

AUTOMOTIVE

Jaguar makes the case for alternative “car” definition

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Jaguar's I-Pace is technically not a "car" by dictionary definitions. Image courtesy of Jaguar

By STAFF REPORTS

British automaker Jaguar is petitioning to have the dictionary definition of car evolve to include electric vehicles.

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The online entries for “car” in the Oxford English Dictionary and Oxford Dictionary both are limited to combustion engines, but Jaguar is looking to change the definitions to be more inclusive. This move comes as Jaguar has been making a big push in electric vehicles with models such as its first all-electric sport utility vehicle, the I-Pace.

Definition debate

The Oxford English Dictionary, considered the standard historic record of the language, defines car as “a road vehicle powered by a motor (usually an internal combustion engine) designed to carry a driver and a small number of passengers, and usually having two front and two rear wheels, esp. for private, commercial or leisure use.”

Oxford Dictionaries, which is run by Oxford University Press, has a similar definition that includes “internal combustion engine.”

Jaguar has sent a formal petition to both dictionaries to have their definitions changed to include powertrains that do not center on combustion, such as electric motors.

The automaker has also started a social media campaign, asking consumers to post about how the dictionaries should #RedefineTheCar.

We’ve rewritten the rules. Can we now rewrite the dictionary?

According to the current online definition, the all-electric #Jaguar #IPACE - 2019 World Car of the Year - isn’t a ‘car’ at all. We think it's time for a change.

How would you #RedefineTheCar? pic.twitter.com/LDhpLbBTE0

— Jaguar UK (@JaguarUK) August 14, 2019

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Tweet from Jaguar

“A lot of time and thought is put into the name of any new vehicle or technology to ensure it is consumer friendly, so it’s surprising to see that the definition of the car is a little outdated,” said David Browne, head of Jaguar Land Rover’s naming committee, in a statement. “We are therefore inviting the Oxford English Dictionary and the Oxford Dictionaries to update its online classification to reflect the shift from traditional internal combustion engines towards more sustainable powertrains.”

Jaguar Land Rover recently showed its commitment to the United Kingdom with plans to produce a new series of electric vehicles at its Castle Bromwich plant.

The company is bringing together all elements of electric production in the U.K., including battery creation, electric drive units and vehicle manufacturing. Jaguar Land Rover plans to launch electrified options for all of its models by 2020, looking towards battery-powered cars as the future of driving ([see story](#)).

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