

FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Modular Sells on Images Before Price

Why a configurable product is the hardest thing to photograph and the easiest thing to render, and how to build a visual library that covers a whole range.

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You cannot photograph a house that has forty versions

Modular and prefabricated housing has a structural marketing problem: the product is a system with options, and a buyer wants to see *their* configuration on *their* site. Photography cannot do that. It can only show the three show homes that happen to exist.

The layout problem

Several house types, each with options. Photographing the range means building the range first, which is the wrong order.

The siting problem

The same unit reads completely differently on a slope, in woodland, on a coastal plot. Buyers ask "what would it look like on mine", and photography has no answer.

The finish problem

Cladding, window frames, roof. A handful of options each, and the combinations are the thing you are actually selling.

All three are exactly what CGI does cheaply and photography does not do at all — provided the work is structured as a system from the beginning, rather than as a series of one-off images commissioned whenever a brochure needs filling.



Maverick Frame production render.

STEP 01

Build a library, not a brochure

The decision that separates a modular range with good visuals from one with an expensive pile of images is whether the work was planned as a matrix. Three layers, in this order.

01	**The unit, modelled once, properly**	Each house type built once, at real scale, with named parts and separated materials. This is the asset. Everything else is an export from it, and every shortcut taken here is paid for repeatedly later.
02	**The finish matrix**	Cladding, frames, roof, door colour. Material swaps in a fixed scene, from fixed cameras. Cheap per image and directly comparable, which is what a buyer choosing a finish actually needs.
03	**The siting set**	The same unit in three or four generic but convincing settings — sloping, wooded, open, coastal. This is the layer that answers "what would it look like on my plot", and almost nobody produces it.

The order matters more than the budget

Done in this order, layer two and layer three are inexpensive because they reuse layer one. Done as separate commissions six months apart, each one rebuilds the unit from scratch — and you pay for the same house three times without ever owning it.

The interior question

Interiors multiply fast and are where modular visual budgets usually overrun. A useful discipline: one full interior set for the best-selling type, and 3D floor plans for the rest. Layout sells modular more than styling does, and floor plans carry layout for a fraction of the cost.

STEP 02

Five things buyers ask that images must answer

01 “How big is it, really?”

Modular units are routinely assumed to be smaller than they are. Every exterior needs something of known size in frame — a person, a car, a standard door — and every interior needs furniture at true specified dimensions. This is the single most common trust failure in the category.

02 “Does it look temporary?”

The prejudice you are selling against. It is defeated by material detail at close range: the junction where cladding meets the base, the window reveal depth, the soffit. Commission at least one detail image per type, and make it close.

03 “What would it look like on my plot?”

The siting set. If your visuals only ever show one flat green field, buyers with a sloping or wooded site cannot picture it and assume it does not work.

04 “What do I actually get for the base price?”

Show the base specification honestly as well as the upgraded one. A range where every image is the top configuration creates a disappointment at the quotation stage that costs more than the images saved.

05 “How does it arrive?”

Uniquely modular, and frequently unanswered. An image or short animation of delivery and craning removes a genuine anxiety about access, disruption and neighbours — and almost nobody in the category produces one.

The fifth is the differentiator

Base-specification honesty and a delivery sequence are the two images most likely to be missing from your competitors' material and most likely to matter to a serious buyer. Neither is expensive once the unit is modelled.

STEP 03

Plan the matrix

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RANGE  ____________________________________________

LAYER 1 - UNITS
  House types to model          ____
  Interiors: full sets          ____   floor plans only  ____

LAYER 2 - FINISHES (per type, fixed cameras)
  Cladding options   ____   Window frames  ____
  Roof options       ____   Door colours   ____
  Exterior angles    ____
  Exports = types x cladding x frames x ... x angles = ____

LAYER 3 - SITING
  Settings (slope / wooded / open / coastal)   ____
  Types shown in each                          ____

SPECIAL IMAGES
  Detail / material close-up      ____
  Base spec vs upgraded pair      ____
  Delivery and craning sequence   yes / no

REUSE
  Do we receive the unit models?  _____________________
  Cost of adding a type next year: _____________________
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On the last two lines

A modular range is a product line, not a project. It gains a type, drops a finish and revises a window every year. The terms on which the unit models survive decide what each of those annual changes costs — a morning, or the whole shoot again.

Where to start if the budget is small

Best-selling type only. Model it properly, produce the full finish matrix from fixed cameras, add two siting variants and one detail shot. It outperforms a thin single image of every type in the range, because it lets one buyer make one decision.

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
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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.

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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.