YA-Base64 1.2.3

Introduction

Yet Another Base64 Decoder version 1.2.2 is a simple droplet designed to decode MIME Base64 encoded as well as uuencoded files that are dropped upon it. It assumes that all segments of the original MIME or uuencoded document have been concatenated into the file being decoded, and that the segments are in order.

This is intended primarily as a helper application for Yet Another NewsWatcher, for which it is the recommended Base64 decoder AND uudecoder helper application. It is not a general purpose MIME document decoder. However, it does handle most usenet Base64 and uuencoded binaries fairly well, and it can deal with multiple attached files.

It requires, but does not test for, System 7 or later.

YA-Base64 was written by Brian Clark, using DropShell 2.0 by Leonard Rosenthol, Marshall Clow, and Stephan Somogyi, as well as some utility routines from NewsWatcher by John Norstad (copyright 1996 by Northwestern University).

Comments on Base64 Decoding

When performing a Base64 decode, if the program encounters a line containing name="filename.ext" before it finds any Base64 data, that name will be used for the decoded file. Otherwise an attempt is made to located a name for the decoded file using the Subject header line in the message. If this is unsuccessful, a name of the form untitled-nn will be used.

Setting the Type and Creator of Decoded Files

The file mapping settings of Internet Config will be used to assign a file type and creator to the converted file. If this is unsuccessful, the decoded file will appear to be a SimpleText (TeachText) document. You will then have to determine the appropriate file type and creator yourself, and use some other utility program (ResEdit, for example) or system extension (Get More Info, for example) to change the type and creator to the appropriate values.

An exception is when decoding a Base64 file. If the MIME headers include information about the file type and creator (using the x-mac-type= and x-mac-creator= header strings), this information will be used rather than any creator and type from Internet Config file mapping settings.

Comments on Uudecoding

Correctly uuencoded files should contain a line of the form:

begin nnn filename.ext

directly before the start of the uuencoded data, all on the same line. The nnn is an octal number used to set the file permissions under UNIX and similar operating systems. filename.ext is the name of the decoded file.

In some cases (typically due to an error by the encoder), the file permission number is missing. YA-Base64 has a preference that enables such incorrect begin lines to still be recognized by the program. See "Preferences," below.

Preferences
There are five program preferences, set from the Preferences dialog.
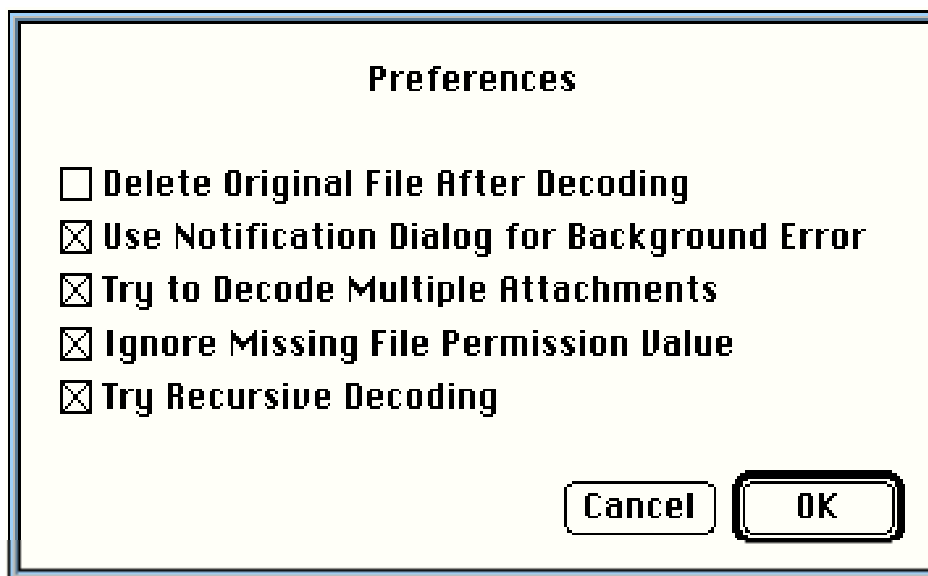
1) If "Delete Original File After Decoding" is checked, the program will delete the original encoded file after it has been processed, but only if at least one decoded output file was successfully created from the original file. Otherwise the original file remains untouched. The safest setting for this option is unchecked.

2) If an error is encountered during program operation, an alert will be displayed providing the system error number and a short description of what operation failed. When "Use Notification Manager Dialog for Background Error" is checked, the Mac's Notification Manager will display a dialog when the program encounters a problem when running in the background. Otherwise it merely blinks its icon in the application menu.

3) Sometimes a single file will contain multiple attached binary files. If "Try to Decode Multiple Attachments" is checked, YA-Base64 will attempt to extract multiple attached files included in a single message. Because YA-Base64 is NOT a smart decoder, it may be that some multi-part single attachment files will not decode properly if the option to extract multiple attachments is enabled.

4) If "Ignore Missing File Permission Value" is checked YA-Base64 will perform less stringent testing when looking for a valid begin line for uuencoded files, as described above in the section "Comments on Uudecoding".

5) Sometimes usenet binary attachments are erroneously encoded multiple times. Sometimes a file is uuencoded twice in a row; sometimes it is first uuencoded and the Base64 encoded (or vice-versa). If "Try Recursive Decoding" is checked, YA-Base64 will attempt to decode again any file it successfully decodes. Note that this adds to the time it takes the program to process a file. Typically it takes half as long to process a file that does not contain any Base64 encoded or uuencoded data as it does to process a file that does contain such data. So a file that was encoded once that decodes in 30 seconds when this option is turned off will take about 45 seconds to decode if it's turned on. A similar file that was encoded twice would take about 60 seconds to produce the final, fully decoded data.

Disclaimer
The author assumes no liability for the use of this application.