



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Twelve Questions Before the Renders Redesign Your Project.

Ask them before you sign a renovation rendering contract. A studio worth hiring answers all twelve in one email. The wrong one goes quiet when you ask how it matches the existing stone.

START HERE

Every failure was visible before you signed

Renovation rendering projects rarely fail on image quality. Sunny facades and styled interiors 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 "We will show the finished project"	The first draft shows a generic new house. Backers and buyers still cannot see past the building site, and funding and marketing wait for the work to finish.
02 "We will make it look its best"	Proportions have been "improved", a tree has gone, the roof is a different material. The architect cannot stand behind images that quietly redesign the project.
03 "Photoreal, of course"	The new wing is rendered next to library stone and a stock street. It looks fake beside the real building, and anyone who knows the site sees it at once.
04 "A premium look for the property"	Flat light, stock furniture and a resort feel. The farmhouse, the townhouse and the refurbished floor all end up looking the same, without the character buyers pay for.
05 "Changes are no problem"	Finishes change during the works and each change is quoted as a new render. The scene lives with someone else, and the images stop matching the project.

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

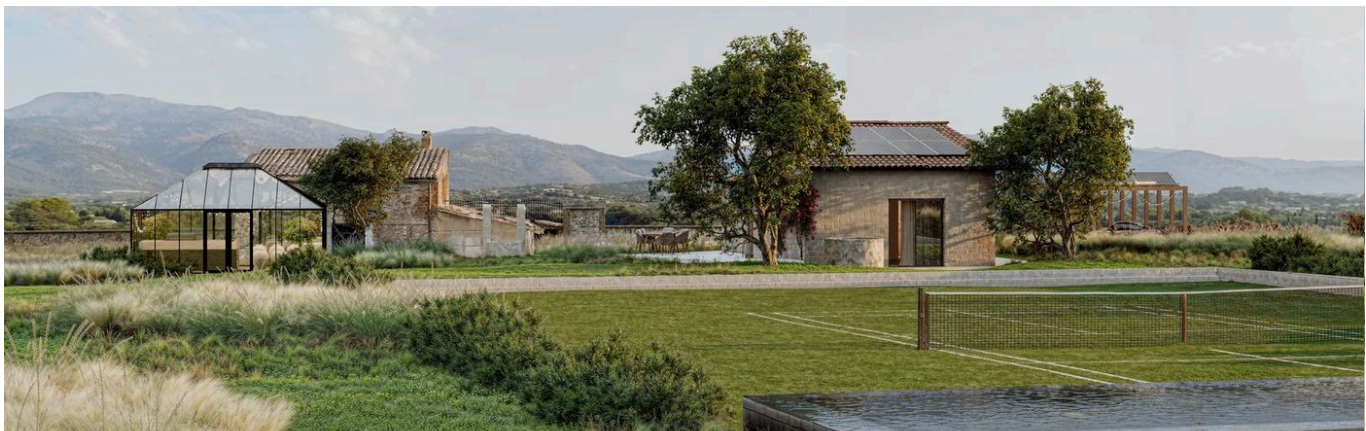
Questions 1 to 6: the building, the site, the date

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 show the finished renovation?	The drawings or a 3D model of the renovation, photos of the existing building and site, and references for materials and planting.	"Just send a sketch, we will imagine the rest."
2. Will you follow our drawings exactly, or improve them?	Geometry, terrain levels, existing trees and cameras follow your documents, and any suggested change is agreed before final rendering.	"We usually make it look a bit better."
3. How do you match the new work to the existing building?	Materials matched to photos of the existing stone, roofs and openings, and the renders set into your site or drone photos where it matters.	"Our library has a very similar stone."
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 investor meeting 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 renovation is judged against something real. The architect knows every dimension, and anyone who has walked the site knows the stone, the trees and the view. Both are decided by what the studio asks for, and promises to keep, before it starts.



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THE TEST, PART TWO

Questions 7 to 12: changes, formats, files

ASK THIS

A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE

WALK AWAY IF

7. When a finish or layout changes during the works, what do you update?

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

A new quote for each change, from scratch.

8. Can you show day, dusk and night versions from the same camera?

Yes, as lighting variants of one scene, so the set shows how the property lives without new modelling.

"Each mood is a separate render job."

9. Is the working scene archived after delivery?

Yes, so the next phase, the sales film or a later refurbishment starts from it.

Only the final JPEGs exist after delivery.

10. Which formats do you deliver for the investor pack, listing and brochure?

Print resolution for the brochure, web-weight files for listings, social crops, agreed before cameras are framed.

"We send JPEGs, you resize them."

11. Can a walkthrough film and 360 tours come from the same model?

Yes, with a storyboard before rendering, and a plain answer on how the tours are hosted and open on a phone.

"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 entourage library" 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 stone or a missed investor date with a team you are not allowed to talk to. Ask it plainly and listen to how long the answer takes.



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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

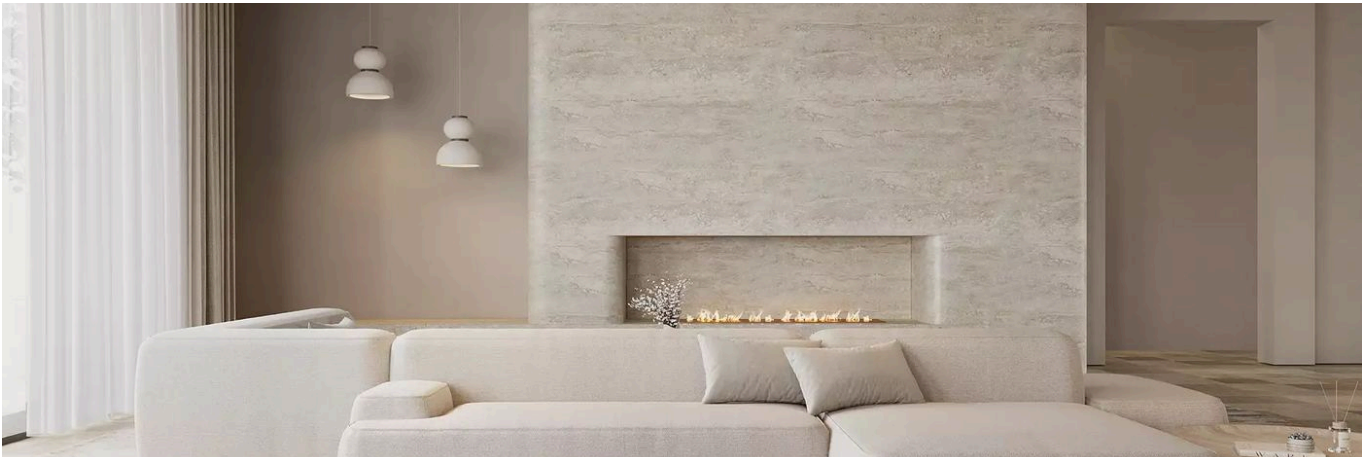
01	Subject	Renovation renders for [property], quote and twelve questions
02	Line 1	We need [number] views of [a renovated house / a rural estate / refurbished offices / a conversion] in [place] for [funding / approvals / an early sale / the launch] by [date].
03	Line 2	Attached: drawings or the 3D model, photos of the existing building and site, drone photos if we have them, 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 the existing building and who the images are for.

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/
Renovation work	maverickframe.com/solutions/renovation-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.