



BlackBerry AtHoc

Mobile Alerting System User Guide

7.6

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The Mobile Alerting System

The BlackBerry AtHoc Mobile Alerting System (MAS) enables the BlackBerry AtHoc notification system to be synchronized on ruggedized laptops to provide a portable alert system wherever it is needed. If a disaster occurs in which a base or a building has been evacuated, or there is a total network or telephony system failure, Operators can still send alerts. Using MAS on laptops that have wired or wireless Internet capabilities, operators can publish alerts to reach the affected personnel.

This guide describes how to synchronize the Mobile Alerting System on the ruggedized laptop so that it becomes a portable alert system.

Audience

This guide is written for an Operator who must set up the BlackBerry AtHoc Mobile Alerting System (MAS) on a ruggedized laptop to send emergency notification alerts to affected end-users.

Hardware and software features

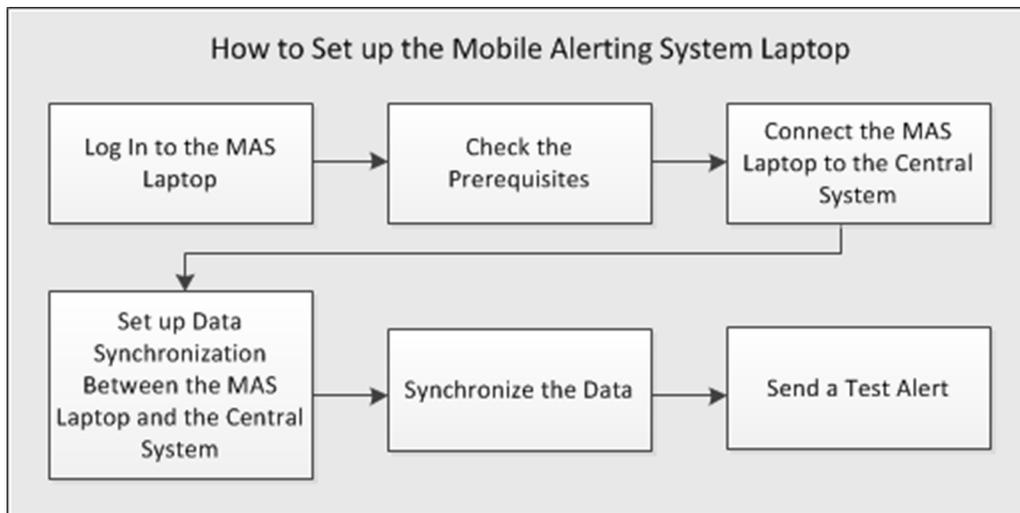
- The laptop's battery life is approximately five hours.
- The Microsoft Windows software version installed on the laptop is Windows 2012 R2 with the required Service Pack.
- SQL server 2012 EXPRESS edition.

Note: The recommended practice is to turn on (or enable) Microsoft Windows updates to automatically update the Microsoft Windows software on the laptop.

Overview

The Mobile Alert System (MAS) laptop provides a backup alerting system that you can use when the central system is not available. The following sections describe how to connect the MAS laptop to the central system and set up synchronization.

The following diagram shows an overview of the tasks the operator performs to set up the MAS laptop:



Check prerequisites and installation requirements for the central system

Verify that the following actions have been completed:

- Ensure that the BlackBerry AtHoc system has been upgraded to Version 7.6.
- In the BlackBerry AtHoc system product config file, set the MOBILE ALERTING registry to Y. If the MOBILE ALERTING registry was not originally set to Y, change the setting and restart the processor.
The registry key for a 64-bit machine is: HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Wow64\AtHocServer\ProductConfig\MOBILE-ALERTING
- Install the Windows Server 2003 Resource Kit on the central system database server. This file also works with Microsoft Server 2012.
Download the Resource Toolkit from the following URL: <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=9D467A69-57FF-4AE7-96EE-B18C4790CFFD&displaylang=en>
- In the database, specify the Virtual System to be exported by executing the following command for the organization ID whose data needs to be exported from the PRV_EXTENDED_PARAMS TAB:
EXPORT_DATA_YN = 'Y'
- Assign the Download Export File Role to the Operator on the same organization for which they need to export jobs in the BlackBerry AtHoc system.
- Verify that the backup location for the export files is set to AtHocENS/Database/Backup/Export. This path is set up during the initial set of the BlackBerry AtHoc system.
- Ensure that the System Task Manager has executed the Export MAS Data job on the Primary System. To verify the Export MAS Data job, log in to the BlackBerry AtHoc management system and change to the System Setup (3) organization, and go to **Settings > System Jobs**.
- Ensure that the Application Pool Settings for both Standard and Enterprise are set to AtHoc Default Pool (MAS Only).
- If HTTPS is being used, a valid SSL certificate for the central system needs to be added at the root level of the MAS laptop for trusted communication.

Best practices

The following are best practices for using the laptop and the MAS.

Note: If local policies prohibit the recommended Best Practices, request an exception from the administrator who manages the local policies.

- **Microsoft Windows updates:** Turn on (or enable) Windows updates to automatically update the Windows software on the laptop.
- **Synchronizing the MAS:** Synchronize the MAS weekly and just before a scheduled MAS test.
- **Data verification:** Verify the data in the MAS weekly and just before a scheduled MAS test.

Log in to the MAS laptop

A hard copy document is provided with the MAS laptop that contains your login information.

To set up the MAS laptop to access your local network, complete the following steps:

1. Perform any pre-network scans as required.

Note the following configuration items:

- This system is a Windows Server 2012 system.
 - Symantec Antivirus is preloaded.
 - All patches available at shipping time have been applied.
2. Configure the laptop for either static IP or DHCP, as required.
 3. Add the laptop to the local domain to receive updates and allow login.
 4. If you changed the computer name when you added it to the domain, update the registry keys located at the following URL: `HKey_Local Machine\Software\Wow6432Node\Athocserver\`
 - a. Update the `OleDbConnectionString` connection string to one of the following values:
 - New MAS Laptop Computer Name. For example, MyOrgLaptop2012.
 - New MAS Laptop IP address (if set up for Static IP). For example, 10.22.35.3.
 - LocalHost (strongly recommended if set up for DHCP IP address).
 - b. Reset the IIS Admin server:
 1. From the Start menu, go to **Administrative tools > Services**.
 2. Click the IIS Administration service, then click **Restart**.
 3. After the service has restarted, close the Services window.

Set up data synchronization between the MAS laptop and the central system

Set up data synchronization between the MAS laptop and the central system

This section describes the tasks to set up data synchronization between the Mobile Alerting System and the central system, which is the system that you use to publish alerts. The central system can be either the working primary system or the failover system, depending upon which is being used at the time.

Prerequisites

Before beginning the data synchronization with the central system, complete the following tasks:

- Verify that the MAS certificate matches the central system certificate.
- Verify that any certificate installed on the central system is also installed on the MAS laptop and the appropriate certificate is bound in IIS.

To check the certificates, complete the following steps:

1. Open IIS Manager on the MAS Laptop. IIS Manager can be found in the control panel under Administrative Tools – Internet Information Systems Manager.
 2. Click the Default web site icon, and in the right hand pane, click **Bindings**. A window opens.
 3. Verify that the HTTPS is bound and the certificate name matches your primary certificate server.
- Verify whether the Export MAS Data job has executed and built the packages for the Mobile Alerting System synchronization.

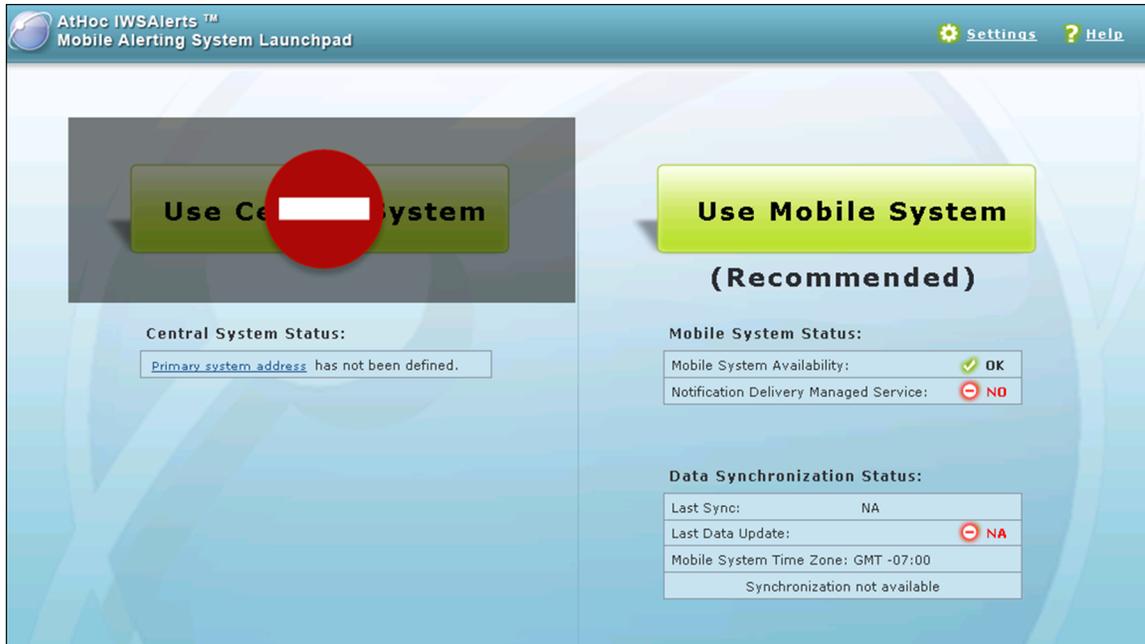
To check the job status, complete the following steps:

1. Log in to the BlackBerry AtHoc management console as an administrator.
2. Change to the **System Setup (3)** organization.
3. Click .
4. In the **System Setup** section, click **System Jobs**.
5. On the **System Tasks** window, click **Export MAS Data**.
6. On the **Export MAS Data** screen, click **Run Now**.
7. Click **OK**. A pop-up window opens.
8. Verify that Virtual System has been exported.

Define the central system

You need to define the central system when you encounter one of the following scenarios:

- The central system has not been defined:



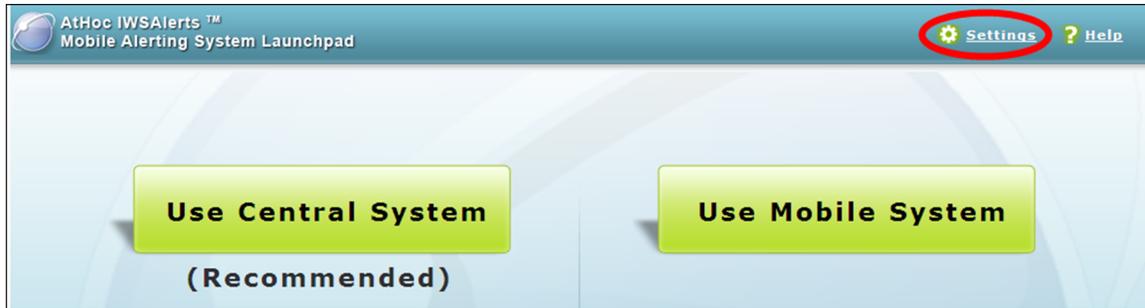
- The central system URL is no longer valid:



Supply data for the synchronization

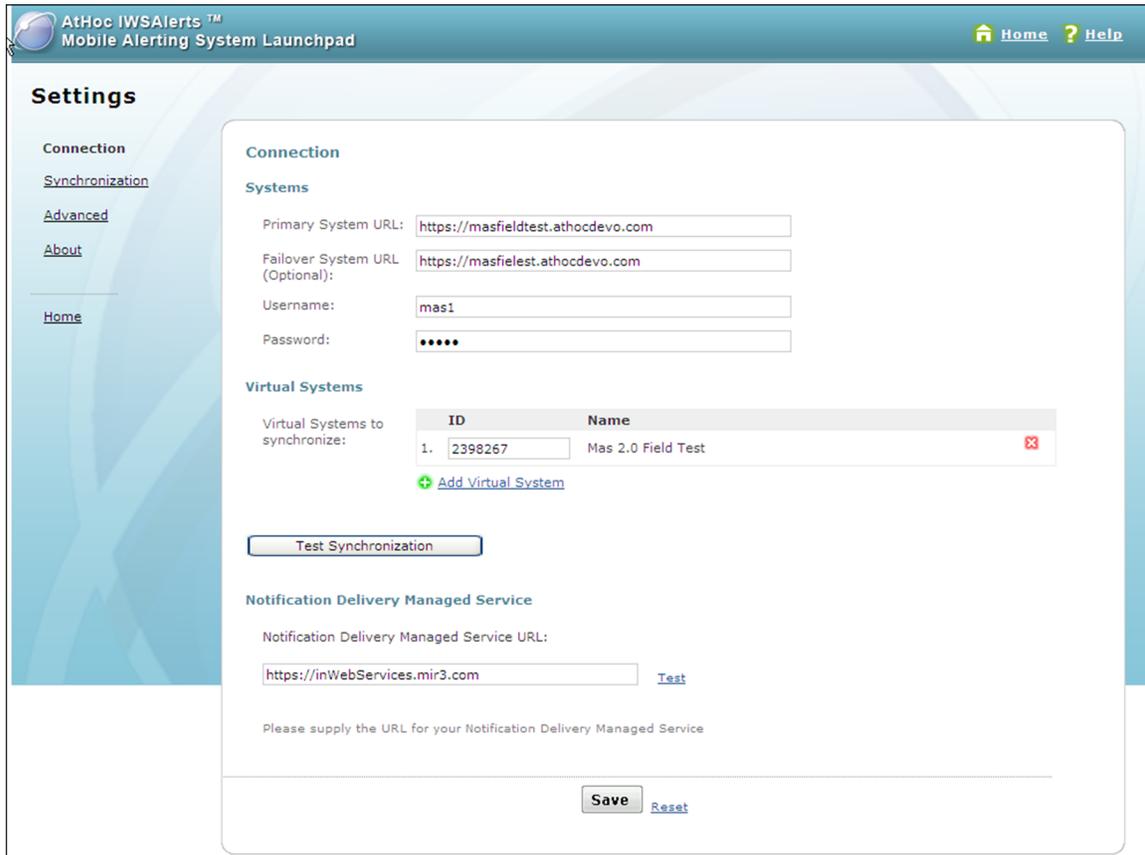
To enter the required data to synchronize the Mobile Alerting System with the central system, complete the following steps:

- On the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad, click **Settings** or **Primary system address**.



2. On the Connection page, enter the following information:

- **Primary System URL:** The URL of the BlackBerry AtHoc production server:
https://myalertingserver.mydomain.gov.
- **Failover System URL:** The URL of the BlackBerry AtHoc failover server.
- **Username:** The Operator name on the primary system that has the permission to export Mobile Alerting System data. For example, Enterprise Administrator.
- **Password:** The Operator password on the primary system that has the permission to export Mobile Alerting System data.



3. In the ID field, enter the Virtual System ID of the Virtual System that you are synchronizing with.
4. Click **Add Virtual System** to add a row for every Virtual System that you want to synchronize with.
5. Click **Test Synchronization** to verify if you can successfully synchronize data with the central system.
6. Enter the Notification Delivery Managed Service URL that has been provided to you.
7. Click **Save**.

8. In the **Mobile Alerting System Launchpad**, Click **Test** to verify that you can reach the Notification Delivery Managed Service.
9. Click **Save** if all of the tested elements on the Connection page are successful.

Note: You should synchronize the MAS weekly and just before a scheduled MAS test.

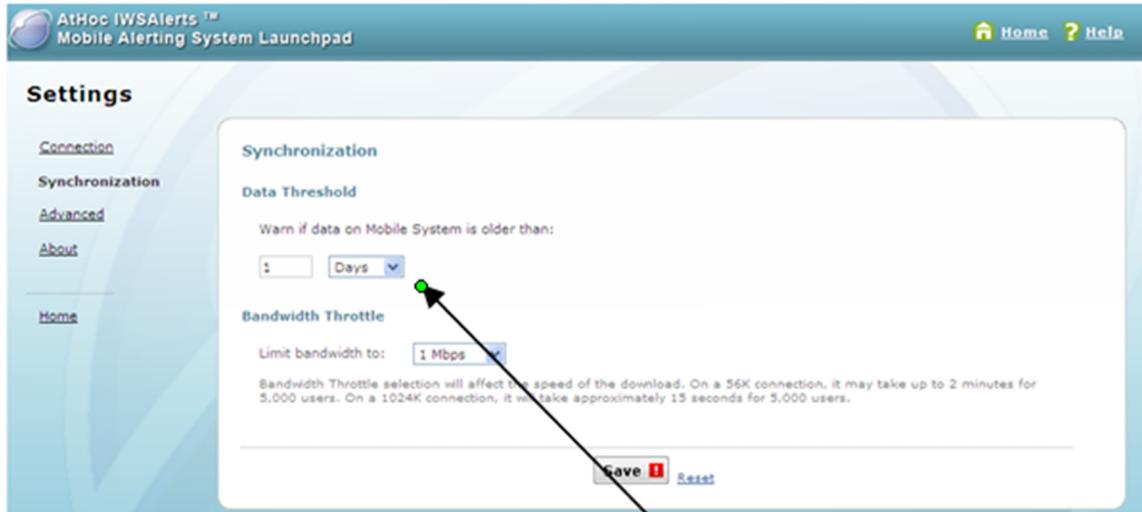
Set up the bandwidth throttle

To set up the speed of the data download from the primary system, complete the following steps:

1. Click **Settings**.
2. Click the **Synchronization** link. The synchronization page opens.



3. In the **Data Threshold** section, set the value to indicate the status of the Last Data Update that appears on the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad page.



4. In the **Bandwidth Throttle** section, select the **Limit bandwidth** to limit the speed of the data download from the primary system.
5. Click **Save**.

Synchronize the data between MAS and the central system

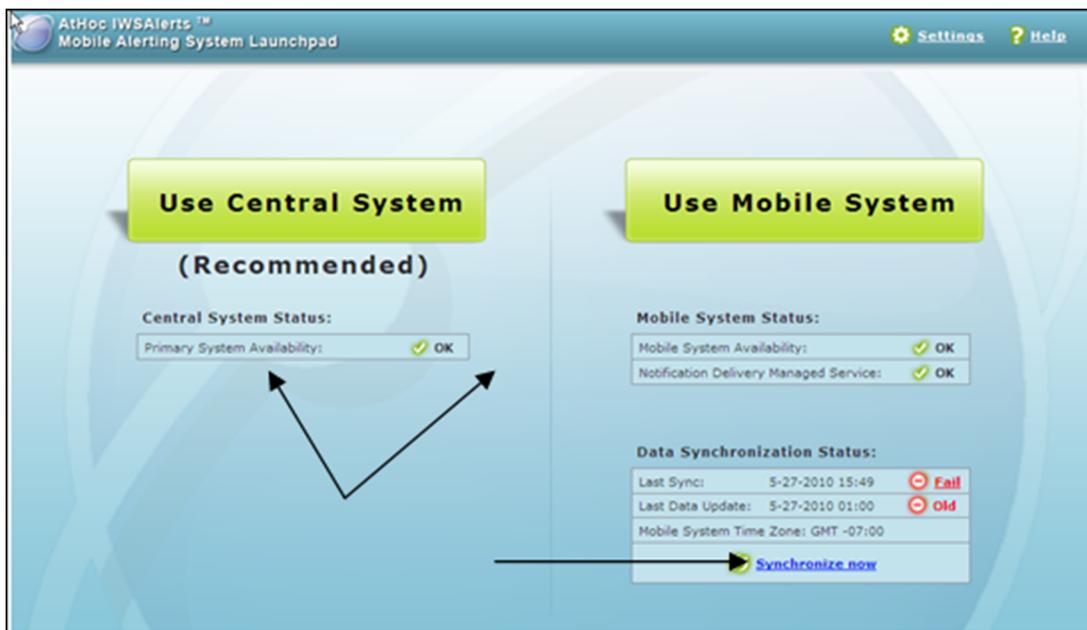
This section describes how to perform data synchronization between the Mobile Alerting System and the central system. Data synchronization can only be performed with the primary system, not the failover system.

Prerequisites

Before you can synchronize the data, verify the following items on the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad:

- The primary system availability status is OK.

The following image shows the status of the primary system. If the Use Central System button is green, the primary system can be reached by the MAS system. If the button has a red icon over it, there is an issue with reaching the primary system and you are not ready to synchronize.



- The version of BlackBerry AtHoc on the MAS laptop is the same as the primary system with which it synchronizes. Check the version number on both the central system and the MAS laptop.
- To check the version number from the product on the primary system, click **Settings**, and then click **About**. To check the version number on the central system, click the drop-down link next to the logged-in user name, and then click **Help and Support**.

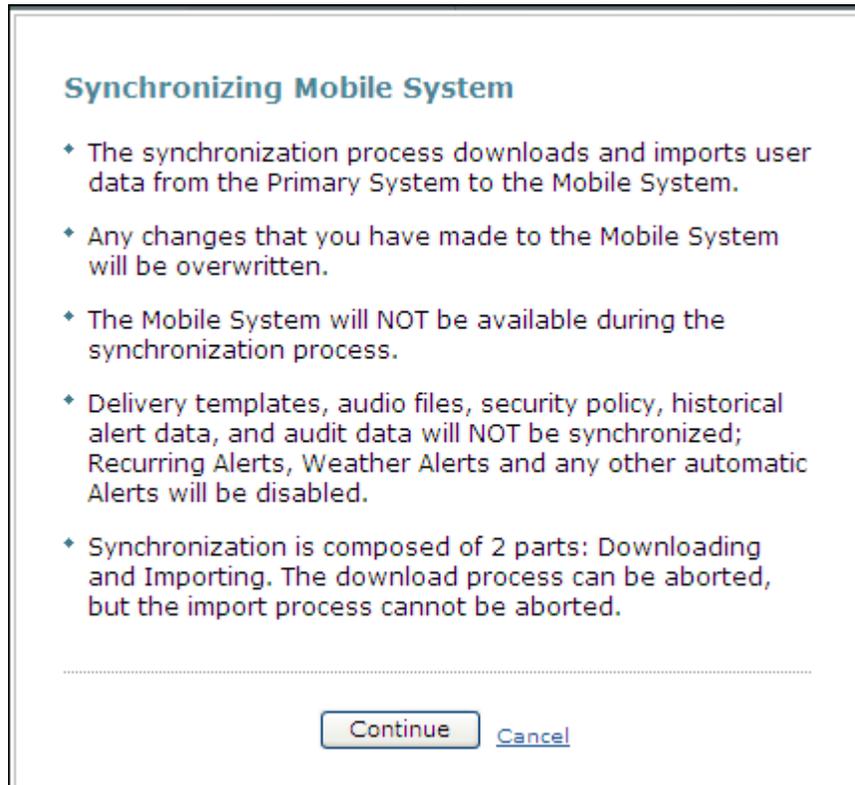
Important: You must upgrade both the central system and the MAS laptop at the same time. Using two different versions of BlackBerry AtHoc can cause data corruption on the MAS laptop. You must do a data export if the primary system has been upgraded to ensure that the data of the first synchronization between the upgraded MAS and the primary system is current with the new version.

- Under the Data Synchronization Status area, the **Synchronize now** link is available.

Perform data synchronization

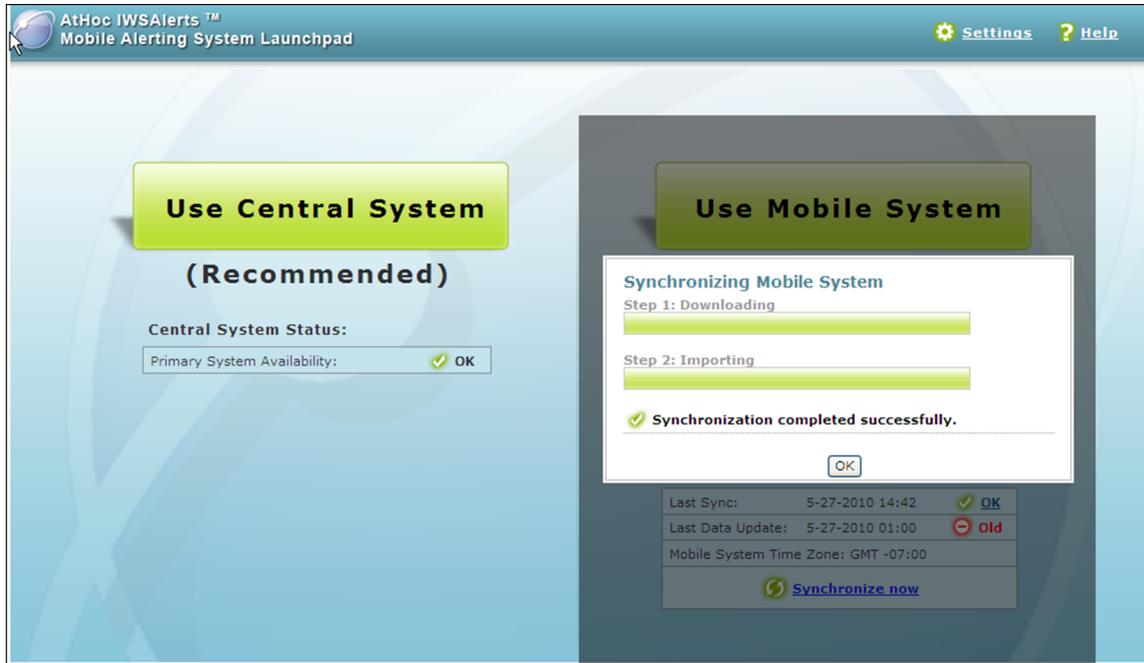
To start the synchronization between the central system and the MAS laptop, complete the following steps:

1. Go to the **Mobile Alerting System Launchpad** at the following URL: `https://<mas-server>/mas`.
For example: `https://mas-client76.athocdevo.com/mas`
2. Click **Synchronize now**.
3. On the window that appears, read the information about synchronizing the mobile system, then click **Continue**



The time it takes to synchronize to the primary system depends on the bandwidth and the size of the file.

4. After you see the message **Synchronization completed successfully**, click **OK**.



Note: Verify the data in the MAS weekly, and just before a scheduled MAS test.

5. Go to the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad to use the central system or the Mobile System.

Differences between the central system and the mobile system

The following are the key differences between using BlackBerry AtHoc on a central system versus on a mobile system:

- When using the mobile system, you must synchronize data from the central system to obtain the latest updates to the system, alerting, device, and end-user information.

Important: All new activities performed on the mobile system are overwritten each time the central system synchronizes data to the mobile system. If you have made changes on the mobile system that need to be reflected in the central system, turn off synchronization until you have copied the records to the central system. Resume synchronization to keep the mobile system current.

- Mobile system alerts can be sent to only phone, email, or SMS devices and not to the desktop.

Access the Mobile Alerting System

You launch the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad from a Web browser at the following URL: <http://localhost/mas>.

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. Ensure that ActiveX is enabled.

In Internet Explorer, navigate to **Settings > Internet Options > Security**. Check that the local intranet is set to medium-low. Or, under custom jobs, verify that Active X components are set to Prompt or Accept.

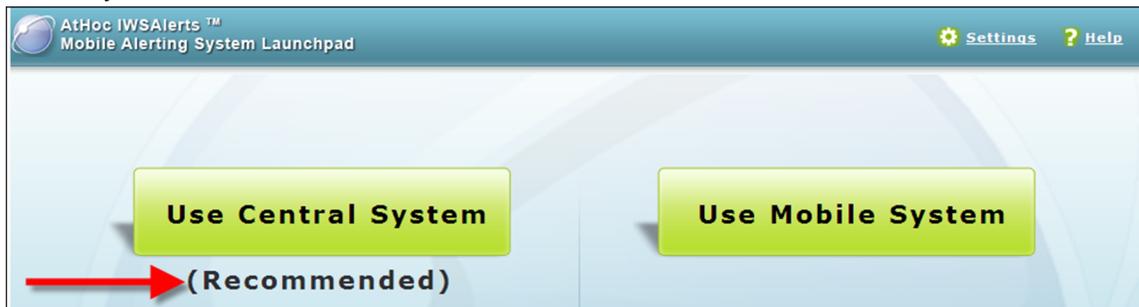
3. If you require a secure connection, navigate to one of the following URLs:

- <http://localhost/mas>
- <https://localhost/mas>

4. From the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad, click **Use Central System** or **Use Mobile System**.

The central system can be either the primary or failover system. The mobile system refers to the alert system on the ruggedized laptop.

One system is designated as **(Recommended)**, based on availability, as shown in the image below. The central system is always recommended if it is available.



After you select a system, the standard BlackBerry AtHoc management system Operator Login page displays.

5. Log in using your BlackBerry AtHoc username and password.



6. Begin to use BlackBerry AtHoc features as you would on any other computer.

Note: You cannot publish a silent telephony alert. You can send the test alert to your end-user account. You cannot publish a silent telephony alert. You can send the test alert to your end-user account.

Send a test alert

To ensure that the Mobile Alerting System is functioning properly, you should send a test telephony alert to yourself using a Verizon Air Card. To do this, complete the following steps:

1. Verify that the Verizon Air Card is plugged in and active.
2. Create a standard alert as you would normally do on the production system.

3. Verify that the alert has been received.
4. Respond to the alert.
5. Verify that the response is tracked correctly in the Alert Tracking Report.

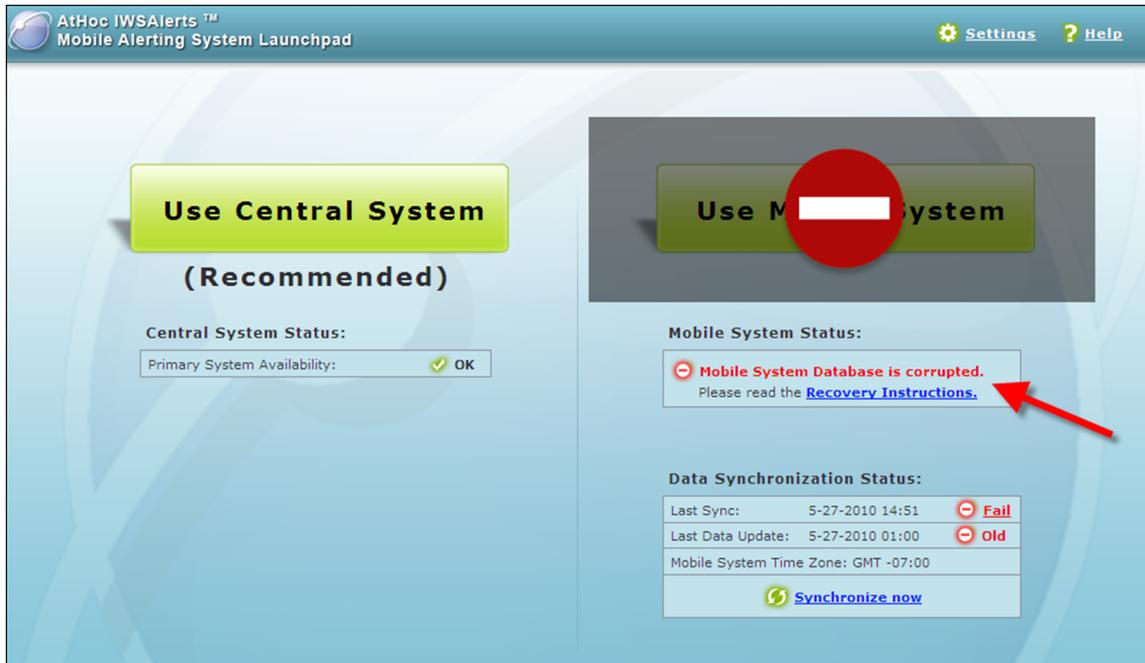
Troubleshoot synchronization issues

The section provides information about troubleshooting data synchronization issues.

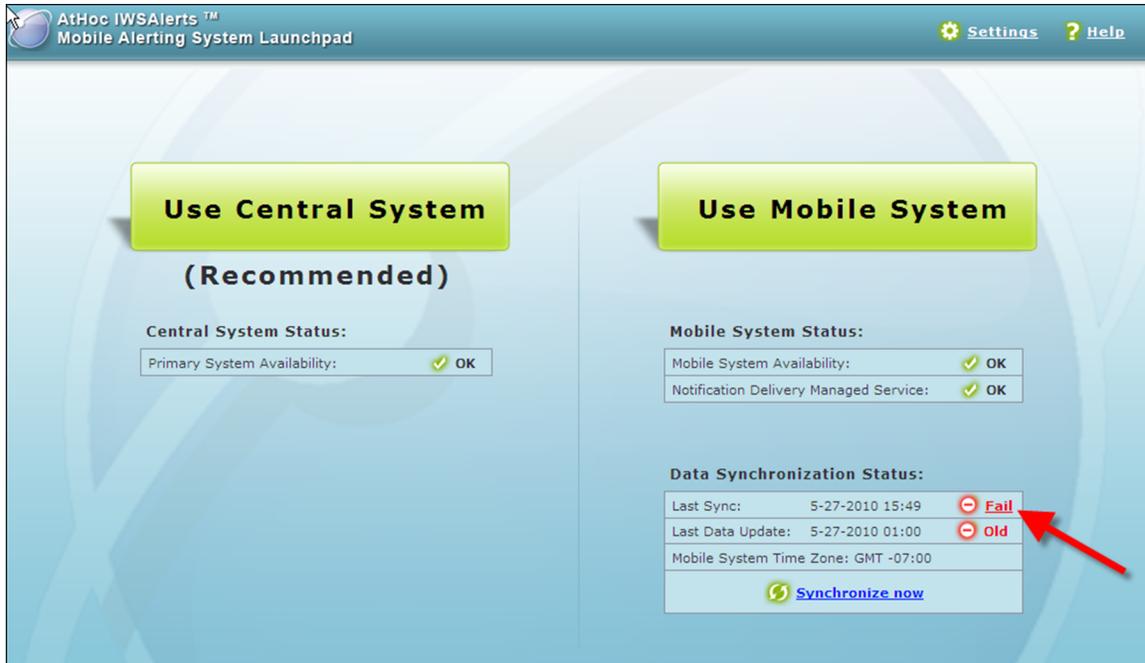
Data synchronization failures

There are two types of data-synchronization failures:

- **The database is corrupted:** In this case, you no longer have access to the Mobile Alerting System. On the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad, you see the error message: Mobile System Database is corrupted.

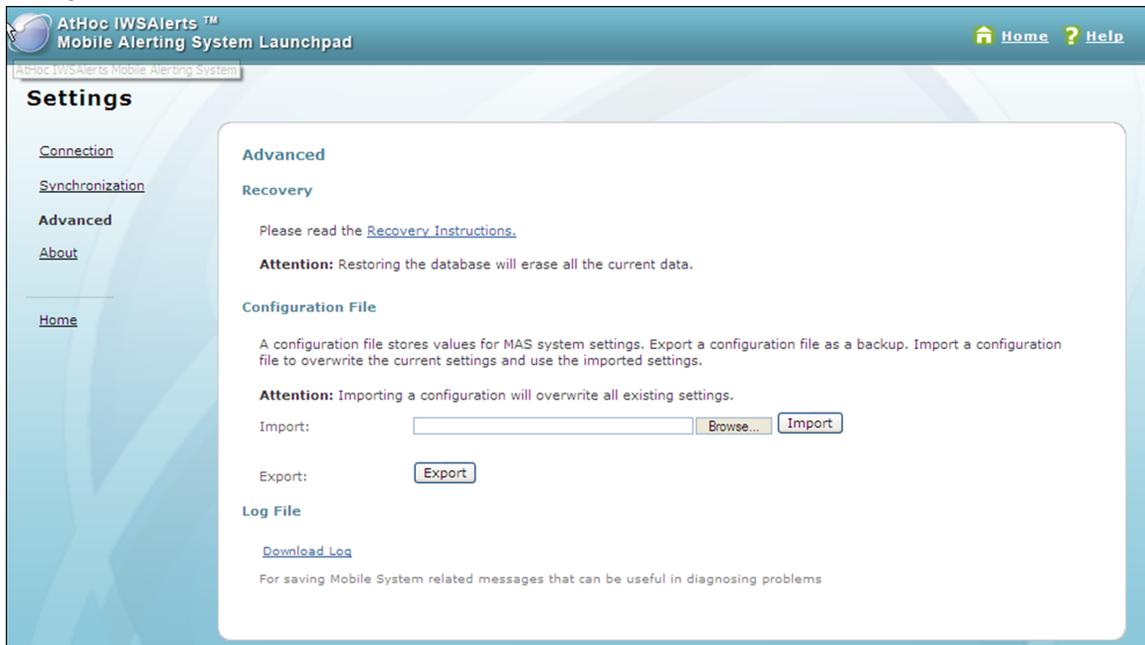


- **The database is not corrupted:** In this case, you can still use the Mobile Alerting System.



Problem: Synchronization fails and the mobile system database is corrupted

1. On the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad, go to the **Last Sync** row and click **Fail**.
2. Review the information in the **Sync Log** dialog for errors. If errors exist, contact BlackBerry AtHoc customer support to resolve them.
3. Click **Done**.
4. Click **Settings > Advanced**.



5. In the **Log File** section, click **Download Log** to examine the details of the synchronization and the possible reasons that it failed.
6. Contact BlackBerry AtHoc customer support for assistance.
7. On the Mobile Alerting System laptop, do the following:
 - a. Check the AtHoc Event Viewer for possible reasons for the failure.
 - b. Check the Application and System Event logs.

Database fix

To fix the corrupted database, you can perform several different troubleshooting options:

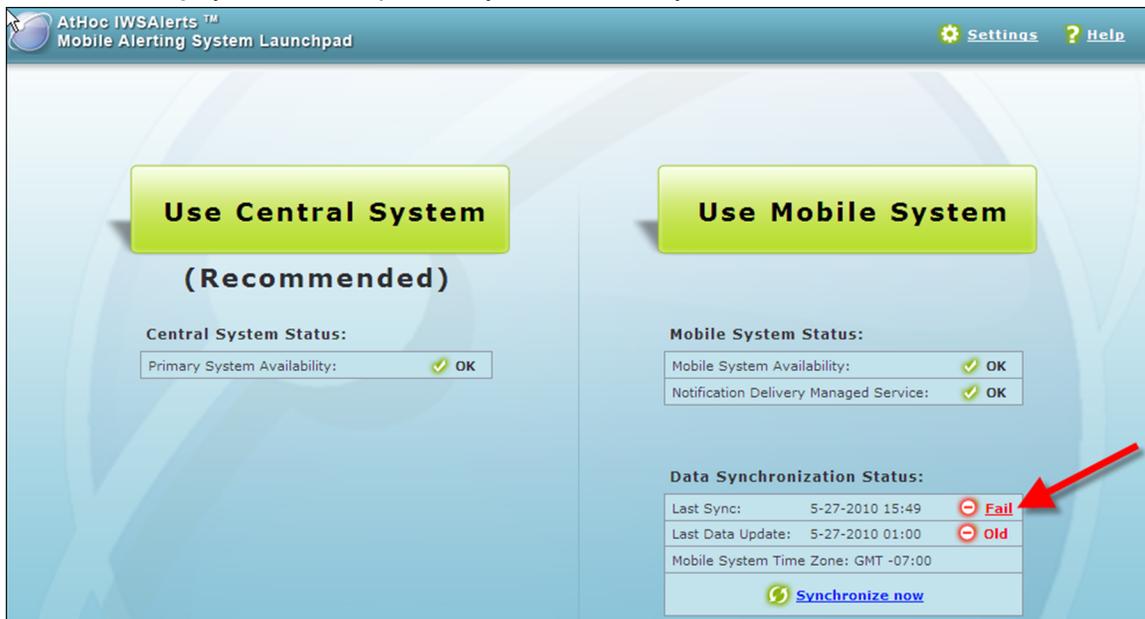
- Perform the synchronization process again.
- Recover the previous database by following the instructions in the Recovery Instructions document:

On the **Mobile Alerting System Launchpad**, or on the **Advanced** page, click **Recovery Instructions**.



Problem: Synchronization fails and the mobile system database is OK

1. On the Mobile Alerting System Launchpad, verify that the Last Sync value shows the status of Fail:



2. Perform the synchronization process again.

Problem: The MAS has been synchronized but the central system is unavailable

See [Define the central system](#) and [Supply data for the synchronization](#) for information on how to resolve this issue.

Problem: I do not see the users I want to target

If you publish an alert from the MAS and you cannot find the appropriate targeted recipients for the alert, complete the following steps:

1. Make sure that the synchronized data has been synchronized with the appropriate central system.
2. Supply the correct central system URL.
3. Perform the data synchronization process again.

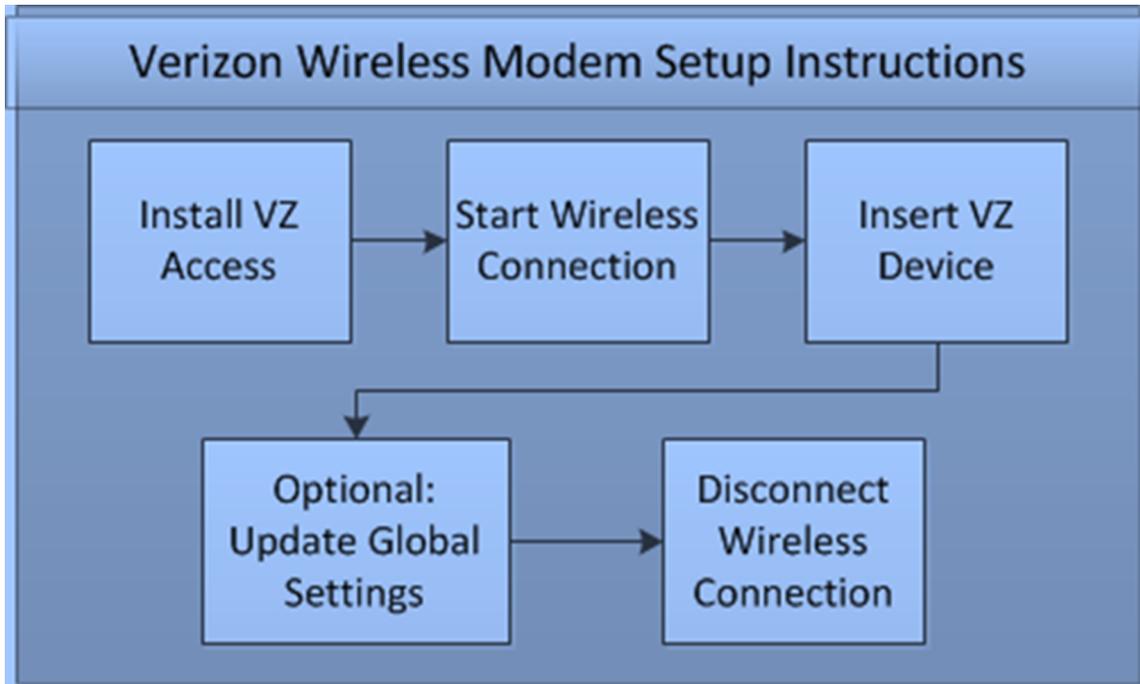
Set up the Verizon wireless modem

This section describes how to set up the Verizon wireless modem.

Overview

The operator using the MAS laptop sets up the Verizon wireless modem to send and receive alerts on the MAS laptop. You must install and configure the VZAccess Manager and attach the modem to your laptop.

The following diagram shows how the operator sets up the Verizon modem.

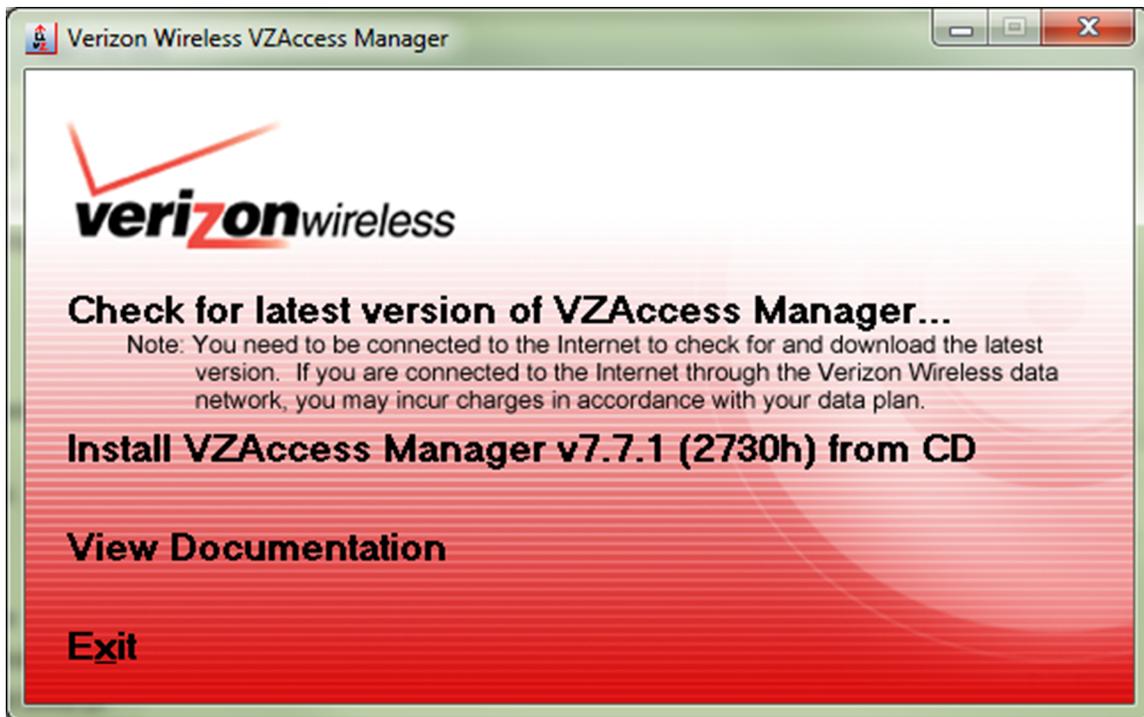


Install VZAccess Manager

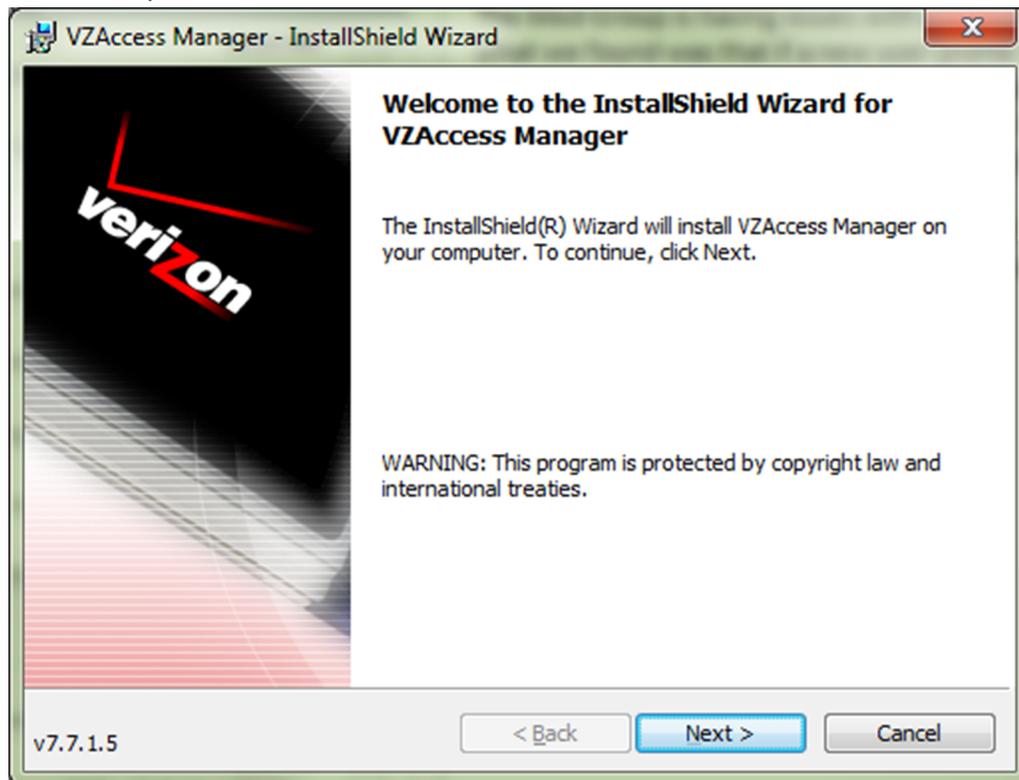
Install VZAccess on the machine before you attach the wireless modem.

To install VZAccess Manager, complete the following steps:

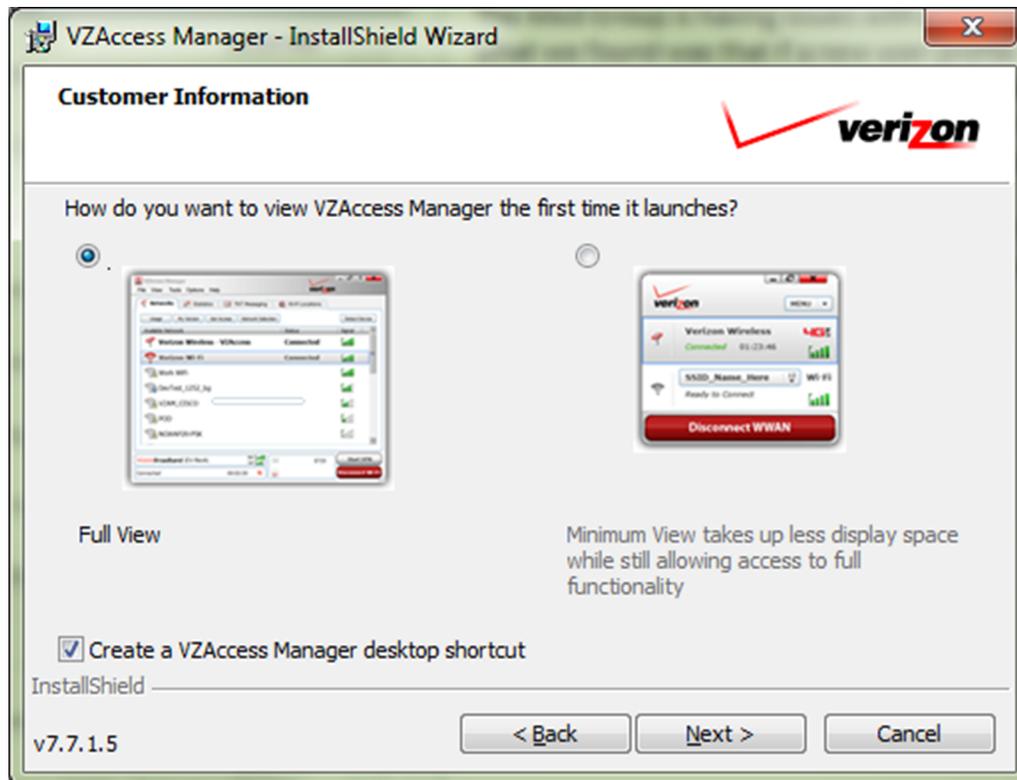
1. Insert the CD Disk into the MAS laptop and allow the auto-run application to run.
2. On the window that appears, click **Install VZAccess Manager v.7.x from CD** option.



3. Click **Yes** to allow the program to install. Note that this requires Administrator permissions.
4. Click **Next** to install the product.



5. Select **Accept both License Agreements**, then click **Next**.
6. Select **Full View**, then click **Next**.



7. Click **Next** to set the installation folder location.
8. Select **Typical**, then click **Next**.
9. Click **Install** to start the installation.
10. Click **Finish** to complete the install.
11. Ensure VZAccess Manager is set to run in Windows XP compatibility mode.

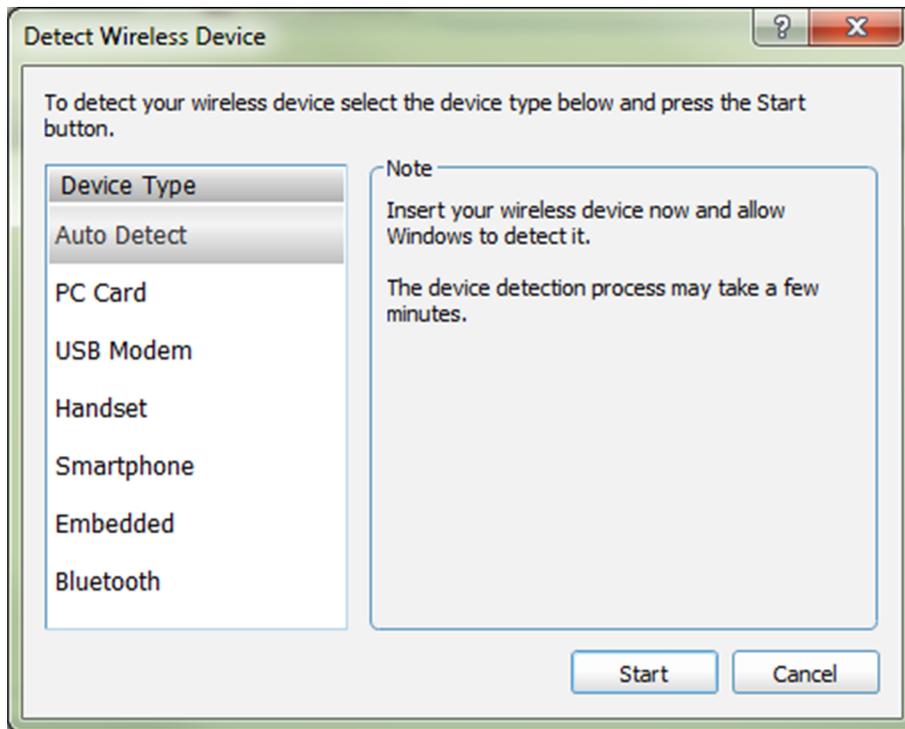
Start the VZAccess Manager

Start the VZAccess Manager software to begin the modem set up.

To start the VZAccess Manager, complete the following steps:

1. Click the desktop shortcut or open the application from the Start menu.

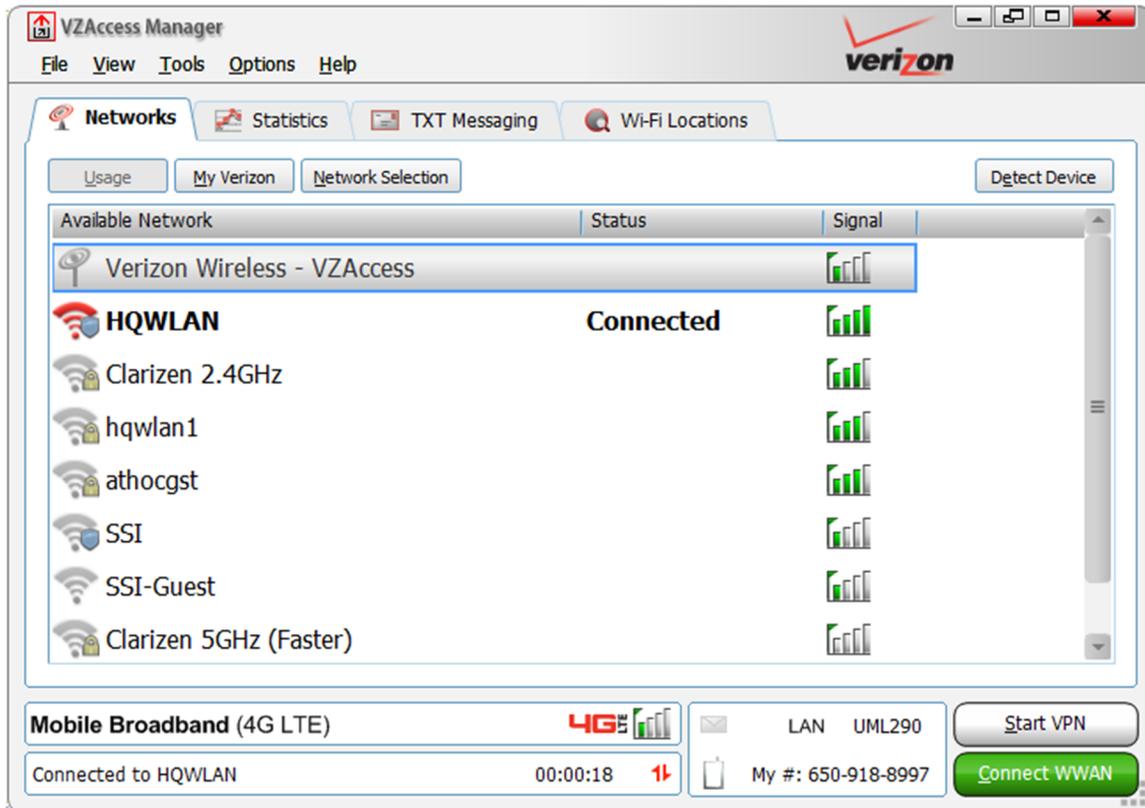
The Detect Wireless Device dialog opens and prompts you to insert your wireless device so that Windows can detect it.



2. Insert your device into a USB connector as shown in the following image.



3. After you have installed the device, click **Start** on the **Detect Wireless Device** screen.
4. The detection process runs and the drivers are installed. When the installation completes, the Networks tab opens.



If you are currently connected to a wireless network, the device status turns green. The network for Verizon Wireless- VZAccess appears at the top of the list.

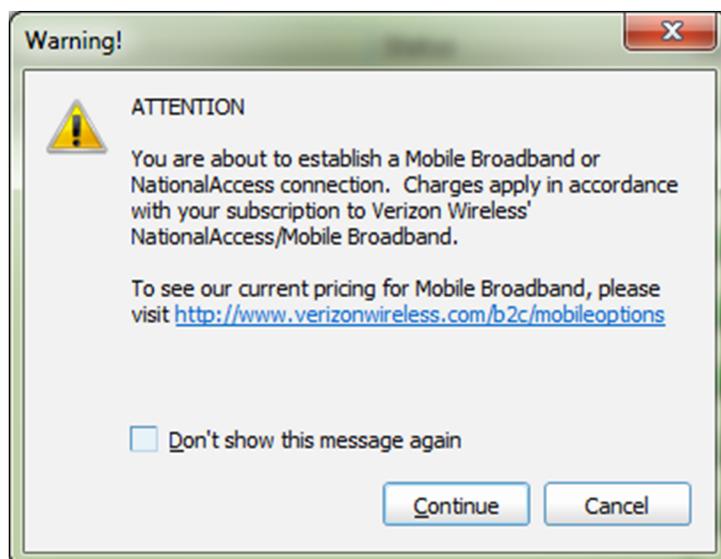
Connect to the wireless network

To start the wireless connection to connect your device to the wireless network, complete the following steps:

1. Highlight **Verizon Wireless – VZAccess** and click **Connect WWAN**.



2. Click **Continue** to start the wireless connection. A Warning dialog opens notifying you about charges related to the connection.



3. Click **Continue** to establish the connection. Click **Cancel** to avoid broadband charges.

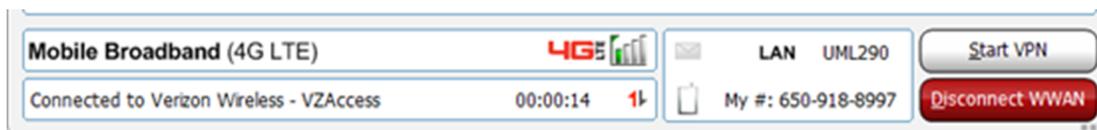
When the network connection completes, the Networks tab updates the status of the network to Connected.

4. Some Verizon areas are not compatible with the global settings. You may need to change to 4gLTE + GSM or CDM Modes. See [Troubleshoot the wireless connection](#) to learn how to update the global settings.

Disconnect from the wireless network

To disconnect from the Wireless Network to save your device's battery life, complete the following steps:

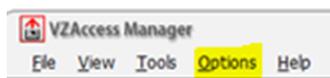
1. Highlight the **Verizon Wireless VZAccess** network connection.
2. Click **Disconnect WWAN**.



Troubleshoot the wireless connection

If you receive a Connection Failure message, your Verizon area might not be compatible with the Global Settings. You may need to change the mode to 4gLTE + GSM or CDM Modes. To change modes, complete the following steps:

1. From the VZAccess Manager, click **Options**.



2. Open **Network Selection**.
3. Highlight **Verizon Wireless – VZAccess** from the Network Mode list.
4. Click **Close**.

BlackBerry AtHoc customer portal

BlackBerry AtHoc customers can obtain more information about BlackBerry AtHoc products or get answers to questions about their BlackBerry AtHoc systems through the Customer Portal:

<https://support.athoc.com/customer-support-portal.html>

The BlackBerry AtHoc Customer Portal also provides support via computer-based training, operator checklists, best practice resources, reference manuals, and users guides.

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