

PORTSIDE BOULDERS

Case Study / James Kang



PORT
SIDE
BOULDERS

Perths #1
bouldering gym..

first-time?



INTRODUCTION

The Portside Boulders website was built as a redesign to the original website, <https://www.portsideboulders.com.au/>, which lacked the same engagement and design principles seen in other popular bouldering websites within its field. This case study will look into the methodology for the redesign, problem solving techniques, and an outline of the tools I use to meet the various project and user goals.

DESIGN PROCESS

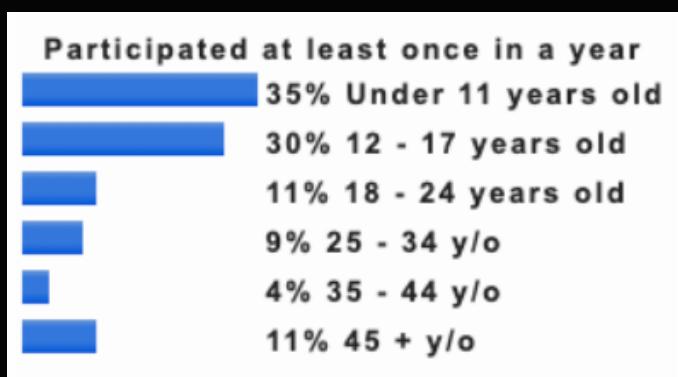


METHODOLOGY - TARGET AUDIENCE



IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Both men and women aged 18-35 visit frequently.
- Many of the customers of Pontside Boulders drive themselves to the venue, and have spare time within the week, indicating they are either university students or bouldering hobbyists. This is reflected in the age group.
- Children and young adults also visit the venue, however less frequently, around once a year. indoorclimbing.com
- Some children and young adults do regularly attend as well, usually alongside Youth Programs and parents.



METHODOLOGY - TARGET AUDIENCE



Empathise

Define

Ideate

Prototype

Test



BRIAN University Student

Age: 23

Gender: Male

Wants & Needs:

- To be fit and healthy
- Enjoy climbing and improve
- Maintain his studies while also bouldering and working part-time

Frustrations:

- The cost of bouldering puts pressure on his studying due to working part-time
- Wants to communicate with more climbers like himself to improve but doesn't know who to talk to
- Wants to balance his social life, studying and part-time job effectively

Bio:

Brian is a university student who visits his local Bouldering gym three times a week. He's dedicated to the sport and has bought his own shoes, chalk, and sports clothes to help him climb. He visits both alone and with friends on occasion. Brian also works a part-time job to pay his bills and for bouldering expenses.



JESSICA Office Worker

Age: 30

Gender: Female

Wants & Needs:

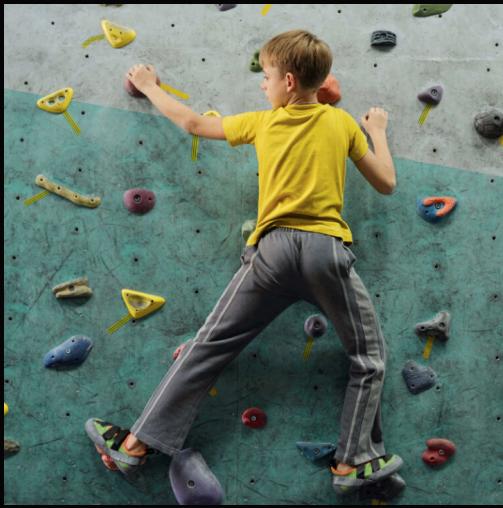
- To stay fit and healthy
- To improve her bouldering skills
- To meet new friends within the bouldering community
- Relax and enjoy the process of bouldering
- Destress from work and escape for a few hours every week

Frustrations:

- Feeling unmotivated to visit the gym at times
- Pressured of being judged at the bouldering gym
- Demotivated to visit gym after busy days at work
- Friends don't understand or enjoy bouldering the way she does
- Age makes her feel isolated at the venue

Bio:

Jessica works a full-time job at a business firm. She spends most of her days working, but likes to relax at her local bouldering gym from time to time. She rarely invites her friends to join, as she finds solving walls relaxing by herself and see's it as a fun alternative to going to the gym. She occasional talks to the other gym climbers she meets. Her outside social life includes going out for lunch and drinking with her work friends.



TIMMY

Kid

Age: 10

Gender: Male

Wants & Needs:

- To have fun
- To beat new challenges on the walls
- To explore the gym and try new techniques and challenges
- Wants to impress his dad by completing walls

Frustrations:

- Getting stuck on a challenge and not being able to complete it
- Occasionally scared to try new walls due to lack of understanding of the challenge
- Only has a limited amount of time to use the bouldering venue

Bio:

Timmy visits the bouldering gym with his father every Saturday morning, where they help each other climb and learn how to climb new walls. Timmy enjoys the challenge of the walls and loves to talk about bouldering with his friends and family. He also has bouldering parties for his birthdays and likes to invite his school mates to join him.

METHODOLOGY - RESEARCH



INITIAL RESEARCH:

Initial research of popular bouldering websites set the foundation for understanding the project and user goals and needs. Identifying strong design techniques and elements from other successful bouldering websites helped identify what elements were important. Element such as large landing-page hero images, allowing the user to relate to the portrayed demographic, large eye catching text, and bright areas of colour and blocking symbolising the colourfulness of holds on a bouldering wall.

PROJECT GOALS:

- Create a memorable and interactive website through storytelling
Users should remember and experience the thrill and adventure of bouldering through the website.
- Motivate first time users to try bouldering
 - A majority users using the website will be first time boulderers, so a focus on onboarding and teaching should be prioritised.
- Increase overall design of website to be more professional and appealing.
- A professional yet interesting looking website will appeal to the large demographic of bouldering.

METHODOLOGY - INTERACTIONS



INTERACTION POINTS & FEATURES:

- Scrollable boulder wall for first time users to learn about bouldering:
 - Learn the different level walls
 - Learn basic techniques
 - Learn safety techniques
 - Learn the benefits to health
 - Show the social side of bouldering
- Wall will have different holds that presents information as you scroll up? Imitating climbing a wall. Can also “safety drop” down to beginning of page. Teaches you to drop before you can drop the page. Will be skippable.
- About page will have better explanation of what bouldering is and better presentation of the different walls available.
- More than climbing section will be four informative boxes, walls section will be a hero image as well as a carousel.
- Top navigation bar will be a hand burger menu for responsive design.

METHODOLOGY - COMPETITORS



Iris Boulders - Sleek, professional, modern

<https://www.irisboulders.com.au/>

Iris boulders contains the professional and modern approach that Portside Boulders wishes to encapsulate, but does lack on its storytelling ability for first-time users.

The websites footer is extremely impressive in its effectiveness in providing information on contacts, hours, social media, location, its branding and who designed the website. This will be important for Portside Boulders website as their navigation bar is fairly cluttered, and could use trimming, as well as a higher focus on a first-time user introduction.

The ordering of the navigation bar is also impressive as it is ordering correctly, with the classes, shop, and contact sections to the far right, allowing options such as the first visit and pricing to attract the users attention first, as they are more important. This is due to western cultures viewing screens from left to right.

Iris Boulders colour palette also uses a lot of black and white to help pop the greys of their logo to highlight certain sections. They also use lots of abstract imagery and images in general to help give the website identity. This can be utilised by Portside Boulders to create a sense of community and further the bouldering/climbing theme.

Parallax, proper alignment, spacing and use of white space has been used on the website, as well as basic highlighting. I believe this can be greatly improvement and implemented for Portside Boulders website by adding scrollable interactions for information, better highlighting that confirms selections and furthers brand identity and colour scheme, and increasing storytelling elements by using imagery, user journey planning and digital affordances to bouldering.

Overall, Iris Boulders is a very polished, professional and modern website utilising basic JavaScript with excellent formatting and presentation of information that can inspire a different approach for Portside Boulders website upgrade. The difference in the website is the target audience, Portside will be more catered to first time users instead of generic everyday climbers. The concept is that new users will access the websites more than users who already boulder.

The implementation of a gallery would be considered if access to a professional camera and time to take photos on location were available. It is a wonderful feature that promotes exploring the venue, better visualisations for first-time users.

Beyond Bouldering - Open, friendly, practical

<https://www.beyondbouldering.com.au/>

Beyond Bouldering is another example of using a hero image to encapsulate the target audience and feeling of the company. The front page includes all the pivotal information, but does lack the first-time user catering that Portside Boulders should incorporate into their goals. A map placed at the footer also helps users find the location of different bouldering venues. Hints of green is used to promote the identity of the website without overbearing the user with the colour, when compared to Portside Boulders website.

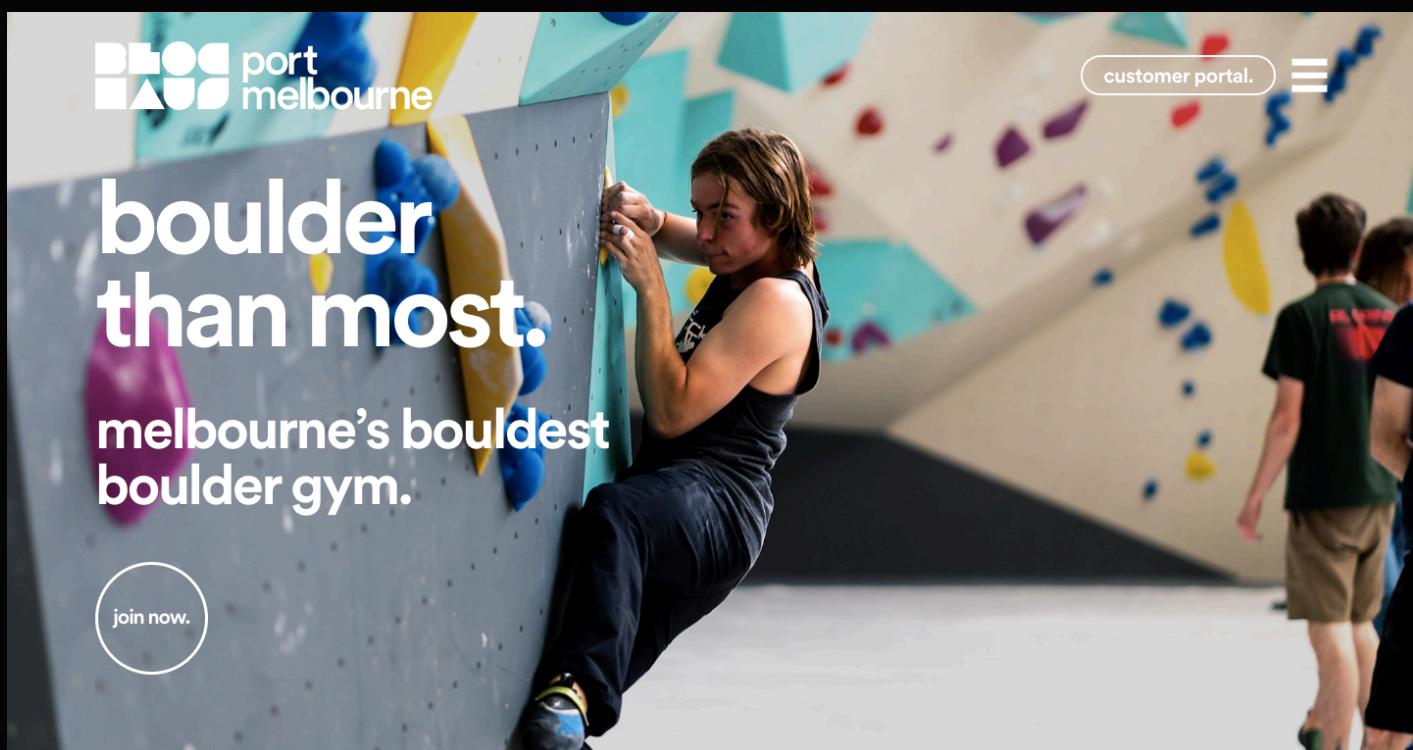


Port Melbourne BlocHaus

<https://mlb.blochaus.com.au/>

Port Melbourne uses an extremely modern website design, utilising website trends such as hamburger menus, beautiful use of a hero image, spacing, “bold” typography with lowercase san-serif, and modern highlighting techniques. The logo also incorporates abstract shape to form the words “BlocHaus”, much like bouldering holds.

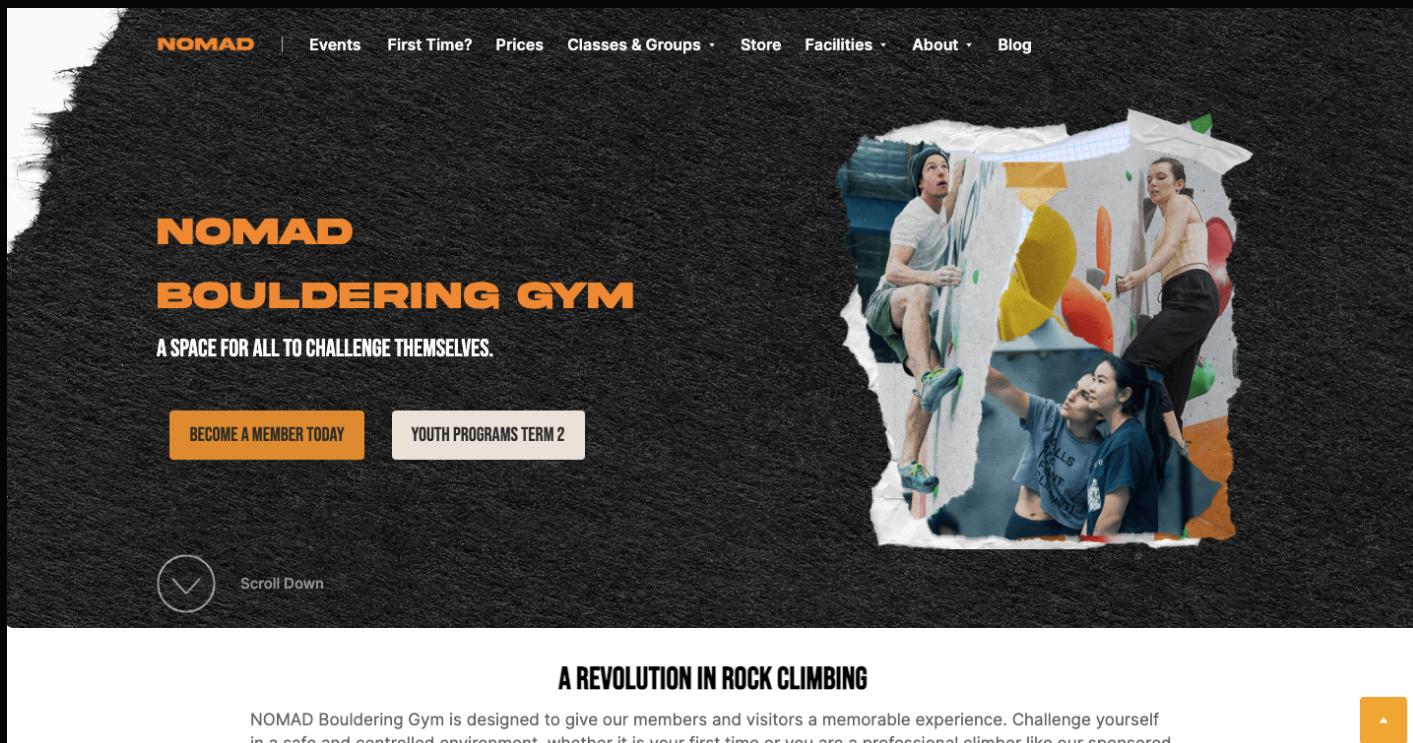
The modern approach and simplicity of the website can be greatly utilised by Portside Boulders to appeal to our 18-25 year old target audience. Consistent use of theme and branding through.



Nomad

<https://www.nomadbouldering.com/>

Nomad's website uses strong highlighting and anecdotal images to help connect with the user. Javascript features such as scrolling animations and hovering confirmation effects help the user feel like the information is being presented as the user moves through the website, increasing the feeling of interactivity.

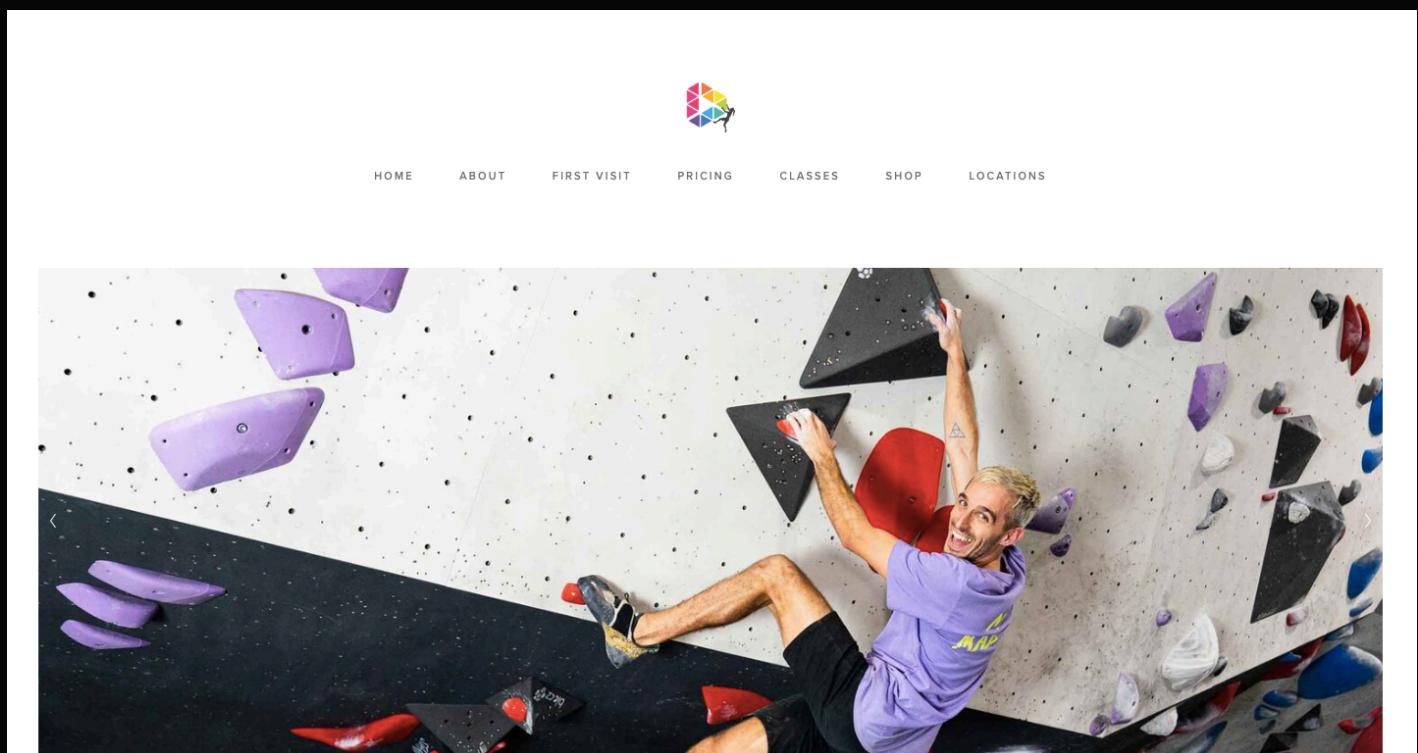


9Degrees

<https://www.9degrees.com.au/>

Good use of highlighting and consistency of colour, this furthers the brand identity.

Uses anecdotal images to help create users know the target audience of 9Degrees bouldering gym. Adding a shopping cart does increase the usability of the buying merchandise, but is and should not be the focus of Portside Boulders. The website also includes a facts and questions section that allows users to open and close certain questions to be given answers.



METHODOLOGY - IDEATION



Empathise

Define

Ideate

Prototype

Test

The screenshot shows the Figma application interface. The top bar includes file, search, and tool icons. The title bar says 'Drafts / webdesign2'. The left sidebar has 'Layers' and 'Assets' sections, with 'Page 1' selected. A large list of MacBook components is on the left: # MacBook - 7, # MacBook - 8, # MacBook - 16, # MacBook - 15, # MacBook - 14, # MacBook - 13, # MacBook - 20, # MacBook - 27, # MacBook - 23, # MacBook - 19, # MacBook - 18, # MacBook - 17, # MacBook - 9, # MacBook - 10, # MacBook - 11, # MacBook - 12, # MacBook - 5, # MacBook - 4, # MacBook - 3, # MacBook - 2, # MacBook - 1. The main canvas shows a grid of MacBook icons and a smaller group of icons labeled 'spare'. The right sidebar has sections for 'Design', 'Prototype', and 'Inspect'. Under 'Background', it shows 'C2C2C2' at 100% with a checked 'Show in exports' option. Under 'Export', it shows '1x' suffix 'Suffix' and 'PNG' format with a 'Export webdesign2' button.

PORT SIDE BOULDERS

Perths #1

rockclimbing gym.

first-time?

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [First-visit?](#)
- [Pricing](#)
- [Classes](#)
- [Youth-programs](#)
- [Groups](#)
- [Shop](#)

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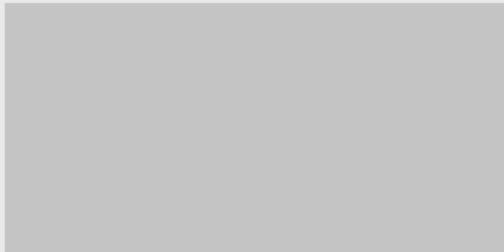
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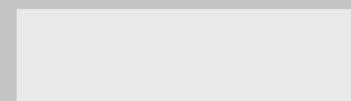
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About us



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PHONE: +61 421 244 870

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DESIGN BY JAMES KANG

Hours

OSBORNE PARK
MON | 10am - 10pm
TUES | 6am - 10pm
WEDS | 10am - 10pm
THURS | 6am - 10pm
FRI | 10am - 10pm
SAT & SUN | 8am - 7pm

OPENING HOURS
O'CONNOR
MON | 10am - 10pm
TUES | 6am - 10pm
WEDS | 10am - 10pm
THURS | 6am - 10pm
FRI | 10am - 10pm
SAT | 8am - 9pm
SUN | 8am - 7pm



PORTSIDE
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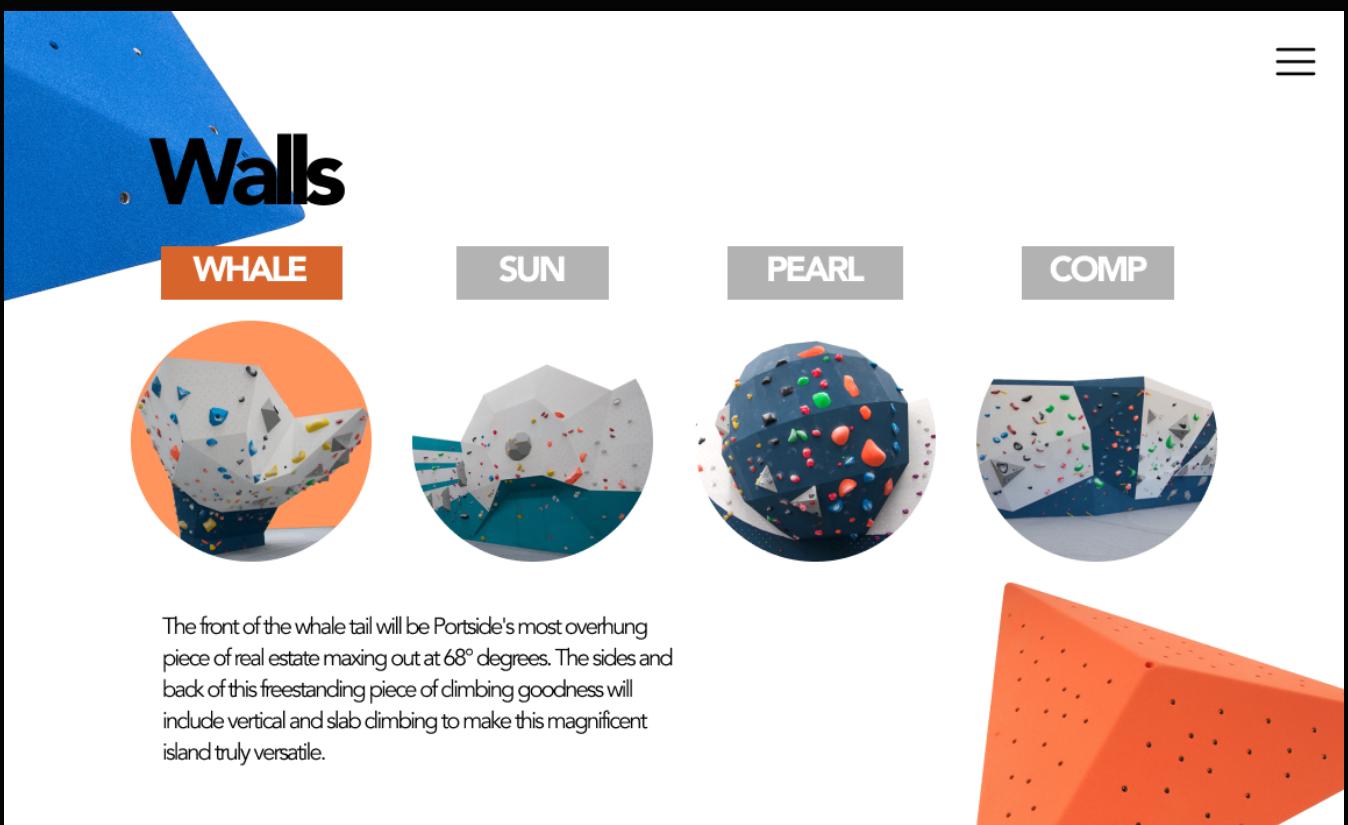
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first-time?

X

- Home
- About
- First-visit?
- Pricing
- Classes
- Youth-programs
- Groups
- Shop



Walls

≡

WHALE SUN PEARL COMP



The front of the whale tail will be Portside's most overhung piece of real estate maxing out at 68° degrees. The sides and back of this freestanding piece of climbing goodness will include vertical and slab climbing to make this magnificent island truly versatile.



METHODOLOGY - PROTOTYPING



Figma Prototype:

- Figmas prototyping tools were used to simulate the navigation of the user, as well as providing an accurate representation of the finalised animations and interactions.

Prototype Design Philosophy :

- A focus on an accurate representation of the final polished website was made to ensure the users positive and negative responses were indicative of how final users would respond.
-



METHODOLOGY - TESTING



Usability Tests (5 users)

- The usability tests tracked the users amount of engagement, positive feedback. Positive and negative aspects of the website were discuss with each user to get a deeper understanding of what to focus on. More technical adjustments and design choices were influenced through usability tests by other designers, such as increasing consistency of photography and colour use, as well as increasing negative space between elements.

MY TOOLS:



Figma

Used in almost all my prototyping and design development, Figma is an excellent tool for quickly creating beautiful mockups for websites, applications and projects, that can also be enhanced with interactions and animations for user testing.

Figma also enhances group work and collaboration, providing a workspace that works straight off the browser and allows for easy communication between members.



Photoshop / Lightroom / Illustrator

Used to enhance imagery used in websites, as well as to create custom elements for websites and applications.



HTML / CSS / JAVASCRIPT

I work heavily with CSS for micro-animations such as hover-effects, animated text and fading imagery on scroll, and laying the groundwork for responsive design.



Aftereffects

Used less often, but can really add a pop of character and life to projects. Animation can be seen used for my logo within my portfolio website.

Thank you for scrolling!



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