Why do Libraries need buildings?

- Welcome / Introduction
- Presentations
  - Theo Kemperman
  - Olaf Eigenbrodt
- Panel Discussion
- Discussion with the audience
The Role of Physical Spaces in Libraries - or - Why do Libraries need Buildings?

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Rotterdam Public Library
Contents:

1. City of Rotterdam
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1. City of Rotterdam
Rotterdam
Rotterdam – city of contrasts

- Population: 650,000
- Hyperdiverse: 178 nationalities, 100+ languages
- Dominant language: Dutch
- Second City
- City of workers
- 51% has a migration background
- Social, geographical & cultural divisions
- Challenges: inequality, inclusion, opportunities, common future
2. Rotterdam
Public Library
Urban context
Public Library Rotterdam
Central Branch – 22,000 m²
For all citizens and visitors of Rotterdam

• Mission: "To help Rotterdam residents to participate consciously, critically and actively in Rotterdam society."

• Largest cultural institution in Rotterdam
  2.7 million visits/year

• Budget: approx. € 23 million

• 700,000 objects, including 200,000 for schools

• 1,400 study/work spaces
Presence: Physical and Digital

- Network: 21 branches covering most of the city – many as "Third Place"
- Library services for approx. 173 primary schools in Rotterdam (± 66%)
- website: 1,1 million visitors
- branches: 2,7 million visitors
3. Libraries as Public Places
Public Spaces

• Promotes community’s well-being & happiness

• Open and accessible to all

• Spaces for meetings, workshops, community interaction

• Especially in a digital age, they provide opportunities to realise a variety of human rights, including participation in civic life, freedom of access to information, and cultural rights. They allow for a social, shared dimension to rights, going beyond the individual. (UN / IFLA)
4. Libraries as Third Places
Third places

• ‘First place’ – home
• ‘Second place’ – work/school
• ‘Third Place’ – in between First and Second

• By design: free, inviting, informal hangout that cultivates essential social experiences in the company of like-minded people
• It never feels like a chore to spend time there. It’s the next best thing to setting up camp in your own living room
• Important for civil society, democracy, civic engagement and a ‘sense of place’
5. Place making
Public Libraries as Place Makers in Today’s Cities

- Urban development, planning and design: lively neighborhoods
- Attracting people, interesting places
- Place identity
- Resiliency – local economic regeneration
- Diversity and intergenerational equity
6. Platform Partners
Library Platform Partners

• Libraries serve diverse functions and societal roles, for communities and individuals

• Many functions are provided with/by partners

• Libraries: platforms for partners

• $1 + 1 = 5$

• Shops, cultural partners, coffee corners, restaurants, counter functions, heritage
Why do libraries need buildings?

Olaf Eigenbrodt
State and University Library Hamburg
Do they?

- Open access
- Electronic resources
- Open online courses
- Research data management
- Digital humanities

...
Space

- Learning
- Body and mind
- Constitution of knowledge
- Constitution of space
- Responsibility
Place

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Consultation & support
- Access
- Atmosphere
Identity

- Campus and placemaking
- Serendipity
- Third Place (?)
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