Glossary of Terms

Timeline – Each user's timeline is his or her personal page that displays all of his or her pictures, status updates, and activities on Facebook.[5]
News Feed – Each user's homepage that shows updates on friends and liked pages.[5]
Tagging – A tag links a person, place, or page to something a user posts, such as a status update or a picture.[5]
Friend – Another user that you connect and share with on Facebook.[5]
Chat – A feature that allows users to send instant private messages to online friends. If friends are not online, these messages will be sent to the friend's message inbox.[5]
Like – A button that allows a user to provide positive feedback to a status update, picture, video or other shared information. Liking a page allows a user to add those pages' updates to their news feed.[5]

Profile – A Twitter page that displays information about a Twitter user and their tweets.[6]
@ - Used to address another Twitter user in Tweets.
# -A Hashtag, used to mark keywords or topics in tweets.[6]
Follow – Allows a user to subscribe to another user's tweets.[6]
Tweet – The eponymous status update.
Direct Message – Private messages between Twitter users.
Retweet – A function that allows one user to forward another user's Tweet while giving attribution to the original Tweet.
Trending Topic – One of the most popular topics on Twitter at the moment.[6]

Blog – Similar to a user's profile page, it displays all of a user's posts.
Dashboard – Each user's homepage that displays posts from the other users that they follow.
Tagging – A way to organize posts by labeling them with descriptions. Tags provide a way to search for content on Tumblr.
Follow – Allows one user to subscribe to another user's posts.
Ask – Allows anyone (including non-followers) to ask a user questions on the site. Users can ask questions through their blog, or anonymously (and anonymous asking can be disabled by the blog's user).
Fanmail – A variation on the asking feature of Tumblr that does not allow anonymous messages.
Reblog – A function that allows one user to forward another user's content onto their blog while giving attribution to the original post.
Theme – the design of each user's blog.

GENERATION AWKWARD

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"Awk." It's a saying that seemed to pop up over night. Our generation rapidly incorporated it into the vernacular like, well, the word like. And it doesn't end there—presh, obvs, and adorbs have also penetrated the vocabulary. Out of the hundreds of thousands of words in the English language, why was "awk"—a shortened version of the word awkward—chosen as one of the select few to be shortened and made into a trend?

Could it be because of the growing social awkwardness Generation Y is dealing with due to our refusal to converse in person, in favor of social networking? These additions to our lexicon and changes in the way we communicate are only two of the many side effects of rapid advancements in technology that we have seen over the past several years. Cyber bullying, early onset hearing problems, false confidence and alternate personalities behind the façade of online anonymity, sexting, and insufficient knowledge of basic grammar are just the beginning.

Junior Savannah Dekle adds her pet peeves to the list: "I think the increase of horrible manners is a big negative. You can't even have a dinner with people anymore without someone being on their phone. Another one is that so many people are unable to do simple math because they were raised with calculators."

Why move forward if there are so many negative side effects? Obviously, there are positives in advancement. "Thanks to the increased use of technology we are able get things done more efficiently, we can accomplish feats that were unimaginable decades ago, we can save more lives and get information much faster," said Jordyn Middlebrooks, a freshman Psychology major.

But do those positives outweigh the negatives? As someone who is part of the generation most affected by these advancements, Adam Holtzapple, a freshman mechanical engineering major answered this much debated question:

"Although there are inherent consequences with increased technology use, I personally hold the idea that the pros overwhelm the cons when it comes to technology use. I believe humans have made important and necessary strides with technology, which have brought us to what we consider success today. Without technology growth, the human race would remain stagnant, subsequently initiating a naturally induced "brain drain" where there's no more research done by professors and doctors looking to make processes more efficient or looking to create the next life-altering invention. Therefore, technology increase, even with negative consequences, is beneficial because it forces us as one human race to strive for intellectual superiority," Holtzapple said.

I think that the general consensus within our society is that we, as the most intelligent inhabitants of this planet, should continue to search for the answers to the questions we still have not solved. In choosing that path, we are subjecting ourselves to the task of overcoming the aforementioned consequences of development. Middlebrooks believes that "People should take time out of their lives to put away their phones, computers, etc. to have undistracted time to focus on friends, loved ones, and to be able to get things done in a timely manner." Maybe if we did all take that time once in awhile, being without our gadgets for short periods of time wouldn't hurt as much.

And, hey! Maybe we'll even get over this whole socially inept stage thanks to a few more nifty discoveries. Will there be a previously undiscovered drug that makes it go away? A new psychological therapy? Or maybe we'll just get so used to the awkwardness that it won't be uncomfortable anymore. Awk.