BEYOND THE BOOKSHELF: VIRTUAL REALITY AS A TOOL FOR LIBRARY DESIGN AND INTERACTIVE TOURS

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A New Chapter for Libraries

Libraries are now evolving into dynamic and immersive centers, not only offering books, but also providing interactive spaces that support learning and community. Virtual Reality (VR) technology is key to designing new and more engaging experiences.

Challenges of Traditional Library Design

Old library designs face problems such as difficulty in visualizing space, costly revisions due to design errors, and limited collaboration due to one-way communication.

Advantages of VR in Library Design

1. Immersive space planning – users can take virtual tours and adjust layouts directly.
2. Cost-effective – avoids costly mistakes, allows for quick testing of various layouts.
3. User-centered – allows visitors to try VR models, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.
4. Testing future technologies – AI simulations, AR, and digital stations for hybrid library preparation.
5. Engagement & training – VR tours for students, staff training, and reducing confusion during orientation.

Conclusion

VR makes library design more immersive, cost-effective, and inclusive. This technology also enhances collaboration, supports future needs, and combines imagination with digital innovation.

Future Challenges

VR accessibility for all users, including people with disabilities, still requires special attention. However, the outlook remains bright, as evidenced by library initiatives such as the San Jose Public Library and Georgetown University, which have already built dedicated VR spaces.