



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Hiring a CGI Studio from **Australia**

Why the time difference is an advantage rather than a problem, what to confirm about local authority requirements, and how to budget in AUD.



START HERE

The time difference is the whole argument

Australian practices tend to treat an offshore studio as a compromise they accept for price. Run properly it is the opposite: with a studio roughly eight to ten hours behind you, work moves while your office is closed and lands before it opens.

STUDIO LOCATED	OVERLAP WITH AEST	WHAT THAT MEANS DAY TO DAY
Europe	Your late afternoon is their morning	The strong option. Comment at 5pm, revised work is waiting at 9am. A full cycle per day with no one working late.
Asia	Most of your working day	Real-time conversation, but no overnight turnaround. Better for complex, iterative jobs than for volume.
North America	Very little, and awkward	The genuinely difficult one. Expect a full day's lag on every exchange.
Australia	Full	Easiest to manage, highest day rates, and no overnight cycle at all.

How to actually use it

Batch your comments into one message at the end of your day rather than sending them as you think of them. One clear batch per day, reviewed each morning, is the rhythm that turns the time difference into roughly double the iteration speed you would get locally. Comments dribbled out across your afternoon arrive after their day has ended and achieve nothing.



Maverick Frame production render.

STEP 01

What to confirm before a planning submission

Requirements differ by state and by council, and they change. Nothing below is advice on what your authority wants — it is the list of things to establish in writing, from them, before anyone renders anything.

01 Does this authority require verified or accurate visual representations?

If yes, the camera positions must be surveyed and the montage produced to a defined method. This is a different and more expensive job than a marketing render, and it cannot be retrofitted.

02 Which viewpoints, and who chooses them?

Often the authority nominates them. Producing beautiful images from viewpoints nobody asked for is the most common wasted spend in a planning package.

03 Is a photomontage required, or is a model view acceptable?

A montage needs photography from the exact surveyed position, in specified conditions, which means a site visit and a weather window.

04 What must be shown: proposed only, or with cumulative development?

Including consented neighbouring schemes changes the amount of context modelling substantially.

05 Is there a required methodology statement?

Some submissions want the camera data, lens, date, time and method documented alongside the image. Ask your studio up front whether they produce this.

06 Shadow and overshadowing studies — needed, and to what standard?

These are geometric, not artistic, and they are quick if planned with the model and awkward if requested afterwards.

Take the answers to your studio before commissioning. A studio that has not been asked these questions will produce a marketing image, because that is what an unqualified brief asks for.



STEP 02

Budgeting, and the things that go wrong

On currency and rates

The ranges on page 06 are in USD. Agree three things in writing, because each of them has produced a dispute:

- Which currency the contract is in, and who carries movement
- Whether GST applies and how it is handled on an offshore supply
- Payment method and who pays the transfer cost

On distance

If a site visit or photography is needed, an offshore studio is not doing it. Establish early who shoots the plates, to what specification, and who carries the cost of a reshoot if the light is wrong. This is the single most common gap in an offshore arrangement for Australian projects.

Five failure modes, in order of frequency

01	Plates shot by whoever was free	Give whoever photographs the site a written specification — position, lens, height, conditions — or the montage cannot be built accurately.
02	Local vegetation and materials	Eucalypt, spotted gum, Colorbond, rendered blockwork. A studio that has not worked in Australia will reach for northern-hemisphere defaults and the image will read as foreign to a local panel.
03	Sun path	Southern hemisphere. Obvious, and still wrong in more submitted images than anyone would expect. Ask to see the sun direction confirmed against the north point.
04	Holiday calendars	Their public holidays are not yours. Ask for their shutdown dates at the quoting stage, and check them against your submission date.
05	Comments sent all day	See page 02. This one is free to fix and costs more time than all the others combined.



STEP 03

The short scorecard

Ten checks specific to hiring across the distance. Run them on each shortlisted studio before you brief.

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|--|---|
| ☐ Work delivered into an Australian market before — can they show it? | ☐ Contract currency, GST treatment and transfer costs agreed |
| ☐ A named contact, with stated hours in your time zone | ☐ Their public holidays checked against your programme |
| ☐ A stated daily review point, not "we'll be in touch" | ☐ Will sign your NDA, and can say where files are stored |
| ☐ Willing to produce a methodology statement if required | ☐ Milestone payments, not all in advance |
| ☐ Clear on who shoots plates, and to what specification | ☐ A written revision policy with a definition of "a round" |

The one that matters most

The daily review point. Everything good about working across ten hours depends on there being a fixed moment each day when work is sent and a fixed moment when comments arrive. Studios that cannot commit to that in writing will give you the time difference as a cost rather than as an advantage.



Maverick Frame production render.

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

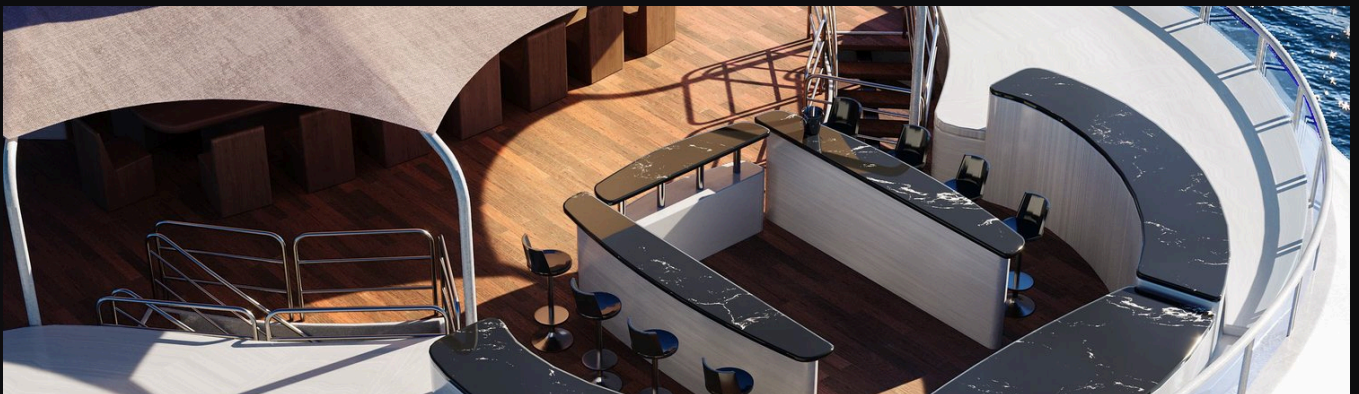
SEE THE WORK

maverickframe.com/gallery

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

