

# Library promotion in the development of the Universitas Sumatera Utara towards a world-class university

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes library promotion in developing the Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) towards a World Class University (WCU). Indonesia is experiencing educational obstacles in achieving the WCU title. Several factors influence the difficulty of achieving the WCU predicate, but the most dominant is the library's role in accommodating student literacy skills. As one of the higher education institutions, USU understands the vital role of the library in increasing the intensity of literacy to achieve the WCU predicate. The urgency of this research is to review the promotion of the USU library in achieving the WCU predicate through the library as an instrument. This article uses qualitative research with a case study approach. The data collection techniques used in this article are in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Primary data sources in this article are research informants, while secondary data used are books, articles, and reportage. The data collected by the author will then be analyzed using content analysis techniques. The results show that the library has various vital roles in literacy reform so that USU can achieve the WCU title. In this case, the library pursues promotional strategies including 1) Product, 2) Price, 3) Promotion, and 4) Distribution. The whole promotion model contributes to improving campus literacy in achieving WCU goals.

**Keywords:** promotion; library; World-Class University

## 1. Introduction

Universities in Indonesia experience various challenges in transforming towards a World Class University (WCU). At this level, several factors affect the difficulty of the transformation process. However, the most dominant is the literacy rate of the Indonesian people, which is ranked 62 out of 70 countries (KEMENKO PMK, 2021). On the other hand, this challenge can be reduced because the literacy rate in Indonesia reaches 96.35% (Data Indonesia, 2022).

The opportunity for universities to become a world-class university in Indonesia is significant if the government and universities can encourage students' interest in reading. The literacy level includes all indicators that meet world-class university standards, as the indicators are: 1) Academic reputation, 2) Graduates, 3) Quality of learning, 4) Citation matrix per faculty and 5) Ratio of faculty and international students.

The above indicators must be fulfilled, although some experts suggest that the standard indicators and ranking system put enough pressure on universities (Vidal and Ferreira, 2020). Therefore, sustainability and world-class university indicators have entered the scope of the academic cottage industry (Liu et al., 2019). The existence of

these indicators and ranking systems is expected to contribute to the innovative development of national constituent entities and the economic and technological connectivity of the region (Korosteleva, 2021).

To achieve the WCU title, some campuses seek effective international research collaboration, improve research performance, deepen academic networks, and disseminate local issues and solutions to the world (Zhang et al., 2022). Cumulatively, all these efforts can be pursued through optimizing the library as a fundamental instrument of development and research (Zakaria, 2021).

The library, as one of the facilities in Higher Education, is also required to be alert in dealing with various service models so that students still get the best facilities. This is what the Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) is striving for in obtaining the WCU title. One of the USU librarians mentioned that a new strategy or emphasis is also needed in promoting the USU Library.

Librarians who previously used to promote services conventionally (offline) must change the form of online services in order to be able to achieve the WCU predicate. The promotional strategy previously carried out by the USU library prioritized a promotional strategy by visiting or visiting units within the USU directly, such as Faculties or Study Programmes. The USU Library also initiated offline activities through library visits or user education activities by directly bringing users or students to the library to introduce existing facilities, such as the latest collection exhibition.

Research has a high urgency in the context of university development to achieve world-class standards. This research will provide insight into the library's key role in supporting the university's vision, especially in terms of information access, high-quality research, and education. By understanding how library promotion can enhance the university's image and effectiveness, this research will assist USU in identifying strategies needed to achieve higher global rankings and meet the challenges of the changing digital era.

## **2. Literature review**

University libraries are one of several types of libraries that exist in Indonesia. In this article, the author will outline the theoretical basis of the library's role in enhancing a university's reputation, library promotion strategies that have proven successful in similar institutions, and the implications of the importance of integrating library resources and services in university education and research. With this in-depth understanding, we can identify relevant opportunities, challenges and strategic recommendations to steer USU's journey towards higher academic performance and global recognition as a WCU.

Through this subchapter, the author has accumulated around 1,000 previous studies with the keyword "Library Promotion." The author will conduct network and density analysis in accumulating the discussion of previous literature. The accumulation as follows in **Figure 1**:



marketing mix focuses on more than just marketing goods but also services. The USU Library, as one of the units of USU, also concentrates on services, so this marketing mix theory is suitable to be used as a theory to answer the problems posed.

Previous research that is relevant to this research and can be used as a reference is research with the title “Peer reading promotion in university libraries” (Jiang et al., 2021). This research discusses university libraries using social networks to promote reading; however, there are challenges in increasing the use of these library platforms, such as poor promotion and low reader participation. Therefore, these libraries need to find ways to address the behavioral characteristics of social network readers. Then, the research entitled “The Term Library Service in the Conceptual Framework of Library Science” (Stolyarov, 2021). This article discusses contradictions in concepts related to the main content of library activities. Then, the research entitled “Instagram for student learning and library promotions: a quantitative study using the 5E Instructional Model” (Lam et al., 2023). This article discusses how libraries worldwide, including Hong Kong, are increasingly using social media tools to introduce and promote their services and resources to users, primarily through Instagram.

### **3. Materials and methods**

This article uses a qualitative research type with a case study approach (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2016). This article describes the approach with conceptual studies that stand on the type of literature review (Creswell, 2020; Moleong, 2018; Yin, 2013). The analysis process is carried out by looking at several studies of Islamic thought in forming a perspective that is oriented towards a social approach.

The data collection techniques used in this article are in-depth interviews, observation and documentation (Sugiyono, 2017). Then, the author uses the literature review technique; Denzin & Lincoln in Rorong (2019), suggest that a view that stands on a descriptive perspective tends to focus on how to view reality (usually social or psychological reality), which in its order always refers to structured approaches. The author takes the literature review in this paper because it can be reviewed potentially to understand the theoretical perspective in research that there are many different approaches to conducting a study.

The data contained in this article is oriented towards two main points, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data in this article are vital informants, namely, USU library and library science experts. At the same time, secondary data in this study are books, reportage and scientific articles related to the research theme.

The results of the data will be analyzed using content analysis techniques. According to Krippendorff (2022), content analysis does not limit the text in the definition to written products but also “other meaningful matter,” which at this level will formulate data with the context of in-depth discussion.

### **4. Result and discussion**

#### **4.1. Literacy reform: Libraries as instruments towards WCU predicate**

Higher education has become a vital foundation in community development and national progress. In the era of globalization and increasing competition, universities

worldwide compete to achieve the title of “World-Class University” (WCU), which describes high-quality standards in education, research, and community service. Amidst the rapid development of information technology, literacy reform is critical to meeting this challenge. Libraries, as the heart of knowledge in universities, play a central role in realizing the WCU title.

The importance of literacy reform in modern society and education cannot be ignored. Literacy encompasses the ability to read, write and understand information (Odigie et al., 2020). In an increasingly digitally connected world, literacy also includes the ability to access, evaluate and use information from various sources, including the internet. Literacy reform is critical to meeting the challenges of the information age, enabling individuals to participate in society and the knowledge economy actively.

In education, literacy reform provides a solid foundation for academic progress and individual development. Good reading and writing skills are the foundation of all subjects and curricula. In addition, good information literacy enables students to develop the research skills required in school projects and academic assignments. Literacy reform also teaches students to think critically, analyze information, and make evidence-based decisions, which is crucial in a society with abundant information (Tommasi et al., 2023).

In addition to the educational environment, the importance of literacy reform is also reflected in everyday life. The ability to understand information, participate in conversations, and make informed decisions are necessary skills in various contexts, including work, health, and social life. Literacy reforms help individuals become more independent and empowered and contribute positively to society. As such, the role of literacy in promoting social inclusion, equity and individual development is critical in an increasingly complex and connected world.

Libraries are a vital resource in advancing literacy reform. It is a place where a wide array of physical and digital resources are available for study and use by the academic community. The critical thing to understand is that libraries today have become a broader role. The achieving of literacy reform as the actual roles of libraries can be seen in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** The library’s role and efforts in increasing literacy intensity.

No	Actual role	Efforts to optimise the role of
1	Access to Resources	a. Enrich the current research. b. Provide a complete database. c. Institutional repository. d. Search bar in assisting research literature.
2	Literacy Training	a. Digital Security. b. Use of Software and Applications. c. Reference Services and Research Support. d. Problem-Solving Skills Training. e. Academic Literacy Training. f. Digital Literacy Course. g. Integrating Digital Literacy in Education Programmes. h. Measuring and Evaluation.

**Table 1.** (Continued).

No	Actual role	Efforts to optimise the role of
3	Research Support	a. Literature search. b. Reference management. c. Understanding of copyright. d. Open access.
4	Collection Development	a. Diversification of Digital Materials b. Open Access c. Appropriate Collection Selection d. Development of Local Resources e. Maintenance of a Quality Collection f. Training and Guidance g. Promotion of Digital Resources h. Collaboration with External Parties i. Evaluation and Feedback
5	Academic Literacy	a. Research Consultation b. Relevant Collection Development c. Promotion of Academic Literacy d. Encouraging the Correct Use of Copyright e. Evaluation of Research Impact f. Research Archiving

- 1) **Access to Resources:** Libraries provide different resources, including books, journals, databases, and institutional repositories (Carson and Alexander, 2020). This is essential for information literacy, which involves the ability to locate, identify, and use information from various sources (Clarke and Schoonmaker, 2020).
- 2) **Literacy Training:** Libraries often organize information literacy and digital literacy training. This assists students and faculty in developing the skills necessary to evaluate and use information critically (Kerrigan et al., 2023).
- 3) **Research Support:** For researchers, libraries are an invaluable source of knowledge. Libraries help in literature search, reference management, and understanding of policies related to copyright and open access (Nickels and Davis, 2020).
- 4) **Collection Development:** Libraries are involved in collection development relevant to academic needs. By keeping abreast of scientific and technological developments, the library ensures that its collection remains up-to-date (Trotter and Komarnytska, 2023).
- 5) **Academic Literacy:** Libraries also play a role in supporting academic literacy, which includes understanding academic norms, scientific writing, and research ethics (Adams, 2023; Vianna and Caregnato, 2022).

Literacy reform is a significant endeavor in modern society. Literacy is the ability to read, write, and understand information. These are basic skills that form the foundation of human communication and understanding of the world around us. However, in the increasingly advanced digital age, literacy has evolved to include the ability to access, evaluate, and use information online. Literacy reform is the process of ensuring that individuals are well-equipped with these skills so that they can actively participate in an increasingly complex and connected society (Weninger, 2022).

In education, literacy reform is a critical cornerstone in developing knowledge and understanding (Oggero et al., 2023). The ability to read well and write effectively is critical to success in subjects and developing intellectual skills. In addition, information literacy is a critical component in developing research skills that are essential in the educational process. The ability to locate, evaluate, and use information wisely is a valued skill in the academic and professional world.

Beyond the educational context, literacy has far-reaching impacts on everyday life. The ability to understand health documents, instructions, and information, for example, can influence individuals' decisions about their medical care. In the world of work, literacy is a determining factor in various jobs, from reading financial statements to evaluating contracts. The ability to participate in discussions and debates, as well as make informed decisions, are skills that are highly valued in society.

One example of literacy reform in Indonesia is the Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) programme that launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Juanda et al., 2023). The programme has several reform, including: teacher training, procurement of reading materials, literacy activities in schools, evaluation and monitoring.

Literacy reform is not only about developing individual skills but also about ensuring that literacy is a tool for social inclusion, equality, and empowerment. A more literate society has more significant potential to become a more informed, critical, and empowered society. Therefore, efforts to promote and support literacy reforms are essential to advance society toward a brighter and more cultured future.

## **4.2. Library promotion strategy**

The library certainly has a strategy for promoting its services; four variables are the core of marketing activities according to Basu Swasta, namely, product, price structure, promotion, and distribution. This research uses Basu Swasta's mixed promotion theory to look at the promotion carried out by USU. To discuss the findings obtained, the researcher divides it into four variables proposed by Basu Swasta, namely:

### **4.2.1. Product**

Products, according to Basu Swastha (2007), are a complex of palpable and non-palpable properties, including packaging, color, price, company and retailer prestige, and company and retailer services, which buyers accept to satisfy their wants and needs. Library is an organization of non-profit institutions in which it provides library services, be it lending services, returns, collection services, references, photocopying, and user services by utilizing the physical facilities of the library. USU Library has several services that can be used directly (offline) and indirectly (online); this service is undoubtedly expected to target users who cannot come directly to the library but can still access library services at USU.

“Showing the library is not only about books but also with a place that barcodes journal articles, and we also maximize in the usual mobile application, the menu used to be limited but now it has been improved: borrowing books in the library can be done online, submitting final assignments also via online and others, but now online visitors are declining, because students prefer to come directly to the library.” (informant 2)

From the results of this interview, it can be seen that library services are developing from conventional to digital. However, when library services can be used again, users go directly to the library to enjoy library services, such as The Gade Creative Lounge discussion room, scientific seminars for students, librarian competency development, and library collections such as books and journals. These products are the main products offered by the USU Library to the academic community.

The products offered by the USU library are not only physical books (hardcopy) but also in the form of digital books (ebooks). Teaching materials or digital reading materials are an essential concern for students today. Apart from ebooks, reading materials that students can obtain through the USU library are journals. Through their NIM (Student Identification Number), students can access the ebook and journal services without visiting the USU library to access them directly.

“We Promote Ebooks and Journals, for example, related to how to utilize journals. Therefore, we aggressively make promotions so that students can know about the products we offer (ebooks and journals) and they can also access them from anywhere. They do not have to visit the library” (Informant 2).

Ebooks and journals are products offered by the USU library to meet the needs of students in the learning process. Ebooks and journals are considered capable of being products that can meet the achievement of organizational goals by student outcomes in lectures. In addition to lecture material obtained in the classroom, ebooks and journal facilities are also a support for students in obtaining satisfaction related to the academic climate in the USU environment. As stated by Kotler & Keller (2016), a good product is a product that can satisfy the primary needs of consumers (students).

The products offered by the library play a crucial role in the promotion of World-Class University (WCU) status. The quality and diversity of collections, ease of access, and additional features such as online services are the main foundations in attracting users and strengthening the library’s image as a center of academic excellence (Narlock & Robison, 2022). These products not only fulfill research and learning needs but also reflect the library’s commitment to innovate and continuously improve service quality under international standards. In the context of global competition in higher education, the library’s superior products are a major attraction in attracting the best academics and students and an important tool in achieving recognition as an outstanding WCU.

The USU Library strongly supports the efforts of USU to achieve World-Class University (WCU) status. By providing a variety of services and products, ranging from physical to digital collections such as books and electronic journals, the USU library helps fulfill the research, learning, and academic development needs of students and faculty. Comprehensive support from the library, both in terms of information accessibility and additional services such as discussion rooms and scientific seminars, contributes significantly to improving the quality of education and research at USU. As an important center of knowledge, USU library plays a crucial role in supporting USU’s vision of becoming a globally recognized educational institution of excellence.

In the context of accommodating promotional strategies towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the use of Virtual Reality (VR) technology has an important



role in enriching aspects of library products. By utilising VR, libraries can create products in the form of immersive interactive experiences for users (Guo and Ma, 2022). Through VR, users can explore library collections virtually with a real sense of reality, attend seminars and workshops, and participate in exciting and innovative literacy activities. By enriching the user experience through VR, libraries not only enhance the appeal of their products, but also offer new possibilities in communicating the educational and research values contained in library collections and services. Thus, the use of VR technology as part of the product aspect of the library can be an effective tool in supporting the library's promotion strategy towards WCU status.

In addition, the USU library ensures that every student and lecturer's needs can be met optimally. From the interview results, it can be seen that the library provides a lot of reputable book and journal literature. If the literature provided is not sufficient, the library will bridge researchers, both lecturers and students, with university libraries throughout North Sumatra.

The way of cooperation is more like a two-way communication. The library accommodates research interests and literature through applications, websites and emails. Then there is the G-Form which is distributed through the Study Programme to become an evaluation distribution involving the entire USU academic community.

Library products are the backbone of education and research at the university, playing a central role that supports the journey towards World-Class University (WCU) status. Quality academic resources, strong research support, and a role in improving academic literacy help universities attract the best faculty and students, achieve outstanding research achievements, and ensure that high educational standards are met. As a knowledge center, the library and its products are an essential asset in achieving outstanding academic performance and gaining recognition as a WCU.

#### **4.2.2. Price**

Price is one of the elements of the marketing mix (mixed promotion) that provides income or revenue for the company. Prices are flexible, meaning that they can be changed quickly, thus influencing the purchasing and sales decision-making policies of a company. However, the existence of the USU library as one of the units under USU needs a price list or price for obtaining products provided by the library. The price paid by students is only done when they pay tuition at the beginning of each semester.

“For the rate or price of obtaining services in this library, you do not pay, whether borrowing books or accessing other facilities. Mostly, there are fines given if they are late returning books according to the specified date. So if the price or pay, maybe it is part of their tuition fee payment” (Informant 2).

According to Byrne and Carthy (2022), apart from being related to prices, discounts, and payment terms, price variables are also related to strategic and tactical policies that are prepared or budgeted. USU Library also has a strategic policy and a budget that is used as a strategy for building and improving services. Even the budget given by the University to the library has increased. This is done in the context of library branding and product optimization.

“There is an increase in the budget; in 2021, there was an increase in the budget, and until now, the budget continues to increase, and hopefully next year, the budget

will continue to increase because this is all to optimize the services that students and lecturers will obtain” (Informant 2).

In the library’s promotion towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the urgency of pricing is important in ensuring wide accessibility to quality information resources (Tella and Ogbonna, 2023). Affordable or even free pricing policies for library services play a key role in expanding user outreach, especially in attracting potential students and researchers who may be financially constrained. Competitive and transparent pricing not only encourages greater participation from various academic circles, but also reflects the library’s commitment to ensuring inclusivity and equitable access to information resources, which is an important foundation in building a reputation as an inclusive and globally competitive educational institution.

To accommodate the promotion strategy towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the role of Virtual Reality (VR) technology in the price aspect is important in expanding accessibility to library services at an affordable price or even free. By utilising VR, libraries can offer virtual experiences that allow users to access library collections and services from anywhere without the need for significant additional costs. This helps create equitable access to information resources, eliminates financial barriers that some users may face, and expands the impact of library services in supporting education and research at universities (Kiriakova, 2021). Thus, the use of VR technology in the price aspect helps strengthen the image of the library as an inclusive institution that is relevant to the current demands in higher education, and supports the vision of USU as a World-Class University.

Increasing the library budget is essential in achieving the World-Class University (WCU) title as it supports collection expansion, access to up-to-date resources, and service improvements, which attract Faculty students and enhance the overall reputation of the University. An adequate budget also allows the library to collaborate effectively, integrate the latest technology, and run vital literacy programs, ensuring its essential role in the University’s journey towards WCU.

#### **4.2.3. Promotion**

Promotion is one of the factors that greatly determine the success of a marketing program (Doskich, 2022). Promotion, as a form of marketing communication, seeks to disseminate information to influence or persuade consumers to have an interest and desire to use the products (goods/services) offered. To introduce and promote existing services, the USU library uses social media, flyers, and through cooperation with various agencies.

“There ... when we were fully online, we promoted maybe through flyers; now, since going offline, we have started planning and slowly undergoing a digital promotion system. There are many ways with this digital, starting from involving students by providing testimonials after using library facilities and we upload their testimonials on our social media” (Informant 1).

The transformation of library promotion is crucial in USU’s journey towards World-Class University (WCU) status. It increases the library’s visibility, supports the university’s reputation, and attracts quality faculty and students. It also expands the range of services, encourages collaboration, and involves the community in library activities, advancing higher education in Indonesia. The promotion even involves

students filling in the content so that students, as the primary users of the library, are increasingly encouraged to visit the library.

Apart from Instagram or TikTok, USU library staff and leaders also actively share messages related to achievements or facilities available at the USU library through the WhatsApp group of the Indonesian Higher Education Library Association. By sharing these messages, the USU library believes it will increase the popularity of the USU library nationally.

“I also often share information and references to the Library group about the USU Library. I also shared achievements and facilities in the USU library several times. This WA group is a platform that provides new knowledge for us managers to continue to compete” (Informant 3).

The activeness of the leaders or employees of the USU Library in various librarian communities or similar communities can add insight to the employees to see how the performance, services, and achievements are obtained by various libraries in Indonesia. This is also a motivation for employees to continue to prepare themselves to make changes and innovations in order to obtain better achievements. In addition, activeness in the association is also a very effective promotional strategy in branding and increasing the popularity of USU libraries nationally. This is also by the performance contract agreed between the USU Rector and the head of the USU Library.

“Branding is the most important point in the performance contract between the head of the library and the rector. So optimizing the use of social media is quite important to ensure the achievement of this performance contract” (Informant 2).

The use of social media in library promotion has had a significant impact on the library (Tse et al., 2022), besides being able to encourage employee motivation to continue to innovate in increasing the popularity of the library. Social media also makes it easier for librarians to interact with users or students. Interactions conducted through social media provide feedback to the library regarding the content they create for promotion—feedback such as comments, suggestions and constructive criticism for future library improvements.

“Followers, views and likes have increased; views about library promotions are higher than other university activities. It shows us that many library enthusiasts and user enthusiasm is also increasing. They also often give appreciation or even suggestions to criticize the content or services we create” (Informant 3).

In the promotion process, the USU library also always includes a tagline that can add to the characteristics of the USU library in the eyes of its users. This tagline is also an identity for USU Library compared to other libraries. The tagline makes it easier for the public to remember the USU library, as well as branding. The tagline built by the USU library is “Transformation towards the ultimate.” This tagline adapts the USU tagline to improve quality and competition in the international arena. Therefore, this tagline is in line with the USU library.

“The library tagline is certainly in line with that of USU, namely, transformation towards the ultimate. Our goal is also to internationalize USU. So the library as one of its units must also encourage the achievement of this goal” (Informant 2).

From the interview results, it was found that the library ensures their products can meet the needs of students, USU Library has developed various services that are

responsive and user-oriented. Through the USU Mobile app and reservations through Google Form, students can easily access the library's collections, reserve classrooms or discussion rooms, as well as submit proposals from the library. In addition, the library also provides free access to reference and research resources, and facilitates the borrowing of books that are not available in the library through cooperation with other parties, such as the regional library of Medan City.

Swastha states that promotion is persuasive information to direct a person or organization to actions that create exchanges in a marketing context. In this case, the company must be able to determine or select the media that can be used to support marketing success. So, these activities must be combined and coordinated so the company can carry out these promotional tasks properly (Swastha, 2005). Therefore, the USU library chose social media to conduct promotions, and it was proven that the promotion was efficient and effective in increasing user interest.

In addition to the use of social media, promotion is also carried out by the USU library through cooperation with various agencies. The library collaborates to boost promotion and branding, such as Pegadaian and BTN (State Savings Bank). The collaboration is usually carried out by conducting seminar activities for students to encourage the learning process at USU.

“For cooperation, we have worked with pawnshops, which started yesterday during the pandemic. The cooperation is in the form of seminars or webinars. They provide supporting facilities for activities; we usually invite students to attend” (Informant 3).

Cooperation in library promotion is essential in USU's journey towards World-Class University (WCU) status. It enables the pooling of resources, increases the library's visibility, and creates opportunities to expand the reach of services and influence. By working with faculty, researchers, staff, and external parties, the library can maximize its impact in supporting the university's education, research, and community service and contribute to USU's quality image at the national and international levels.

#### **4.2.4. Distribution**

Distribution is one of the elements that play an essential role in the marketing process carried out to library users. With appropriate distribution channels, promotional messages or products that want to be introduced to the public will be achieved effectively. The library, as one of the units in USU, must also be able to determine the distribution channel by the will of the market, in this case, students. As explained earlier, the USU library's promotional messages are optimized through social media. Therefore, it becomes clear that the leading distribution channel used is social media.

“In this digital era, the library shifted its conventional system to online through the USULIB Mobile application for booking books, borrowing, returning” (informant 1). After the digital era, the USU library strategy transformed in determining promotional distribution channels. If previously the USU library also used print media as a distribution channel, currently, the USU library tends to focus on online media. Even the use of various types of social media is becoming increasingly important,

considering that users, who are also primarily students, tend to choose social media as their information medium (Sabarina and Maryam, 2022).

“USU promotes from social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, the program is still that, maybe we want to develop it to TikTok. Because now there are also many student TikTok users” (Informant 1). Social media as a distribution channel for USU library promotional messages is also becoming more effective and efficient. This is because students’ responses as users of service facilities can be conveyed directly without going through a complex administrative process. Communication in digital/online platforms results in interactivity and real-time processes. Because it can reduce space and time barriers, which are obstacles to communication activities, students can directly and anywhere give comments or suggestions to the USU library without coming specifically to the library. Conversely, employees can provide answers to these comments directly without also having to meet students in the library directly.

“There is a two-way communication that occurs by using social media. Students can respond to our messages directly. Usually, they convey it through the comments column or DM (Direct message). (Informant 1). The many advantages possessed by digital platforms as promotional message distribution channels certainly make USU libraries also focus on developing promotional innovations in online media. In addition to using online media as a promotional distribution channel, the USU library also uses each library in the faculty as a promotional distribution channel. This is done so that students who have never visited the USU library can get exciting information related to facilities and services that they can get when they become USU students.

“We also have branches in the faculties that promote in the faculties later. We do this because there are also students who are reluctant to go to the library, even though they can get many benefits, just because they do not know they cannot get the benefits. Like journal access” (Informant 1).

From the interviews, it was also found that to build cooperation with the existing faculties, USU Library has implemented various communication and collaboration strategies. They use Google Forms to coordinate cooperation with each study program, build a college forum for information sharing and coordination, and hold seminars or workshops involving librarians and academic staff to improve human resources. In addition, cooperation with external parties such as pawnshops is carried out through CSR funds allocated for the revitalization of library rooms.

To achieve WCU status, USU Libraries focus on improving technology utilization and system integration. They offer repositories, journals, and integrated systems to support research and learning at the university. Although there are no direct discussions with outside libraries, USU library actively organizes seminars or workshops for human resource improvement. Obstacles faced include a lack of user awareness of existing facilities, as well as constraints in the information system which are overcome by continuous system improvements.

In promoting the library towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the urgency of distribution is key to ensuring wide accessibility to information resources. Efficient and equitable distribution allows the library to reach a wide range of stakeholders, from students and lecturers to researchers and the general public. By providing easy and varied access to library collections through various distribution

channels, including online and offline platforms, libraries can expand their impact as competitive knowledge centers. The integrated distribution also allows libraries to expand their service reach, strengthen user engagement, and build their image as an open and inclusive educational institution of excellence.

In supporting the promotion strategy towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the role of Virtual Reality (VR) technology in the distribution aspect is key in expanding the reach of library services to various stakeholders. By utilizing VR, libraries can provide easy and varied access to information resources through digital platforms that can be accessed from anywhere (Troville et al., 2023). Users can virtually explore library collections and participate in literacy activities without being limited by geographical or physical boundaries (Mobo, 2020). This not only expands the reach of library services to users who cannot access the library directly, but also strengthens the library's image as a modern, inclusive, and globally competitive knowledge center, in accordance with the vision of USU as a World-Class University.

Opening library branches in each faculty is an essential step in promoting the USU library towards World-Class University (WCU) status. It not only provides easier access to library resources for faculty and students in a convenient location but also strengthens the integration of the library in the education and research process across the university. Thus, library branches in each faculty provide more direct support, optimize resource utilization, and contribute to the enhancement of USU's reputation as a comprehensive and globally competitive university as can be seen in **Table 2**.

In the context of the USU striving towards World-Class University (WCU) status, the library promotion mix plays a crucial role in supporting efforts to achieve these goals. In the product aspect, library promotion should emphasize the excellence of collections consisting of a variety of information resources, both in the form of printed books and digital resources such as electronic journals (Roberts et al., 2022). Library promotions should also highlight state-of-the-art information technology facilities, such as WiFi access, computers, and expert consultation services. In the process, promotions should highlight efficiency in services, including easy borrowing and returning processes, as well as the support of well-trained staff who are responsive to users' needs. Effective promotion also takes into account the proper distribution of information to stakeholders such as students, lecturers, researchers, and the general public, through various communication channels such as social media, websites, brochures, and promotional activities.

By implementing a well-planned and coordinated library promotion strategy, USU can increase its visibility as an excellent educational institution that supports quality learning and research. Through proper promotion, USU library can expand its range of services and attract more students, researchers, and academics to utilize its facilities. Thus, library promotion will not only strengthen USU's image as a quality academic institution, but also serve as one of the important factors in supporting USU's journey towards its globally recognized as a World-Class University.

**Table 2.** Promotion aspects and their role towards WCU.

No	Aspek	Peran menuju WCU
1	Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide a rich and diverse collection of information resources for quality research and learning.</li> <li>b. Presenting state-of-the-art information technology facilities to support accessibility and efficient use.</li> </ul>
2	Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop a policy of affordable or even free access to information resources, to ensure inclusivity and wider accessibility for users.</li> <li>b. Ensure transparency in library service fees, including additional or subscription fees.</li> </ul>
3	Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase awareness and understanding of the value and contribution of the library in supporting the academic mission of the institution.</li> <li>b. Expanding reach and increasing user interest through effective promotional campaigns, both online and offline.</li> </ul>
4	Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure proper distribution of information to various stakeholders, including students, lecturers, researchers, and the general public.</li> <li>b. Provide easy and varied access to information resources through various distribution channels.</li> </ul>

## 5. Discussion

Product-based promotion, pricing, promotion, and distribution are essential strategies in advancing literacy and supporting USU in achieving World-Class University (WCU) status by focusing on literacy (Huang, 2022). Product-based promotion allows libraries to highlight the literacy resources and services they offer, such as book collections, e-books, databases, and information literacy training. By promoting these products, libraries can raise awareness of the resources available to assist students, faculty and researchers in developing strong literacy skills.

Furthermore, the price factor is an essential consideration in building literacy. In the context of libraries, this includes the cost of access to literacy resources and services. Offering affordable access or even open resources can help ensure that literacy is accessible to all members of the academic community at USU without financial barriers.

Effective promotion and distribution also play a crucial role in promoting literacy. The library should communicate clearly and promote literacy services through various channels, including the library website, social media and promotional campaigns. In

addition, the efficient distribution of literacy materials, such as books and guides, across campus ensures that such resources are easily accessible to all users, supporting improving literacy across the university.

Overall, product-based promotion, pricing, promotion and distribution are essential tools in advancing literacy and supporting the university's vision as a World-Class University (Zhao et al., 2019). By ensuring that literacy resources and services are affordable, easily accessible, and effectively advertised, libraries can contribute to the development of literacy among members of the academic community, elevate the reputation of the university, and ensure that literacy becomes an integral part of the journey towards higher academic achievement and global recognition.

In moving towards WCU, the university library encountered several obstacles, namely: limited resources, lack of user involvement, lack of external community involvement and competition with external resources. The following are the library's strategies in alleviating the barriers.

First, with limited resources, it is important to identify priorities and efficient budget allocation. One strategy is to partner with alumni, or other organizations to secure additional funding. Optimizing the use of existing resources is also necessary, including the use of digital resources and collaboration with other libraries to share collections. Second, Lack of user engagement. The library can understand users' needs and preferences through surveys, interviews, or group discussions. By actively involving users in service planning and evaluation, libraries can increase their relevance and strengthen user engagement. Creative and effective promotional campaigns can also be used to increase user awareness and interest in library services. Third, Lack of external community engagement. Libraries can increase external community engagement by holding special events or programs, such as discussion sessions, alumni gatherings, or volunteer programs. Open and active communication with the external community is also important to build strong and sustainable relationships. In addition, utilizing existing networks and relationships within the university or industry can help increase support and engagement from the outside community. Fourth, Competition with external resources. Libraries can establish strategic partnerships with external resource providers to gain better access or better prices for required collections. In addition, the development of unique or specialist collections can be a competitive advantage for the library in differentiating itself from external services.

The extension and socialization carried out by Kemenparekraf must be in line with the opinions formed in the community. Good counseling is the internalization of messages that can then be applied in everyday life. In retrospect, if these messages cannot be internalized, they will not have much effect on the development of the tourism sector. The author has accumulated public perceptions that can be used as an indicator of the success of Kemenparekraf's socialization in educating the public.

## **6. Conclusion**

To build literacy and support USU towards the title of World-Class University, product-based promotion, pricing, promotion, and distribution within the library is an essential strategy. It enables the library to highlight quality literacy resources, ensure



affordable access, and increase awareness and participation in literacy activities. Thus, product-based promotion, pricing, promotion, and distribution not only strengthen the library's role as a leader in literacy development at the university but also support the achievement of USU vision as a World-Class University with community members with strong literacy skills and strong global relevance. It is recommended that future researchers be able to see how to develop virtual reality-based library promotion models as the next level of higher education marketing through libraries.

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