

FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Five Films, One Product Rig. $15,400 Less.

Which product films to order from design to support, what the model and rigs carry over, and a priced composite of the whole run against starting each film from scratch.

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START HERE

Five films, one product, five rebuilds

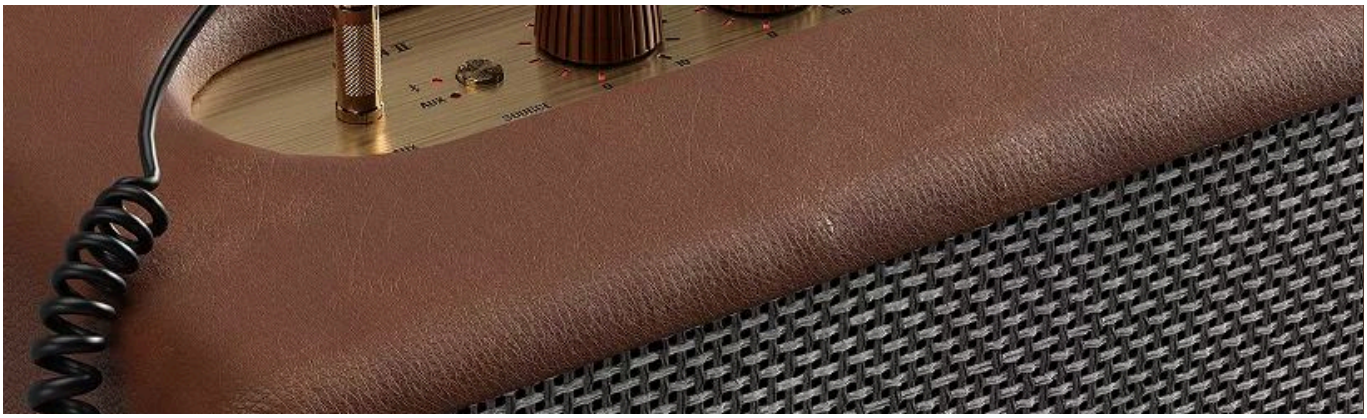
A product is animated many times between the first engineering review and the last help-centre video: a mechanism study, a pitch explainer, a launch film, retail loops, setup guides. The CAD barely changes. The rig that makes the lid open and the gears turn is usually built again for every film.

The reason is ordinary. The engineering animation was done in-house, the pitch film by a freelancer, the launch by the ad agency's partner, the how-to videos by the support team's supplier. Each one cleans the CAD, rebuilds the moving parts and relights the materials. And the support films, needed on launch day, are usually ordered after it.

	BOUGHT STAGE BY STAGE	PLANNED AS ONE ROADMAP
01	**CAD cleaned and rigged again for each film**	One clean model and rig, kept on file
02	**Materials look different in the pitch and the ad**	One look-dev, carried from launch to retail
03	**Retail loops rendered as a new project**	Loops cut from existing cameras and scenes
04	**Setup videos commissioned after the launch**	How-to films planned with the launch, same rig

The part that moves is the part you pay for. Pay for it once.

Rigging the mechanism is the slowest work in product animation. Keep the rig, and every later film pays for cameras, lighting and edit, not for the product again.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE ROADMAP

Which film to order, stage by stage

Five stages, from the first engineering review to the help centre. The last column is what the studio should hand forward, so the next film starts from a rigged, lit product.

STAGE	ORDER THESE VISUALS	WHO USES THEM	CARRIES OVER
Design	Mechanism and assembly animations	Engineers, designers	Clean model, rig of moving parts
Pitch	Short explainer film and feature loops	Investors, crowdfunding, buyers	Materials, explainer cameras
Launch	Hero film with sound design, social cutdowns	Launch campaign, ads, press	Hero look-dev, environments, edit
Retail	Looping spins and feature clips	Ecommerce, marketplaces, in-store screens	Loop setups, turntable cameras
Support	How-to and setup animations	Manuals, help centres, customer service	Simplified shaders for future guides

Start where you are

If you are at Pitch, order the explainer now and ask for two things: the model is cleaned and rigged to production accuracy rather than for the pitch alone, and the scene files are kept. The launch film and the setup guides then start from a working rig.



Maverick Frame production render.

WHAT IT COSTS

The film pipeline, priced both ways

A composite for one consumer product with a moving mechanism, priced at mid-market studio rates. Film lengths and per-minute rates are identical in both totals; only the model, rig and look-dev change.

	LINE ITEM	BASIS	AT STUDIO RATES
01	Design: CAD clean-up, model and rig	once	**$2,800**
02	Design: mechanism and assembly film, 60 s	1 min x $3,500	**$3,500**
03	Pitch: materials and explainer cameras	scene reused from Design	**$900**
04	Pitch: explainer film, 60 s	1 min x $5,000	**$5,000**
05	Pitch: four feature loops, 15 s each	1 min x $4,000	**$4,000**
06	Launch: hero look-dev and environment	scene reused from Pitch	**$1,500**
07	Launch: hero film with sound design, 45 s	0.75 min x $8,000	**$6,000**
08	Launch: six social cutdowns	6 x $300	**$1,800**
09	Retail: loop and turntable setups	scene reused from Launch	**$300**
10	Retail: spins and feature clips, 90 s	1.5 min x $3,000	**$4,500**
11	Support: how-to cameras, simple shaders	scene reused from Retail	**$400**
12	Support: three setup films, 45 s each	2.25 min x $3,000	**$6,750**
	Design stage		$6,300
	Pitch stage		$9,900
	Launch stage		$9,300
	Retail stage		$4,800
	Support stage		$7,150
	Planned as one roadmap		**$37,450**
	The same visuals bought stage by stage, from scratch		**$52,850**

The from-scratch total has each film go to a new vendor who cleans and rigs the CAD again and builds the look that film needs, from $2,800 at Design to $5,500 at Retail ($4,100 for simpler support guides). Planned as one roadmap, the model and rig are built once, and the difference is $15,400.

17%
DESIGN, $6,300

26%
PITCH, $9,900

25%
LAUNCH, $9,300

13%
RETAIL, $4,800

19%
SUPPORT, $7,150

THE ONE PAGE

What to send us at each stage

The clients whose logos sit on our service pages do not send specifications for product animation. They send CAD, a sample if there is one, and a line on where the film will run. At any stage, that is enough to quote from.

01	**Design: the CAD**	STEP or native CAD of the assembly, with the moving parts named. No CAD: a sample unit, photos and the manual.
02	**Design: the motion**	How the mechanism moves, in a sketch, a video of the prototype or a sentence.
03	**Pitch: the story**	The three features that matter, in order, and who the film is for.
04	**Launch: the look**	Finish references, colourways, packaging files and the brand guidelines.
05	**Launch: the sound**	Whether we brief a sound designer or you license the track.
06	**Retail: the platforms**	The marketplaces and store screens, with their length and ratio limits.
07	**Support: the steps**	The setup sequence from the manual, and the steps customers get wrong.
08	**Support: the languages**	Which markets need versions, so text stays out of the rendered frames.
09	**Any stage: the date**	The review, launch or shipping date. A minute of film takes 4 to 6 weeks.

Change stage, keep the scene

Ask us to keep the cleaned model, the rig, the materials and the cameras when a film is delivered. When the next stage comes, send the CAD revisions and we quote only the new cameras, shots and edit.

Rates and terms overleaf

Freelance and studio per-minute ranges, our production times for animation and what a revision round covers are on the next page, so you can check every rate in this composite.

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/
Product animation work	maverickframe.com/services/3d-product-animation/
Or simply	reply to the email this guide arrived in.

Written by the people who read these briefs

Dim Kuzmenko is the 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.