configurator sizes, social formats and dealer kit files, agreed before cameras are framed.

"We send JPEGs, you resize them."

11. How do you price the next model in the series?

Lower than the first: fixed cameras, light and materials are reused, so each new model costs less.

Every model quoted as a new project.

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

Named roles on the studio's own team, an NDA before drawings change hands, nothing published without approval.

"Our network", a pause, or silence.

10 - 12

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

7 - 9

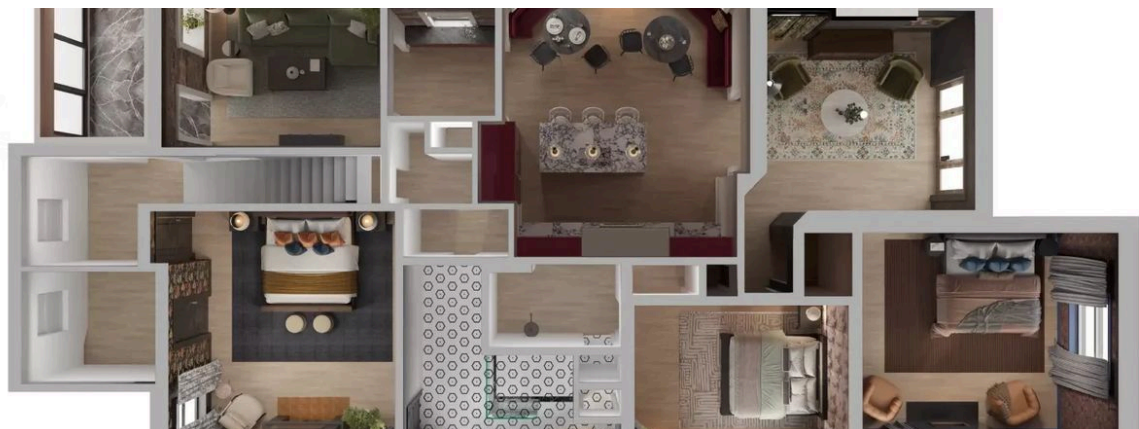
ASK FOR ONE PAID TEST VIEW BEFORE COMMITTING THE SET

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. A house model that is not launched yet should not travel to people you never signed an NDA with, and a wrong window cannot be fixed by a team you are not allowed to talk to.



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SEND IT

One email, three studios, one day

Copy the email below, fill in the brackets and send it to three studios on the same day. Compare the replies side by side: the differences show up in the first answer, not in the portfolio.

THE EMAIL TO SEND

01	Subject	Modular home renders for [house model or series], quote and twelve questions
02	Line 1	We need [number] views of [a new house model / a tiny home or ADU / a community] for [the catalogue / dealers / the website / a trade show] by [date].
03	Line 2	Attached, or after you sign our NDA: factory drawings, elevations, the floor plan, the option list 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, offer an NDA and ask you one or two questions back about the drawings and the options.

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.



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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/
Modular home work	maverickframe.com/solutions/modular-home-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.