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The start of 2011 has brought about debate on the future of email, the development of new technologies and most importantly, the impact they will have on our industry and the way we communicate with people. Volker Wiewer, CEO of eCircle, argues why email isn't dead yet.

I read an interesting article in the Evening Standard, predicting the death of email. It seems that the emergence of new technologies, like social media, must result in the death of another.

The emergence of new technologies is something to be celebrated. The launch of things like Facebook Messages caused a stir in the marketing industry and rightly so. As a 'one stop shop' for social communications. Facebook Messages has the potential to have a profound effect on how consumers communicate online. Even Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg stressed that it would not be an 'email killer', but a 'messaging system that includes email as a part of it'.

At eCircle we have long been championing the huge power of successfully integrating email and social media. This year we are launching our first pan-European conference for digital marketers, ConnectEurope2011, and I have no doubt that emerging technologies and trends like social media will be one of many interesting topics brought to the table by the industry experts and global brands that will be attending and speaking.

We will also be launching the next stage of our European Social Media and Email Marketing study at ConnectEurope2011, analysing how brands are, or aren't in many cases, making the most of these influential online channels. Contrary to popular belief, social media actually lends itself well to integrating email within its services, and it is clear to see those brands that are reaping the rewards from using these tools cleverly.

The past decade has seen marketing communications change beyond recognition; in my opinion the future of marketing lies solidly within the digital sphere. In this space brands have a huge opportunity to create interactive campaigns that connect with people.

Email and social media are joined at the hip and I believe that email will still be the backbone of commercial online communications in the future. We shouldn't be putting new technologies and traditional methods up against each other. We, as experts, should be analysing how to communicate with people in the most effective way, through understanding why they behave a certain way on social networks and email. This will allow us to target individuals with a relevant brand message at the right time. And ultimately, isn't that what we are all trying to achieve?

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