



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Five Stages. One Pack Model. Built Once, Not Five.

Which packaging visuals to order from the first concept to the buyer meeting, the pre-order page and the launch, what the 3D model carries over, and the budget per stage at our product rate.

START HERE

Five vendors, five looks, one pack

Most brands buy packaging visuals one stage at a time. Concept mockups from the designer, a sample shoot for the investor deck, retail sell sheets from an agency, Amazon images from a photographer and launch ads from a freelancer.

Each of them recreates the same pack, and each makes it look slightly different. Buyers see five products where you sell one, and you pay for the setup five times.

BOUGHT STAGE BY STAGE		PLANNED AS ONE ROADMAP
01	The pack is set up again for every new set	The pack is built once in 3D and updated as the artwork changes
02	Every SKU, flavour and size is a new shoot or a new render	Variants are label swaps from a fixed camera and light
03	Sell sheet, listing and ads look like three brands	One look across buyer deck, store, marketplace and ads

The model is the asset. The images are the output.

A pack built in 3D from your dieline, with the label, materials and finishes matched to print, is the largest cost in the first set. If it stays with one studio, every later set is cameras and rendering rather than setup.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE ROADMAP

What to order at each stage, and what it keeps

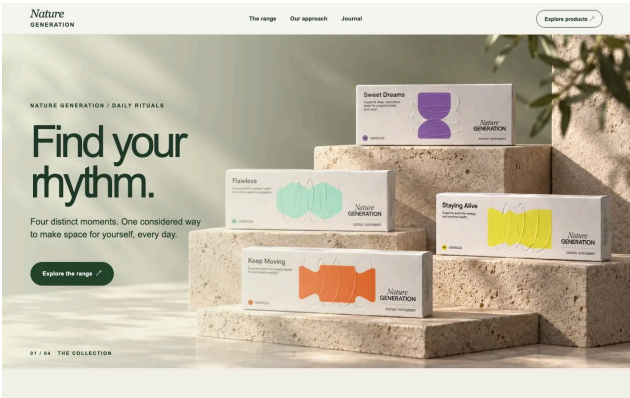
Five stages, in the order most packs meet them. Each row says what to order, who will look at it and what the next stage reuses.

STAGE	ORDER THESE VISUALS	WHO USES THEM	CARRIES OVER
Concept	Packaging design options in 3D: shape, label and finishes, side by side	Founders, brand team	The pack model and the look
Approval	One clean white view per pack, close-ups of foil and emboss	Printer, regulatory, investors	The camera and light setup
Sell-in	Shelf and display views, sell sheet images, deck and pre-order visuals	Retail buyers, investors, backers	The scenes on file
Launch	Packshots on white for every SKU, 360-degree spin, lifestyle scenes	Amazon, your store, PR	The view library
Campaign	Unboxing and pack reveal films, social and ad formats	Ads, social media, retail screens	A model ready for the next SKU

Start where you are

If the buyer meeting is next month, order the sell-in set now, and ask for the pack to be kept as one scene with fixed cameras on file. That is what lets the listing, the ads and the next flavour reuse it rather than start again.

Not every pack passes through all five stages. A pack already on shelf may start at Launch with a listing refresh; a startup may stop at Sell-in until the pre-order closes. The order still holds, and so does the rule: whatever stage comes first builds the scene the others reuse.



Maverick Frame production render.

WHAT IT COSTS

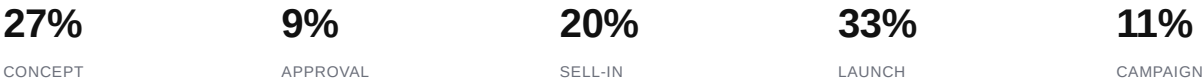
One range, five stages, line by line

A composite of one range of four SKUs in one pack shape, priced at our product rate of \$45 an hour. Hours follow our product norms: a view on white or a studio view about 4 hours, a scene about 6. Your numbers will differ; the proportions and the saving from reusing the model usually do not.

LINE ITEM	BASIS	AT \$45 AN HOUR
01 Concept: pack model, label mapping, materials and light setup	16 h, once	\$720
02 Concept: two design options in 3D, one studio view each	2 x 4 h, model reused	\$360
03 Approval: clean white view and finish close-up	2 x 4 h, setup reused	\$360
04 Sell-in: shelf and display scenes for the buyer deck	2 x 6 h, model reused	\$540
05 Sell-in: pre-order page and sell sheet crops	6 x 1 h, renders reused	\$270
06 Launch: packshot on white for each SKU	4 x 4 h, setup reused	\$720
07 Launch: lifestyle scenes	2 x 6 h, model reused	\$540
08 Campaign: social and ad formats from the renders	10 x 1 h, renders reused	\$450
Concept subtotal		\$1,080
Approval subtotal		\$360
Sell-in subtotal		\$810
Launch subtotal		\$1,260
Campaign subtotal		\$450

Planned as one roadmap \$3,960

The same visuals bought stage by stage, from scratch \$6,120



From scratch means the same lines plus \$2,160: the \$720 setup done again at Sell-in, Launch and Campaign. Shares above are of the \$3,960 planned total, 88 studio hours.

THE ONE PAGE

What to send us at each stage

The short list of inputs that decides the price and the timeline at each stage. Send what you have; missing items become questions, not delays.

01	Concept: the brief	Product, price point, shelf or channel, and two references for the look. No design yet is fine: we start the concept from here.
02	Concept: the pack	Dieline with dimensions, or the bottle, jar or box you plan to use, with cap and closure.
03	Approval: the artwork	Print-ready label files, usually AI or PDF, with Pantone or CMYK references.
04	Approval: the finishes	Foil, emboss, soft-touch, kraft or glass: a printed sample or a photo under neutral light.
05	Sell-in: the buyer	The retailer or channel, the meeting date and the formats of the deck or sell sheet.
06	Launch: the SKUs	The list of flavours, sizes and colours, and which share a pack shape.
07	Campaign: the channels	Ads, social media, retail screens: sizes, lengths and the launch date.
08	Every stage: the date	The buyer meeting, the pre-order launch or the print order. We plan backwards from it.

Change stage, keep the scene

If we built your pack at an earlier stage, reopening it takes one email: name the stage, the new deliverables and any artwork changes since. The model is on file, so the quote starts from rendering, not setup.

Our terms are on the next page

Our rates, timelines and what counts as a revision round are set out on page 06. The composite on page 04 is priced at the same \$45 product rate.



Maverick Frame production render.

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/
Packaging work	maverickframe.com/services/3d-packaging-rendering-services/
Or simply	reply to the email this guide arrived in.

Written by the people who read these briefs

Dim Kuzmenko is a co-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.