Report Bücherhallen Library and WHU - Research and Knowledge Services Department Visit

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Institutions: Bücherhallen Library, WHU KRS Department

Introduction

In the pursuit of understanding diverse library ecosystem, I embarked on a visit to two distinct institutions; Bücherhallen Library and WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management in Vallendar Research and Knowledge Services Department. This report documents my observations, insights, and reflections from this visit.

Bücherhallen Library

Visited location: Zentralbibliothek and other branches in Hamburg

Overview

With three million guests every year, the Bücherhallen Hamburg is the cultural institution with the largest audience in Hamburg and at the same time the largest municipal library system in Germany.

32 libraries in all parts of the city, two library buses and the central library near the main train station with an integrated children's and youth library, offer an extensive, constantly updated range of media for general information and education as well as leisure activities and entertainment, tailored to the needs of different guests of all ages and interests. Librarians always happy to take care of your inquiries and requests.

All library halls are technically state-of-the-art and offer attractive rooms to spend time in. Free Wi-Fi, computer workstations, cozy environment, and modern software are a given. Separate group rooms are suitable for study or discussion groups and make the library halls the central cultural meeting point in the respective districts.

During my visit, which was from 23 February till 29th February, I received an intensive close-up training with the technical departments, as well as experienced some of the library branches day-to-day chores. Below are some of the departments I had different orientation and training with:

- Department of Visitor Services
- Department of events
- Klangcollage | Minecraft activity
- Social Media
- Department of Media Acquisition
- Information Desk, Children's Library
- Organization chart
- Branch Library Bergedorf, as well as the Community Center "Körberhaus"
- *Dialog in Deutsch Program*
- Mobile Library visits around Harburg
- *RoboLab*

Physical Infrastructure

The architectural design of Bücherhallen Library Hamburg combines elements of tradition and modernity, creating a welcoming and accessible space for visitors. Upon entering the library, I was greeted by a spacious foyer adorned with colorful displays and comfortable seating areas. The layout was intuitive, with clearly marked sections for different genres, age groups, and interests. The library's commitment to inclusivity was evident in its accessible design features, including ramps, elevators, and designated quiet zones for individuals with sensory sensitivities.

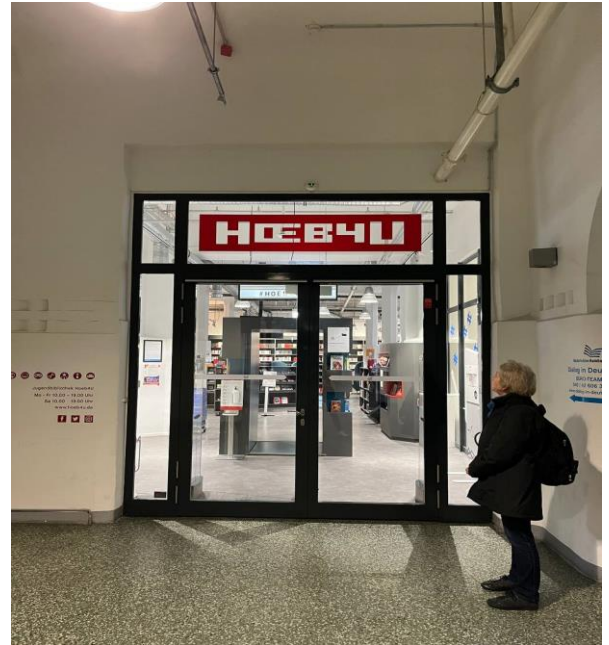**Technological Integration**

Bücherhallen Library Hamburg has embraced technology as a means of enhancing access to information and resources. High-speed internet access, computer workstations, and digital databases provide patrons with instant access to a wealth of online resources, including e-books, audiobooks, and academic journals. Interactive touch-screen kiosks and self-checkout stations streamline the borrowing process, empowering users to explore the library's collection at their own pace. Additionally, the library's robust online platform offers virtual programming and digital exhibitions, ensuring continued engagement with patrons beyond the physical confines of the library.

Programming and Community Engagement

The library's commitment to community outreach and programming is evident in its diverse array of events and activities. From author readings and book clubs to language classes (*Dialogue in Deutsch*) and more, there is something for everyone. During my visit, I had the opportunity to attend Dialogue in Deutsch session, which drew a diverse audience of refugees, immigrants, and others who try to master their German language. The library serves as a dynamic cultural hub, fostering intellectual discourse, creativity, and social interaction among patrons of all ages.

Within the Bücherhallen Library Hamburg, the *Robo Lab* stands as a pioneering initiative at the intersection of technology and education. This innovative space offers patrons the opportunity to explore robotics, coding, and STEM concepts through hands-on activities and workshops. Equipped with state-of-the-art robotics kits, programming software, and interactive learning tools, the Robo Lab fosters digital literacy and creative problem-solving skills among users of all ages. With guidance from knowledgeable staff members, visitors can embark on a journey of discovery, unlocking the potential of robotics to inspire curiosity and innovation. The Robo Lab exemplifies Bücherhallen's commitment to embracing emerging technologies and empowering patrons to thrive in the digital age.

Bücherhalle Bus, is a dynamic extension of the library's commitment to accessibility and outreach. This

innovative initiative brings the joy of reading and learning directly to communities across Hamburg, particularly those with limited access to traditional library services. Housed within a specially outfitted bus, the Bücherhalle Bus travels to schools, neighborhoods, and community centers, delivering a curated selection of books, multimedia resources, and educational materials. With its vibrant exterior and inviting interior, the Bücherhalle Bus serves as a mobile hub of knowledge, culture, and community engagement. Through this mobile library, Bücherhallen ensures that the transformative power of literature and learning reaches every corner of the city, enriching lives and fostering a love of reading among residents of all ages.
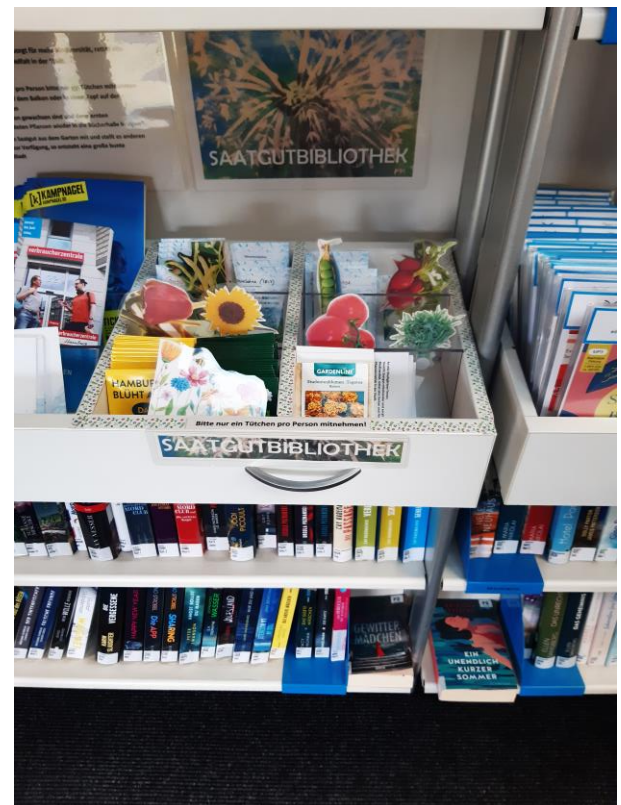

Staff and Service Quality

The professionalism and dedication of the library staff are commendable. Friendly and knowledgeable librarians are readily available to assist patrons with their inquiries, recommend resources, and provide research support. The level of personalized service and attention to detail contributes to a positive user experience, reinforcing the library's reputation as a trusted information hub in the community. Despite the challenges posed by limited resources and staffing, the staff's passion for their work shines through in their interactions with patrons, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

Conclusion

My visit to Bücherhallen Library Hamburg provided valuable insights into the transformative power of public libraries in fostering community engagement, lifelong learning, and cultural enrichment. With their inclusive programs and services, the library continues to adapt and innovate to meet the evolving needs of its patrons, reaffirming its role as a vital resource hub and cultural institution in the city of Hamburg.

WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management, Knowledge and Research Services "KRS"

Overview

The Research and Knowledge Services Department at WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management is a specialized academic library and research hub catering to the needs of faculty, researchers, and students in the field of business administration and management. Located on the campus of WHU, a leading business school in Vallendar the department plays a pivotal role in supporting scholarly research, teaching, and learning activities. Its department KRS: Knowledge and Research Services Department leverages technology to support research and scholarship in the field of business administration. Access to proprietary databases, academic journals, and digital archives is facilitated through the department's online portal, providing users with comprehensive access to scholarly resources. Additionally, the department offers specialized research support services, including literature reviews, data analysis, and citation management, to assist faculty and students in their research endeavors. With the assistance of Mr. Hossam Zalabany, Ms. Carolina Dunkel, and Mr. Mahmoud Khalifa, I've had a better understanding to the WHU KRS.

The department works on three main pillars:

1. Research Data

Access to databases, datasets, database platform licensing.

2. Digital Research Support

- Research software, AI assisted research tools
- Digital research methods; support for data and text mining, coding, APIs, etc.
- Research Data Management: planning, technical and ethical implementation, storage, versioning, publishing, etc.
- Open access publishing
- Technical Infrastructure: data repository WHU Datahub, and publication server WHU Docu- base.

3. KRS Library

- Literature, eBooks, journals collection, textbooks
- Acquisition and cataloging
- Library catalogue and discovery tools
- Inter-library Loan
- Service desk
- Self-checkout
- Reading rooms
- printers, scanner, screens
- workshops, introductions, trainings

Acknowledgment: