



Throw Forward Thursday: The end of emails

The last time somebody asked me to send them a fax, I told them I couldn't because of where I live. They asked me where that was and I said in the 2020s, so they let me scan it and send it as an email attachment, thank you. Well, I wonder when the last email will be sent. I hope it's soon.

My name is Graeme Codrington, welcome to Throw Forward Thursday, where every week we jump into the future and see what's going on there, and what I really hope is that we don't have to jump too far into the future to find the end of email. If you're like me, your inbox is overstuffed with unanswered, unread emails and it's out of control. What we need to do is find a way to replace emails.

Now emails were a remarkable innovation at the time. You got to go back to the early 1990s or so when if I wanted to contact somebody, I needed to phone them. They weren't at their desk because phones were tethered to the desks. So I left a message and then they got my message, they phoned me back, but now I wasn't at my desk and they left a message for me and we could go backwards and forwards for a while before we connected or we had to make an appointment. Email changed as it created asynchronous communication which was fantastic. It allowed me to send you a message, you respond in your own time and now we're engaging and communicating, but of course, the world has sped it up and added text messages and things like that, and now we're just overwhelmed with emails and communications.

What we need is to replace the email system, just like we replaced faxes, just like we replaced Telegrams, just like telexes were replaced, and just like in some countries at least, the simple post office is being replaced. So, it's difficult maybe for us to imagine what something else will look like because we're so entrenched with what we've got, but we do need to begin to think about the end of emails. It's not going to come with one solution, one thing that replaces all emails. I think what will happen is there'll be a variety of little replacements.

For example, if you do shopping instead of getting an email to confirm that your cart has been paid for and the shopping is complete, it'll just be in the shopping

app, we don't need the email, we can go back to the shop's app and we can see and track the process. Internal team communications can be replaced with a productivity app, which then keeps all of your communications together and provides some searching and hashtagging functionality, which is way better than emails anyway. And we could ban marketing communications via email and spam and so on.

So I think it's going to be a thousand little cuts into the email beast that finally kills it, and what you need to be doing as a team member, as a team leader, as an organisational thinker, as somebody who thinks about the future of work, you need to be doing your best to minimise and remove email and direct message communications in different ways, in different spaces and replace them with something that is better to use, better in terms of its communication, and won't overwhelm us and kill us. The end of email, I don't know when it will happen, but it can't be soon enough.

As always, thank you for joining me, and throw forward Thursday Land. Make sure that you like and subscribe. If you're following us on YouTube, thanks for listening. If you're listening to the podcast and you can interact with us by going to the website, ask about the futureship.com and leave us any messages, comments, or questions that we'll apply to them all.

I'll see you next Thursday as we continue this fascinating end of series.

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