

MAPI Download Utility

If you would like to dial your mail provider every 12 hours and download your messages to your personal folders, you need MAPI Download. MAPI Download connects and downloads messages without ever starting the Exchange mail client, making it suitable for running from scheduler programs. Like MAPI Logon, it allows you to specify the profile to use on the command line.

Requirements and contraindications

Like MAPI Logon, this should work on NT as well as Win95, given the presence of MAPI. The profile you specify must contain a default store as a destination for the messages, and must contain transport providers for each message service that it will poll.

I haven't tested this at all on Remote Mail services.

Certain transport providers, such as MSN, require that you click a button in order to connect, even if you've given the transport provider your password to use on your behalf. This makes MAPI Download much less useful with these transports.

Installation

Download mfetch.zip from this web page and unzip it. Copy the executable mfetch.exe anywhere that you like. Check your \windows\system directory for the file msvert40.dll; if you lack this, download msvert40.zip from this web page, unzip it, and move the extracted file into \windows\system. Create a profile containing the desired destination message store as the default store, and containing each transport needed. Specify this profile when running the utility.

De-installation

Delete the file mfetch.exe, together with any shortcuts or batch files that reference it.

Usage

Like MAPI Logon, MAPI Fetch is designed to work from desktop or folder shortcuts, or by having another application spawn it. It accepts a number of command-line switches that control its behavior.

The /p switch is mandatory, naming the profile to use for logon. If the name of the profile contains spaces, surround it with quotes.

The /c switch allows you to specify a credential string for use at logon. Most systems do not use this.

The /? switch gives a brief summary of the program.

Note that MAPI Download, true to its name, only downloads messages.

Known shortcomings and bugs in this release

There is one very important bug that I must commend to your attention. It is not in mfetch, MAPI, or Exchange, but instead apparently lies in Win95 PPP. It doesn't bite everybody, and those that it does bite it doesn't bite every time; but if it does bite you you'll ache for a while. I list it here only because mfetch makes it dangerous.

Briefly, certain sites have reported that their systems occasionally lock up solidly - requiring reset or cycling the power - when they disconnect a PPP session. If you use mfetch to download your messages, and mfetch activates the Internet Mail service provider and lets that establish the PPP connection as necessary, then it will disconnect the PPP session immediately after downloading your messages. If this bug strikes you, you will lose all messages downloaded, since the system will lock up before the file system flushes its data to the disk.

If like most sites you've never had your system lock up on hangup, then you're safe, and may use mfetch with impunity. However, if you have seen this happen before, you should always establish the PPP session by hand, explicitly starting a session through Dial-Up Networking; that way, should hangup slag your system, you'll have given your data the time it needs to migrate to the disk.

If you run two programs simultaneously downloading Internet Mail from different POP providers, you can crash MAPI. Workaround: don't do that.

Change history

24 November 1995. Version 0.1.0. Initial release.