American Dialect Society
2010 Words of the Year
NOMINATIONS to be voted on by
the American Dialect Society
Jan. 7, 2011, Pittsburgh

WORD OF THE YEAR
Nominations to be made at final meeting.

MOST USEFUL
fat-finger Verb: to mistype, as by accidentally
striking more than one key on a keyboard/pad.
junk junk shot (attempt to fix BP oil spill), junk
status (Greece’s credit rating), don’t touch my
junk (protest against TSA pat-down procedure).
nom Onomatopoetic form connoting eating, esp.
pleasurably. Can be used as an interjection or
noun to refer to delicious food.
vuvuzela: South African plastic trumpet used by
fans during the FIFA World Cup matches.

MOST CREATIVE
-sauce Intensive suffix, as in awesome-sauce
‘great’ and lame-sauce ‘stupid’.
spillion An immense number, especially of
gallons of oil in the Gulf spill. Also
spillionaire, person made rich by money from
BP’s spill cleanup fund.
phoenix firm A troubled company that
reemerges under a new name.
prehab Preemptive enrollment in a rehab facility
to prevent relapse of an abuse problem.

MOST UNNECESSARY
refudiate Blend of refute and repudiate used by
Sarah Palin on Twitter.
ironic moustache Facial hair worn as a statement
of retro hipsterdom.
star whacker Imagined celebrity killer (alleged
by actor Randy Quaid and his wife Evi).

MOST EUPHEMISTIC
corn sugar Corn Refiners Association’s
rebranding of high fructose corn syrup.
enhanced pat-down TSA’s term for
controversial new frisking procedure.
kinetic event Pentagon term for violent attacks
on troops in Afghanistan.

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
hacktivism Using computer hacking skills as a
form of political or social activism.
-pad Combining form used by iPad and other
tablet computers (ViewPad, WindPad, etc.).
telework Term used at federal level for work by
an employee away from the office.
trend Verb: to exhibit a burst of online
buzz.

LEAST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
fauxhemian Winner of a Gawker poll to replace
the term “hipster.”
skyaking Jumping out of a plane in a kayak.
top kill / top hat / junk shot Various
failed techniques to fix the BP oil spill.

ELECTION TERMS (new category)
Aqua Buddha Fictitious deity in collegiate
scandal involving Rand Paul, raised during his
Kentucky Senate campaign.
mama grizzly Sarah Palin’s term for a fiercely
conservative female candidate.
man up Exhortation to be responsible or “act like
a man,” used by Sharron Angle against Harry
Reid in Nevada Senate race.
Obamacare Pejorative term for the Patient
Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.

FAN WORDS (new category)
belieber A fan of pop singer Justin Bieber
(Bieber + believer)
glee A fan of the TV show “Glee” (Glee + geek)
little monster A fan of pop singer Lady Gaga, so
called by the singer herself.
Twihard A fan of the “Twilight” books and
movies.
Yat Dat A native-born fan of the New Orleans
Saints.