

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE
ON HOW TO OBTAIN
MOTOROLA
CUSTOMER PROGRAMMING SOFTWARE (CPS)

BACKGROUND

Motorola is a very large, complex and bureaucratic organization and is difficult to navigate. Motorola is not set up to deal with individual end user customers, it is not an amateur radio company (they do not understand why someone would need to re-program their radios daily) and Motorola is set up to support their dealers who provide support to its customers including providing programming assistance which dealers reasonably charge for.

It is IMPORTANT to note that each step in this process is governed by a different computer system and each step in the process requires the previous step to be “bridged” by the one computer system moving to the new computer system that governs the next process. Each step takes approximately 24-48 hours.

It is IMPORTANT also to note, that the process is this way because Motorola is a big company with many disparate legacy IT systems (no different than any other large company) and the reason why MOL and the process is not necessarily user friendly or follow the yellow brick road because the system was designed for use by dealers who know this or have been trained on the system. It was never intended to be a shopping cart on Amazon!

It is my hope that this guide helps with the frustration many have experienced, but please understand, as an amateur radio operator setting up an individual account to purchase software is somewhat pushing the envelope from what was originally developed and designed by Motorola for a different user base. Although not realistic long term, you can always rely on a friend to help program your radio for you.

PROCESS

The only way to legitimately obtain the software is to order and pay Motorola direct. No one, not even dealers are allowed to sell the software. Motorola wants the licensing agreement (which they aggressively enforce with the assistance of the FBI) directly with the end user. The programming cable can be purchased from a dealer. The typical process is this. Mileage may vary and there are exceptions.

For customers in Canada, we understand that Motorola does not offer subscriptions, one workaround is to use a US based address if you have the opportunity to do so.

One sets up an account at motorolasolutions.com by going to the SIGN IN Menu, then at the bottom of the pop up, click on the link “Don't have an account? Register” (do not use http or www and the URL works best with IE 8 and no compatible view or IE 10 with compatible view). Please make sure you turn off your pop-up blocker. If there is a glitch in the form where you can't submit it, you must fill your fax number, if you do not have one enter all zeros or re-enter your phone number.

You will have less trouble setting up an account for software purchase if you are a BUSINESS and you state you are maintaining numerous radios. It also goes easiest if you are a RADIO CLUB, a RADIO GROUP or RADIO ASSOCIATION as your "business name." If you list as a BUSINESS name or a Radio Club, Group or

Association (it does not have to be a registered entity), it will save a ton of questions. It is recommended you list yourself as an Enterprise business and that you request company administrative rights.

Also, there is a value add in that, if you license the software in such a way, legally those members are entitled to share it amongst themselves. By taking up a collection from several individuals, one can share the expense and license to the group and legitimately share the software. User accounts can be set up on MOL for access and/or a free file sharing account can be set up to distribute to members. For those that complain about the cost of the software, why not take up a small collection from each person in a small group of members. For 13 members that is approx. \$20 each, for 25 members that is approx. \$10 each. Warning, more than a few copies is a gray area.

Cost of the subscription is \$169. It should be noted that the software subscription which is for 3 years includes firmware, resource notes and telephone support, and the same software package programs every portable, mobile and repeater in the TRBO portfolio. There is online downloading of both the CPS and firmware including resource notes. Dollar for dollar it is some of the best value around. In addition, when the subscription expires, many folks wait another year or so before renewing to stretch the buying cycle, the software will continue to work after the subscription expires. This software is not freeware or shareware, Motorola spends millions of dollars in development of the CPS. This is sophisticated professional software. The stability, GUI, and lack of counterfeit Chinese driver issues and the ability to cut and paste are themselves worth their weight in gold.

Initially, the CPS appears more expensive compared to the typical amateur software which is less noticeable because it is small hits over time (cost per each model radio) rather than a larger upfront expense for a multi-year subscription. I know many hams have numerous portables that they paid \$50 each for the software that only programmed a single model radio and did not necessarily include software and firmware updates. Penny wise and pound foolish.

Motorola was never set up to sell software to individuals per se since this under cuts dealers who charge for programming services. Customer Service typically will try and say just go to your local dealer for programming. The assumption is you need to program your radio once rather than trying to re-program a radio repeatedly.

You have purchased a top of the line DMR radio why scrimp on the software which is the very back backbone of the features and functionality of the radio. Features are constantly being added with each firmware release. Compare the ease of use to the free Chinese software.

Fill out the initial contact form, you do not have a customer number or a Motorola contact since you are new to Motorola. Enter End User for an individual and Enterprise User for a group. If you are the primary person handling the account, you will want to check requesting Company Administrative Rights.

Motorola will then send you the following questionnaire in 24-48 hours (you can "REPLY" to this message or call Customer Service directly at 800-814-0601 with your answers), see suggested responses:

- 1) Do you have an established account number with Motorola? NO
If so, what is that number?
- 2) If for business use, what is your organization's legal name (no abbreviations)? SEE GUIDANCE ABOVE (for personal use please provide the name you would like to reference on the account)
- 3) Are you purchasing Software? YES

- 4) Are you a State or Local Government entity? NO
- 5) Are you a Not-for-Profit entity? AS APPROPRIATE
- 6) Do you work for or contract for the US Federal Government? NO
- 7) What is your organization's Shipping Address for online orders? (must be a physical address) AS APPROPRIATE
- 8) What is your organization's Billing Address? AS APPROPRIATE
- 9) Briefly describe what you are looking to acquire from Motorola Online? TO PURCHASE COMPUTER PROGRAMMING SOFTWARE (CPS) TO MAINTAIN A FLEET OF RADIOS.

The following questions pertain to potential Independent Resellers:

YOU WILL WANT TO ANSWER N/A TO THESE.

- 10) Are you a tax exempt reseller in the two way radio and/or communications market (Purchase will be providing services or sales to your external customer)?
 - a. Do you have a valid resale tax exemption certificate?
- 11) What is your combined yearly sales forecast of Motorola Solutions part, accessory, and service products (if approved as an Independent Reseller)
- 12) Do you have business relationships with any similar Communication equipment manufacturers'?
 - a. Please list manufacturers
 - b. Type of relationship
- 13) How would these Motorola Solutions products be distributed to consumers? (Internet, Storefront, Other)
- 14) As a communications equipment and service provider, does a significant portion of your business include selling to the U.S. Federal Government?

Then you go online and complete the software agreement (PDF agreement). Motorola and the FBI on their behalf aggressively enforce this. The account process takes a day or two to set and finalize. As I indicated, those time frames have cushions in them, give them 1 or 2 days and follow up, the squeaky wheel gets the grease!

Then one calls in or gets the Motorola Online (MOL) account access and orders HKVN4362 (download only version was recently changed to no charge). The version that also includes Radio Management (RM) HKVN4622 (still has a subscription price of \$169). The ordering system is not user friendly, it is always easier to call 800-814-0601 and order on the phone. You want to be careful about getting sucked in and feel comfortable with ordering online because you will be tempted to order parts and accessories that way but you will be paying a premium retail price. Almost any dealer can still make a small profit and sell to you for far less than what you would pay online with this type of account. Be careful of the convenience.

One can only order a subscription and that is with a CD which is shipped in a few days, updates take a week or two to be shipped, which is a different part number than above (RVN5115XX) and costs \$265.

Once the subscription is completed, Motorola should automatically update the user profile to show the software download (under resource center, resource center, software, two way, MotoTRBO, then CPS/Service and/or Conventional Firmware NOTE: This is not applicable if you are using the new My View System), however this does not always happen flawlessly, and sometimes it takes a call or two. And yes, just because you are supposed to get the software or ordering profile to show, doesn't always mean it will happen.

The online software and firmware capability with resource notes is a value add feature of the subscription and is not a standalone service, one has to order the subscription and/or CD in order to get access. Even during the subscription period, one may get their MOL profile corrupted and lose some or all of the access to software download. Simply call Customer Service and have the profile reset.

Then one goes on to order the wideband entitlement by watching the video (12 minutes in duration). Login to MOL, go to Training tab, select LMS Training. Search and Register for PRD0001.01E - FCC NARROWBANDING MANDATE TRAINING. If you can't find it by the course number, search on the catalog for the course name, this is a known issue. If you cannot locate the course call MOL, 800-814-0601, Option 4, Option 3, and they can send you a direct link. Watch the Power Point presentation (12 minute video).

Once the system updates you completed the course, you can order the wideband entitlement license. Order part no. HKVN4046A when they open up the field in your catalog. Again, it is always easiest to order by phone. You can ask for several licenses, one for your desktop, one for the laptop and one in case your hard drive crashes. Ordering a bunch of EIDs sets off a red flag. It is installed once on your computer and you will be able to program 25kHz wide frequencies. Each entitlement is good for the life of the computer and for one version of the CPS (Gen 1 or Gen 2).

I still get calls several times a week for folks looking for a radio with "no later than X firmware never programmed by X version of software" and on and on, just to avoid the wideband entitlement requirement which is free with the CPS subscription. They make themselves both crazy and sick (and me as I try to find that particular radio for them) and since Automatic Gain Control (AGC) and Audio Processing in general was not the best in older versions, most of the audio disparity is caused by older software (besides improper programming) and turns folks off MotoTRBO as a platform, which further exacerbates the problem.

For almost 30 years, not a single person has ever said to me after purchasing that the subscription was a rip off, in fact, most complain that they should have done it sooner.

FOLLOW UP

The process can be bureaucratic and cumbersome, the standard canned response from Motorola is 24-48 hours for anything, in most cases systems have to bridge in 24 hours. My advice has always been to order by phone and follow up by phone, that seems to work best and is the most efficient way to go. I would suggest not to be abusive and open a case right away, however, a nice and cordial squeaky wheel gets the grease, often times you can get a more desirable result rather than waiting 48-72 or for Motorola to re-contact you. In many cases the ball is dropped by Motorola or you slip through the cracks, so follow up remains a critical part of the process.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

The above is my opinion and these observations and come from being a Motorola dealer for over 30 years, and this guide was intended for those not familiar with the process, please do not contact me to give me your comments agreeing or disagreeing with the system as Motorola has it set up, it is what it is, and not a single one of us is capable of changing it. I hope that most of you, in the end, agree with me, the journey is worth it to get access to some of the finest two-way radio equipment in the world.

Thanks,

Ken
K1DMR (formerly KF4CZB)

NOTE:

The views and opinions expressed in this instructional guide are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Motorola, my company/dealership or otherwise constitutes legal advice.

Please contact the author Ken Bryant with any thoughts, comments, suggestions and improvements.

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