

Link History

New Feature Note

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Summary

This document briefly describes the Macintosh implementation of the Link History window. The Link History window provides a history list of links the user has recently clicked on. Links include ads and all the various URLs Eudora recognizes. The user may open links as well as perform basic management on said links from the Link History window. The link window will be available to adware and paid users only.

Rationale

The Link History window solves the problem of what to do with Ads the user clicks on when offline. If the user is offline when an ad is clicked, its presence in the link history will allow the user to attempt to visit the sponsor's site when appropriate. By including other links the user clicks on, the Link History window will be populated with useful information. This will encourage the user to use it, and possibly follow up on postponed Ad clicks.

User Interface

The Link History window is a wazoo-able window. It will be placed in the default wazoo with the address book, etc., since it shares a similar size. All Link History management functionality is invoked from the list itself, or from buttons at the bottom of the window.

Opening the Link History Window

The Link History window is available via the "Link History" menu item in the Window menu.

Link History Window Layout

The Link History window is a standard wazoo-able window. It consists of a single list box, and for now, a single button to delete link history entries. The list box is populated with one link per row. The default appearance of the Link History window is described below:

The Thumbnail column displays the ad's thumbnail, if one is available. If no thumbnail is available for an ad, one will be created by shrinking down the actual ad image, and saving it as an icon. The thumbnails will be copied from the ad cache and maintained separately from the ads themselves. For all other non-ad links, an icon will be displayed indicating what sort of link is represented.

The address, or the name of the link if there's something more readable available, is displayed in the Name column.

The Date Visited column contains the date the link was last visited or a label, if one is assigned. A label will be assigned automatically if a link fails to load.



Both adware and paid users will be provided with the ability to switch to small icons, or no icons in the Thumbnail column via some settings.

Link History Window Controls

The user may click on a column header to sort the link history.

The user may single click in the list box window to select a link. If an ad is selected, the ad will be displayed in the Ad window at this time. The Ad window will go back to displaying its regularly scheduled ads as soon as the Link History window loses focus, or if more than a couple of minutes elapse.

The user may double click a row in the list box to open the link.

Thus user may click the View button to launch the selected links.

The user may click the Delete button to remove the selected links from the history file.

The user may click and drag a link out of the window to a new message or the desktop.

Under the Hood

When the user clicks on a link, we will record what was clicked on, when it was clicked on, and any other information. The term “link” refers to any URL Eudora recognizes. This includes any text Eudora recognizes and highlights as a URL, or any graphic or ad that has an associated URL.

All new ads, as well as any link the user has clicked on, will be presented in the Link History window.

The user will be able to do some minimal link management from the Link History window, as well launch stored links.

Remembering Links

Link history will be stored in multiple history files inside a folder named “Link History,” which will be created inside of the Eudora Folder where the settings live. History files will be in the same format as address book files.

Each time a link is clicked, an entry (nickname) will be added to this history list. The URL, the pretty text of the link, the date the link was last clicked, the link label, and a file URL where to find the link thumbnail will be stored for each entry.

Ads will be automatically placed in the link history window as soon as they are first detected. They will show up in the history automatically, even if they’ve never been clicked on or displayed.

Link Purging

To avoid maintaining an infinitely growing list of links, we will automatically remove old links. Likewise, to avoid those embarrassing moments when your mom happens upon all the sites you’ve recently visited, we’ll allow the user to selectively delete links from the window.

Each entry in the link history file contains the date the link was either first added or last clicked on in the Link History window. Periodically, Eudora will go through the History files entry by entry and purge old links. If more than PREF_LINK_AGE days have elapsed since the link was added or last clicked on, it will be removed.

The same routine that is used to purge a single outdated link will be invoked on the select links when the Delete button is clicked.

Settings

A new setting will be required for Link Aging. This setting, PREF_LINK_AGE, will contain the number of days to keep links around, before they are automatically removed from the list. The default will be 14 days.

Additional settings governing how the link window is drawn (large, small, or no icons, etc.) will be necessary as time permits.

File Formats

Records of the links the user clicks on will be stored in multiple Link History files located inside the Link History folder. The Link History folder will be created inside of the Eudora folder where the settings live.

The link history files will be nickname files – this format seems to be adequate for the predicted number of links we'll be keeping around at any given time.

Testing Notes

TBD

Scope of Work

At this point, we're looking at something like 2-3 weeks.