

Eudora for Windows, Versions 5.0 & 5.1, by QUALCOMM
Review by Jane Heald

Works with:
Microsoft Windows 95/98/2000/Me or Windows NT 4.0 or above.

Why would anyone purchase this e-mail software? Eudora 5.1 is available for a free download from <http://www.eudora.com> and its manual is available online. (One advantage of having the CD is that you don't have to go online to view the manual.) Once you acquire the software (via either download or CD), you must register in one of three modes: light (non-supported, with some missing features), sponsored (fully operational, but with a 2-1/2-inch-square advertisement in the lower-left corner of each screen), and paid (no ads, but registration costs \$39.95). In the two weeks I tried 5.1 in sponsored mode, the ads were not offensive; the two most memorable pictured a book available from Amazon.com or urged me to help save sea turtles. The PDF manual has 345 pages. It has a large index and a superb Glossary of computer and Internet terms. Much of the information in this review is "lifted" from the manual. This software does not have an Uninstall feature.

The CD includes software and an 80-page manual for Eudora Internet Suite. It contains both an email client and HTML-compliant web browser for Palm Computing devices. I did not explore these and will gladly pass this disk on to anyone interested.

You may say, "I'm happy with my present e-mail software; why upgrade?" If you're happy, that's good. You may not need any more bells and whistles. Conventional wisdom has it that Eudora is less vulnerable to virus attack than Outlook Express. My free AVG anti-virus software automatically installs a Eudora plug-in that checks all incoming and outgoing mail and certifies them virus-free. I sometimes use Eudora's filters to consign messages from certain senders or with certain content directly into a Spam mailbox or Trash. (What I would really like would be a single keystroke that would simultaneously delete a file from the In Box and consign its sender to a "never see again" category.)

To my pleasure, I found that installing Eudora 5.1 automatically included all of the ISP settings and mailboxes from both my old Eudora 3.0 *and* Outlook Express. QualComm woos users by providing 16 detailed on-line Tutorials.

HTML messages (email messages that use HTML, the language of web pages) are becoming more and more common. Most web browsers allow a web page to be sent as an HTML message.

So, what does Eudora's viewer support in light mode?

- + Bold, italic, and underlined text
- + Different font faces, sizes, and colors
- + Fixed-width text as an option
- + Left and right justification and centering
- + Multiple indentation levels

- + Bulleted lists
- + Hyperlinks (clicking on a URL launches your browser and takes you to a web page)
- + Horizontal ruling lines
- + Direct display of BMP images and some JPEG images (not as attachments)

Installing either Apple's QuickTime or Microsoft's viewer adds support for inline display of a wider range of image (picture) formats.

- + Direct display of a wider variety of images, including the full set of JPEG formats, PNG, GIF, TIFF, Macintosh PICT, etc.
- + Numbered lists
- + Tables and forms
- + International character sets
- + Java applets, JavaScript, and ActiveX controls
- + Dynamic HTML
- + Other embedded objects (audio, video)

The manual lists several new features and functions in Eudora 5.0 for Windows in the sponsored or paid mode (which of course are continued in 5.1):

Eudora Sharing Protocol (ESP). ESP is a new Eudora feature that allows you to share documents and discussion among of a group of Eudora users without the use of a shared server. I haven't had occasion to use this feature.

MoodWatch™. MoodWatch is a new Eudora feature that can monitor offensive text (flaming) in both incoming and outgoing messages. This feature is a rather silly nuisance. All it does is mark messages with chili peppers as "hot, very hot, or blazing hot." Fortunately, one can turn this feature off.

Statistics. You can now display and print statistics on your Eudora usage and on the number of messages you send and receive.

Multiple Address Books. The Eudora address book has been improved for easier use and maintenance. It contains more categories per entry, and you can now print the address book, but printing out my address book was disappointing. It puts only 8 entries on a full-sized page, with most of the space wasted. I would like an address book data base that I could combine with Word's mail merge feature to produce a pocket-sized booklet or print Christmas address labels. This would permit me to keep all of the kinds of data on my friends in one place.

Signatures. You can now see your signature in the message you are composing. You can also edit the signature if you like. If you prefer not to see the signature, you can turn this feature off.

With Eudora 5.1 I easily inserted photographs directly into e-mails. However, it was necessary first to resize the pictures. (I opened the .bmp files in PhotoSuite, chose Adjust, then Resize (keeping proportions) and saved them under new names. Not being attachments, the pictures popped right up when I opened the e-mails. With my 56K

modem, a message with one 135KB .bmp picture required 54 seconds to send, but only 33 seconds to receive.

Eudora also has a Plug-in for attaching voice messages with nearly as high audio quality as a local phone connection. The compressed voice messages take up very little space on a computer. (You can choose between high or low compression rates.) Since the average computer user comfortably speaks at a rate 10 times faster than he or she can type—and some people don't read English—this could be a useful feature. The length of message is flexible. Of course, you must have a microphone plugged into your sound card, and the person receiving the message must also have PureVoice software. (It is available for free download from <http://eudora.qualcomm.com/purevoice/>.) My Montana grandchildren and I got a kick out of sending Happy Easter messages back and forth.

There was one small glitch. The 5.1 program as I initially downloaded it had a functioning PureVoice menu item. However, it didn't include the "Attach Site Info" option (as the Help files promised). So I downloaded the above free standing PureVoice Plugin. It now has the needed option—but does not automatically show up on the Eudora screen. This is a minor inconvenience, so I made inquiry. I have been disappointed with Tech Support so far. When I tried to phone, I was informed that there is a 35-minute hold time. My detailed e-mail inquiries receive an automatic response: "Go look at our FAQ's." Their e-mail says they will answer individually if you need more help—but when I tried to explain the problem again, I received another automatic response.

Eudora was developed by Steve Dorner at the University of Illinois in 1988. After working on the new email program for a year, Dorner was ready to release it for free to the Internet community at large. The working name was UIUCMail, which Dorner realized was a tongue twister. Then he remembered a short story written by Eudora Welty (1909-2001) titled "Why I Live at the P.O." It's a story about a woman who decides to live at the post office where she works rather than put up with her family at home any longer. Dorner was processing so much email at the time that he felt like he lived at the post office, and his program used a "post office" protocol to fetch mail, so he saw a metaphorical connection. Since the programming and naming took place a decade ahead of the phenomenal growth of the Internet, Dorner hadn't anticipated Eudora would eventually be so popular. Naming the program after a living author could have become awkward for Dorner and any future licensees. Fortunately, Ms. Welty was flattered and amused by the allusion to her and her work. Eudora email is currently used by more than 20 million users worldwide.