

BIG Idea Mentor Contact Information

Finalist Information

Presentation Time: 11:30 AM

BIG Idea Business Name: E-Z Holds	School: Tri-Valley High School
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Mentor

Name: Elliot Gall

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Mentor's Job Title: Vice President, Card and Merchant Solutions

Company Description/Mentor Background: Community bank with over \$4 billion in assets. I've worked in the credit card issuing business for 18 years after earning a bachelor's degree in finance with a minor in psychology and a Master of Business Administration. I have additional educational and work background in technology, physics and natural sciences with direct application in an internship with one of the country's most innovative national laboratories.

Currently serving on the board of directors for Safe Harbor, coach of Smitty's youth baseball travel team.

Company website: www.dacotahbank.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/elliottgall

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Twitter (optional):

Entry: E-Z Holds

ID: 281

Concept Overview

E-Z Holds are my new brand of climbing holds, created with custom molds and poured from liquid polyurethane. Many current climbing holds don't prepare you for the real rock you will find outdoors. This is why my focus will be designing holds that accurately replicate the natural feel of real rock, while still being comfortable to train on.

Product & Service

I will be designing, creating, and selling rock climbing holds. While climbing gyms are a great way to build strength for outdoor rock climbing, the holds often don't prepare you for climbing outside. This is because many holds in climbing gyms have perfect, flat edges, which are rare to find outdoors. So, when climbers start climbing outside, the unevenness of the holds is unfamiliar and takes time to get used to. This is why I will be focusing mainly on creating climbing holds that mimic the feel of natural rock without making them uncomfortable like some rock can be. They will still have the comfortable feel of regular climbing holds, but they will have uniquely textured surfaces to prepare climbers for the variability of real rock. They will also have to experiment to find the best ways to hold them, much like they would on rock outside. I don't anticipate these holds completely replacing current climbing holds because flat edges and smooth climbing holds are still nice to train on at times. Also, some people never plan on climbing outside. This is why I will also be making regular climbing holds, but they won't be my main focus.

Marketing Opportunity

There are more than 600 climbing gyms in the United States, plus a countless number of people who have personal climbing walls at home. These gyms and walls are constantly going through holds and having to buy replacements. This will give me a great chance to sell my holds. A large part of my target market will be people who are looking to train for outdoor climbing. This is why I will focus on designing holds that help train climbers for the unpredictability of real rock. There are many companies that make rock climbing holds, but there is not a very big selection of holds that accurately represent natural rock. I would start by advertising my product on social media. I would also create a website to go with it where I would sell all of my climbing holds. Once I start making sales, I will give deals for repeat customers and people who are buying in bulk.

Competition

There are many companies that make climbing holds, and there are a few really good ones. But my plan would be to take advantage of the area where these companies are lacking. This is in the area of natural climbing holds. I will stand out by creating climbing holds that help climbers to train better for climbing outdoors, while still having the convenience of being able to train year-round in a gym where you don't have to worry about factors like weather. I will also be making

some climbing holds that are more of a traditional style in order to attract customers that might not care about training for outdoor climbing. I will also give deals to people who are repeat customers and people buying in bulk. To start out, I may not be able to compete with large companies price wise, especially when it comes to shipping. That is why I will also make sure to focus on quality, ensuring that each hold I create meets a high standard. They will be long-lasting and durable which will help set me apart from some competitors who don't focus much on quality. Once sales increase and production becomes more efficient and affordable, I will be able to lower prices a little bit to compete with other companies in that area as well.

Management & Operation

To start out, I will be working by myself with the plan of expanding in the future. The first thing I will have to do is design molds by carving holds out of foam and then casting the molds from them. Once I have molds I am happy with, I will start producing holds by pouring liquid polyurethane into the molds. I will set up a website and start selling the holds there. I will set up packs of holds that customers can buy at a cheaper cost than buying holds individually. Once sales pick up, I will hire someone to help me produce the holds. They would be in charge of pouring the polyurethane and casting the holds while I create more designs and manage sales. The goal would be for the business to keep expanding up to the level where I would be selling holds country-wide. To get to this level, I would hire more people to help manage production and sales.

Inspiration

Source: original

Details: My idea was inspired by my rock climbing experience. I started climbing about three years ago, and the main tool I used to train was indoor climbing gyms. When I started climbing outside, I found that I was climbing at a much lower level than I was in gyms. This was because I was not used to the feel of climbing on natural rock and how each hold had a unique texture and a right way to hold it. So, it took time for me to adjust to this new style. That's why my idea is to create climbing holds that will help you adapt to natural rock while you train so climbers won't have to go through another learning period once they start climbing outside..

Elevator Pitch

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/f5TpcRxFAXA>