

Outlook Export Utility

Introduction

Here below you'll find a small utility to manage mail attachments (Attachments Export Utility).

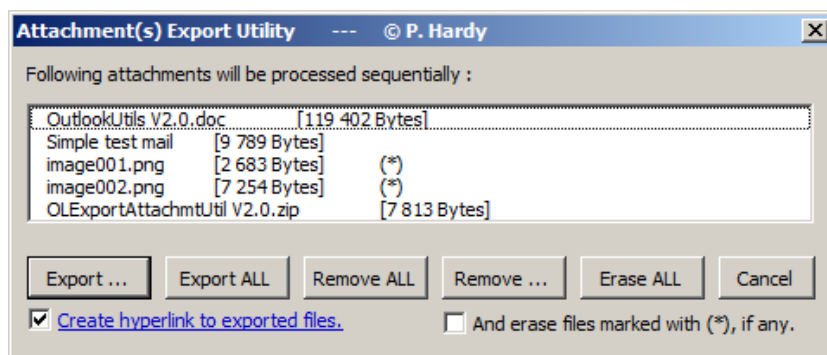
This is written in Visual Basic for Applications (VBA), an Object Oriented Programming (OOP) environment available with Microsoft Office suite. Beside VB code (macros), this tool is built on Forms (popup windows) showing some info (list of attachments, ...) and makes use of buttons and checkboxes to determine user's desired actions.

Outlook configuration

This utilities suite are macros you'll add to Outlook, but to activate them, you must allow macros in Outlook configuration. To do so, go to [Tools] / [Macro] / [Security ...] then on [Security Level] tab, select 'Medium', or in Outlook 365 version, go to [File] / [Options] / [Trust Center] / [Trust Center Settings ...] / [Macro Settings] then select one "Notification ..." or "Enable all macros" option (I select the last one). See below sections for installation process.
To make this effective, you now need to restart Outlook.

Attachment Export Utility

This first utility (`ExportAttachments` macro) looks for all attachments in the current (opened !) mail, and lists them in a first pop-up window, asking which action to take. A small *report* (banner or header frame) is left at the top of the mail, reminding which action was taken against each attachment. The difference I make between Remove and Erase is that each removed attachment will be listed in the banner, while erased are just deleted without any reference back to it.



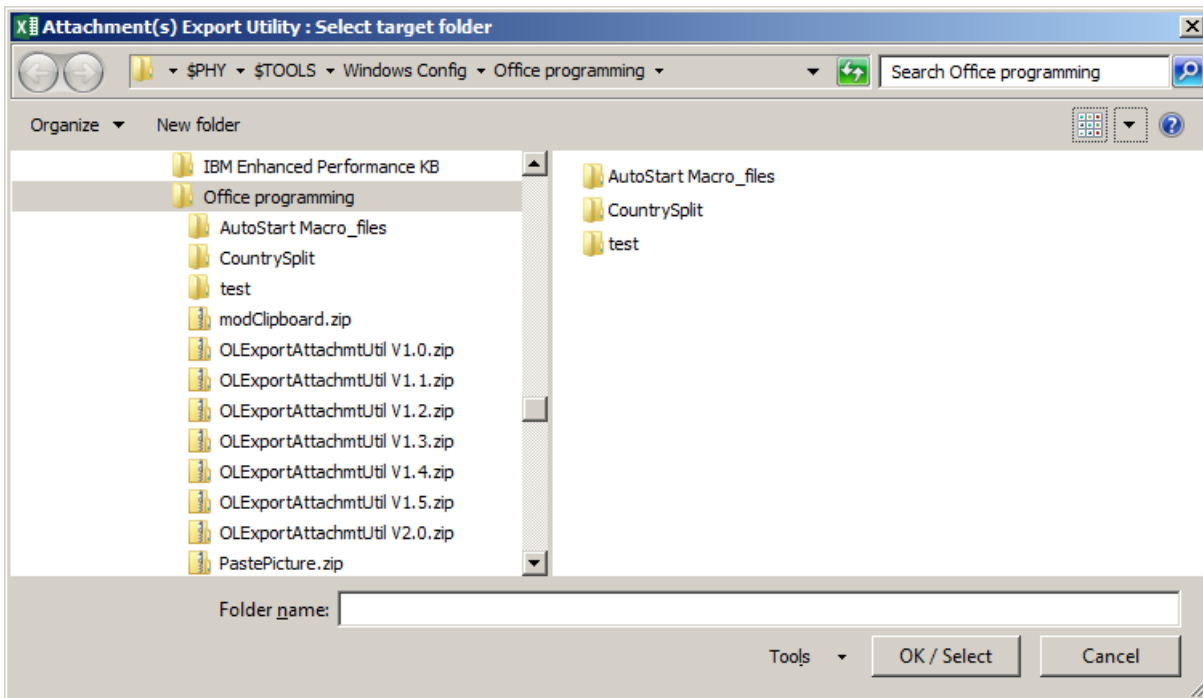
Main options

- [Export ...] First select a target directory, then ask which action to take for each attachment.
- [Export ALL] Ask for target directory, then export directly all attachments to it.
- [Remove ALL] Remove all attachments directly, in one shot, without asking for confirmation.
- [Remove ...] Ask which action to take for each attachment, without Export option (thus skipping the directory selection).
- [Erase ALL] Erase all attachments from the mail.
- [Cancel] Just abort (without any modification) the macro.

- [Create hyperlink to exported files] checkbox: to create an hyperlink for Exported files (links to the file on your disk, where you saved it), selected by default.
- [And erase files marked with (*), if any.] checkbox: if selected, all such marked attachments will be erased (the '.png' in the above example).

Folder selection

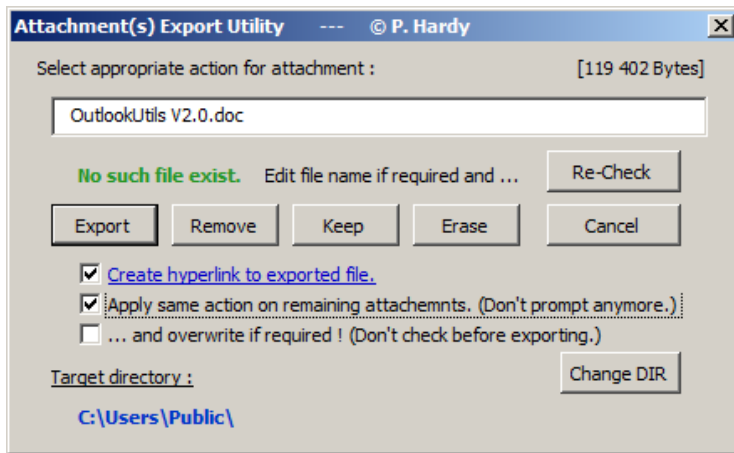
If you selected [Export ...] or [Export ALL] option, the following folder selection window will pop-up :



Click on [OK / Select] to either select the current (viewed) folder, or select the highlighted one (if you did; this avoid you to double-click on a sub-directory before pressing OK to select it). If you click on [Cancel] (or press [Esc]), you'll fall back on the [Remove ...] option.

One Attachment at a time

If you selected [Export ...] or [Remove ...] option, the dotted ones, for each attachment of the list (current being highlighted in attachment pop-up window), you'll have the option to :



- Edit file name
- [Re-Check] (Re-)Check if file name already exist.
- [Export] Export it in the Target directory, and remove from mail.
- [Remove] Remove from mail, with a reference in the banner.
- [Keep] Keep attachment in mail, and don't insert a reference in the banner.
- [Erase] Erase from mail, without a reference in the banner.
- [Erase ALL] Erase all attachments from the mail.
- [Cancel] Stop the macro at this point (don't process remaining attachments).
- [Change DIR] Will re-open Folder picker to select a new target one.
- ... and three check boxes for extra options, self explanatory.

When done, a “banner” (header frame) is inserted at the top of the mail, summarizing your actions, like :

```
<<==== ATTACHMENT(s) EXPORT UTILITY =====>>
<<= File Exported [OutlookUtils V2.0.doc] (119 402 Bytes) >>
<<= File Removed [Simple test mail.msg] (9 789 Bytes) >>
<<= sent by <Hardy, Pierre> on 13/06/19 18:53:57 >>
<<= File Removed [OLExportAttachmtUtil V2.0.zip] (7 813 Bytes) >>
<<===== Processed on 13/06/19 at 19:34:32 by Hardy, Pierre. ={2}=>>
```

That's it ! ... for now

Notes & Tips

- Exports do also remove the attachment from the mail (no export only option).
- When exporting / removing attached mails, I've added the sender and date / time. The objective is to be able to remove mails you already got (and so already somewhere in Outlook), and being able to find it back with sender and date (as so many may have same subject). NB: The only way to do it (without installing some plugin), is to save the mail in C:\TEMP folder, access it to get “Sender” and “SentOn” info and then delete it.
- If, on an [Export ALL], one file already exist in target directory, the macro falls back into [Export ...] mode and ask what to do.
- If, on Export, the file exist and you then select [Remove] button, a link to existing file will be create too (this to keep original file / date unchanged).

- Both Remove and Erase do delete it from the mail, but Erase doesn't let a reference to it in mail header.
- Some embedded tables, images, diagrams, ... part of the mail, are listed as attachments. So be careful when removing them, and check your mail before saving : is it still readable / understandable without those attachments ?
- When the macro ends, you can enter in "Edit" mode ([Edit] / [Edit message] if you don't have a button to), and edit / delete (part of) the inserted header if needed.
- If you're not happy with the result, just close the mail ([Esc]) **without** saving changes. This is also a way to export and keep original mail unchanged.
- For info, the Folder selection pop-up window is a "*tool*" not available in Outlook, but only in Excel or Word (don't ask me why !). So, an instance of Excel application is invoked in background for it, then closed. This is totally transparent, and don't affect any opened Excel file.
- Excel *reminds* the latest selected directory, so if you don't remember where you saved your last files, re-export (from any mail with attachments) and folder picker will open in last selected folder.
- I didn't put the saved path in the banner on purpose, because mails do some times travel further than thought, and the path could contain *proprietary* information (like the actual customer name, while project is confidential, ...). Personally, I have the same folder (sub-)tree structure in Outlook and on my disk. **But**, if you select the "Create hyperlink to exported file" option, this will of course hold the full path (not directly visible, but very easy to find), so be sure the "path" doesn't contain *sensitive* information.
- When using the Export Utility, don't switch to another application, you may have some difficulty to find back the pop-up windows, as they don't appear in the task bar, and are not always in the *task switch* (with Alt-Tab) list. The best way to find them back is to minimize all windows one per one. And as long as you didn't closed the File picker window, Excel seems blocked (in fact, it waits for you to close it).
- When inserting the header, mail format may change from RTF to HTML, and in some cases, the 'new line' is converted to 'new paragraph' with extra line space, resulting in a *longer* mail, as displayed on screen. Font can also change during this process. This is one of the small "*bugs*" I've found. In ExportAttachmtUtil V3.1.bas file, I've added a FONT tag to default it to "Arial" (instead of default/standard "Times New Roman" font).
- Another "*bug*" is an extra ">" line before the header itself, in some (rare) cases.

Side macros

As we have a link to exported file to disk, couldn't we "re-import" them with a single click ? That's the idea of second macro below, but first ...

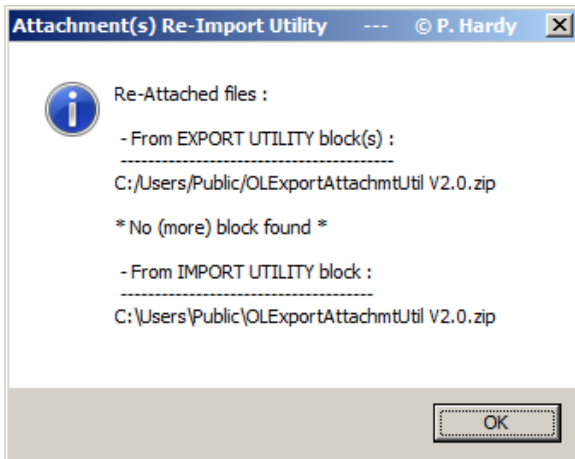
Import Attachments

Import Attachments (`ImportAttachments`) macro uses Excel file selection tool (as for Export) to import (attach) files into a mail. This allows to keep a track to where the file was imported from, which can be used later on to either create a link when removing attachments for own sent mails, or to re-attached them.

This is done by adding some specific file block "trailer" or "signature" (at bottom of the mail, in tiny (1 point) text, white on white). If you look for it, you can select it and copy/paste in Notepad for example to see how it looks like. Didn't found a way to hide it outside mail body.

Re-Import Attachments

Re-Import Attachments (`ReAttachFiles`) macro scan export headers and import trailers, from same user only, and try to re-attached them from where they was initially exported / imported. As small report will be shown as in below figure :



Remove File References

Remove File References (`RemoveFileReferences`) macro scan import trailers, from same user, and suppress it. This if you want your mail going out without that info.

So ...

Even with those small bugs/limitations, I use it daily without any problem, and I'm convinced it saves me a lot of time in attachments management.

Installation

1. Import Forms and Macro in Outlook Visual Basic :

Extract the attached/joined ZIP file in a directory and remove ".txt" extension, ".bas" is enough.

Latest version : OLExportAttachmtUtil V2.0.zip from June 2019.

Then from Outlook, press [Alt-F11] (or go to [Tools] / [Macro] / [Visual Basic Editor]) and enlarge the new 'Microsoft Visual Basic' window. Import the 2 forms (`OL_InfoBasicForm.frm` & `OL_ExportAttachmtForm.frm` (two files per form, with .frm & .frx extensions, but imported in one shot)) and the main macro (`OL_ExportAttachmtUtil.bas`) through [File] \ [Import file ...] (or [Ctrl-M]).

2. Add the Macro to Outlook Menu, Toolbar or Ribbon :

Now, to run it, you can of course go through [Tools] / [Macro ...] / ... [Run] or in Outlook 365 [Developer] (if activated !) / [Macros] / ... , but is it a little tedious for a constant use. So, I suggest to customize your Outlook Menu, Toolbar or Ribbon (Outlook 365) by inserting new commands in.

First open a mail (the macro can only be run when mail is opened, so this is the 'opened mail menu / tool bar' to customize), then right click on Menu bar / Ribbon, and select [Customize ...].

In older version :

Under [Commands ...] tab, in [Categories:] list, select [Macros]. In the right list (under [Commands:]), you should then see the "Project1.ExportAttachments" macro. Drag it to where you want it (either the main menu, any submenu or tool bar).

Before closing the "Customize" window (or re-enter Customize mode), find back the inserted macro, right click on it to customize its appearance : Name, Button, Style (Default show only the button image on tool bars), ...

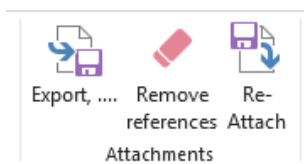
And to remove the macro button, in Customize mode, just drag it to where a small 'x' appears close to the pointer (this don't remove the macro itself !).

In Outlook 365 :

Under [Customize Ribbon] section, first create a new (custom) group under "Messages" from "Main Ttabs", the add macros to it by "Choose command from:" "Macros" (in drop down list). You can then Rename it, which also allows you to select a icon for it

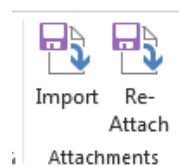
And do the same with a new mail window for Import / Re-attached macros.

Here how I see it in my Outlook Ribbons :



On opened mails :

and when sending :



Restart Outlook, saving changes.

You're ready to test it (and please make some tests first, so you see what happens with which buttons, ...)

Uninstall - Inactivate

To remove those utilities, just delete them from where you import / paste it, or to inactivate them, set the Outlook Security level to High (and restart Outlook).

Have fun ... :-)

Pierre Hardy.