

NETWORK UPDATE

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Computer networking is becoming more and more essential to the language instructor. Besides allowing foreign language professionals to share resources and ideas, it gives students direct access to native speakers of the language they are studying and provides opportunities for exchanges that reach beyond the traditional scope of the language classroom. As we explore this new resource together, we encourage you to share your discoveries with other IALL members. Please let us know how you are using telecomputing with your students. We also urge you to keep us informed of what you still want to know about the vast world of networking.

This month's column explores USENET as a resource for foreign languages. It brings you up to date on Minitel which now provides an important link to services in many countries. In addition, you will find reviews of CTLINK, a software package that helps access and save Minitel screens for re-use, and of Eudora, a mail-manager.

USENET as a Foreign Language Resource

by Ed Dente

Tufts University

For those interested in exploring language and culture interests on-line, there are a number of resources available. The internet offers links to libraries and universities throughout the world. The easiest way to discover which institutions you can access is to contact your local university library or computing center and ask for an access list. For truly interactive culture and language work, however, consider joining mailing lists on listserves and working with the newsgroups on Usenet ("News").

Usenet is a marvelous jumble of well over one thousand newsgroups. A

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newsgroup is a topic posted on the network. People around the world read and respond to the messages. Unlike a listserv, you need not subscribe in order to access the messages. There are a number of foreign language and culture newsgroups as follows:

SOC.CULTURE.BRAZIL

Discussion of Brazilian culture, nearly all of which is in Portuguese,

SOC.CULTURE.ESPERANTO

Most of the entries are in Esperanto,

SOC.CULTURE.FRANCE

Most are in French,

SOC.CULTURE.GERMAN

Most are in German,

SOC.CULTURE.ITALIAN

Some are in Italian,

SOC.CULTURE.LATINAMERIC

A few are in Spanish,

SOC.CULTURE.MEXICAN

Virtually all entries are in Spanish,

SOC.CULTURE.POLISH

Most are in Polish.

On any given day, the foreign culture newsgroups are alive with questions, comments, suggestions, arguments, opinions, even recipes from instructors, students, casual participants and dedicated netters. For instance, as I write, I find on SOC.CULTURE.ITALY an ongoing thread on election results in Italy and what they may portend, an impassioned discussion on women's rights in Italy, an equally impassioned discussion on the merits of soccer vs. baseball, requests for travel information, questions about programs offered in Italian universities, and recipes for Italian food.

On the same day SOC.CULTURE.BRAZIL featured a discussion on Brazilian runners in the Boston Marathon and thoughts on the telephone system in Rio. SOC.CULTURE.SPAIN included an election discussion, questions about the best Spanish dictionary to use, a calendar of Spanish cultural events in Boston, discussion of some fine points of Spanish grammar, and questions about the proper translation of idiomatic expressions. A lively thread on *toro* and animal rights was being continued.

Throughout the other foreign culture USENET groups, these kinds of topics are echoed. The foreign language levels vary from obvious beginner to native speaker. These groups are lively for all kinds of issues. No one pulls any punches when it comes to defending an opinion or belief. Newcomers can feel free to jump right in, express an opinion, and wait for the responses.

These newsgroups are very easy for anyone having an email account to access. The issues and topics discussed range from the trivial to the profound, from the generally agreed upon to the extremely controversial. Students and instructors participate, so there is a great deal of interaction in the target language. For complete details on how to sign on, contact your campus computer services department.

MINITEL UPDATE

Minitel now allows interconnection with services in Spain, England, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Italy. This means there are many services now available in Spanish, German, Italian and other European languages.

Want to dialogue? The Minitel EDUTEL CLASSE project provides a forum for international communication for hundreds of

elementary, secondary and university-level groups in 15 countries around the world. Contact Bernard Moreau, Attaché linguistique, at (415) 397-0321 for more information.

A new VHS training tape on the use of the Minitel in the classroom is available free of charge by sending a blank VHS tape to the following address:

Ambassade de France
Bureau Audiovisuel
300 Poydras, Suite 2105
New Orleans, Louisiana, 71030
Tel: (504) 529-7502 or (504) 523-5395
Fax: (504) 529-7502 or 523-5725

When planning your Minitel budget, survey statistics indicate that the average elementary school using Minitel spends about \$250 - 300 a year and secondary schools \$300 - 500.

The free software from MSC (Minitel Services Company) and commercial software available from Baseline & CTL make it possible to save information to use again off-line. Screens can be saved as text for incorporation into word processing or as graphics. The commercial software allows uploading of messages, thus reducing on-line access charges. Contact: Baseline 1(800) CHAPLIN, CTL (212) 477-2424 (see review below).

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

CTLINK

by Carmen Grace
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What Is CTLink?

CTLink, available for both Macintosh and IBM platforms, is two products in one. First, it is a terminal emulation software program that allows Macintosh and PC users equipped with modems to access nearly any North American electronic service. CTLink operates on all gateways and on-line services offered in Minitel, NAPLPS, Prestel or ASCII formats. Secondly, CTLink is an international communications service connecting users from France, Canada and the United States through email, on-line chats, and forums. This review is limited to CTLink software use on a Macintosh platform to emulate a Minitel terminal. Minitel's 22,000 services offer an incredible array of up-to-date information on all aspects of French life.

Connecting To France

Installing the software and connecting to the Minitel gateway of the user's choice are easy to accomplish. Once connected to France, one drawback of this software becomes apparent. Minitel users generally do not want to gather all the data available from any given service. They enter information as they navigate through a service to get exactly what they need. Competing software presents screens with key words to click on so users can access the information they desire as quickly as possible. In contrast, CTLink requires users to type in the

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key words as the return/enter key is **inoperative**. Entering this information requires clicking on the SEND key, one of ten function keys on the right of the screen. Constantly moving one's hand from the keyboard to the mouse in order to select choices on several screens is awkward and time consuming. Since nearly all Minitel services provide these key words to click on, it seems a shame this capability has not been maintained. When on-line, users prefer to be maximally efficient with their time (in order to save unnecessary expense). Unfortunately CTLink does not always make this possible.

Downloading and Replaying Screens

One of the ten function keys, TEXT CAPTURE, (not available on competing software) is a valuable addition, allowing users to download screens very quickly without having to go up to the menu bar. Since all diacritics are removed from the text, instructors will need to download screens using TEXT CAPTURE and reinsert accent marks, etc. before passing the gathered data on to students.

Minitel users may want to download files to present in their original format to students. CTLink makes it easy to do, but the manual doesn't give enough details on how to REPLAY files that have been SAVED before printing them. (*See authors' notes at end of review.*)

The Printing Function

The most exciting aspect of CTLink is its printing capabilities. Unlike other emulation software, it will print screens in various sizes (depending on the size of the computer screen). Moreover the printouts are always crisp and clear. The CTLink format of black letters against a white background is much easier to read than the white on black presentation of competing software. Whether photocopying CTLink screens or

transferring them to transparencies for student projects, the results are outstanding. (Please note: the PC version does not print graphics screens.)

Communications Features

Other Minitel emulation software packages currently available do not have any communications features. However, many academics have access to networks such as the Internet whose email, on-line chats, bulletin boards (called forums on CTLink) and file exchange capabilities are very similar to those of CTLink with one distinct difference. Internet on-line time is free (for users in the U.S., Canada, England and Australia); CTLink on-line time is not (email costs \$10/hr).

Who Should Use CTLink?

Emulation software such as CTLink allows Minitel users to explore France as never before without ever leaving the classroom. If the school budget for Minitel is less than \$500/year, teachers may want to download data and print screens themselves rather than having students do it on-line. CTLink's downloading feature is easy to use and its printing function is superb. If a school is not connected to a network and needs communications capabilities in addition to Minitel emulation, then CTLink will meet both those needs. If, however, a school has adequate resources to allow students some on-line time (e.g., \$100/month since medium-priced services such as ARTS, LESPORT, METEO, PARISCOPE, SNCF cost U.S. users \$25/hr. per terminal), teachers may want to consider a more user-friendly software package. Because the users' manual is neither as clear nor as complete as it should be, it is not always possible to make CTLink do all that it can; which may needlessly frustrate new Minitelists.

Notes

CTLink offers Minitel users everything they need to access services quickly and to download or print gathered data. Without prior training, count on spending between \$200 and \$300 learning how to navigate through and fully exploit Minitel's diverse services.

If interested in the clarifications of the CTLink Users' Manual (which were developed by the reviewers), or more information on Minitel training sessions, write to either gracec@spot.colorado.edu or jbacker@bvsd.co.edu with "Manual clarifications" as the Subject.

Hardware Information

PC Version

Hercules, CGA, MCGA, EGA & VGA card support
Requires DOS 2.0 or above, 512K memory
Copy protected

Macintosh Version

Macintosh SE, Plus, Classic and II models
System 7.0 compatible
Requires System 6.0.1 or above, 1 Mb of memory
Copy protected

Purchasing Information

CTLink is available from:
CTL Communications, Inc.
611 Broadway, Suite 430
New York, NY 10012-2608

Version 3.30 Pricing for PC:

\$84.95; 5.25" (1.25 MB) disk or 3.5" disk
Not currently available on 360K, 3.25" disks

Version 3.30 Pricing for Macintosh:
\$99.95

EUDORA AND THE ELECTRONIC POST OFFICE

by David Bodnar
University of Colorado at Boulder

It's a usual day in the office. I'm working on my Macintosh computer, putting the finishing touches on cost projections in a spreadsheet. A small icon flashing in the upper corner of the screen indicates that new email (electronic mail) messages have been received. I've been waiting anxiously for a reply from my manager, so rather than ignoring the prompt, I select the Eudora program from the Application menu and view the In mailbox (*Figure 1*). I quickly scan the message headers marked with bullets, since these are the new, unread communiqués. Judging by the sender and the topic, I see that the first message isn't critical. The second, however, is the approval for an important project I've been working on. I open the memo with a quick double-click of the mouse, and a dialog box tells me that the memo contains an "attachment" and allows me to save this data file to a folder on my system. The memo from my manager states that the project has been approved, with some minor changes. The MS Word document describing the project has been modified to show these changes, and has been returned to me attached to the email message. Others in my department are waiting for word on the decision, so I forward the message to my colleagues and include the Word file with its formatting intact so they can review the specifics. Using the Applications menu again, I resume work on the cost projection spreadsheet, pleased that the interruption required less than a minute.

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Eudora is a software program that brings the power and flexibility of electronic mail systems into the accessible and friendly environment of the Macintosh desktop. Rather than logging into a different computer as a terminal and using an unfamiliar text editor, a user can read and write electronic mail messages on the Macintosh. Since users already know how to enter and manipulate text on their own computer, only a few new tricks need to be learned.

The success of email depends on how easy and efficient the system is to use. If composing and sending a message on the computer is more difficult than scrawling it on a piece of note paper and having it delivered to the recipient, email will not become part of the daily routine. For a keyboard user, the details of the mail host running on a remote UNIX or VMS machine are of little interest, just as the workings of the U.S. Post Office are not their concern. Most of us are interested only in what we have to do to mail a letter, how much it's going to cost us, and how quickly and reliably it will be delivered. For email, the critical piece is the program used on the desktop computer to send and retrieve electronic mail.

What is Eudora/POP Mail?

Eudora is an Internet-compatible mail program for Macintosh computers developed at the University of Illinois by Steve Dorner. The program takes its name from

Eudora Welty, the American author who wrote "Why I Live at the P.O." The Eudora mail client communicates with a mail server program called POP3 running on a UNIX or VMS system. POP is an acronym for Post Office Protocol, which was designed to automate the handling of email for microcomputers. When a user sends a mail message, it is first composed using the Eudora program on his/her computer. This allows the user to write in the familiar Macintosh environment, without having to learn a text editor and mail commands for another system. The finished message is then transmitted to the POP3 server, which stores it until it can be delivered to the recipient. Similarly, incoming mail messages are actually addressed to and received by the mail server. The server holds the messages until Eudora connects to check for mail. At that time, all new messages are transferred to the local hard disk on the Macintosh for reading and further handling (Figure 2).

Why is it Useful?

Electronic mail is a very effective communications tool. At the University of Colorado at Boulder, electronic mail is preferred to telephone calls for a number of reasons. First, a phone call interrupts you on someone else's terms rather than your own. Email messages wait patiently for you until you are ready to read them. You may also stop in the middle of a message and return to it later. This is true both for mail you receive

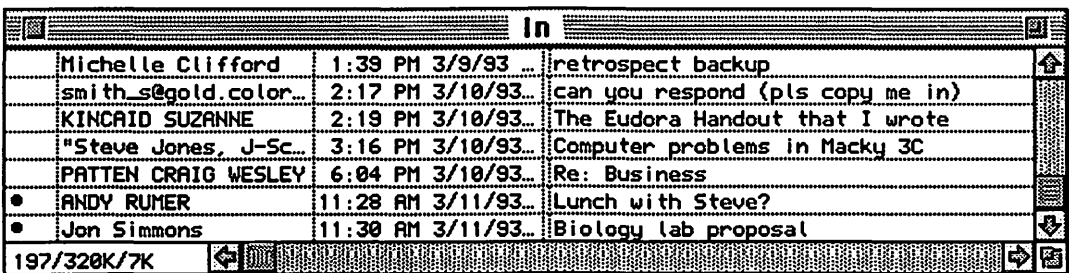


Figure 1. In mailbox with two new messages.

and messages you are writing to send out. Another problem with phone calls is the fact that both parties have to be available at the same moment, which is why so many of us play telephone tag. Email allows both sender and recipient to work independently of each other's schedules. While this is true of electronic mail in general, Eudora is even more flexible since you do not have to log in and out of a host machine to access your mail. Unlike conventional mail, the frequency of mail delivery is set by the user. Also, since messages are text on the computer, they can be stored for later reference, shared with others, and incorporated into other documents. *A basic rule of computing is not to duplicate work that has already been done.* Eudora extends this further by allowing you to send data files created in applications along with your email messages.

Who should use Eudora?

People who are already using a Macintosh computer to do other tasks should be among the first to explore Eudora. Those of us who spend a large part of our work day communicating (or trying to communicate) with others will have the most to gain. Eudora's uncluttered and intuitive

interface lets even novice users take advantage of email's power almost immediately. Surprisingly, few people ever open the manual, and some are unaware that a manual even exists. This is the mark of a user friendly product.

Specific Features

Eudora has many convenient features that make it an exceptionally useful program. Here's a short list of the most noteworthy:

- Messages are edited on the Macintosh rather than the mail server, using familiar Mac text editing tools and commands.
- Messages can be easily printed, saved as text files, or created from text in other files.
- Mail is checked automatically, so you don't need to remember to do this. If mail has been received, Eudora moves it to your "In" mailbox and can give you a gentle reminder or boldly interrupt you. You select the method used for notification.

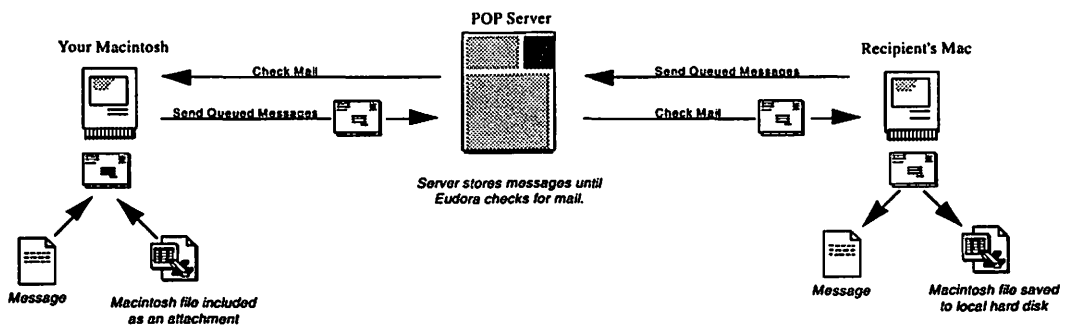


Figure 2. Diagram of POP Mail system.

Note: Attachments are most convenient when they are sent and received by similar machines (i.e. Mac to Mac) both using Eudora. Attachments sent to someone not using Eudora to receive e-mail will appear at the end of the message in either ASCII or BinHex format. If it is encoded in BinHex, it will not be usable until the recipient has decoded it.

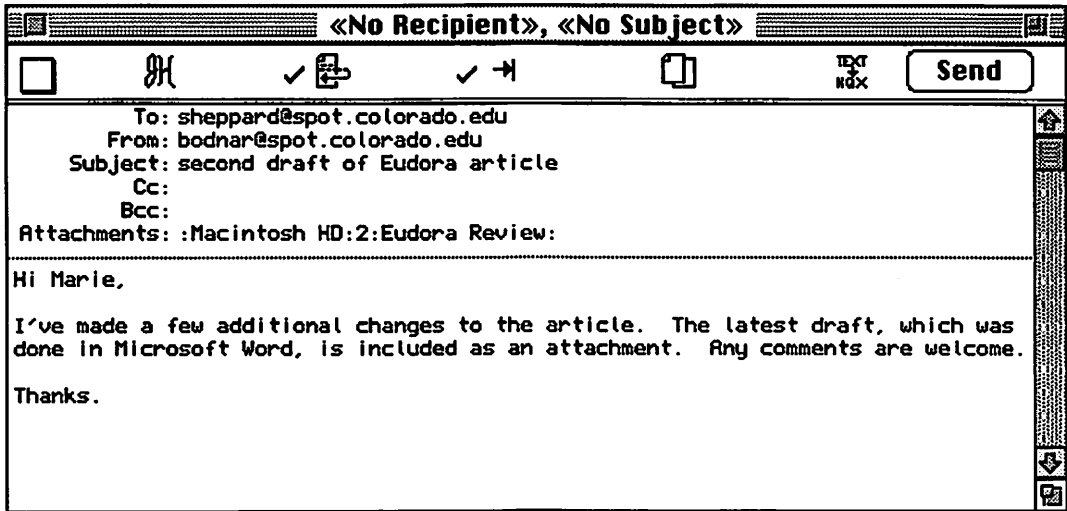


Figure 3. New message, ready to send.

- **Attachments:** Eudora allows you to "attach" other Macintosh data files to your email messages for delivery. Any standard Macintosh file can be sent and files retain all of their original attributes, including text formatting. Data files that have been received can be opened directly using the original parent application. In most cases, no file conversion is necessary.
- **Ph:** (Phonebook) accesses directory services to look up phone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- **Nicknames:** a list of email addresses can be created for those individuals to whom you send mail frequently. New messages can then be automatically addressed. Automatic addressing can also be used for replies and forwarded or redirected messages.
- Both incoming and outgoing messages can be saved for future reference. If many messages accumulate, they can be separated into different mailboxes or directories. You can also sort by date,

sender, or subject. In addition, you can search for words that may appear within a message.

- **Transliteration:** Eudora has a transliteration facility that can replace any one character with any other character when sending or receiving mail. This is useful when communicating in languages other than English. For instance, "\$" can be automatically replaced by "£" or "/" can be replaced by "i."

Requirements

In order to take advantage of Eudora's email capabilities, you will need the Eudora software, plus:

- Macintosh System 6.0.4 or newer. Use of MultiFinder or System 7 is preferred.
- MacTCP software for network connections. The Macintosh Communications Toolbox software can be used for modem or serial connections.
- DDP/IP gateway for systems on

LocalTalk networks (e.g. GatorBox or EtherRoute), an Ethernet card, or a modem or other serial connection.

- An account on a system running a POP3 server.

Your computing center or information systems department should be able to tell you which of these requirements have been satisfied at your site.

How do you get Eudora?

Eudora is available free of charge by anonymous ftp from ftp.qualcomm.com (in the mac/eudora directories).

If you don't have anonymous ftp available, send a check for US \$30 payable to "QUALCOMM Incorporated" to:

QUALCOMM Incorporated
c/o Eudora Package
10555 Sorrento Valley Road
San Diego, CA 92121.

You will receive the distribution on 3 1/2 inch diskettes and a printed copy of the manual. The diskettes will also contain a soft copy of the manual. The \$30 is to cover duplication and shipping costs; Eudora itself is free.

The POP (Post Office Protocol) software for UNIX systems, called "popper", is available by anonymous ftp from ftp.cc.berkeley.edu. VAX/VMS systems can use "Multinet" from TGV or IUPOP3, available for anonymous ftp from logos.ucs.indiana.edu. For VM/CMS, a version of "popper" is available for anonymous ftp from vmd.cso.uiuc.edu.

A Final Word

Due to increasing budget constraints, more work has to be done in less time by fewer workers. To accomplish this, we must become more efficient and less restricted by

traditional information flow. Eudora is a software solution that enables us to gain control of our daily communications and extend their usefulness. Few people would buy a computer simply to do email, but it's probably not as unreasonable as it sounds. After all, the goal is efficiency, and improved communications is an excellent first step.

Some Additional Information

A PC (Windows) version of Eudora is also available. If you want more information about either the PC or Macintosh version, please send email to Eudora-Info@qualcomm.com.

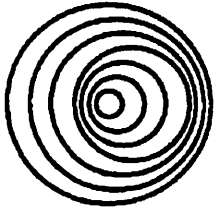
Qualcomm may release a commercial version of Eudora in order to fund continued development. If Qualcomm does start charging for Eudora, the price will probably be low, with an even lower price for educational users. It's also likely that a free version, with fewer features and enhancements, will continue to be distributed.

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