

Research for the MONK Project: Outdoor Bouldering

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As part of the MONK project, I conducted research on outdoor bouldering to ensure that I know the target group and bouldering topic very well. The information gathered was critical in creating good marketing strategy that appeals to climbers by addressing their needs and expectations. Below is a summary of the research findings:

Definition

Outdoor bouldering is a form of climbing performed on natural rocks without ropes or harnesses. Climbers rely on crash pads for safety and stay relatively close to the ground, focusing on short but physically demanding routes called "problems." This activity combines strength, problem-solving, and a connection with nature.

Methodology: In this research I used **Web content analysis** method, which is gathering information from websites and articles available on the internet.

Key Observations

From research and sources:

1. Essential Gear:

- Climbing shoes: Provide grip and precision on rock surfaces.
- Crash pads: Offer protection from falls.
- Chalk: Prevents hands from slipping due to sweat.
- Weather-appropriate clothing and tools for warm-ups, like resistance bands, are also recommended.

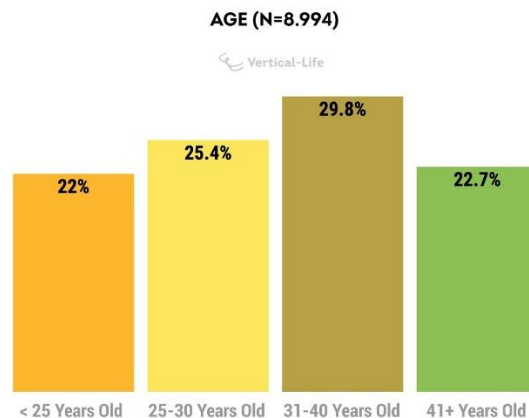
2. Safety Tips:

- Always place crash pads on level ground and ensure they cover potential fall zones.
- Spotters are essential for guiding falls and avoiding injuries.
- Falling is part of the experience—plan for it by practicing controlled descents.

3. Climbing Etiquette:

- Leave no trace: Clean up after yourself and avoid damaging rock surfaces.
- Follow local climbing regulations and respect other climbers.
- Always leave the space better than you found it.

4. Target group:



Based on the information found on this website : <https://www.ispo.com/en/news-trends/study-vertical-life-what-makes-climbing-and-bouldering-fans-tick>

I have learned that:

- **Demographics:** The typical climber tends to be middle-aged and male.
- **Community:** Climbers are part of a strong and supportive community, often introduced to the sport through social connections.
- **Competition:** The climbing scene is becoming increasingly competitive, with many climbers participating in local and professional events.
- **Dedication:** Climbers are highly dedicated to the sport, often traveling extensively to climb in different locations.

Transformation

How this research informed the project:

1. Customer journey:

The findings helped me create a detailed customer journey for the Monk project.

(Customer journey can be found in the Monk project PDF in the learning outcomes or Monk project page)

2. Tiktok concepts:

The connection with nature in bouldering influenced made me think, that It would be a good idea to create concepts with tiktok influencers who could make content at the climbing spots advertising Monk shop.

3. Monk ambassadors:

I found out that most climbers are men over 30, and it could be a great opportunity to promote the sport among younger people by creating a few brand ambassadors for MONK SHOP with young influencers on TikTok and Instagram. These influencers may have a relatively small following (2k-10k), but the advantage is that TikTok can generate huge views

even with smaller accounts. By collaborating with several smaller influencers, the impact on young people could become real, for example, by creating a trend on TikTok.

Sources:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/well/move/fitness-bouldering-rock-climbing.html>
- <https://www.wired.com/gallery/best-climbing-gear/>
- <https://www.ispo.com/en/news-trends/study-vertical-life-what-makes-climbing-and-bouldering-fans-tick>
- <https://www.blog.madboulder.org/what-is-bouldering-in-rock-climbing/>
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This research was crucial in helping me understand what bouldering is truly about. It allowed me to align the marketing strategy for MONK with the expectations of outdoor bouldering enthusiasts and to build influence within the younger target audience.