

# BOUTIQUE DEVELOPER

*In* CGI RENDERING, DESIGN, PROJECT MARKETING

## How to Style A Virtual Interior for Successful Marketing

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## 7 Keys to Getting the Styling Right for your Project



Years ago CGIs or 3D Renderings were all about visualising the architect's design for the prospective buyer. Today, however, the job of a good set of renderings is to create an emotional connection that helps the viewer to immerse themselves in the lifestyle on offer.

Against a backdrop of so many 'similar' project offerings, the single most important component in creating that emotive bond is furniture and finishes selection and styling – everything from artwork to accessories. But how does one achieve this elusive ambience in the context of the marketing process? Andrei Dolnikov, founder of Binyan Studios explains.

### *1. Establish the Art Director*

Make sure you clarify up front who is in charge of the Art Direction of the Styling. It is ok to be briefed by committee – you want to make sure everyone’s voices are heard, including the developer, the agent and architect, this includes their personal preferences, likes and dislikes.

But it is not ok to be art directed by committee. Once the brief is in it is important that the creative vision of the party in charge of the styling look and feel is allowed to be realised, art direct by committee and risk your project interiors looking like a garage sale.

## ***2. Stay on Trend – but don’t do what everyone else is doing***

Make sure your stylist, interior designer or CGI creator is in touch with the latest trends and aesthetics. Not only in furniture but also in terms of CGIs in market. The industry is prolific: if you are not aware of what has been done recently, you risk looking like several other projects. And if you are not abreast of the latest aesthetic trends – one can very quickly begin to look dated.

## ***3. Don’t try to not offend anyone***

Make sure your project knows who it is talking to – trying to find the ‘safest’ look that will be all things to all people will be a sure fire way to come across as boring and unimaginative. While you don’t have to be bombastic you do have to have a clear audience you are trying to ‘wow’. They may not represent every single potential buyer, but if the right group love it, they will appear in numbers.

A successful approach to doing this is to dissect the personality of the person who will occupy the space. who is this ideal persona that sums up your demographic’s highest aspirations? What books do they read? What art do they love? Do they entertain? Do they have kids and



pets? All these questions unlock potential styling choices that speak directly to your audience.

#### *4. Work hard to look like you did not work hard*

Computers inevitably make things look too perfect, too exact and too sterile – make sure the styling is arranged in a manner that appears slightly (and stylishly) lived in. The partially finished glass of sparkling water – with a cut twist of lime (not lemon). A handbag ‘accidentally’ left on the couch. A curtain billowing in the wind through a balcony door not quite closed. A pantry door left ajar to reveal the ample shelf space within, along with the owner’s new age ingredients.

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**“The devil is in the imperfection of the detail –**

# **mess it up just so – and your buyers will feel they belong.”**

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## ***5. Be Aspirational – at every level***

Even a buyer in a more low cost area will want to see their interior furnished in a way that shows them their ‘aspirational self’ – they may buy Ikea – but you would never put that in a rendering. Take this too far and it can come across as elitist and out of reach – so knowing your demographic is crucial. When styling an up-market or boutique project – go for statement pieces – show the buyer who they want to become. When working on super prime projects such as Hudson Yards in New York or One Circular Quay in Sydney, the furniture pieces must worthy occupants of the high net worth or celebrity home. Even one piece of mediocre furniture can ruin the effect.

## ***6. Create brand association through your Styling***

Some of the most successful property campaigns have made the most of associating their interiors with a well known and cache-carrying interior designer or brand.

Designer and furniture brands such as Coco Republic and B&B Italia have been used within interiors to lend their brand glow to the project itself. This requires the developer to reach out to the appropriate brand to forge this partnership ahead of time.

In a recent stage of the famed 15 Hudson Yards project in New York – the developer commissioned 4 Celebrity Interior Designers to design 4 hypothetical styling schemes to showcase a potential penthouse interior. None will be built as per the literal design, but the fanfare and exposure created by associating the project with these luminaries of taste has created enormous buzz for the project.

## ***7. Don’t show too much – or you run the risk of showing nothing at all***

Even when you have done everything right in terms of your styling selections – it can all fall apart if you do not compose the image the optimal way. Put the camera in the corner and try to show the whole room – and you are almost guaranteed for the viewer to click to the next project, or turn the page.

Composition and the discipline of detail is here – if your feature detail is a gorgeous marble fireplace – don't show it from other side of the room. Get up close and personal – make them feel the warm glow of the embers.

In order for the viewer to experience the relaxation of sitting in the spacious living room looking out to the view, avoid the birds eye perspective. Rather put them into the scene. Bring them close. Give them the sense that they are occupying the space. Ironically – in many cases the more of the space you show, the smaller it seems, and the effect, the magic is gone. But with well considered composition – the most 'cosy' space can feel like a palace.

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