



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Most FOOH Campaigns Fail at the **Shoot**

How to shoot a plate that can actually be worked with, the clearance questions people ask too late, and what a realistic FOOH schedule looks like.

[START HERE](#)

What FOOH is, and what it is not

Faux out-of-home is a real location, filmed, with something impossible added to it in CGI, made to look like a passer-by filmed it. The format lives or dies on the first half of that sentence, which is the half most briefs skip.

Where it works

- A product with a strong, simple silhouette
- One idea that reads in three seconds, muted, on a phone
- A recognisable location that gives the scale its punch
- Campaigns where being shared matters more than being polished

Where it does not

- Products whose appeal is fine detail or texture
- Anything needing more than one message in the clip
- Brands that cannot accept looking slightly unofficial
- Regulated categories where "is this real" is a legal question, not a creative one

The uncomfortable part, said plainly

The format works because for a second the viewer believes it happened. That is also its risk: in some markets and categories, an ad that a reasonable person could mistake for a real event is a compliance matter. Decide early — with whoever signs off your advertising — whether your clip will carry a visible marker that it is CGI. It changes nothing about how it is shot, and everything about how comfortable the sign-off is.



Maverick Frame production render.

STEP 01

The plate shoot

The plate is the filmed footage the CGI is added to. Almost every FOOH project that goes badly goes badly here, and no amount of post fixes it. Hand this page to whoever is holding the camera.

	DO	DO NOT
Camera	Highest quality the phone or camera offers, 4K or better, 25 or 30 fps, locked.	Do not let the frame rate switch automatically, and turn off any beauty or HDR mode.
Movement	Either locked on a tripod, or one slow, smooth handheld move in a single direction.	No zooming. No sudden reframes. No walking toward the subject while panning.
Duration	At least 20 seconds per take, with the camera running before and after the action.	Do not shoot exactly the length of the final clip — the edit needs room at both ends.
Exposure & focus	Lock both before rolling.	Autofocus hunting mid-take makes a plate unusable. This is the most common single failure.
Framing	Leave generous empty space where the CGI element will sit.	Do not frame tightly on the building. The impossible thing needs somewhere to be.
Reference	Film a slow 360 of the location, and photograph the ground, the façade and the sky.	Do not skip this. It is five minutes and it is what makes lighting match.
Scale	Put a person or a car in shot, or measure one visible element and write it down.	Do not rely on the CGI team guessing the height of the building.
Coverage	Three takes minimum: locked, slow move, and one wider than you think you need.	Do not return with one take. Reshooting a location is the expensive kind of mistake.

Weather and time of day

Overcast is the friendliest light for this work: soft shadows are far easier to match than hard ones, and the CGI element sits into the plate without a fight. Bright direct sun is achievable but adds time, because every shadow in the added object has to agree with every shadow already in the frame.

STEP 02

Clearance, before you shoot

This is the part that gets discovered after the clip is finished. None of it is legal advice — it is the list of questions to put to whoever gives you that advice, early enough to matter.

01 Do you have permission to film this location commercially?

Private property, shopping centres, transport hubs and many plazas require a permit for commercial filming even when anyone may walk there.

02 Is the building itself protected?

Some famous structures and their night-time lighting carry rights of their own, and rules differ sharply by country.

03 Are other brands visible in the plate?

Shopfronts, billboards, logos on vehicles. Decide whether they are removed in post, and price that in rather than discovering it.

04 Are identifiable people in frame?

Passers-by who can be recognised may need releases, or to be removed. Crowded locations look great and create the most work.

05 Does the clip imply an event that did not happen?

The core question of the format. Get a view from whoever signs off your advertising before production, not after.

06 Where will it run, and under whose rules?

Platform policies on synthetic media, and national advertising codes, vary. A clip cleared for one market is not automatically cleared for another.

The cheap insurance

Shoot a second plate at a location you control — your own building, a car park, an unremarkable street. It costs an extra hour on the day. If the hero location turns into a clearance problem three weeks later, it is the difference between a delay and a dead campaign.

STEP 03

Formats, timeline, and what you supply

Deliverables to ask for

Vertical master	9:16, the primary format — cut for it, do not crop into it afterwards
Square	1:1 for feed placements
Horizontal	16:9 where you need it
Silent cut	It will be watched muted; check it works with no sound at all
Clean version	No captions or logo burnt in, for later edits and other markets
Stills	Frame grabs at print resolution — nearly free at the time, useful for months

Ask for the vertical to be **composed** vertically. A 16:9 clip cropped to 9:16 loses exactly the scale relationship the whole format depends on.

What you supply

- ☐ Product CAD or a 3D model, if one exists
- ☐ Physical samples or detailed photographs, if it does not
- ☐ Brand colours as exact values, not "our blue"
- ☐ Logo as vector, with clear-space rules
- ☐ Packaging artwork as print files, not screenshots
- ☐ The plate takes, unedited and at full quality
- ☐ Location reference photos and the scale measurement
- ☐ The single sentence the clip has to communicate

The sequence that works

Idea, then clearance questions, then location recce, then plate shoot, then CGI. Every problem in this format is cheaper to solve one step earlier than where it is usually found — and the two steps people skip are the two in the middle.



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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



MAVERICK
FRAME
STUDIO

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.

