

BROOKLYN BOULDERS



CASE STUDY: BROOKLYN BOULDERS GOWANUS LOCATION UPDATE

PROJECT TYPE: CLIMBING WALL RENOVATION WITH DEMO, DESIGN, FABRICATION & INSTALLATION



PROBLEM:

Brooklyn Boulders, one of the nation's leading indoor climbing facilities, planted its roots in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn in 2009. With a massive plan to rock the climbing world, BKB set out with a fantastic space, a vision and its own grassroots construction methods and materials. What the founders didn't know right away, though, was how quickly their brand would expand to facilities in Chicago, Boston and into the next borough north: Queens.

Its first facility garnered much attention and was built to suit the times and its local audience. The BKB crew used traditional steel tube and plywood material along with surface treatments that could easily be acquired by your typical home-construction enthusiast. During the process, the designs were often created on the fly with construction starting before concepts were fully completed.

But this was the very first facility of its kind in Brooklyn. The goal was to get up and running as quickly as possible while on a grassroots budget. The BKB founders didn't have the luxury of committing to a large-scale climbing wall builder for designs and manufacturing.

With BKB Gowanus' unparalleled success, the owners knew they had built a proper indoor climbing brand. They believed they could build others like it in major metropolitan areas to unite urban climbing enthusiasts. So, when the time came to expand to other Top 10 Designated Market Areas, the BKB team already had its model for success. But BKB also had the luxury of creating its own modern, design-driven dream facility using the latest in climbing wall construction and aesthetics from Vertical Solutions.

Seven years after its initial opening in Brooklyn, BKB had four stunning facilities but one major problem: The owner-built walls at Gowanus were tired and outdated. Complexities kept rising due to unexpected maintenance because of age and construction method. The walls served their purpose for many years, but they no longer aligned with the BKB image of top-tier quality climbing, unique experiences focused on outdoor enthusiasts and seamless branding from one facility to the next. So, the BKB team once again pushed for a new step forward: Major reconstruction on a significant percentage of its climbing walls.

In cities like New York, space is not only hard to come by but also runs at a major premium. The team wouldn't consider closing its entire facility for the much-needed renovations which came at the busiest time of year: The winter holiday season. Closing its doors to a large membership for weeks on end was simply not an option. BKB needed a solution that was sensical, adaptable and long-lasting. And most importantly: They needed it fast.

OPTIONS

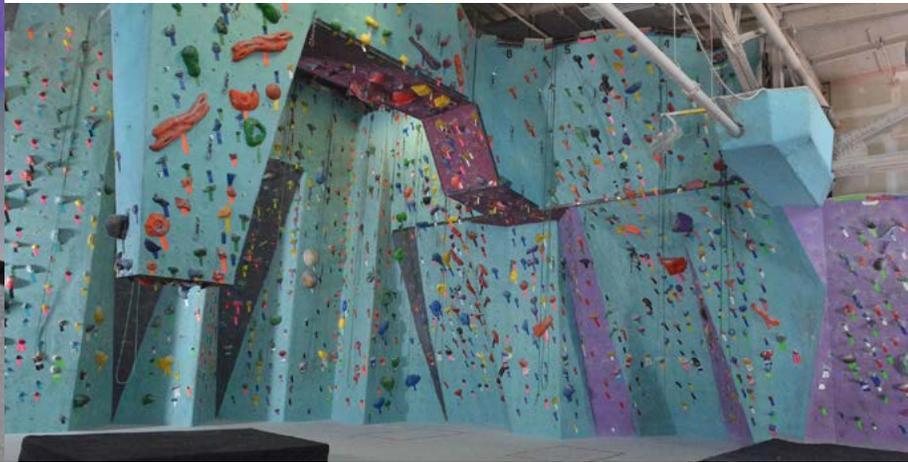
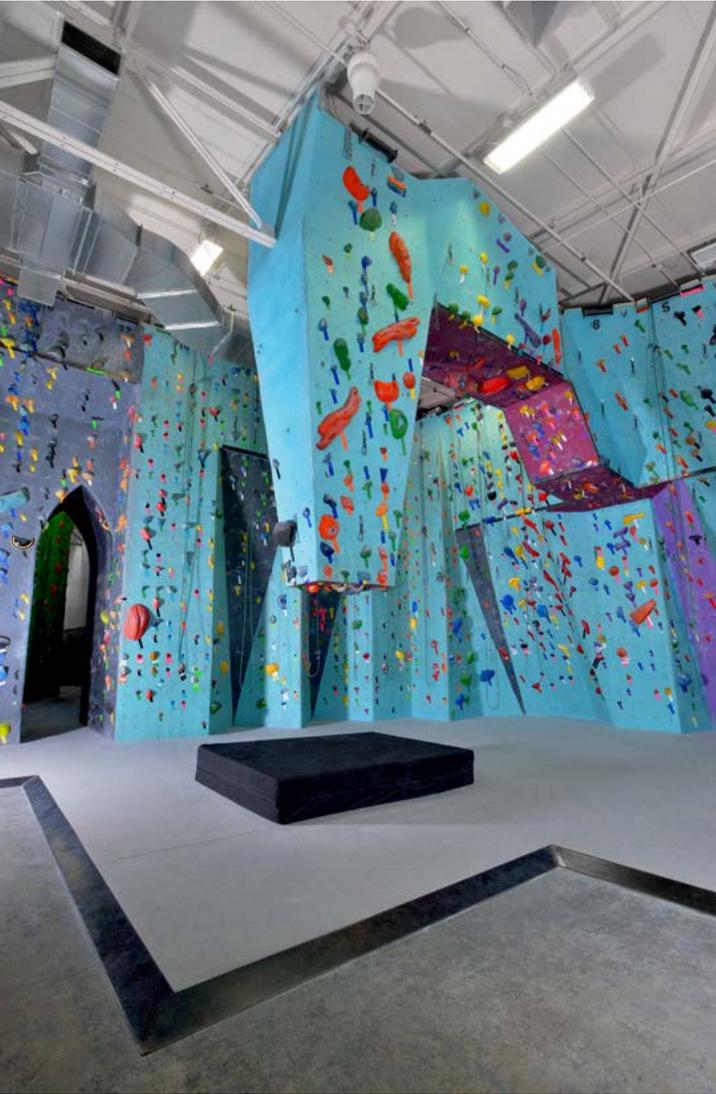
Time is of the essence, especially for a business operating in three major markets. Plus, BKB was targeting major new goals for the year, goals that couldn't afford a "pause" on the Brooklyn facility's profitability. Because of these goals, the reconstruction needed to occur in a compressed time frame with an accelerated completion date.

Design, engineering, demolition of the original walls and the construction and installation of new walls had to take place in nine weeks. To further complicate the project, it was necessary for the work to occur over the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's weeks while the facility was open ... as if the construction environment of New York City wasn't logistically difficult enough!

But Brooklyn Boulders could choose any climbing wall builder in the market, despite its previous experience using Vertical Solutions.

HOWEVER, AS DEFINED BY THE PROBLEM, BKB COULD NOT FIND ANY ALTERNATIVE BUILDERS THAT:

- ▷ Had experience navigating NYC construction logistics.
- ▷ Could mobilize quickly.
- ▷ Had an expedited manufacturing process.
- ▷ Had an efficient design construction style ready to deploy.
- ▷ Could work in a restricted timeframe.
- ▷ Would require the facility to close.
- ▷ Would object to working over major holiday weeks.



SOLUTION

Vertical Solutions was chosen as the only company that could meet and exceed all identified objectives.

The design team had just three weeks to design and fully engineer 5,000-square-foot of rope climbing walls, a task which usually takes twice the amount of time. To accomplish this, Vertical Solutions relied on its extremely agile, accurate, and adaptable construction method of choice: An MLM construction process utilizing wood CNC machine production panels. This process expedites pre-fabrication at VS' Salt Lake City headquarters and delivers a product guaranteed to fit onsite specifications with minimal re-work.

The talented design team took to task and crushed the design process with geometric-shaped panels that were seamlessly joined to create modern and stunningly aesthetic wall surfaces. More impressive was the fact that the project wasn't a clean sheet build from the ground up. The VS team was required to demolish the old owner-built walls and work within the massively tight constraints and logistics of New York City.

RESULTS

The Vertical Solutions team tackled the unbelievably large project within the allocated timeframe. From conception, the original walls were demoed and new MLM geometric walls were designed, engineered, shipped and installed in an impressively short amount of time. This case study has set a new standard for accelerated and impactful climbing wall construction.

[Click here for more images of the full gym and renovations.](#)



VERTICAL SOLUTIONS DELIVERED ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ▷ A retrofit project to replace current aging home-built walls to keep up with modern-built facilities.
- ▷ A project completed quickly and on-schedule over three major holiday weeks.
- ▷ A project completed on-budget.
- ▷ A project that did not affect the facility's hours.
- ▷ A project using an expedited, reliable and durable construction style.

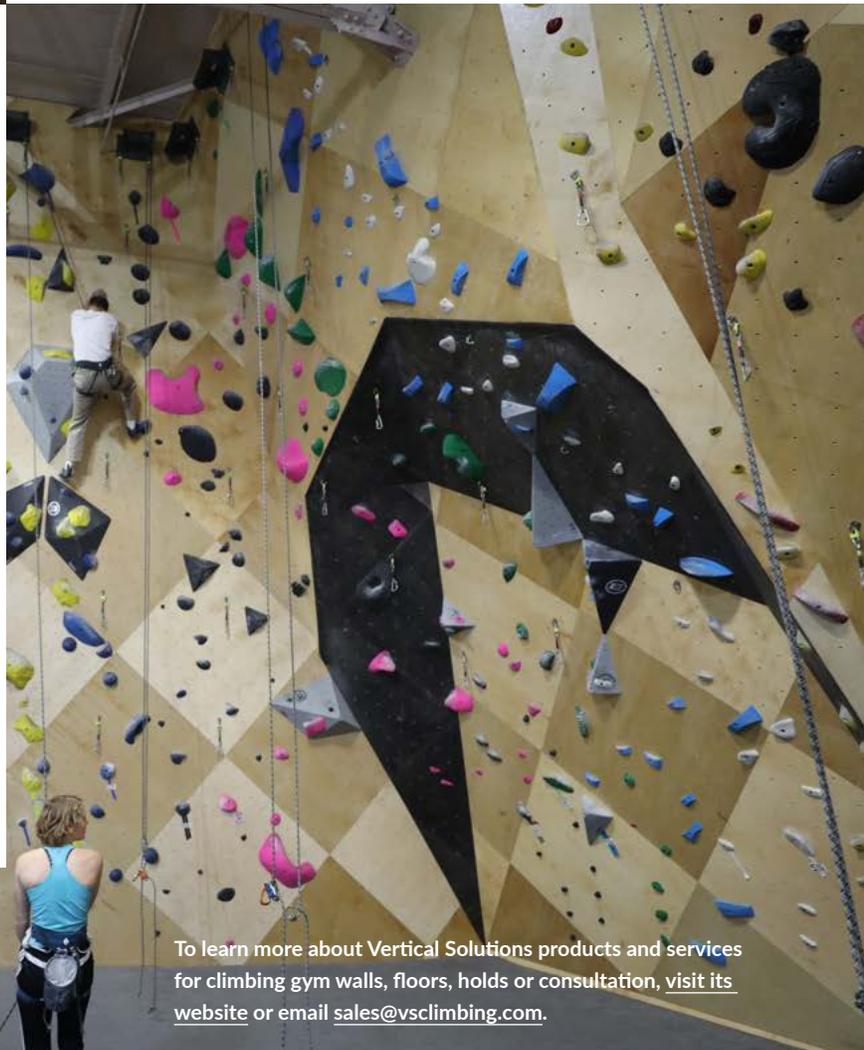
This proof of concept executed on behalf of Brooklyn Boulders illustrates that Vertical Solutions has the team, expertise, tools and ambition necessary to deliver on any goal.

"As usual, we put some very tight and non-negotiable constraints on the project scope that we gave to Vertical Solutions. Additionally, this recent renovation project was by far the most accelerated we've ever proposed. The fact that all of this came together and was installed over the holidays without closing our facility was nothing short of monumental. This is New York; nothing closes!

I don't want to overlook the importance of this project's design either. We'd built a brand that requires cohesion amongst all the facilities and we couldn't accept anything that wasn't spectacular and immediately impressive, yet tailored to the Brooklyn audience. The design team worked with us quickly to get us something fresh and new, with durability being a major priority.

WE CAN'T IMAGINE CHOOSING ANY OTHER WALL BUILDER TO GET THIS DONE RIGHT AND ON-TIME."

— LANCE PINN, PRESIDENT,
BROOKLYN BOULDERS



To learn more about Vertical Solutions products and services for climbing gym walls, floors, holds or consultation, visit its [website](#) or email sales@vsclimbing.com.





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