

Beat: News

`Hashtag`, `selfie`, and `catfish` among new words added to Webster's dictionary

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USPA News - Hashtag, selfie, and catfish are among the more than 150 new words and definitions added to the 2014 edition of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, America's best-selling dictionary, the publishing company announced on Monday. Many of the new additions relate to social networking and the influence technology has on human relations, the company said in a statement.

Besides hashtag, selfie, and catfish, the new words also include crowdfunding, tweep, gamification, big data, and the term social networking itself. "So many of these new words show the impact of online connectivity to our lives and livelihoods," said Peter Sokolowski, Editor at Large for Merriam-Webster. "Tweep, selfie, and hashtag refer to the ways we communicate and share as individuals. Words like crowdfunding, gamification, and big data show that the Internet has changed business in profound ways." Hashtag, most often used on the social networking website Twitter, refers to a word or phrase that is preceded by the # symbol to categorize the subject or nature of the accompanying text. A selfie, which is usually made to post on social networking websites, refers to an image that a person has taken of oneself using a digital camera. The word catfish, meanwhile, was popularized by a reality-based MTV series of the same name that focuses on the truths and lies of online dating. The term, besides being a type of fish, refers to a person who sets up a false personal profile on a social networking website for fraudulent or deceptive purposes. The word also became popular after it was revealed U.S. football player Manti Te'o was lured into an online relationship by a nonexistent woman. Other additions to the dictionary include culinary terms such as pho, a soup made of beef or chicken broth and rice noodles, and turducken, a boneless chicken stuffed into a boneless duck stuffed into a boneless turkey. Also added was the Canadian favorite poutine, which is a dish of French fries covered with brown gravy and cheese curds. The words freegan, fracking, and Yooper were also included in the annual update. A freegan is an activist who scavenges for free food in waste receptacles as a means of reducing consumption of resources, fracking refers to the injection of fluid into shale beds at high pressure in order to free up petroleum resources, and Yooper is a nickname used for a native or resident of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

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