

# THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO 3D CONFIGURATORS

*by*  **Sketchfab**

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The Leading Platform for 3D and AR on the Web



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# 1 What is a 3D Configurator?

A 3D product configurator is an interactive tool that allows potential customers to **experience your products in 3D, view them from any angle, and customize colors, textures, components, and more.**

Sketchfab's 3D configurators bring customizable products to life with **stunning speed and greater detail** than anywhere else on the web. They work online, in any browser, on any device, without the need for a plugin.

Sketchfab's configurator experience is the **closest you can get to examining an actual product before buying.** It's a much more engaging approach to product presentation than traditional, passive 2D presentation.

A much more  
engaging medium  
than regular images.





**Components**



**Colors**



**Textures**



**Interactions & Animations**

Almost any element of a product that can be customized can be configurable.

# 2. 3D Configurators: The Different Use Cases



## Website & Mobile App

You can easily embed a 3D configurator on your website or in your app. Our technology is compatible with all major eCommerce platforms.



## Virtual & Physical Events

You can showcase your configurator on desktops, tablets and smartphones, allowing visitors to explore your products in 3D—a great way to generate engagement at your booth.



## In Store

A 3D configurator on an in-store touch screen is the easiest way to showcase the entire range of your products.



## Internally

You can leverage a 3D configurator internally to iterate on designs in real-time and easily share and review developed samples within your company.

# 3 Benefits of a 3D Configurator



**Conversion**



**Interactivity & Engagement**



**Product Education**



**Personalization**



**Showcase All Product Combinations**



**Reduce On-hand Stock**



**Powerful Sales Support Tool**



**Share Developed Samples Internally**

# 4 Build your 3D Configurator

## STEP 1

Create 3D models or leverage existing 3D models

## STEP 2

Upload your 3D models to Sketchfab

## STEP 3

Develop the configurator using Sketchfab's API



Each configurator normally takes **4-8 weeks** to build. The build time depends on how complex the configurator is, whether or not you already have 3D models, and if the models need to be optimized for the web experience.

# STEP 1 Create or Leverage Existing 3D Models

## DEFINE THE PARAMETERS OF YOUR CONFIGURATOR

Think about your concept, determine the specific functionality and user flow for the configurator.

## YOU MAY ALREADY HAVE 3D MODELS

The first thing to check is whether you **have a 3D model of the product that will be configurable.**

Most brands that we work with find that **3D content already exists from their manufacturing process** and can be repurposed.

Existing models may require some optimization to ensure ideal online performance, but they are a useful starting point.



We encourage you to reach back into your production pipeline to look for **existing 3D content.**

## HOW TO CREATE 3D MODELS?

Sketchfab is **not a 3D creation tool**; we provide **cloud hosting for 3D assets** and technology to easily showcase and share these 3D models and experiences on the web.

We work with a **network of content partners** who can assist you with 3D model creation. Find and contact the best partners for your projects through **our directory.**

# STEP 2 Upload your 3D Models to Sketchfab

## SKETCHFAB SUPPORTS ALL MAJOR 3D FORMATS

Your 3D models are likely already compatible with Sketchfab—we **support all major 3D file formats** spanning all major 3D creation software applications.

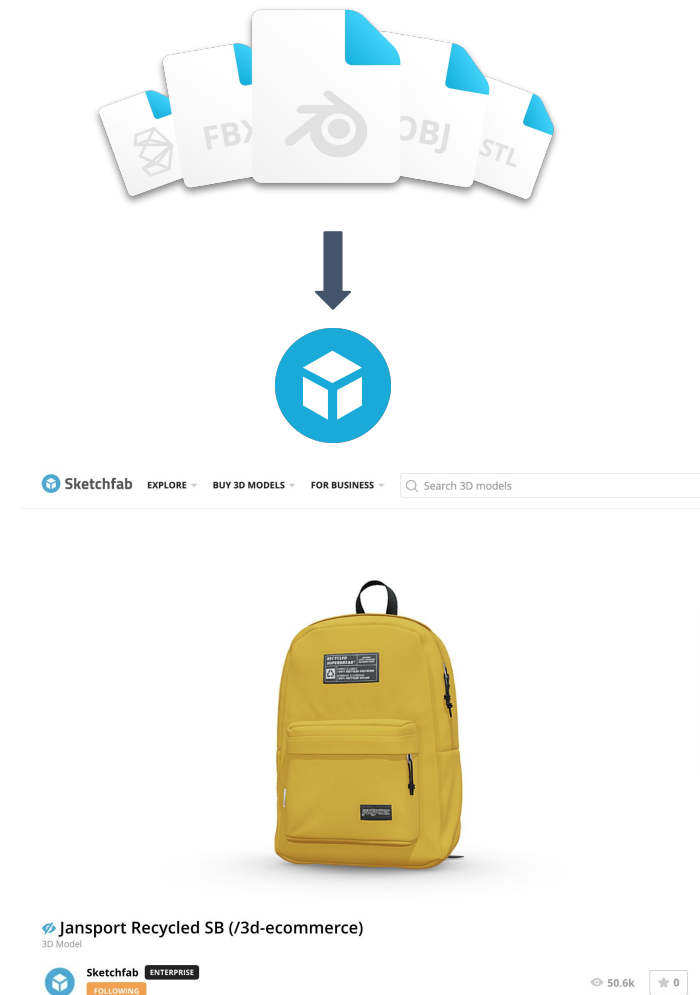
**We support these common formats, and others:** OBJ, BLEND, FBX, GLTF, 3DS.

Check [here](#) for the full list of 3D file formats that we support.

## DIRECT EXPORT TO SKETCHFAB via PLUGINS

Sketchfab integrates natively, or via plugins with **all major 3D creation tools**, allowing you to directly upload to your Sketchfab account without leaving your 3D workspace.

See the full list of the available exporters [here](#).



# STEP 3

## Develop the Configurator using Sketchfab's API



Configurators are custom applications built on our Viewer API; their creation requires **front end development resources (JavaScript)**.

Explore our [API documentation here](#).

### DO YOU HAVE FRONT END DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES?

#### YES

If you have developers on your team, our robust Viewer API is easy to use and will allow you to build beautiful 3D configurators from scratch.

To access our API, subscribe to one of our licenses.

→ [Plans page](#)

#### NO

You can work with one of our API development partners who will help you build smart configurators for scalable applications.

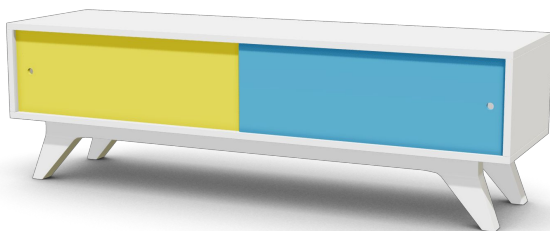
→ [Find a partner here](#)

# 5 Design Tips

## OPTIMIZE THE USER EXPERIENCE

In addition to developing the configurator itself, you'll need to build the web and user interfaces for the configurator (buttons, menus, etc.). A good interface will keep users' focus and make it easier for them to familiarize themselves with your product.

→ **Configure components:** Depending on the number of options and your preference, the configurator can show all available options at once, or the user can be guided through options step-by-step. **Make sure to avoid long descriptions that might confuse a user.**



Left door



Right door



## INCLUDE A CLEAR CALL TO ACTION

For example, you might choose one of the following: Add to cart, Save the design, Send an email to your sales team with the configured design, Export configured product as a PDF.

## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION

→ **Dynamic pricing:** by implementing our viewer API in your own application or website, you can create a dynamic display of the product pricing, which can be updated as the user customizes it.



Explore some 3D configurators built on top of the Sketchfab Viewer API in the [Customer Stories](#) part of our blog.

# 6 Reach your Audience

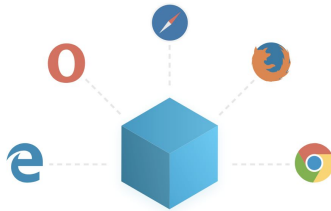
## EASILY EMBED YOUR CONFIGURATOR

Once you are satisfied with the configurator, incorporate the code into your website (the HTML, JavaScript and CSS code).

## WORKS ON ALL BROWSERS

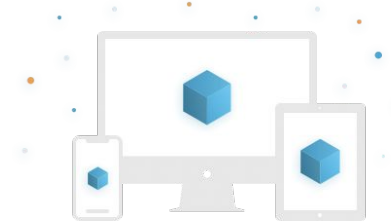
In order to reach audiences at scale, new technology must be accessible **across all platforms**.

The Sketchfab player works on **all operating systems** and **all browsers** without the need for a plugin.



## WORKS ON ALL DEVICES

3D models delivered by Sketchfab are optimized for viewing on **mobile, tablet and desktop**, meaning your 3D configurator will be accessible from any device and run smoothly.



## COMPATIBLE WITH ECOMMERCE PLATFORMS

We are also compatible with **all major eCommerce platforms**.



# 7 Cost of a 3D Configurator



Altogether, the average end-to-end cost of a full configurator project ranges **from \$5,000 to \$50,000**, including model creation, Sketchfab license, and custom website development.

Models Creation		Sketchfab Account		Sketchfab API	Web Development	
Do you have 3D models of your products?		Do you have a Sketchfab account?		Access Sketchfab API <b>documentation <a href="#">here</a> for free</b>	Do you have developer resources?	
YES ✓	NO ↓ Leverage one of <b><u>our partners</u></b> to produce content.  Cost will depend on the complexity of the products.  <b>\$50 - \$1,000 per asset</b> ✓	YES ✓	NO ↓ Subscribe to one of our <b><u>plans</u></b> to create an account.  <b>Cost will depend on your plan.</b> ✓	✓	YES ↓ Develop your configurator in-house using your models and our API.	NO ↓ Leverage one of <b><u>our partners</u></b> to help you.  Cost will depend on the scope of the project.  <b>\$5,000 - \$50,000 per project</b> ✓

BASIC / PRO



PREMIUM / ENTERPRISE



You need at least a Premium license to remove the Sketchfab watermark.

**The Premium license starts at \$79/month.**

# 8 Success Stories

Elite Home Theater Seating (Elite HTS) is a Canadian custom manufacturer of ultra-luxury home theater seating.



## Challenges

- Enhance the visualization experience to allow potential customers to interact with their final product in 3D.
- Increase customers' comfort level by simplifying the product design process.
- Increase conversion and sales.



## Solution

Our partner Tapmod built the 3D configurator using Sketchfab's 3D Viewer API and Elite's 3D models.



## Results

- Sale conversion increased: + 20%
- Improved the client experience by allowing clients to create their own seats in 3D.
- Modernized the brand image: Elite differentiates itself from competitors.

**TRY IT HERE**



"The new configurator is improving inquiries and sales conversion by at least 20% and possibly more."

Bobby Bala, CEO, Elite Theater Seating

**ELITE**  
HOME THEATER SEATING



# 8 Success Stories

F.Domes manufactures geodesic domes for a variety of purposes and activities. Their tents are complex products with multiple configurable features.



## Needs and Challenges

- Educate potential customers on the different dome components and their characteristics
- Increase the number of leads
- Reduce the time spent on inquiries answering basic questions and shorten the sales cycle



## Solution

- A 3D Configurator that lets shoppers customize their domes in real time on the F.Domes website
- Real-time update of the price, 3 languages, 4 currencies
- Call to action: direct contact with the sales team



## Results

- Increased the number of leads: +30%
- Quality of inquiries improved, prospects are now product-educated
- The sales cycle is shorter—prospects are educated on the product before reaching the sales team

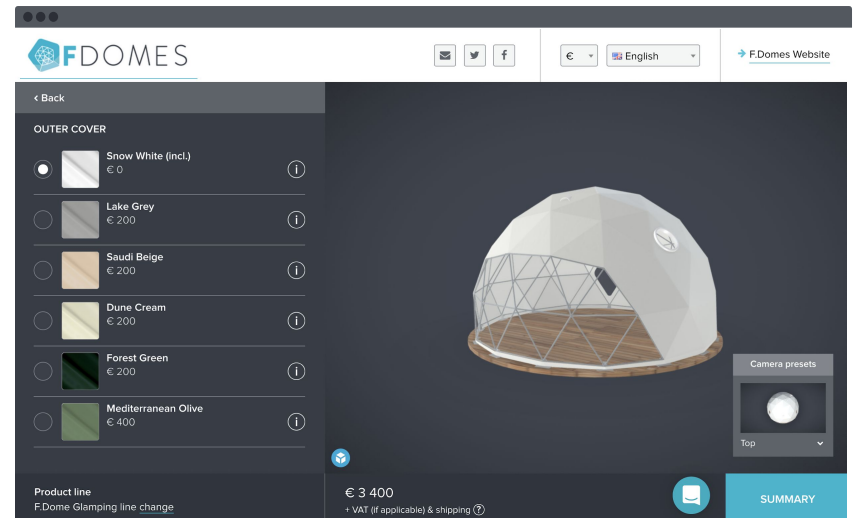
**TRY IT HERE**



“We managed to improve our Visitor to Lead conversion rates by 30 - 40% on average”

— Adam Lyczakowski, Cofounder, F.Domes

 FDOMES



# 8 Success Stories

Founded in 1981, Formaspace is a custom business furniture manufacturer for clients in laboratory, chemistry, industrial, and office environments.



## Needs and Challenges

- Improve Formaspace's customer experience
- Differentiate themselves from competitors by providing a better product and quality of service online
- Reduce the length of the 12-week sales cycle (from design to production)
- Increase the number of leads



## Solution

Using Sketchfab's API, Formaspace developed and implemented a 3D configurator on its three websites, allowing clients to design and customize their own furniture in real-time.



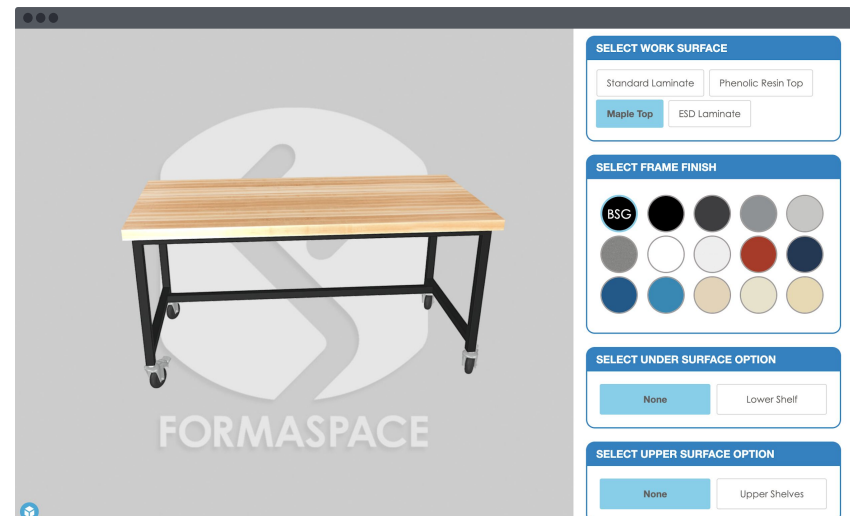
## Results

- Reduced the length of the design process from 4 weeks to 10 minutes, thereby speeding up the sales cycle
- Increased the number of web leads by 30%
- Showcased their products with the 3D configurator at tradeshows (Pittcon and Neocon) and received great feedback from their clients



"We started this project hoping that it would increase the number of leads by 30%. Well, it exceeded our expectations."

— Mehmet Atesoglu, Digital Marketing Manager, Formaspace



# 8 Success Stories

The Nautique Boat Company, has been producing boats since 1925. Nautique's previous configurator used 2D images. It was tedious to maintain—each model required hundreds of images to allow for every possible configuration.



## Goals

- Develop a robust, agile, easy-to-update configurator
- Allow users to easily configure their dream boat, save, and request pricing from a local dealer
- Increase lead generation and integrate with Nautique's network of dealers



## Solution

A 3D web-based configurator using Sketchfab's Viewer API and Nautique's existing 2D configurator



## Results

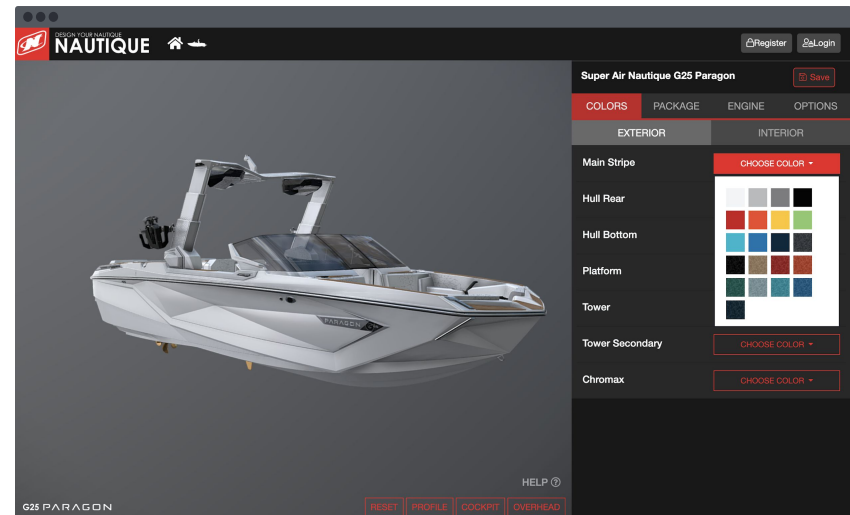
- Consumers can choose from 12 different models and personalize almost every element to create a unique boat: colors, interior options, accessories such as audio systems or engines
- Users can interact with their dream boat in 3D, explore every angle and zoom to details
- Potential buyers (and their desired boats) can connect directly with Nautique's salespeople, creating a powerful lead generation funnel
- At trade shows: the configurator is shared on tablets for attendees to experiment with Nautique's models



"The new real-time 3D Configurator has exceeded our expectations with its level of interaction and ability to completely customize every aspect of our boats. We look forward to expanding on this technology."

Brian Sullivan, Vice President of Marketing,  
Nautique Boat Company

 **NAUTIQUE**



# 8 Success Stories

The [Brooklyn Solar Canopy Co](#) (BSCC) team has designed and manufactured canopy solar systems for the New York City residential market since 2015.



## Needs and Challenges

Allow customers to:

- Interact with the product to familiarize themselves with the technology
- Customize their own specific design and provide a virtual overview of what the panel would look like on their home



## Solution

Our partner, [Tapmod](#), developed a 3D Configurator using the Sketchfab [Viewer API](#) and Brooklyn Solar Canopy's existing 3D models.



## Results

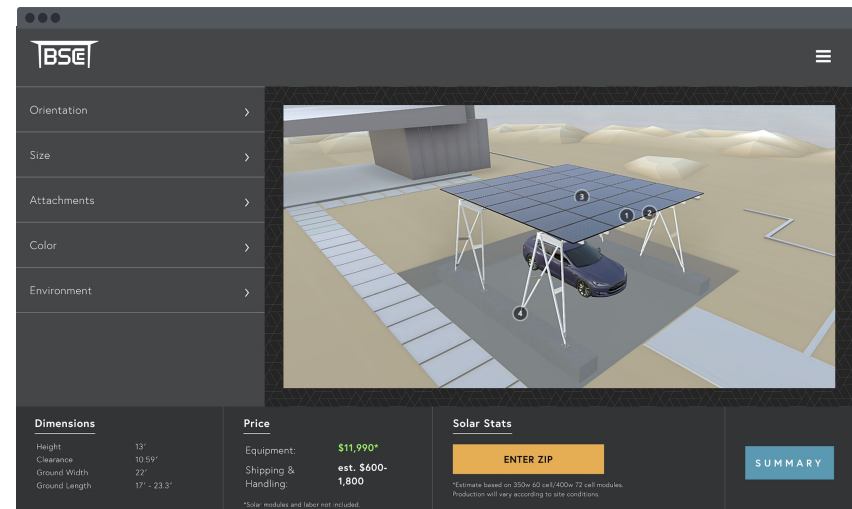
- Developed playful and engaging prospect education
- Accelerated the sales process—initial conversations with prospective clients start at an advanced stage
- Increased traffic at trade shows: hundreds of people interacted with the 3D configurator on touch screens
- Boosted the innovative identity of the brand: “best booth” prize winner

[TRY IT HERE](#)



“The 3D Configurator is definitely accelerating the sales process, no doubt about it. Our first conversations with people start at a pretty advanced place now.”

*Christopher Neidl, Director of Business Development, Brooklyn Solar Canopy*



# 9 FAQ

## Can I try Sketchfab for free?

To try out Sketchfab for free, sign up for a Basic license.

## Which plan to I need for configurators?

You may access our API with any plan, including the free Basic license. For certain features, such as removing the Sketchfab logo, you will need either the Premium or Enterprise license.

## Can I upload my own artwork onto the design of the configurator?

Yes, check out [this wine cork configurator](#) where you can upload your own logo.

## How can I find a developer to help me build a 3D configurator?

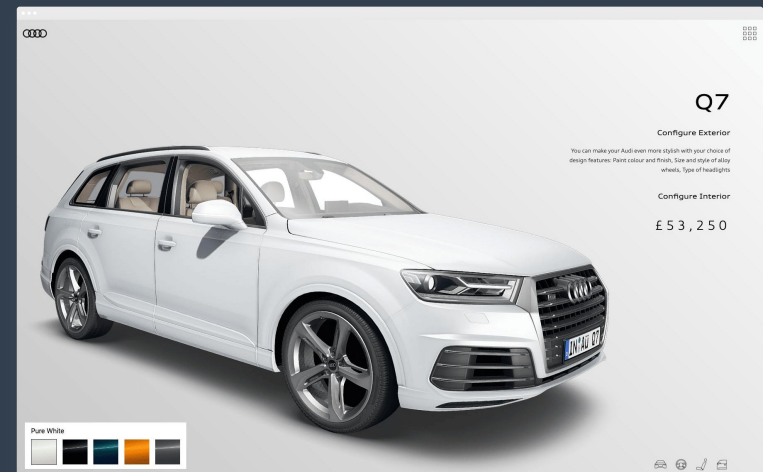
You can reach out to one of our vetted partners directly via [our Partner Directory](#).

## What coding language do I need to use to leverage the Sketchfab API?

You will need to use JavaScript to build interactivity into the viewer.

## Can I connect Sketchfab to my product database?

Yes. Connecting to Sketchfab means that your 3D configurator does not need to be rewritten every time an additional option is added.



# Need More information?

Visit us:

[sketchfab.com/3d-configurators](https://sketchfab.com/3d-configurators)