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Usability Testing Protocol and Script:

Vertical Endeavors

OVERVIEW

Vertical Endeavors is a local company that opened its doors in 1992. Built by climbers themselves, Vertical Endeavors started by filling a gap in the market for climbing enthusiasts who could not engage in the sport during the Minnesota winters and has grown to include five Minnesota locations and one indoor climbing facility in Illinois. Today, they are considered an industry leader in indoor climbing and center their offerings around customer delight, engagement, and safety.

The Vertical Endeavors website is the face of the organization and is specifically geared to communicate to those who are yet to become members, including individuals as well as families who are interested in what climbing has to offer to them. It is intended to help answer common questions in order to keep inbound phone calls and emails to a minimum. Sales and important information (e.g., punch card promotions or holiday hours) are also intended to be front-and-center for customer clarity and streamlined communications.

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RESEARCH GOALS

- Evaluate how easy it is for users to discover the full suite of activities that Vertical Endeavors offers.
- Gain insight to how much the user understands the risks and benefits of climbing at Vertical Endeavors.
- Evaluate the users understanding of the value of membership at Vertical Endeavors.

TASKS

- Sign up for an activity of your choosing (goal 1)
- Find out how many bouldering areas there are at the Minneapolis location (goal 1)

- Find and watch the orientation video (goal 2)
- Find out what you should do before your first visit to Vertical Endeavors (goal 2)
- Find out what the discount is for members going to a yoga class (goal 3)
- Read the membership benefits and tell us what 2-3 benefits of membership would be for you (goal 3)

STRUCTURE

Duration: 30 minutes

Location and format: Zoom

Materials needed:

Laptop

Script

Methods used/type of session:

Think-aloud protocol

SCRIPT

Introduction

Hi, I'm Xxxxxx. Thank you for joining me today.

I'm going to be walking you through this session. It will take about 30 minutes. Joining us will be the rest of my team. They will have their cameras off and their mics will be muted but will be observing.

Before we begin, I have some information for you, and I'm going to read it to you to make sure that I cover everything.

Today I'm asking people for their reactions to the Vertical Endeavors website. Vertical Endeavors is an indoor climbing center with five locations in Minnesota and one location in Illinois.

Another thing I want to mention is that I'm testing the website, not you. You can't do anything wrong here and you don't have to worry about making mistakes.

Also, please don't worry that you're going to hurt anyone's feelings. It's helpful to hear frank feedback about the website in order to improve it, so I'm looking to hear honest reactions.

If you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.

Request for recording

With your permission, I'd like you to share your screen with me and I'm going to record what happens on the screen. The recording will only be used to help with my findings and report.

[---START RECORDING--]

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Starting questions:

Ok. Thank you!

Before we look at the site, I'm going to ask you some starting questions:

- What are your thoughts about climbing gyms?
- What do you know about Vertical Endeavors?
- What kind of concerns do you anticipate there could be about climbing gyms?
- On a scale of 1–5. 1 being uninterested and 5 being extremely interested.
How would you rate your interest in going to vertical Endeavors and why?

Home Page Tour, Website introduction

Ok, great, thank you!

We're done with the questions and we can start looking at things.

[Open Vertical Endeavors website]

I'd like you to open the Vertical Endeavors website and share your screen with me. First, I am going to ask you to look at this page and tell me what you make of it: What strikes you about it, whose site do you think it is, what can you do here, and what is it for? Just look around and think aloud as much as possible about what you are seeing.

You can scroll if you want to, but don't click on anything yet.

TASKS

Ok, great, thank you!

Now I'm going to ask you to try doing some specific tasks. I'm going to read each one out loud before you begin.

I'm also going to ask you to do these tasks without providing specific directions. We'll learn a lot more about how well the site works that way.

And again, as much as possible, it will help us if you can try to think out loud as you go along.

- Say you are wanting to go to an activity at Vertical Endeavors. Explore the website, choose an activity to attend, and show how you would start signing up for that activity.

Thanks so much. Please return to the home page

- Now let's say you are interested in going to the Minneapolis location to try climbing, but you're wanting to know more information about the site before you go. Can you find out how many bouldering areas there are at the Minneapolis location?

Please return to the home page

- You've decided you're going to go to the Minneapolis location and try climbing! Explore the website to find out what you should do before your first visit to Vertical Endeavors.

Please return to the home page

- You've noticed that there might be some other steps that you need to complete before you can climb. Find the orientation video and click on it to start it. (if they find it, let them know they do not need to watch the video)

Thanks so much. Please return to the home page

- You are considering becoming a member, but you are wondering if it would be worth the cost. Read up on the membership benefits and tell us what the 2 to 3 top benefits of membership would be for you.

Please return to the home page

- So, you have decided to become a member. Now that you're a member, find out what the discount is for you if you want to attend a yoga class.

Closing or reflection questions

Thank you! We're almost done -- in closing I'd like to ask a couple more questions reflecting on this experience:

- How would you describe what is available at Vertical Endeavors from looking at the website?
- How easy or difficult would you say it was for you to find the information you were looking for?
- After looking through the website, using a scale from 1–5, 1 being unlikely and 5 being extremely likely, how likely are you to go to one of their facilities? Could you explain why?
- If you were able to change one thing about this website to fit your needs, what would it be?

Thank the participant and close

Those are all of the questions I have for you. Thank you so much for taking the time to give your feedback -- it is very helpful and I appreciate it.