

FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Hiring a CGI Studio Anywhere

The general method for any market: the four things that are always local, the four that never change wherever you hire, and a one-page sheet to score a studio.

[START HERE](#)

This is the general case, and it is said plainly

We have written market-specific guides — Australia, London, Germany, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Dubai, Canada, California, the US, Norway, the Netherlands, Italy, Miami. If your market is not on that list, nothing is missing. The country-specific part of this decision is smaller than people expect, and it is the same four variables everywhere.

So this guide does not pretend to know your planning system, your climate or your construction vocabulary. It tells you which four things you have to establish locally, which four things are identical whether you hire in Lisbon, Tallinn, Almaty or Auckland, and how to score a studio on both halves in one page.

Local — you must supply this

- Light and season — latitude, sun path, which month the image pretends to be
- Vegetation and ground — the planting and surfaces a local eye reads as normal
- Construction language and materials — what the building is actually made of, in your words
- How the images will be reviewed — and by whom, against what

Portable — identical in every market

- A geometry approval stage before anything is made pretty
- A written revision policy that defines what one round is
- Rights, reuse and what happens to the model afterwards
- Who actually does the work, and where they sit

The useful consequence: the local half is **your** homework, not the studio's, and it takes an afternoon. The portable half is what you are really buying, and a studio that is strong on it will be strong on it for your country too.



Maverick Frame production render.

STEP 01

The four things that are always local

Each one has a failure that looks small in a thumbnail and obvious to anybody who lives there. Each one is fixed by sending a specific thing at the briefing stage, not by finding a studio down the road.

01 Light and season

Latitude decides how high the sun gets, how long the shadows are and how blue the shade reads. The hemisphere decides which way the sun travels. **Send:** the north point on the site plan, the month and rough hour you want the image to portray, and one photograph of the site or the street in that season. State the sun direction as a sentence and ask to see it confirmed against the north point on the first camera test.

02 Vegetation and ground

A studio with no reference will reach for the default library: generic broadleaf trees, tidy lawn, northern-European paving. In a dry market, a tropical one or a hard-winter one that single choice makes the whole image read as foreign. **Send:** six to ten photographs of real planting, kerbs, paving and boundary treatments within a few streets of your site. Photographs of the neighbourhood beat any mood board.

03 Construction language and materials

Render, cladding, weatherboard, stucco, brick bond, fenestration — the same word means different things in different markets, and your drawings will use local shorthand. **Send:** a short materials list in plain description rather than trade names, plus a photograph of each principal finish as built somewhere nearby. If you use a national product code, spell out what it physically is.

04 How the images will be reviewed, and by whom

A technical reviewer with the drawing set open behaves nothing like a sales agent or a committee. The same building needs a different image for each. **Establish:** who signs the images off, what they will compare them against, and whether any submission requires a defined method, particular viewpoints or documented camera data. Put those questions to your own authority or planning adviser — we cannot tell you what any jurisdiction requires, and any studio that tells you without asking is guessing.

Collect all four before you ask for a quote. A studio quoting against an unqualified brief quotes for a marketing image, because that is the only thing an unqualified brief describes.

STEP 02

The four that are the same wherever you hire

These do not vary by country, by currency or by time zone. They are also where almost every unhappy project goes wrong, which is why they are worth more of your attention than the map.

05 A geometry approval stage, before anything is made pretty

You see untextured grey views from the agreed cameras, and you confirm that the building, the massing and the context are right. Changes here cost almost nothing. The same change after lighting and materials costs a great deal. If a studio wants to show you a finished image first, ask why — the usual answer is that grey views are harder to sell than atmosphere.

06 A written revision policy that defines a round

Not how many rounds — that varies legitimately by job and nobody should quote you a benchmark. What matters is the definition: is a round one consolidated set of comments across all images, or one comment on one image? Is a change of camera a revision or a new view? Is a material change on an approved image included? Get those three answers in writing and most billing disputes disappear.

07 Rights, reuse and what happens to the model

Where may the images be used, for how long, and by whom — your client, your contractor, the portal, the press. Separately: do you receive the model, in which formats, and may you give it to another studio next year. Ask what a new view from the same model costs twelve months from now, and ask how long they keep files.

08 Who actually does the work, and where they sit

Ask who will be on your project, whether any part is subcontracted, and to which country. This is not a loyalty test; it is how you know whose holidays affect your programme and who can answer a question about your drawings. Ask for one named contact with stated working hours in your time zone and a fixed daily or weekly point at which work is sent and comments come back.

Four lines to paste into your first email

Do we get untextured grey views for approval before materials and lighting? · How do you define one revision round? · What do we own afterwards, and what does a new view from the same model cost next year? · Who will do the work, where are they, and who is my named contact? — A studio that answers all four in a paragraph each is already in your shortlist.

STEP 03

One page, any country

Print this once per shortlisted studio. Score each line 0, 1 or 2 — nothing, partly, clearly and in writing. It works in any market because none of the lines depends on one.

STUDIO _____ MARKET _____

YOUR LOCAL HOMEWORK	DONE?
North point + month + hour stated	___
Neighbourhood planting photos sent	___
Materials described, not just coded	___
Reviewer and what they compare it to	___

THE PORTABLE FOUR	0 / 1 / 2
Grey geometry approval stage, in writing	___
A round is defined in writing	___
Rights, reuse and model handover stated	___
Named team, location, contact hours	___

EVIDENCE	0 / 1 / 2
Work shown in a comparable climate / season	___
Work shown from a real drawing set	___
Will run a small paid first job	___
References you may actually contact	___

TOTAL ___ / 22 DECISION _____

How to read it

Do not average it. Any zero in the portable four should stop the conversation regardless of the total, because those are the lines that turn into arguments. A studio that has never worked in your country but scores clean on the portable four is a better bet than a local one that will not put a revision policy in writing.

Then stop evaluating

Past a certain point a shortlist tells you nothing more. Commission one small paid job — a single view, real drawings, real comments — and you will learn more about how a studio handles a revision than a portfolio can ever show. Do that before you need the images, not after the first supplier has failed.

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

WRITTEN BY

Dim Kuzmenko

Founder



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