MailConverter 2.1: Caveats And Comments

FORMAT WARNING

MailConverter generally figures out what kind of file it's been presented with by looking at the header, or in some circumstances the file type and creator. If it sees something legal, it expects the rest of the file to be legal too, in whatever format the header implies. If the header looks like good Babyl, for example, but the rest of the file isn't, don't expect the converter to work.

FORMAT COMMENTS

1. Ricemail: MailConverter depends on the current file structure used by Ricemail. Some very old versions (pre-1992) have a different format. The best thing to do if you have notebooks made by one of these early versions is to update them with a newer version (eg, by creating a new notebook and using MOVEALL to move all the old messages into it).

2. DOS Pine: With most mail formats, MailConverter doesn't care whether the file has Unix-style end-of-line (linefeed), Mac style end-of-line (carriage return) or DOS-style end-of-line (carriage return + linefeed).   With DOS Pine conversion, it does care. The structure of the format relies on character counts for the messages, and altering the usual DOS cr+lf to the usual Mac cr alters that count. Therefore, in the case of DOS Pine files, you must keep it in DOS format; otherwise the mail format will not be recognized. This means that you should not move such files from DOS to Mac via ascii (or text) mode ftp, since the whole purpose of that kind of file transfer is to adjust the end-of-line characters. Use binary mode, or move the files via floppy (using PC Exchange), or mount the remote file-system with AppleShare. If you've already used ftp to move DOS Pine files, or if you've manually converted them to Mac format, you should convert them back to DOS format, using BBEdit Lite or Alpha or some other text tool that knows how to do this.

3. AOL/eWorld: Note the   Convert AOL/eWorld To & cc: option in the Settings. In some cases, the address fields (From, To, and cc) of an AOL or eWorld message will not have full internet addresses. MailConverter will always try to correct the From field (in order to get Reply to work in Eudora) but it will not, by default, do the same for To and cc, in order to keep the output file-size from   growing excessively. If you want address correct for To and cc,   check this box.

3. Digests: MailConverter will burst digests into a mailbox of separate messages. Digests, as typically delivered by mailing lists, come in several flavors which require the user to specify slightly different handling. See Digest And Pseudo Digests   for details. Digest can be created from Eudora/Z-Mail mailboxes with the Digestify   command (see The File Menu).

4. Claris Emailer: MailConverter will convert only filed Emailer mail, not the In Box or the Out Box. With incoming POP mail,   the original internet headers will be extracted from the resource fork, and the descriptive headers that Emailer prepends to the message body will be stripped off. With incoming mail retrieved from non-POP (dialup) connections, and with outgoing mail, it will attempt to parse the descriptive headers into some reasonable sendmail format (but no guarantees here).   Outgoing mail in Emailer does not store the From: field (since it's actual value depends on the service) so in general converted outgoing messages will likewise have no From: field (and they'll look funny in Eudora as a result). If Internet Config is installed, and if an Email Address preference has been specified, a phoney From: field will be generated using that address.

INCOMING VS OUTGOING MAIL

The format Eudora uses fors its mailboxes does not distinguish incoming mail from outgoing mail. Instead, Eudora uses a field in the .toc file, which is not accessible to third party programs like MailConverter. By default, mail in Eudora is considered incoming. What this means is that MailConverter has no way to create outgoing mail: everything you import will be flagged by Eudora as incoming.   When you look at a summary window containing what you expect to be an outgoing message, it will be listed as coming from you (rather than being listed as going to whomever it was

sent).

I'm not familiar with how Z-Mail handles the incoming vs outgoing distinction.

ATTACHMENTS AND LARGE MESSAGES
Eudora only checks for attachments   on incoming mail from the POP server or local spool file. If you wish to convert a mail file with attachments in it, you must use Eudora's UUCP spoolpath option on the resulting, converted file if you want to get at the attachment. Similarly, Eudora only breaks up large messages on incoming mail from the POP server or local spool file.

I don't know how to force attachment parsing in Z-Mail.

DRAG & DROP: FINDER INTERFACE
If a single file is dragged onto the MailConverter icon, it will be converted with the Convert File command; if a single folder is dragged onto the MailConverter icon, it will be converted with Merge Folder.

If multiple files and/or folders are dragged onto the MailConverter icon, the dragged items will be merged into one mailbox by default (ie, similar to Merge Folder). If the Command key is down at the time, each dragged item will have its own mailbox (ie, similar to Convert File).

If the control key is down at the time of the drag, all dragged files will be tagged rather than converted (see Tag File, above).

DRAG & DROP: DRAG MANAGER SUPPORT
If you're running 7.0 or 7.1, you can get still get access to MailConverter's Drag&Drop support. Pick up Macintosh Drag And Drop 1.1 from ftp://ftp.apple.com/dts/mac/sys.soft/extensions. Last time I checked, this package did not include a drag-aware Finder, so you won't be able to drag to or from the Finder in the new Drag Manager style (eg, dragging files from the Finder to one of MailConverter's windows). But other inter- and intra-application drags should be fine, in particular dragging from Anarchie or NewsWatcher to MailConverter (not from Fetch, however). A drag-aware Finder for 7.1 is available from eWorld and also comes with AppleScript 1.1 and CodeWarrior 4.0.

The Drag Manager is included with 7.5, which also comes with a drag-aware Finder.

NewsWatcher's Save Threads To Separate Files option will not work properly when dragging articles to MailConverter.   You must disable this option if you want to drag multiple articles (from multiple threads) directly to MailConverter. If you really want this option on, you'll have to drag to the Finder first and then drag the resulting files.

Fetch 3.0 supports drag & drop but unfortunately it cannot be used to drag remote files into MailConverter. Contact me if you want more details (it has to do with Fetch's built-in binhex decoding and the way it generates file names as a consequence). Anarchie works fine for this purpose, however.

READING A NEWLY CREATED MAILBOX: Eudora Lite vs Eudora Pro vs Z-Mail
If you're using the commercial version of Eudora, reading a newly created mailbox is simple: just double-click on it, or use the Other... menu choice in the Mailbox menu. The mailbox can reside anywhere, and the table-of-contents will be generated as needed. The only restriction is that the mailbox filename be 27 characters or less (an option in MailConverter will enforce this restriction). You can also send the new mailbox directly to Eudora from MailConverter.

Freeware Eudora is   less friendly. In this case, the mailbox must reside in your Eudora folder, and it

must be there at the time Eudora is started — it can't be added while Eudora is running as near as I can tell. Double-clicking on a mailbox in freeware Eudora will only work once its corresponding table-of-contents file has been generated by selecting it from the Eudora mailbox menu. The new Send-To-Eudora option does not work with the freeware version unless you're appending to an existing mailbox.

If you're using Z-Mail, you can open the new mailbox with the Open Folder command, or send the new mailbox directly to Z-Mail from MailConverter.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT FILE CONVERSION
Don't try to replace the file you're converting with the result of the conversion; it can't work, and you're liable to confuse the program in a major way if you try to force it.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT FOLDER CONVERSION
It's very important that the contents of the selected folder and all subfolders remain unchanged for the duration of folder operations: don't delete files in the folder (at any level) while Merge Folder or Convert Folder are in progress, don't move files out or in, definitely don't try to put the results of the conversion into the folder you're converting. In short, don't do anything at all to alter the folder structure. This also applies to drag&drop operations involving folders.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT EUDORA AND "BIG" MESSAGES
Eudora dislikes messages that are larger than 32K. When it reads from a POP server, it will automatically break such messages up into chunks of 32K or less. But it does not currently do this break-up on a new mailboxes, in particular on mailboxes created (or modified) by MailConverter. To handle large messages, you must force Eudora to treat the mailbox as if it were new incoming mail. You can do this by specifying the full path of the file, preceded by a "!", as your POP account. Of course the messages in the file will go in your In folder, since as far as Eudora is concerned this is simply incoming mail. But you can transfer them elsewhere afterwards.

If you find this procedure tedious, I would suggest asking Qualcomm to have Eudora check for "big" messages whenever it creates or re-creates the .toc for the mailbox.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ALIAS IMPORTING
If you use MailConverter to import an alias which has the same name as an existing one, both entries will be in the Nicknames file but in practice Eudora will almost always assume you mean the earliest occurance. For instance, if the name is on the recipient-list menu, it will only show up once and it will refer to the earliest entry. Likewise if you manually type the name into a message, the earliest entry will be used. More importantly, if you rename or remove any of later entries of the same name using the corresponding commands in Eudora's nicknames window, Eudora will actually rename or remove the original entry! So be very careful before doing this. Best bet if you see duplication is to open the file in a text editor (eg SimpleText or BBEdit Lite) and modify it manually so that there are no more duplicates.

SYSTEM LIMITATIONS
MailConverter does not run under System 6 (or anything earlier)! Don't even bother trying.

USUAL DISCLAIMER
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