

Summary



The library as »Third Places« / Libraries Must Offer More Than Lending Services To Remain Relevant (Robert Barth)

(pp. 426 – 429)

Ever since losing the monopoly on information with the rise of the Internet, libraries have increasingly endeavoured to become »Third Places«. It has been recognized that their previously central focus on the book and media collection has dwindled due to the wide variety of other sources for downloads and purchasing. If libraries hope to survive the 21st century, they need to give priority to new aspects: being a highly attractive place to visit and offering a wide selection of educational and learning materials.

Increasingly, libraries are becoming places to spend more time in. They are sites for learning and centres of information, with rooms for quiet study or group meetings. It is thus important to have comfortable furnishings – all the way to reclining chairs and sofas. Complementary to a learning site is the presence of education and stimulating media – texts, films, theatre and music. In and around London one now finds »Idea Stores« which work closely, for example, with educational institutions. The stores or community centres offer, on their own or as co-sponsors, classes, events and training courses that can be provided with the latest technological equipment. These are important services for life-long learning, which is an essential part of the modern working world.

Libraries also fulfil a function as gathering places. Since a growing number of people in modern society live alone, the library is an ideal place to those who want to get together or simply enjoy an atmosphere conducive to pursuing one's interests. After all, libraries are among the few public places where one can go and not be pressured to spend money.

Very important is, of course, the matter of location. Libraries are no longer found only in quiet side streets, but in the busy centre of town. Businesses have also recognized that libraries make for interesting partnerships. At the same time a library wishes to be noticed. Especially in larger cities a library building may set an architectural accent and even become an icon in the cityscape.

Headhunters, New Models of »PDA« and Comfortable Lounges / A Wide Range of New Services and Products at Trade Fair – 155 Exhibitors from 11 Countries (Oke Simons)

(pp. 456 – 460)

At the trade fair which ran parallel to this year's German Library Conference held in Nuremberg from May 26-29, it was evident once again how quickly libraries and their trade suppliers need to adapt to new conditions. This has resulted in a wide variety of new products and services. One important topic was patron-driven acquisition program (»PDA«), which was given attention both on the conference schedule and at the trade fair. In the area of eBooks, this program will soon face a turning-point due to the steep rise in pricing for so-called short-term loans.

Publishers and bulk suppliers use this conference in order to keep in touch with libraries and to sound librarians out about new ways to offer eMedia to library users. The Berlin publishing house De Gruyter, for example, sees the fair as an opportunity to pass on information to its customers in face-to-face meetings. Actual contracts usually come to fruition at a later date.

Strangely enough information was also made available about Qatar National Library's massive new project. In the near future its role will be not only to preserve the output of its country's published works but also to serve as a university and research library and a modern municipal library. These goals are to be realized with a team of library experts from around the world under the leadership of the German librarian, Claudia Lux. Many trade show visitors had the opportunity to learn how they could contribute to this project in the coming years. Head hunters in the aisles – that was a first for the German Library Conference.

From Friedrichsstraße to Adlershof / 1.2 Million Volumes to Change Location Within Berlin's Humboldt University Library (Birgit Stumm)

(pp. 464 – 467)

How do you move 1.2 million items within a library – with the least amount of inconvenience for users? This was the challenge facing the Humboldt University Library in Spring 2015. Only one year earlier the library had been given the long-awaited approval to build a new storage area. This had become necessary because the rented storage site in Berlin's Tegel quarter had been filled to the last corner for years.

With six million items, the university library is one of German's largest libraries. The new storage site will house not only 450,000 items from the old storage building, but also 175,000 items transferred from the central library and four other branches. In order to free up the shelving at other locations within the branch libraries, 600,000 further volumes needed to be shifted. The time-frame for this project was quite restrictive. In January 2015 the new storage site was completed and the move was scheduled for completion by the middle of April. Based on the library's seven-week plan, it was then necessary to shift approximately 1000 running meters of books each day. Several moving teams worked parallel to each other on various locations under the direction of more than 50 library staff members who stood by during the move. Furthermore a team of 12 experts from the staff kept critical watch over more complex sites in order to prevent any mishaps from occurring. If there had been any mistakes, the entire moving plan would be endangered, since there no flexibility could be allowed in the sequence of the moving plan.

And in the end the move was a success and met with surprisingly few protests from users. After seven weeks the mission was accomplished.

Translated by Martha Baker