

What is MODE 2?

Mode 2 provides the ability to continue sales and returns at Point-of-Sale when a connection to the internet is unavailable.

Why is MODE 2 needed?

Without Mode 2, the costlier option of subscribing to additional internet providers would be necessary to maintain an internet connection in the event one provider is not available. Without Mode 2 or internet provider redundancy, the alternative would be handwritten paper invoices.

Is there a cost to using MODE 2?

Mode 2 is a chargeable feature; however, the cost of Mode 2 may turn out to be less than the cost of additional internet provider connections that would be necessary in the event of interrupted workflow when a service provider is down. Mode 2 effectively avoids the cost of both time and customers because of an internet outage.

How does Mode 2 work?

PartsWatch constantly checks internet connectivity, and since every event that a PC sends to the data center expects a response if the response is not received when expected, or if the data center is not detected, the system will automatically attempt to reconnect as often as determined by Mode 2 setup.

If the system fails to reconnect within the designated time, it will ask the user if it should open Mode 2. If yes, then offline invoicing will be used in place of standard online invoicing. All offline invoicing is consistent with standard invoicing, and invoices created in Mode 2 are stored on the PC until the connection is reestablished and automatically uploaded to the data center.

How do I enable Mode 2 in PartsWatch?

Mode 2 is normally enabled by the installation rep when changing over from your legacy system; however, it can be enabled any time by contacting your PartsWatch sales representative. They will have a support rep get it up and running for you. Help guides and training videos are also available to help with setup and maintenance.

What work can be done in Mode 2?

Since Mode 2's job is to make sure invoicing is always available for customer sales and returns at the counter, Point-of-Sale is the only menu option and all other PartsWatch screens and features are unavailable during Mode 2.

How is the data needed for invoicing available if the internet is down?

Each PC used as a PartsWatch Point-of-Sale workstation on the same Local Area Network (LAN) is designated as either a Primary or a Secondary PC.

In off-business hours, the Primary PC 'pulls' data needed for invoicing from the data center and stores it in a shared file on the PC. The Secondary PCs 'pull' the data from the shared file on the Primary PC, so all workstations have current data needed to create invoices offline.

What is the difference between Primary and Secondary PCs?

Both Primary and Secondary terminals are Point-of-Sale workstations on the same local area network (LAN), with the only difference being that Primaries retrieve Mode 2 file updates from the data center and Secondary's retrieve the updates from a Primary.

Because a Primary PC accesses the data center to retrieve the Mode 2 files, even though PartsWatch and other programs can be closed, Windows must be up and running and the user must continue to be logged in on the Primary PCs for the downloads to be successful.

Since Secondary PCs get their Mode 2 file updates from the Primary PC across the LAN, the time it takes to download files to the Secondary PCs is insignificant, therefore, these PCs do not need to be running during off-hours.

What if the Primary PC is turned off at night?

It is essential that any terminal designated as a Primary be left running at night to allow the download of the Mode 2 file from the data center.

Since it is recommended that PCs running Windows be rebooted at least once per week, rebooting the Primary PCs should become part of the store's normal operating routine.

If the Primary PC is turned off during the predetermined time each night, Mode 2 will still be available; however, the data used may be stale if changes were made and the fresh download was not able to retrieve them.

How many Primary PCs are needed in a store?

Normally, a single Primary PC is needed per store, if only one local area network (LAN) is set up in the store. All other Secondary PCs will be networked to the Primary.

If the store's LAN does not include all PCs, then those PCs not on the LAN must be set up as Primary PCs. If there is more than one LAN in a store, one of the PCs must be set up as a Primary. Mode 2 files downloading to Secondary PCs are only successful from Primary PCs on the same LAN.

What if I want to invoice from my laptop?

If a remote workstation, such as a laptop, is used for Point of Sale transactions and is not in the store's network (LAN), it must be set up as a Primary. Since data is retrieved on a nightly basis, the laptop must be left on during the update hours.

How can I tell if Mode 2 is working?

A convenient "Test Mode 2" feature is available from the HELP menu to make sure Mode 2 will open when needed. Clicking Test Mode 2 will either prompt to open Mode 2 or return an error indicating that Mode 2 won't open. If Mode 2 is not working, check for changes to the store's LAN, a Windows update or a PartsWatch release that might have caused changes to Mode 2.

How can I tell if the download is working?

Frequently Asked Questions – Mode 2

PWS PartsWatch

The MODE 2 MONITOR screen and the Reports, System Reports, Mode 2 Detail and Summary Reports in PartsWatch are available to view/print the status of downloads to both Primary and Secondary PCs that are set up for Mode 2 processing, and should be checked periodically to make sure the downloads are successful.

What should I do if MODE 2 files are not current?

There are many reasons why the download may not be successful, the primary reason being the Primary PC was turned off during the download time. However, changes to the local network (LAN) or the PC such as a Windows update may also cause failure.

If no changes were made, the Mode 2 download process can be stopped and restarted. Follow the *PW Mode 2 Setup Guide* found in F1 Help or the PW Academy for directions.

How will I know if I'm in Mode 2?

Mode 2 always asks if you want to invoice offline before opening. Answer 'Yes', and when Mode 2 opens, a green 'M2' icon will display above the terminal icon on the right side of the screen border, and all screens other than invoicing will be closed.

How will I know when the connection is reestablished?

Once in Mode 2, the system continually tries to reconnect to the internet and when a connection can be re-established, will ask if you want to upload the Mode 2 invoices to the data center now or depending on a hidden application switch, will begin the upload upon logout or when PartsWatch is closed.

How can I tell if an invoicing feature is available in Mode 2?

In the same way, you can use the 'Test Mode 2' feature to make sure Mode 2 will open, simply enable 'Test Mode 2' and try the feature to see if it is available. This is also a good way to work offline should internet access be intermittent.

Can I do electronic catalog lookups in Mode 2?

Invoice-related features such as cash drawer management, electronic credit card processing and catalog lookup are not available offline. However, if there is an internet connection and the catalog server is up, even if the data center is down, then electronic catalog lookup can continue during Mode 2. If the internet is down, then you will not be able to do catalog lookups.

Autologue has made catalog lookup possible whether in Mode 2 or not, using VisiCAT, the Wrenthead online catalog. It allows standalone catalog lookup functionality for product line lookup without an internet connection; however, it does not update lookups to PartsWatch when the system is back online.

Contact your sales representative for more information.

Are Mode 2 Invoices different from 'online' invoices?

Any invoices created offline are assigned a Mode 2 invoice number. To distinguish Mode 2 invoices and cash slips created offline from online invoices, invoices created in Mode 2 include the text 'M2' / 'MODE 2' and cash slips print the text 'MODE 2'.

When back online, each offline invoice is assigned the next real, consecutive, invoice number from online invoicing. Both numbers are tracked with the invoice.