

Architecture as a strategy

The Belgian architect, Henry Van de Velde, built a wonderful 64 meter high Booktower for Ghent University when he was 70 years old. After years of neglect, the concrete building is in desperate need of restoration and the total cost will be 41 million euro (and even more ...) which is hard to get from a university. We needed a Mister Singer who came almost out of the blue, his charm and his drive to convince the board of directors. He used the strength of the building and the public opinion to reach his goal. Today the architects have been appointed but we are faced with an additional problem because the 48 km of books (of which 17 km are cultural heritage) have to leave the building during the restoration. The architects found a clever solution, but alas not the cheapest one....

And of course we are not only a building, but also a scientific library and Architecture as a theme also changed the workflow in the library and made researchers, students, museum staff, cataloguers, ICT-ers and the restaurators finally work together ...

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