



E-INFO: STAY INFORMED

Glossary of Online Terms

App—a web application, accessed over the internet, for a mobile device (e.g., smartphone, tablet) that works much like user-installed software on a computer allowing the device to perform specific tasks.

Blog—from “web log,” a regularly updated personal journal, conversation, commentary, or news forum on virtually any topic that is published on the web and may include text, hypertext, images, and links.

Browser—short for *web browser*, a software application that locates, retrieves, and displays information resources on the World Wide Web.

Cyberbullying—bullying that takes place using electronic technology, including the Internet, and related technologies to harm other people, in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner; may involve text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Cyberstalking—use of the Internet or other technology to stalk or harass an individual, a group of individuals, or an organization; it may include false accusations, monitoring, making threats, identity theft, damage to data or equipment, or harassment.

Email—short for electronic mail, the transmission of digital messages over communications networks, including the Internet.

Encryption—the conversion of digital information into a format unreadable to anyone except those possessing a “key” through which the encrypted information is converted back into its original form (decryption), making it readable again.

Firewall—software or hardware that, after checking information coming into a computer from the Internet or an external network, either blocks the transmission or allows it to pass through, depending on the pre-set firewall settings.

Geotagging—the process of adding geographical location, or label, to photographs, videos, websites, SMS messages, QR Codes, or RSS feeds; a geotag usually consists of latitude and longitude coordinates, altitude, distance, place names, and other details about the origin of the media being tagged.

Global Positioning System (GPS)—space-based satellite navigation system that provides positioning, navigation, and timing/distance information.

Hashtag—words or phrases prefixed with the symbol # (the pound sign); used to mark keywords or topics in a Tweet or social networking service.

IP Address—a unique identifier in the form of a numerical label assigned to each device, such as a personal computer or server, participating in a network, such as the Internet.

Internet—a worldwide collection of computer networks that use the standard *Internet Protocol Suite* to serve billions of users. The Internet carries an extensive range of information resources and services, including inter-linked hypertext documents of the *World Wide Web* and the infrastructure to support *email*.

Internet Service Provider (ISP)—an organization, usually a private business, that provides personal and business computers access to the Internet; users usually pay a monthly fee to an ISP for this service.

Malware—short for malicious software, software that disrupts or damages a computer's operation, gathers sensitive or private information, or gains access to private computer systems.

Botnet—a network of private computers, each of which is called a “bot,” infected with malicious software (malware) and controlled as a group without the owners' knowledge for nefarious and, often, criminal purposes.

Virus—type of malware that has a reproductive capacity to transfer itself from one computer to another spreading infections between online devices.

Worm—type of malware that replicates itself over and over within a computer.

Trojan—type of malware that gives an unauthorized user access to a computer.

Spyware—type of malware that quietly sends information about a user's browsing and computing habits back to a server that gathers and saves data.

Adware—type of malware that allows popup ads on a computer system, ultimately taking over a user's Internet browsing.

Rootkit—a type of malware that opens a permanent “back door” into a computer system; once installed, a rootkit will allow more and more viruses to infect a computer as various hackers find the vulnerable computer exposed and attack.

Online gaming—any type of game played through the Internet, over a computer network, or on a connected game console where players may be located in different geographic locations.

Phishing—sending emails that attempt to fraudulently acquire personal information, such as usernames, passwords, social security numbers, and credit card numbers, by masquerading as a trustworthy entity, such as a popular social website, financial site, or online payment processor; often directs users to enter details at a fake website whose look and feel are almost identical to the legitimate one.

Pop-ups—or pop-up ads, are a form of online advertising on the World Wide Web intended to attract web traffic or capture email addresses.

Pop-up blockers—a web browser feature, software, or application that allows users to limit or block pop-up ads.

Search engine—program that searches the World Wide Web for specified keywords and returns a list of links to the files where the keywords were found.

Social networking—using Internet-based tools that allow people to listen, interact, engage, and collaborate with each other.

Spam—the use of electronic messaging systems to send unsolicited bulk messages (usually advertising or other irrelevant posts) to large lists of email addresses indiscriminately.

Sexting—the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photographs between electronic devices.

URL—the Uniform Resource Locator is the global address of documents and other resources on the World Wide Web.

Virtual reality—an artificial environment created with computer software that can simulate physical presence in real world places, as well as in imaginary worlds, primarily through sight and sound experiences.

Voice chat—a form of telecommunication via voice over IP (VOIP) technologies.

Wi-Fi—a technology that allows an electronic device (personal computer, video game console, smart-phone, tablet, digital audio player) to exchange data wirelessly (using radio waves) over a computer network.

Wi-Fi Hotspot—a wireless access point to the Internet or other computer network.

Webcam—a video camera that feeds images in real time to a computer or computer network; can be used to establish video links permitting computers to act as videophones or videoconference station.

Website—a collection of specially formatted, related Web files (or pages) on a particular subject or organization that are stored on a computer known as a web server and accessible through a network such as the Internet.

WWW—the World Wide Web (commonly known as “the Web” or the “Information Superhighway”), a vast collection of linked files accessed over the Internet using a protocol called Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

Definitions used with permission from the National Cyber Security Alliance.

See also Common Sense Media for additional glossary terms and trending app descriptions.