MPACK

Mpack is a utility for encoding and decoding binary files in MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions) format mail messages. For compatibility with older forms of transferring binary files, Mpack can also decode messages in split-uuencoded format or Macintosh split-BinHex format. This version of Mpack for the Macintosh also supports sending files through Internet email.

Drag & Drop Encoding/Decoding

If you drag a file onto Mpack's icon, Mpack will automatically begin decoding text files or encoding other files. The next two sections will describe decoding and encoding specifics.

Decoding Files

To decode a MIME message, first save it to a text file. If possible, save it with all headers included. Mpack can decode some MIME files when the headers are missing or incomplete, other files it cannot decode without having the information in the headers. In general, messages which have a statement at the beginning that they are in MIME format can be decoded without the headers. Messages which have been split into multiple parts generally require all headers in order to be reassembled and decoded.

Some LAN-based mail systems and some mail providers (including America Online, as of the writing of this document) place the mail headers at the bottom of the message, instead of at the top of the message. If you are having problems decoding a MIME message on such a system, you need to convert the mail back into the standard format by removing the system's nonstandard headers and moving the standard Internet headers to the top of the message (separated from the message body with a blank line). You may do this with a word processor or text editor such as SimpleText.

There must be exactly one message per file. Mpack cannot deal with multiple messages in a single file, to decode things correctly it must know when one message ends and the next one begins.

To decode a set of MIME, uuencoded, or binhex encoded text mail files, select the "Decode Mail Files..." item in the File menu, or press âŒ˜D. You will be presented with a standard open dialog to select the first file you wish to decode. Once you've made your selection you will be presented with a list of all files that have the same prefix (followed by a number) as the file you selected. You may add or remove files at will (with the "Add Files..." and "Remove" buttons), or start the decode process by pressing the "Decode" button. Mpack will process the files and save the output in the appropriate

files. If you receive only part of the files you wish to decode, Mpack will store temporary files in a “mpack-tmp” folder on the default volume until the rest of the files you wish to decode have been received.

Encoding Files

To encode and save/email a file, select the “Encode File…” item in the File menu, or press âŒ˜E. You will be prompted for the file to encode, then the encode dialog will appear with the following items:

Subject:
This is the subject for the email message. You may type a short description of the file here.
Save Email to File / Email To
Use these radio buttons to select whether you want to save the results or send the file via standard Internet email.
Email To:
This is the Internet email address to which the encoded message will be sent.
Split into parts…
This gives you the option of breaking the file into several smaller email messages.
Description:
You may type a longer description of the file here. If you have a description saved on disk, select the “Insert Text File…” menu item or press âŒ˜T.
Encode
This will begin encoding the file. If you have selected Email To: and typed an Internet Email address, this will also open MacTCP and send the email. Otherwise you will be prompted for the filename for the resulting email message(s).

Preferences

Mpack currently supports the following preferences:

Internet Host:
If your Macintosh has an Internet hostname, you should type it here. The “Set” button will open MacTCP and figure out the Internet hostname of your Macintosh automatically. Mpack uses this information to uniquely identify your mail message so it is less likely to get lost.
Email Address:
You should enter your preferred Internet email address here. This will be used as the return address when Mpack sends Internet email for you.
Mail Host:
This is the Internet host which delivers email for you. If you don’t know what to type here, ask your system administrator what “SMTP server” you

should use.

Quit Mpack when finished

When this is checked, Mpack will quit when it finishes encoding/decoding everything. This may be useful if you primarily use Mpack via drag & drop.

Extract text parts

Normally Mpack will only extract binary files from MIME messages. If you check this, Mpack will also extract regular text files from MIME messages.

Encoding:

This determines how Mpack encodes Macintosh files into MIME email messages. If you select Automatic, Mpack will use the most appropriate of the other three options for files you encode. If you select Data only, Mpack will only encode the data in the file and will throw away any Macintosh specific information. This may be useful if you are sending to a non-Macintosh user. If you select Appledouble, Mpack will keep the data and Macintosh specific parts of the file in separate sections. This is usually best for sending files to other Macintosh users as well as non-Macintosh users. If you select Applesingle, Mpack will encode the file in a single piece which only other Macintosh users can understand.

Internet Config

Mpack supports the "Internet Config" application. Mpack sets the Email Address and Mail Host preferences using Internet Config. In addition, Mpack uses Internet Config's Mappings to help assign the correct Macintosh Icon to decoded files. If you wish to change the type or creator that Mpack uses for a particular file, you must use Internet Config. Internet Config is available from the following ftp sites:

ftp://redback.cs.uwa.edu.au//Others/PeterLewis/
ftp://ftp.nig.ac.jp/pub/mac/PeterLewis/
ftp://nic.switch.ch/software/mac/peterlewis/
ftp://amug.org/pub/peterlewis/
ftp://ftp.share.com/peterlewis/
ftp://cadadmin.cadlab.vt.edu/peterlewis/

The USA localized version is available from:

ftp://ftp.andrew.cmu.edu/pub/Mac/Internet-config/

Reporting Bugs or Sending Comments

Bugs and comments should be reported to mpack-bugs@andrew.cmu.edu. When reporting bugs or other problems, please include the following information:

- The version number of Mpack

- The platform (Unix, PC, OS/2, Mac, Amiga, Archimedes)
- The EXACT output of any unsuccessful attempts.
- If having a problem decoding, the first couple of lines of the input file.

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