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Working places, furniture, and technology: strategies of flexibility of university library buildings – the case of Bozen/Bolzano

Abstract

In the debate on modern library buildings the term “flexibility” is a magic word. Over the years its meaning has changed considerably. Today, in times of the so-called “hybrid library” and the idea of a student-centred library it has a specific meaning. On the one hand it refers to the ability to reconfigure layout to match users’ changing requirements and on the other hand it means the provision of a “family” of spaces that facilitate different forms of learning; especially the support of collaborative learning by offering adequate learning facilities is considered as today’s goal of academic libraries. It is a matter of course that the lighting as well as the acoustics design of the facility have to be appropriate to the new challenges. Flexibility is also required as applied to the technology, in particular the wiring of the building, and to the furnishing of the work places.

The new construction in Bozen/Bolzano lives up to these requirements. Under one roof together with other central service institutions of the university, the library facility supports a wide range of independent and group learning activities. Thanks to a flexible lighting design and a consequent anti-noise strategy almost all types of learning styles find an adequate work place in the very spacious building. Thus the library can accomplish its function – as was remarked by the current president of the university - as the “heart of the university”.

CV

1. Education:

- Study of Business Administration and Law in Würzburg , Padova and Milano;
- Postgraduate study of Library Science at the Bayerische Bibliotheksschule in Munich;

2. Professional Employment:

- Subject Librarian for economics, law and information science and head of the branch library for economics and law at the University Library of Bamberg (1985 – 1992);
- Interim Chief Librarian at the University Library of the Technical University of Dresden (1993);
- Head of the department for strategic planning at the former Directorship General of the Bavarian State Libraries, Munich (1994 – 1999)
- Head of the department for collection development and cataloguing at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, one of the biggest research libraries in Europe (since April 2000);

3. Other professional activity:

- Expert and consultant in library management affairs, in particular reorganization and reengineering , personnel management, library building (consulting projects on regional, national and international level);
- Memberships/chairmanships of numerous professional boards, working groups, expert committees on regional, national and international level;
- Numerous publications in professional journals about various library management topics.