



FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

Five Stages. One Solar Scene. Built Once, Not Five.

Which solar visuals to order from the proposal to marketing, what the 3D scene of the roof carries over, and the budget split per stage, priced at mid-market studio rates.

START HERE

Five vendors, five mock-ups, one roof

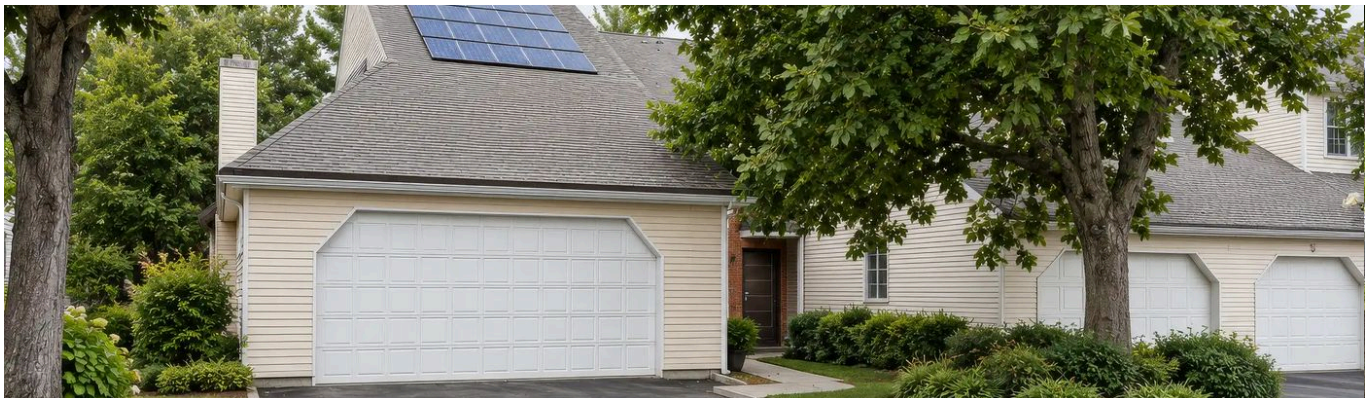
Solar projects rarely overspend on one render. They overspend because each stage buys its visuals from whoever is closest at the time: a design-tool screenshot for the proposal, a freelancer for the association, a drone pilot for the permit, an agency for the launch and the sales team for themselves.

Each of them rebuilds the home or the site from the same photos, and each set looks slightly different from the last: another panel colour, another module count, another light. The other leak is unit types. A community with five house types is mocked up one home at a time, and the board meeting arrives with half of them missing.

BOUGHT STAGE BY STAGE		PLANNED AS ONE ROADMAP
01	Every stage rebuilds the roof from photos	One 3D scene of the roof, updated as the layout moves
02	The array redrawn for every set	One layout from your design export, kept for every view
03	Each new home priced as a new project	New unit types added to a scene that already exists
04	Flyover started from a blank file	Flyover made in a scene that already exists
05	Sales reps make their own pictures from screenshots	Proposal, social and case-study images from the same scenes

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

A roof rebuilt in 3D from your photos, with the array laid out to your design, is the largest cost in any solar visual. If it stays with one studio and is updated as the project develops, every later set is lighting, cameras and rendering rather than modelling.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE ROADMAP

What to order at each stage, and what it keeps

The five stages below are the ones on our solar page. For each: what to order, who looks at it, and what the next stage inherits instead of paying for it again.

STAGE	ORDER THESE VISUALS	WHO USES THEM	CARRIES OVER
Proposal	The array on the customer's own home, from the street and the garden	The homeowner, the sales rep	The roof scene and the cameras
Approval	Street, path and aerial views at real size	The association, the permit office, planning	The layout and the viewpoints
Consultation	Before-and-after pairs and other unit types	Neighbours, community meetings	The community scene
Financing	Portfolio views and a flyover	Investors, lenders, partners	The camera path and scene library
Marketing	Website heroes, ads, social and case-study images	Prospects, the sales team	A scene library for the next project

Start where you are

If the association meets next month, order the street and aerial views now, and ask for the roof and the array to be kept as a scene with fixed cameras on file. That is what lets the community views, the flyover and the case study reuse them rather than start again.

Not every solar project passes through all five stages. A single home may stop at Proposal; a solar farm may go from Approval straight to Financing. 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 community, five stages, line by line

A composite of one installer's townhouse community project, from the first homeowner's proposal to marketing the finished installation, priced at mid-market studio rates. The first home is built once at Proposal and the other unit types once at Consultation. The rows marked as reused cost less because nothing is rebuilt before rendering.

LINE ITEM		BASIS	AT STUDIO RATES
01	Proposal: 3D scene of the home and roof planes from the photos	build, once	\$900
02	Proposal: photo-matched views for the sales proposal	3 x \$350, scene reused	\$1,050
03	Approval: street and path views for the association	4 x \$300, scene reused	\$1,200
04	Approval: aerial and top-down layout views	2 x \$450, scene reused	\$900
05	Consultation: other unit types of the community	build, once	\$1,600
06	Consultation: before-and-after pairs from the same cameras	4 x \$150, scenes reused	\$600
07	Financing: community portfolio views for the deck	3 x \$400, scenes reused	\$1,200
08	Financing: flyover of the community	1 min x \$4,000	\$4,000
09	Marketing: website heroes in three seasons	3 x \$350, scenes reused	\$1,050
10	Marketing: social formats and ad crops	10 x \$60, renders reused	\$600
11	Marketing: case-study set of the finished project	4 x \$200, scenes reused	\$800
Proposal subtotal			\$1,950
Approval subtotal			\$2,100
Consultation subtotal			\$2,200
Financing subtotal			\$5,200
Marketing subtotal			\$2,450
Planned as one roadmap			\$13,900
The same visuals bought stage by stage, from scratch			\$20,700

14%

PROPOSAL

15%

APPROVAL

16%

CONSULTATION

37%

FINANCING

18%

MARKETING

From scratch means the same lines plus \$6,800: the \$900 home scene built again at Approval, Consultation, Financing and Marketing, and the \$1,600 community scene built again at Financing and Marketing. Shares above are of the \$13,900 planned total.

THE ONE PAGE

What to send us at each stage

The teams whose logos sit on our service pages do not send long specifications. At each stage they send a few things like these, usually in the body of an email, and it is enough to quote from and to start work.

01	Proposal: the photos	Two or three photos of the home from the street and the garden, even from a phone.
02	Proposal: the layout	The panel layout or an export from your design software, with module size and count.
03	Proposal: the panel	The panel and mounting models you quote, or a data sheet.
04	Approval: the viewpoints	Where the association, the permit office or planning want to see it from.
05	Consultation: the community	Site plan or aerial photo, and which unit types share the same layout.
06	Financing: the audience	Who sees the deck or the film: investors, lenders, landowners or partners.
07	Marketing: the channels	Where the images will run: website, ads, social, proposals, trade shows.
08	Marketing: the result	Photos of the finished installation, so the case study shows before and after.
09	Every stage: the budget	A figure or a range per stage. It is the quickest way to a scope that fits, and it is not a weakness.

Change stage, keep the scene

If we built your roof at an earlier stage, reopening it takes one email: name the stage, the new deliverables and any changes to the layout since. The scene and the array are on file, so the quote starts from rendering, not modelling.

Our terms are on the next page

Market 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 mid-market studio rates.



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/
Solar work	maverickframe.com/solutions/solar-rendering/
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.