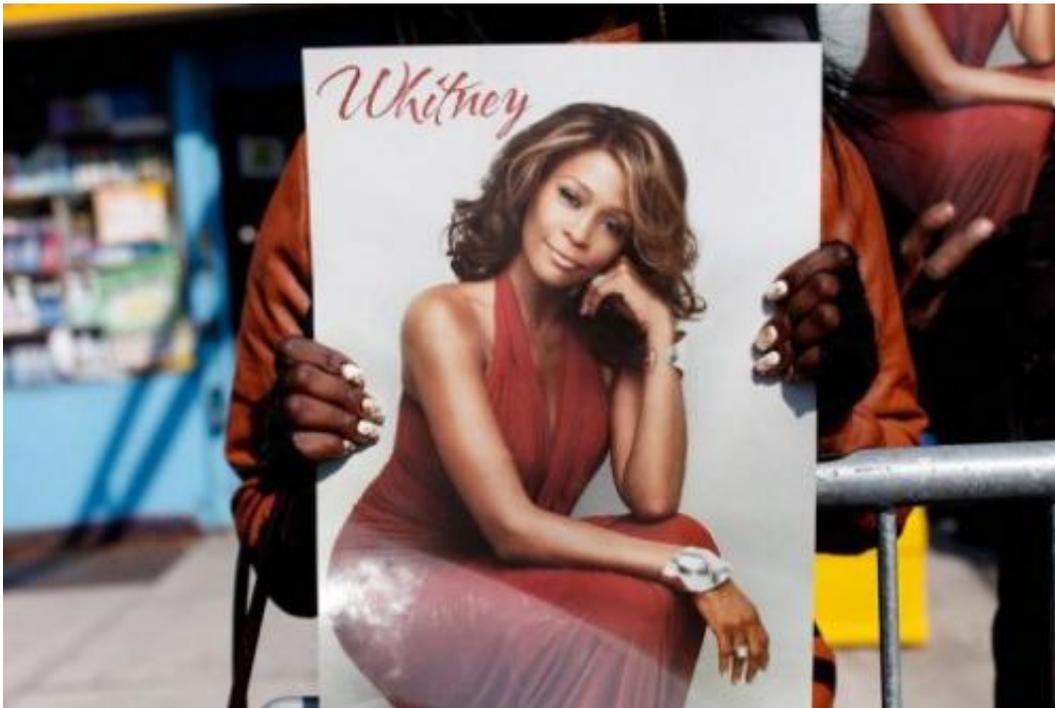


Google raises "spirit of the times" from online searches

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Whitney Houston's unexpected death resulted in information about the singer being the most explored topic globally on the Internet, according to the Google Zeitgeist 2012 report.

Google on Wednesday provided a look at the "spirit of the times" based on what people sought online using the world's most popular search engine.

"While there are perennial themes - 'what is love?' topped the list in ten

countries - it's the unusual and surprising that caught our attention in 2012," Google senior vice president Amit Singhal said in a blog post.

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The "Gangnam Style" dance by performer PSY of South Korea made him the top query in many countries and second only to Houston globally, according to Google.

PSY's video was also crowned the all-time most-watched clip at Google-owned [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/).



The "Gangnam Style" dance by performer Psy of South Korea made him the top Internet query in many countries this year and second only to Whitney Houston globally, according to Google.

"PSY's 'Gangnam Style' signature dance took the world by storm," Singhal said.

Hurricane Sandy that devastated a portion of the US East Coast was the third most explored topic on Google, followed by Apple's iPad 3 [tablet computer](#), videogame Diablo 3, and mother-to-be Kate Middleton the Duchess of Cambridge.

The Summer Olympic Games in London also made it into the Top 10 list of trending search topics for the year.

"Then there was the superhuman," Singhal said of the Zeitgeist report, which was broken down into 838 categories from 55 countries.

"Austrian skydiver Felix Baumgartner's epic [freefall jump](#) made him the number six globally trending person of the year."

"The [2012 Olympics](#) and its various athletes made it into almost every country's top trends," he continued. "And NBA player Jeremy Lin also rose on the charts this year, making him the Number One trending athlete globally."

Hot topics research on the Internet included proposed legislation, such as SOPA and ACTA to regulate the Internet, and the fiercely fought US presidential election along with political gaffes.

"We hope you enjoy exploring what people around the world were searching for in 2012," Singhal said of the insights posted online at google.com/zeitgeist/2012.

"It's quite a snapshot of what makes us human: a blend of guilty pleasures and higher pursuits."

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