

Honoring The Past, Designing For What's Next

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A preview of EP Climbing's Heritage holds, new panel materials, and what we'll be sharing at CWA 2026

The climbing industry has changed a lot over the years. Gyms have grown larger and more diverse, setting styles continue to evolve, and facilities are thinking further ahead than ever before about longevity, maintenance, and user experience.

At the same time, some things haven't changed. Good movement still feels good. Thoughtful design still matters. And the best tools are the ones that continue to earn their place on the wall year after year.

As we look ahead to the 2026 CWA Summit, we've been reflecting on how those ideas show up in our work today, and how they're shaping what we're bringing to the show floor.

Revisiting Familiar Movement: The Heritage Line

The Heritage Line grew out of a simple question: what happens when you take something that worked well decades ago and refine it with today's understanding of movement, setting, and facility needs?

Inspired by EP's original hexagon-based holds from the 1980s, the Heritage Line revisits that early design language through a modern lens. The geometry is familiar, but the execution reflects how climbing is set and experienced today, supporting everything from commercial gym routes to competition-style movement and creative setting.

Rather than chasing trends, the focus here is on consistency, versatility, and usability. The shapes are designed to work together across different materials and sizes, giving setters tools that feel intuitive and adaptable. It's a system built to encourage creativity while remaining approachable for climbers across a wide range of abilities.

In many ways, the Heritage Line reflects something we hear often from experienced setters and operators: good movement doesn't go out of style. It just evolves.

Materials as Part of the Design Conversation

Holds are only one part of the climbing experience. The surfaces they live on—the panels, textures, and materials—play an equally important role in how movement is perceived and how walls age over time.

As facilities plan for longer lifecycles and more diverse use cases, material choices have become a design decision, not just a construction detail. Durability, consistency, and long-term performance matter just as much as how a wall looks on opening day.

With that in mind, we've continued to explore panel materials that align with the same values we apply to our holds: reliability, performance, and thoughtful design.

Expanding Options Without Changing Expectations

One of the panel materials we'll be highlighting at CWA 2026 is eucalyptus. Developed intentionally over several years, eucalyptus panels were designed to meet the same performance expectations facilities already rely on, while expanding material options for new builds and renovations.

This isn't about replacing what works. Birch remains a trusted and proven material. Eucalyptus simply gives facility owners and designers another option. One that fits seamlessly into existing systems and maintains the same standards of performance and

As with everything we build, the goal is consistency. New materials should support familiar design principles, not introduce uncertainty.

A Broader Look at What We're Working On

Beyond Heritage and panel materials, our booth will offer a broader look at how EP is thinking about climbing spaces today. From wall systems and surfaces to ongoing support and long-term planning, we're continuing to focus on solutions that help facilities build spaces that last.

That includes everything from early design coordination and structural planning to inspections, panel updates, and hold refresh strategies years after opening day. Longevity is not a feature added at the end of a project. It is a design principle that influences decisions from the very beginning.

We're still finalizing the full lineup of what will be on display, but our goal is the same as always: meaningful conversations, hands-on exploration, and sharing tools that are designed to work together in real-world environments.

See It at CWA 2026

EP Climbing will be exhibiting at the 2026 CWA Summit at Booth 312, taking place April 15-17. Members of our team will be there to talk through design approaches, material choices, and how these ideas are being applied in facilities today.

Whether you're planning something new, refreshing an existing space, or just want to spend time with the tools in person, we'd love to connect and continue the conversation.

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