



The Big Idea Suan Dusit One World Library – Turn Ideas into Reality

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Article info

Article history:

Received: 1 October 2023

Revised: 9 December 2023

Accepted: 15 December 2023

Keywords:

One World Library, Learning resource, University library, Café library

Abstract

Over the years the perspective of a library has gradually changed. Between the period of 2001 and 2019 there was a sharp decline in the number of libraries around the world, people realized that the traditional libraries were no longer inviting readers. Globally, libraries have adapted to the needs of the modern era. They are no longer just a place to borrow books they have become a place for promoting learning and the space is designed such that the exchange of knowledge takes place freely. In 2022, Suan Dusit University adopted the term “One World Library” as its policy to improve the learning resources that are not supposed to be limited to the library only, but also to open to all spaces of the university as the ultimate learning resources for all learners. The following paper is a discussion of reasons, visions and implementation for the library changes at Suan Dusit University.

Introduction

The very first libraries are believed to have been built around 5,000 years ago. The term “library” originated from the Latin words “Libraria” and “Liber,” in which the former means “a place for storing books” while the latter means “books.” Hence, a library is a place containing collections of books (Chilton, 2022). As time passed, the definition and viewpoint towards library has been altered accordingly. In the book “The Librarian’s Book of Lists,” Eberhart (2010) defines ‘library’ as a collection of resources organized by information professionals or other experts who provide access to services and information that cater to the demand of users.

A New Era of Library

In the new era, libraries that simply offer book services no longer serve the context and way of life of people in the present day. According to data collected from 2001 to 2019, thousands of libraries, especially school libraries, in many countries around the world have closed down. Simultaneously, hundreds of new libraries have opened. The emergence of these libraries marks the radical transformation of libraries through concepts, designs, appearances, and services beyond research and book borrowing as in the past.

Many academics, researchers, and educators have provided information and concepts for modifying and developing libraries. For example, EveryLibrary (2018), a social welfare organization dedicated to support

libraries in the United States of America, pointed out in its publication about the changes of libraries stating that libraries must provide a new and comfortable atmosphere and facilitate collaborative learning environments in all aspects including seating options like tables and chairs, and even technology. Moreover, a library is no longer a place where noise is prohibited since it is essential to provide opportunities for exchanging opinions and discussion in order to gain new knowledge. Libraries must promote learning, create an active and vibrant atmosphere by providing various activities. Librarians must take the role of facilitators and inspire users to engage in learning and reading (EveryLibrary, 2018). With the new way of life, people who have grown up with modern technology can easily access the internet anywhere and anytime. According to data from the National Statistical Office (2018), internet usage has continually increased worldwide, including Thailand, with a significant increase in internet access rates since 2014. Therefore, knowledge in the digital form has eventually replaced books, resulting in a decrease in the number of library users since they can now seek knowledge in a different way and access a wider range of knowledge sources by just connecting to the internet. As a result of the factors mentioned above, various organizations have found themselves in need of transforming their libraries. In the past decade, many libraries have tried to adapt a design that exhibits their unique and distinctive characteristics through renovations or constructing new buildings.

Suan Dusit University, which turned 90 years old in 2023, is a higher education institution in Thailand. The university has continuously transformed its library into a hub for learning. In 1995, the university expanded its campuses to 23 different locations in Bangkok and other provinces to accommodate the growing number of students and adhere to the university's policy, "Study anywhere under the same standards". The President of Suan Dusit University, Associate Professor Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin, has therefore taken the initiative to establish a virtual library that offers services by utilizing international standard information technology systems and the internet to search for information, facilitate teaching and learning, and communicate via videoconferencing. The university has consistently adjusted in response to the new era and changes in global trends. In 2015, the learning space expanded from a library to incorporate coffee shops and established an innovative space called the Café Library. Over time, the

transformation of the libraries at Suan Dusit University reflects the vision of the administrators to prioritize the importance of designing the environment and space.

"I had visited Suan Dusit University several times before working here. I have noticed the pleasant environment as well as the tidiness and cleanliness of the area. The spatial organization was uniquely distinct with the use of modern technology to facilitate students' learning. Students and personnel exhibited good discipline. Their learning was influenced by a good environment and activities organized in line with modern ideas.

How Khunying Krajangsri Raktakanit came up with these concepts is unknown. In my observation, however, she adapted what she had seen and learned from various environments and places and made them into reality (she adapted Spanish culture as a result of her time spent studying there, and her insights into home economics were a result of her year spent as a visiting scholar in the USA).

I have finally come to comprehend what Khunying Krajangsri had been thinking all along after having opportunities to study abroad and gaining experience and information from our university as well as other universities in America, Europe, and Asia. What I have been doing is carrying on her legacy and expanding her ideas to keep up with new social and technological advancements."

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin

4 February 2022

From Library to...University

The Journey of One World Library to the University

One World Library: Framework

The term "One World Library" was originally created by the world-renowned graphic designer in 2017, Michael Bierut with the intention of changing the image of a library. His works can be found in numerous important places all over the world, such as the Museum of Modern Art or MoMA located in the heart of New York City, the Denver Art Museum, and the National Library in Washington D.C. His most well-known creations include the logo for Hillary Clinton's US presidential campaign in 2016 and the Mastercard logo.

As a world-class expert and scholar, Michael Bierut spoke on the TED Talks (<https://www.ted.com>) stage in 2017 to share his ideas and inspiration under the topic "How to design a library that makes kids want to

read". In his talk, Michael Bierut recounted that he was approached by Robin Hood, a large charitable organization in New York, to join a project aiming to transform small rooms in many buildings into the initiative library for children with the help of many architects. Michael Bierut was responsible for the logo design and one of his logos is called OWL, which could stand for either "One World Library" (international library), or "Open, Wonder, Learn."

The term "One World Library" or OWL was an abbreviation for Open, Wonder, and Learn. The term has been derived from the image modification of a traditional library to become a modern global library. This concept shaped ideas and been combined with the Big Idea: the conceptual data into actual practices to promote the meaning of OWL in the

Suan Dusit University dimensions that the university is a space of learning everywhere and also raises the standard of learning management with the luxury and transformation.

With the interest of learning at all times, in 2022, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin, the President of Suan Dusit University put the phrase 'One World Library' into policy. The library along with the Office of Academic Resources and Information Technology was renovated to serve the needs of conducting various activities. However, there was not enough space considering the number of students and the different types of activities being held. Therefore, space renovation relating to learning was the best way to address the issue. Considering that Suan Dusit University has developed and turned areas into learning spaces, concrete learning can be seen as one of the unique features of the University which was mentioned in the speech "One World Library" delivered by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin:

"In the present era, learning should not be restricted to an area like a virtual library or a classroom. Learning from books or other media resources should be adapted to surroundings that are rapidly and continuously changing. Learning from different spaces is considered as an experience leading to better learning. Knowledge is usually mentioned but experience is not referred to. What we see is only one kind of knowledge, but experience with creativity brings about good knowledge. Developing the university environment, therefore, emphasizes a unique design that differs from popular or commonplace designs. Designs for spaces, environment, and buildings of the University can be

called "Suan Dusit Design" which infuses the "Suan Dusit Spirit" into every area. The important culture of thinking of Suan Dusit University illustrates learning without area restriction. The University focuses on providing every space for all persons who need to acquire knowledge, and every space in the University must be a learning space."

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin

23 January 2023

"One World Library to the University" Project

This vision overcomes the location limitation and does not dwell on the traditional library. It has been established that environment, context, and the new generation's learning styles have changed. This is also related to the findings of a research study by Malik Ghulam Behlol which found that people learned from their individual interests. Good learning was according to their needs and appropriate styles, and learning relating to living styles brought about new skills. It also reported that learning should not be separated from daily life or activities done in different situations. According to the study, integrated learning made learning more efficient (Behlol, 2010). Equipped with the knowledge, data, experience, and situational analysis, the policy of space, building, and environmental improvement to become the learning resource based on the standard of academic strength has been developed. This allows students to receive knowledge and develop their ideas stemming from new knowledge gained from both direct and indirect experiences. Thus, knowledge can be acquired in every location, not just in a library or a traditional learning space. It can be said that all the spaces in the University will become a complete learning resource according to the concept of 'From Library to University' as illustrated Figure 1.

Concept Development

The last main element of good learning management is the university. Suan Dusit University places great importance on providing complete learning resources to students, therefore the concept for One World Library (OWL) was developed. OWL is a library full of various learning activities that utilizes the integrated space focusing on designing an environment for learning and services. It considers the learning from both the physical environment and the virtual environment leading to the format of learning management called

From **Library** to ... **University**

The Journey of **One World Library** to the **University**

Library: From Classrooms to Library (From the Years 1934–1996)

Years 1934–1965

The library was not established.

Years 1966–1968

There was a room for gathering works published in Works of Housewife Club Magazine and other documents.

Year 1969

A classroom was developed to be the library which was located on the 1st floor of Building 1.

Year 1971

The library expanded into two classrooms, and there were staff who took charge of the library.

Years 1972–1975

The library was moved to the Library Building, and a science laboratory was in the same building. The former design of the building was based on the standards of the Department of Teacher Training which was previously constructed to become the library and the conference hall. Then the University renovated the building to have the library and the science laboratory. Most of the books and reference books were arranged on the mezzanine floor. There were permanent librarians (both librarians and teacher librarians) who took charge of the library.

Years 1976–1979

The library was relocated to the 1st floor of Building 2. It occupied half of the floor while the other half belonged to the Office of Finance and Registration. The former library was renovated as the Office of the President and the President's room. The library was built as a traditional library. The library arranged the books using the Dewey Decimal System.

Years 1980–1988

The library was moved back to the original location which was renovated with modern design and used the international library system, and the Department of Library Science was founded. The Office of the President and the President's room were relocated to the 1st floor, Home Economics Building (the current location of Café by Home).

Year 1989

The library was relocated to the newly built Library Building, and its systems were improved according to the guidelines for libraries in the new age. The Department of Educational Technology was located on the 4th floor in the same building which was the starting point to bring educational technology to support the library.

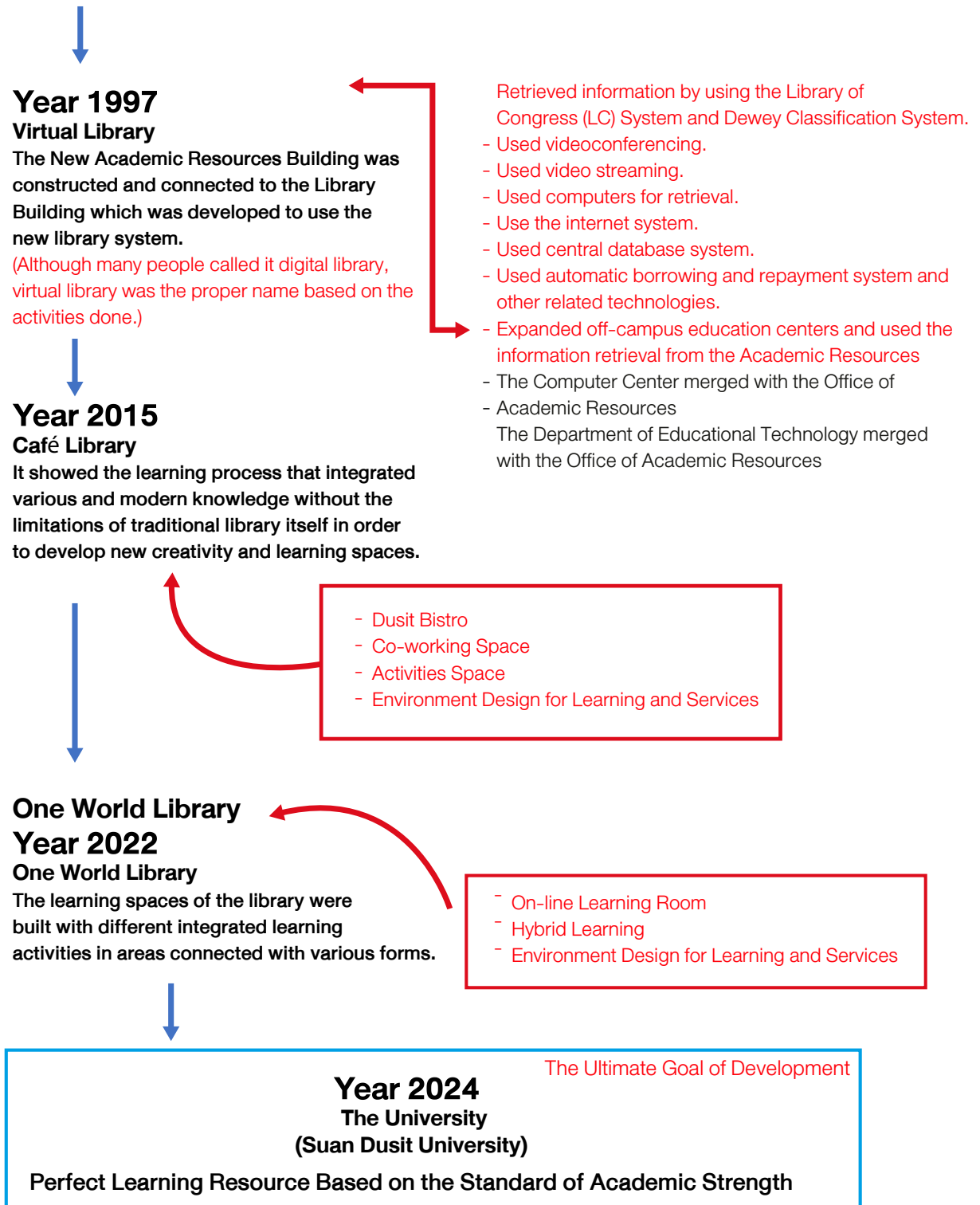


Figure 1 The Development of One World Library, Suan Dusit University
Source: Sirote Pholpuntin. (2023). *The Big Idea Suan Dusit One World Library Turn Ideas into Reality*. Bangkok: Suan Dusit University. pp.6-7.

“Place-based Learning(PBL).” Consequently, every place in Suan Dusit University is becoming a learning space. This appropriate space development will turn One World Library to One World University to surpass the concept of survival.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin
30 November 2022

“Survival is not enough.” Golden 30 Minutes Special
Coffee Break with SDU President

cleanliness along with the addition of the current buildings designed and constructed to reflect the modernity of the changing world. All of these enhance the potential of learning starting from the gates of Suan Dusit University.

“Good Knowledge” is derived from experiences and creative thinking. Therefore, place-based learning is one concept of learning that fulfills the acquisition of knowledge as well as continuity. For instance, learning



Figure 2 One World Library, Suan Dusit University

Source: Sirote Pholpuntin. (2023). *The Big Idea Suan Dusit One World Library Turn Ideas into Reality*. Bangkok: Suan Dusit University. p.8.

One World Library is based on the principle of an era changing from the traditional library being the only place students can search for knowledge to one that includes the outside world as part of the learning atmosphere and environment introducing a new way of learning as illustrated in Figure 2. In this day and age, new ways of learning are emerging from fast changing technology, and the learning practices of people in the 21st century come from experience more than just reading from books. Every space can be used for learning by way of integrated space combination. This is the fourth development era as stated by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin on 23 January 2023.

From 1995 to the present (year 2023), Suan Dusit University has been constantly adapting to a continuously changing environment. This change started from foreseeing the future of the organization as it pertains to standardized scenarios and SDU excellence. This led to the distinction and sophistication of SDU standards which is outstanding and unique.

Creating an apt environment and connecting various places in the university makes “Suan Dusit University” different from others. The structure of the historical buildings reveals its beauty, elegance, and

from reasons and the origin of places including “palace recipes” is significant because Suan Dusit is situated near the palace and the university can be considered as an extension of that particular learning experience. The transformation of the traditional library at Building 11 connecting the Office of Academic Resources and Information Technology with the computer room is now an integrated space that links all the learning spaces. Accordingly, the teachers’ learning management has to adapt and integrate the learning potential from every place.

Café Library in Suan Dusit has been established to cater to everyone for the purpose of meeting and conversing with people from inside and outside Suan Dusit University. This increases the potential for learning and exchanging ideas among our students.

The last piece of the puzzle would be implementing these plans while I am still in this position. The future plan is “everywhere in Suan Dusit is a learning resource.” This is under the concept of opening spaces for talking, arranging activities, and establishing a new image of the library as a comprehensive learning resource with less physical books as possible. For this reason, the project of improving the library at Building 11, the Academic

Resources and Information Technology building, the Fitness Building, the Yaowapa Building, and other classrooms have started. From this idea, it led to the conceptualization of OWL (One World Library). A library can only hold a certain number of books. Therefore, these places were redesigned to facilitate computers with Internet connection. In addition, regular discussions on various talking points are held at Poll Café. Finally, all these things will represent the future image of Suan Dusit University as a “complete learning resource that is based on high academic standards.”

In fact, everything is constantly changing so we never know what the future would be. We cannot predict the future because it is difficult to do so. More importantly, if we can foresee the future, there is no future. Therefore, Suan Dusit University needs to adjust and adapt based on what needs to be done as we cannot see what the future may bring. We have to develop our last puzzle piece and we must be prepared as it may look different from what we have envisioned.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sirote Pholpuntin
23 January 2023

One World Library to The University Project

According to the concept above, ‘One World Library’ is a library full of various learning activities which integrates university spaces as complete learning resources. This is based on our own academic strength standard operating between the years 2022 – 2024. The result of this development is the university’s One World Library as illustrated in Figure 3.

Conclusions

The concept behind One World Library (OWL) is a place every human being on the earth can obtain access to information, learn and communicate. The main focuses are learning as well as sharing and providing culture all over the world without discrimination (Narittakurn, 2023). One World Library (OWL) is another step forward for the library in the era of change. OWL has developed from the idea of ‘using space for learning.’ Learning happens in all university spaces called One World Library (Kitlert, 2023).

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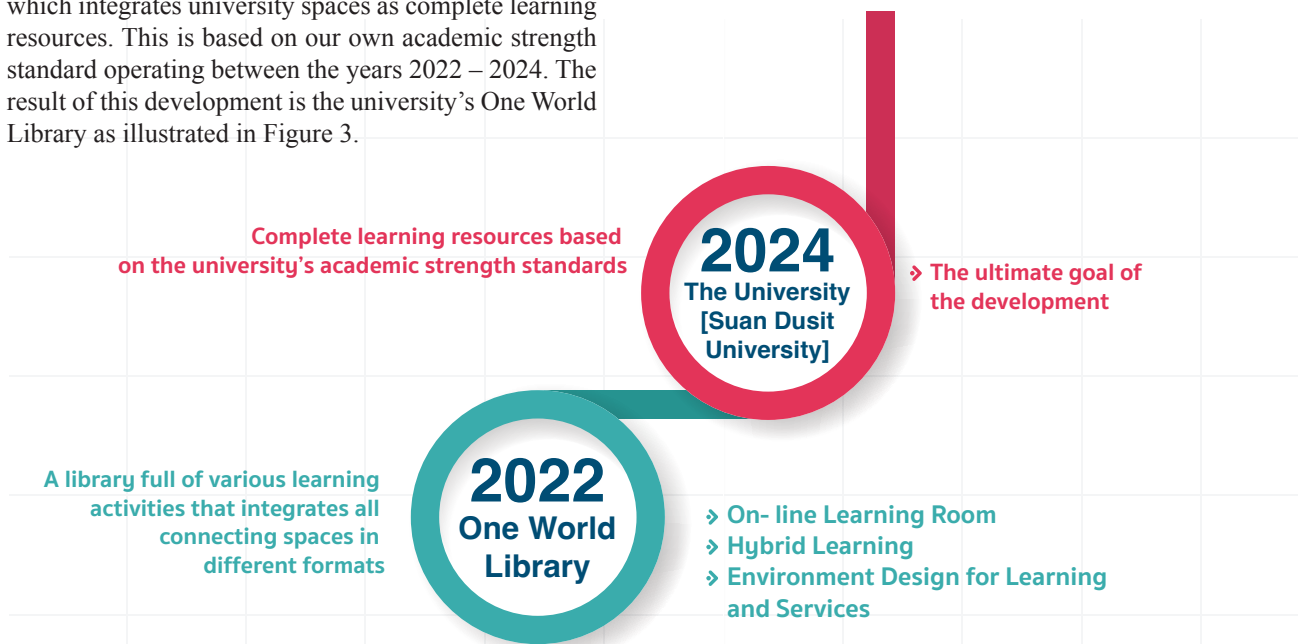


Figure 3 The Result of the Development of One World Library 2022-2024

Source: Sirote Pholpuntin. (2023). *The Big Idea Suan Dusit One World Library Turn Ideas into Reality*. Bangkok: Suan Dusit University. p.10.

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