“Vertical Pro Is Where the Industry Meets, and That's Exactly Where We Want to Be”

- **New tree care technology: Petzl presents mechanical Prusik pulley for 2027**
- **Artificial intelligence and virtual reality open up new opportunities for climbing gyms**
- **Mobile training truck brings safety training directly to companies**

Friedrichshafen – A training center on wheels, artificial intelligence in climbing gym management and virtual adventures on real climbing walls: On November 13 and 14, 2026, Vertical Pro will showcase the wide range of innovations in working at height and climbing sports. Together with the renowned industry gathering “Halls & Walls” of the German Alpine Club (DAV), the sixth edition of the trade fair will bring together the different sectors of the vertical industry. Around 200 exhibiting companies from approximately 30 countries will present new products, technologies and services for rope access technology, working at height and rope rescue, tree care, climbing and bouldering gyms as well as high and forest rope courses at the Messe Friedrichshafen trade fair grounds.

“Whether in climbing sports, tree care or professional work at height, the requirements may differ, but there is considerable common ground when it comes to safety, training and the use of new technologies. Vertical Pro gives industry professionals the opportunity to discover solutions from other sectors, exchange experiences and take away new ideas for their own work. This is precisely what makes our trade fair so valuable,” explain Klaus Wellmann, CEO of Messe Friedrichshafen, and Sharon Bareth, Project Manager of Vertical Pro.

Climbing gyms: AI assistant analyzes operational data

Climbing gyms generate data every day, from bookings and memberships to access control. At Vertical Pro, software provider CLIMBMANAGER will demonstrate how this information can be used to support operational decisions. Its new AI assistant, “Maya AI”, continuously analyzes key business figures. For example, it can identify members at risk of canceling their memberships or uncover potential reasons for declining membership sales. Rather than simply evaluating figures, Maya AI provides explanations and recommendations for

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action. The assistant is part of an integrated software platform covering climbing gym operations from bookings to point-of-sale systems.

“We want to connect with climbing gym operators, build new partnerships and use feedback from the industry to further develop our products. Vertical Pro is where the climbing industry meets, and that's exactly where we want to be,” says Mateusz Ropka, Founder and CEO of CLIMBMANAGER.

Virtual reality transforms climbing walls into adventure worlds

Mount EverQuest is bringing another form of digitalization to climbing gyms. The company combines traditional indoor climbing with virtual reality, overlaying real climbing walls with immersive digital environments. Ordinary climbing holds and walls are transformed into the rocky slopes of towering mountains, the exterior of a spaceship or a volcano. According to the company, the modular system can be integrated into existing climbing walls without major structural modifications, offering gym operators new opportunities for events and additional activities. “At the same time, new target groups of all ages can be introduced to climbing, particularly people who have previously been more interested in video games,” explains Tobias Schaffer, Co-Founder of Mount EverQuest.

Working at height: The training center comes to the workplace

Employees working at height usually have to travel to external training facilities for safety courses. Kölner Seil Kommando, exhibiting at Vertical Pro for the first time, is taking the opposite approach: Its mobile training truck brings the training environment directly to company premises. The vehicle features a fall-arrest ladder system reaching up to eight meters, a fully accessible roof area and a manhole for practicing work in confined spaces. Several anchor points allow realistic rescue and evacuation exercises. In addition to training in the use of personal protective equipment against falls from height (PPE), the truck is equipped and certified to provide mobile training in accordance with Global Wind Organisation (GWO) standards. “When working at height, it is essential that everyone knows exactly what to do in an emergency. Our training truck provides realistic training opportunities directly on site. This not only saves companies time and money but also makes it easier to provide regular training for their employees,” emphasizes Christian Otter, Managing Director of Kölner

Seil Kommando. Visitors to Vertical Pro can see the training truck for themselves and learn more about its possible applications.

Rope rescue: Firefighters' union joins as a partner for the first time

The German Firefighters' Union (Deutsche Feuerwehr-Gewerkschaft, DFeuG) is joining Vertical Pro as a partner for the first time this year and will also have its own booth. The union intends to use the trade fair as a platform to strengthen dialogue with manufacturers, industry experts and practitioners on safety and working conditions in emergency and rescue services. Working at height and rope rescue are particularly important areas of common interest with Vertical Pro. “Highly specialized emergency personnel, such as rope rescue teams, carry out tasks that require specific skills, extensive training and regular practice. To perform these demanding operations safely, equipment, qualifications and working conditions must all meet the necessary requirements,” emphasizes Yves Pasquini, Deputy Federal Chairman and Chairman of the DFeuG Baden-Württemberg regional association. “We are delighted to welcome DFeuG as both a partner and an exhibitor. This allows us to further expand the important rescue services sector at Vertical Pro this year and offer interested trade visitors from this field an even broader range of products and services,” adds Project Manager Sharon Bareth. Members of rescue services can attend the trade fair at a reduced admission price of EUR 17 per day.

Tree care: Training and new rope technology

Vertical Pro is also introducing new developments and expanding its exhibitor portfolio in the tree care sector. Münchner Baumkletterschule, a training provider specializing in rope-based tree climbing techniques, tree care and occupational safety, will be exhibiting with its own booth for the first time. “Cities and municipalities are facing growing challenges when it comes to their responsibility for tree safety, adapting to climate change and preserving existing trees,” explains Heike Hagl, responsible for Project Management, Quality Management and Strategic Planning at Münchner Baumkletterschule. As a result, demand for qualified tree care professionals continues to grow. One possible entry route into the profession is the basic rope climbing course (SKT A) offered by the training provider. Under certain conditions, participants can now receive funding for the course through a training voucher issued by

Germany's Federal Employment Agency. At Vertical Pro, visitors can find out more about the various training opportunities and career prospects in tree care.

There are also new developments in equipment for professional arborists. At Vertical Pro, Petzl will present its new ZIGZAG SHIFT mechanical Prusik pulley, which is scheduled to join the company's product range in 2027. The device can be opened and installed at any point along the rope, whether in a single-rope or doubled-rope configuration. When used on a single rope, it does not require an additional braking device. The new development was tested under real-world conditions for the first time at the International Tree Climbing Championship (ITCC) in St. Louis, USA, in early October. At Vertical Pro, trade visitors will be able to see and try out the ZIGZAG SHIFT for themselves. The Petzl Professional Team will offer several demonstrations and workshops at the climbing tree in the Demo + Test Area in Hall A6 on both days of the trade fair.

Test, compare and discuss

At Vertical Pro, visitors can try out the products on display, both at exhibitors' booths and in the extensive Demo + Test Areas. Hall A6 features two climbing trees, a platform with a ladder, trussing, a shaft and a climbing wall, as well as a container tower for live demonstrations and product testing. In Hall A5, a bouldering wall complements the Demo + Test Area with sports-focused applications.

The supporting program addresses current topics from the different sectors of the vertical industry. As part of “Halls & Walls”, the German Alpine Club and the non-profit organization “Ich will da rauf!” will focus, among other topics, on inclusion in climbing gym operations. Sessions covering professional work at height will examine the practical use of fall protection systems, the limitations of existing safety standards and risks associated with working with ropes and powered ascenders. The program is complemented by the “Women at Height” networking format and the new Expert Forum in Hall A6, where exhibiting companies will present their products, services and solutions in short sessions. The complete supporting program with all presentations, workshops and live demonstrations is available on the Vertical Pro website at https://www.vertical-pro.com/trade-show-program/program

Opening hours and tickets

Vertical Pro will take place in Friedrichshafen on November 13 and 14, 2026. Opening hours are Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are available online only. No tickets will be sold at the venue. Day tickets cost EUR 46, while two-day tickets are available for EUR 52. Reduced day tickets cost EUR 17, and tickets for emergency services personnel are also available for EUR 17. The after-work ticket, valid from 2 p.m., costs EUR 27. Parking is free of charge.

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About Vertical Pro:

Vertical Pro brings together all height professionals – from both the sports and professional sectors. The trade fair presents topics for operators of high-rope courses, climbing gyms and bouldering halls, people working at height, rescue and aid organizations. The focus is primarily on interaction: equipment such as ropes, climbing holds or carabiners as well as safety systems can be tested and compared in the Demo and Test area. The supporting program offers a wide range of opportunities for knowledge building and inspiration. The concept focus of Vertical Pro creates new synergies for sporting and industry climbers, providing the ideal meeting point for exchanging ideas across industry and country borders.

About Messe Friedrichshafen:

Messe Friedrichshafen GmbH is one of Germany's leading trade fair companies and is based on Lake Constance at the nexus of four different countries. Founded in 1950 to promote the region's economy, it has made a name for itself worldwide as an organizer and marketer of leisure and trade fairs. Congresses, corporate and sporting events as well as TV productions and live concerts complement the broad portfolio. Every year, Messe Friedrichshafen attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors and thousands of exhibiting companies from more than 100 countries to Lake Constance. A total of 87,500 m² of exhibition space spread over twelve exhibition halls and two multipurpose foyers as well as the two open spaces in the inner courtyard of 15,500 m² and the static display of 20,000 m² offer unique possibilities for eventful trade fair days. The compact exhibition grounds with their own lake in the immediate vicinity of the airport as well as halls with hangar doors allow for a wide variety of potential uses