



## Reflecting Back on 2009

### Google's Top 10 Searched Terms in 2009

1. Michael Jackson
2. Facebook
3. Tuenti (Spanish Facebook)
4. Twitter
5. Sanilika (Turkish virtual gaming world)
6. New Moon
7. Lady Gaga
8. Windows 7
9. Dantri (Vietnamese language site)
10. Torpedo Gratis (free texting)



A popular line from a classic Christmas song, "peace on earth and goodwill to men," may run through your mind this holiday season as we are about to wrap up another year. And though our troops are still deployed and the economy is unsteady, this year has shown us many valuable lessons allowing for some peace and goodwill where you may have least expected it.

#### Miracle on the Hudson

January 15, 2009

Although most of us will never need to know how to land a plane in a narrow river, there are a few things we can all take away from Captain "Sully's" feat last January. First, never underestimate your ability to make the right decisions. And secondly, stay focused on the goal. Had Sully let his emotions overtake his knowledge and experience, he may have made different choices in the

cockpit that day that would have resulted in an entirely different outcome. That's not to say that our emotions aren't important— because they are. But when you are up against immediate stress and conflict, work with what you know until you can get a better grasp on what it is you feel. Sully was able to remove his emotional position in the situation so he could solve the problem. In doing so, he successfully landed a plane and saved the lives of everyone on board. By stepping back, it may help you see more clearly what the answer is and how you can find the resolution you are seeking.



#### The Passing of Michael Jackson

June 25, 2009

This summer, the loss of Michael Jackson echoed loudly not only in the United States but across the world as well. And though he wasn't the first celebrity to pass away in 2009, his death caused many of us to take a moment and realize how quickly time passes. Unfortunately the fountain of youth is still just a myth (even with Botox) and our lives will eventually come to an end. With that said, it is our responsibility and privilege to make the best out of each day. Cliché and overstated, we are all still very guilty of sweating the small stuff and letting our anger get the best of us. Remember this next time you want to stay mad about something that you will probably forget about in a week: it's more fun to be happy and more energy is wasted when you're negative. (continued on page 2)

## 10 Things to Be Excited About in December...

1. Eggnog flavored everything
2. Fresh cut Christmas trees
3. In-laws
4. Candy canes
5. Cookies
6. Gift giving
7. End of swimsuit season
8. Winter sports
9. An extra glass of wine
10. Receiving Holiday cards in the mail

## Reflecting Back on 2009 (continued)

### Beer Summit

July 30, 2009

When President Obama stated, "I have always believed that what brings us together is stronger than what pulls us apart, he was not speaking of the unrest in the Middle East. Some have called what he was referring to the White House's "Beer Summit." Regardless of one's beliefs and political affiliations, President Obama's message and actions signify a very noble and "teachable moment" in alternative dispute resolution terms. Instead of fueling the fires of the conflict between Professor Gates and Sgt. Crowley, the President presented them both with a great opportunity: the chance to sit, engage one another on neutral ground and act as decent people, over a mug of beer. Most of us will never know what was actually said on that Thursday evening in July 2009, but what we can appreciate as ADR practitioners is the level playing field which each man was provided. They were given a chance to speak freely and a chance to peacefully disagree. At the end of the day, it didn't really matter if they reached a full agreement but what was important was the willingness of both men to learn from situation and keep moving forward.

Not all conflicts are that easy to navigate through and rarely will the United States President get involved but if there is a chance for both parties to connect on some level, take it. Beer or no beer, Professor Gates and Sgt. Crowley showed our country that they were above their egos and cared more about moving on than holding a grudge; a extremely important reminder for all of us during the Holidays and into next year.

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If we were able to see the future before making a decision life would be easy. Yet, it sure would be boring! What would we call our friends to talk about? How could we adequately teach our children how to be successful adults?

Thankfully, we do not have that superpower and we can only learn from our choices and the choices of those close to us—right or wrong.

A very wise and anonymous person said, "If you are looking for a big opportunity, find a big problem." Life is complex. And when you seek to simply learn and take away the good in each circumstance, you'll gain more opportunities (of all kinds) than you could have imagined.

