

@ Emergent Futures | New Around the World | What Are We Writing About

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Welcome to our first edition of What's Emerging for 2009. In our December edition we ran a book competition for rating our business tips. The winners of the competition were: George Dolina, Kingsgrove NSW; Stuart Reeh, Melbourne VIC; Slade Beard, Flynn ACT; Leith Bouilly, Toowoomba QLD; and Rob Chambers, London UK. The top 10 listing of business tips is now available [here](#).

Best wishes from the team at Emergent Futures for a great year in 2009.

Cheers

Paul Higgins, Sandy Teagle, Kim Stewart, Anitha Mendonca, Syed Muqthar, and Samantha Kyle-Little



Business Tips

The business of perks

PerklerT is a collaboration between two old mates who shared one problem - we were finding it difficult to get value from our loyalty and rewards programs. The Perkler Community is made up of people who love and are experts on loyalty programs. Join them to rate, recommend and learn more about your perks. [Read more...](#)

Focusing attention is the new work ethic

A person who works with complete focus has a major advantage over a workaholic who multi-tasks all day and responds to every interruption, according to a story by tech writer Mike Elgan on InternetNews.com. [Read more...](#)



What's Emerging

Social media predictions 2009

Fourteen great minds on social media have shared thoughts on what 2009 may have in store for us. Here's some of what they're thinking. [Read more...](#)

New paper shredder actually recycles paper at the office

A vision for the future: no more sorting, paper separating, curbside collection. Just feed your business papers into the shredder, turn the Meiko SEED system on and overnight the used paper is recycled into a clean, fresh pile of 1500 new sheets of paper. [Read more...](#)

China's state-run TV station scrambles to censor Obama speech

The state-run station China Central Television surprised viewers on Inauguration Day by broadcasting President Obama's speech live and without the usual delay—a cushion for censors to clip offensive words before they go out over the airwaves. Viewers were not surprised, however, when Obama's use of two sensitive words: "communism" and "dissent" triggered something of a panic among CCTV broadcasters. [Read more...](#)

US scientists learn how to levitate tiny objects

US scientists have found a way to levitate the very smallest objects using the forces of quantum mechanics, and say they might use it to help make tiny nanotechnology machines. They said they had detected and measured a force that comes into play at the molecular level using certain combinations of molecules that repel one another. The repulsion can be used to hold molecules aloft, in essence levitating them, creating virtually friction-free parts for tiny devices, the researchers said. [Read more...](#)

Search advertising runs into the recession

US search advertising spending fell 8% in Q4 2008 from Q4 2007, according to Efficient Frontier. [Read more...](#)

Woodchip ethanol plant an \$80m step closer

The United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development has approved a \$US80 million loan guarantee for Range Fuels Inc. to build the nation's first commercial-scale cellulosic ethanol plant. Woodchips will be the feedstock for the plant, which will use technology pioneered at the company's pilot plant in Colorado. [Read more...](#)

Latest micro-generation technology for houses

With more than 25 per cent of Britain's energy output going on heat, power and light for homes house builders will be relying on cutting-edge technology to meet energy-saving targets. But a joint report from the National House Building Confederation (NHBC) Foundation and the Building Research Establishments (BRE) warns there will be significant risks in using some sustainable techniques such as solar panels and wind turbines. [Read more...](#)

Banks foreclose on builders with perfect records

TEMPE, Ariz. - Dave Brown, one of this city's best-known home builders, had kept his head above water through the housing downturn, not missing a single interest payment on his loans. So he was confounded a few months back when one of his banks, spooked by the decline in his company's revenue, suddenly demanded millions of dollars in additional collateral to continue carrying loans on his projects. [Read more...](#)

At first, funny videos. now, a reference tool

Faced with writing a school report on an Australian animal, Tyler Kennedy began where many students begin these days: by searching the Internet. But Tyler didn't use Google or Yahoo. He searched for information about the platypus on YouTube. Tyler's way of experiencing the Web — primarily through video — may not be mainstream, at least not yet. But his use of YouTube as his favorite search engine underscores a shift that is much broader than the quirky habits of children. [Read more...](#)

Google earth emerges as a critical tool for environmental and social justice activists

The first known maps were carved into stone some millennia ago. Still, the map as a tool for social justice and environmental activists is a relatively new phenomenon. But for communities stretching from the Amazonian rainforest to a Santa Cruz Canyon, Google Earth is seeding a revolution. [Read more...](#)

Local currencies grow during economic recession

More communities are creating their own "complementary" currencies during the current economic crisis in an effort to keep wealth in their region. [Read more...](#)

No furnaces but heat aplenty in 'passive houses'

Germany - From the outside, there is nothing unusual about the stylish new gray and orange row houses in the Kranichstein District, with wreaths on the doors and Christmas lights twinkling through a freezing drizzle. But these houses are part of a revolution in building design: There are no drafts, no cold tile floors, no snuggling under blankets until the furnace kicks in. There is, in fact, no furnace. [Read more...](#)

The first sign-language dictionary that's searchable by gesture

UBoston University (BU) researchers are developing a searchable dictionary for sign language, in which any user can enter a gesture into a dictionary's search engine from her own laptop by signing in front of a built-in camera. [Read more...](#)

Internet overtakes newspapers as news source

The Internet, which emerged this year as a leading source for campaign news, has now surpassed all other media except television as a main source for national and international news. [Read more...](#)

More links

We have many more links than we can fit in the newsletter – this month's 'Additional Links' are available on our [website](#).



What We Are Writing About

Book review: It starts with one – Changing individuals changes organisations by J. Stewart Black and Hal B Gregersen

As futurists it is easy to get carried away and involved in exciting and far reaching questions about the future – will computers get smarter than humans, will we live to a thousand, will climate change fundamentally change how we live? In the end none of these questions really matter unless our pondering them achieves some sort of outcome for an individual, an organisation, or the world as a whole. In order for that to happen we have to bring all the excitement and uncertainty back to a concrete concept of strategy and we have to influence people to change what they do on a day to day basis. This book is about the second part of that equation and it provides a simple and elegant framework of how to think about the issues of how people change their behaviour and how they resist changes to their behaviour even when it seems obvious to us that they must change. [Read More...](#)