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Web/Text Messaging Jargon Rules the Biz World

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Posted by [Neal Leavitt](#) on February 28th, 2014 at 7:02 pm



A client recently emailed me that ‘121 meetings might be the sensible approach’ – we were strategizing about holding a press event in advance of a conference.

SMH (‘Shaking My Head’), I wanted to have a bit of fun so SCNR (‘Sorry, Could Not Resist’), I lobbed back a zinger that we should shoot for 122 meetings, figuring AFAICT (‘As Far As I Can Tell’), the client had inadvertently made a typo.

AWK (‘Awkward’). Brain freeze. He meant ‘1 to 1’.

I thought about adding a smiley along with the reply but TBH (‘To Be Honest’), if I see one more emoticon, FMCDH (‘From My Cold Dead Hands’)...you can fill in the rest here.

All of the aforementioned further elucidates what’s finally happened. Internet/text messaging slang has taken over the business world, for better or worse – so, to quote the [Borg](#) from Star Trek, ‘resistance is futile.’

AAR (‘At Any Rate’), I started wondering how certain Internet slang, acronyms and text messaging aphorisms have steadily crept into our daily lives. How did this happen?

AFAICT (‘As Far As I Can Tell’), lots of theories abound but here’s a favorite – Harvard sociology professor Steven Shapin noted a few years ago that Internet slang is an interpretation of language that people have found necessary to create in order to confuse the "older" generation.

So, TTBOBK (‘To The Best Of My Knowledge’), 2014 will result in even more abbreviated chunks of gibberish as it’s all about the quick and mobile Internet. In fact, Paul Gil, a Canadian project manager/certified computer instructor, came up with an extensive list of hot text/chat expressions being/will be used this year:

COO – Spawned in California, Gill says "COO is a stylish way of saying ‘Cool’ or ‘I definitely approve of this.’ Probably created by someone with ADD who couldn’t wait to type in the ‘L’ before moving on to something else.

HMU – Hit Me Up. Used to say ‘contact me,’ ‘text me,’ ‘phone me.’ Gil says it’s a "modern shorthand way to invite a person to communicate with you further."

IDC – Not the global market research firm but the acronym for ‘I Don’t Care,’ Gil says people use IDC when they’re trying to make a decision with a messaging friend and are open to multiple options.

And while not directly business-related, the following example illustrates just how far language has morphed into symbols and letters that would have even stumped [Alan Turing](#).

BBC News recently asked readers to rewrite some classic texts in txt. Here's one example from Alfred, Lord Tennyson:

*0.5a leag 0.5 a leag
0.5a leag onwrđ
All in T valy o Dth
Rđ T 600
“^ T LB!
“Chrg 4Tgns” he sd
In2 T valy o Dth
Rđ T 600*

*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
“Forward the Light Brigade!
“Charge for the guns!” he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred*

Keeping up with all the latest online/text lingo is a losing proposition these days as cyberspace/mobile verbiage seems to be expanding faster than the universe.

James Poulos, writing in [The Daily Beast](#), added this cogent admonition:

“It’s enough to make you suspicious that the Internet was designed to create a race of illiterates, communicating through a primitive system of winks, tongue selfies, rap squats and chunked deuces. There’s no doubt now that the Internet has tipped the balance away from continuing our multi-millennial streak as a fundamentally text-based society – in favor of pictures, moving and otherwise.”

LEmtry, my dEr wtson.

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