

RetailTouch Overview

RetailTouch is a user-friendly state-of-the-art 32-bit Windows program for Point-of-Sale & Business Management, for retailers and wholesalers. It incorporates a very smart design (perfect for mission critical POS operations), uses industry-standard open architecture (easy data access and connections to peripherals), and provides users with top-end power and reliability, exceptional ease-of-use, and MANY UNIQUE FEATURES that provide major advantages over other systems.

POS SIMPLICITY, SPEED & EASE-OF-USE

RetailTouch has fully configurable POS layouts, to ensure maximum simplicity and speed of sales, eg:

- Users can easily modify the size and number of POS panels and control buttons, as well as their function and appearance, including colours, fonts, captions and displayed images/pictures.
- The on-screen Receipt can be modified to include more or less columns, eg. for a simple sale showing just Item (with quantity and unit price if more than one) and Price, and automatically displaying extra columns for a customer order, such as quantity ordered and quantity being supplied.
- The Sale Info panel can display different data in different ways, eg. in one or more columns or under buttons such as Sale, Item or Customer.
- There are more than 140 commands, many with sub-options, that can be applied to POS buttons, for all common POS functions (eg. park/recall or check/reprint sales, account lookup, tender, price adjust, add notes, training mode), and for advanced functions such as calling a sub-panel with custom buttons or auto-filled with Depts, Sub-Depts or products; running flexible macros/shortcuts; hiring products; displaying Kit details; prompting for multiple lengths of a product (eg. timber); importing external sales (eg. from a file).
- There are also more than 180 System Options, plus sub-options, that control how POS behaves, eg. with tendering, discounts, vouchers, EFTPOS, operator shifts, messages and warnings.

This brilliant feature, which allows users to customise their own POS layouts (eg. to streamline or to implement new initiatives), results in exceptional ease-of-use and minimises the amount of staff training needed. This integrates perfectly with RetailTouch's built-in automation, which allows sales to be processed quickly and simply (by minimising required keys and actions), and with RetailTouch's high-grade securities, which minimise operator and pricing errors (eg. restricting some discounts and auto-applying many types of configurable product and/or customer-based pricing and combination deals).

POS PERIPHERALS

RetailTouch is optimised for use with touch screens, but can also be used with standard or POS keyboards, and provides fully integrated support for multiple OPOS (OLEPOS) and some non-OPOS devices, including:

- Cash Drawers (allows more than one per POS, for different cashiers during same shift)
- Receipt and/or Invoice Printers
- Barcode Scanners
- EFTPOS Pinpads
- Customer Displays (eg. 2-line pole display)
- Customer Screens (2nd monitor showing sale info and promos, eg. slides, movies, HTML pages)
- Weight Scales
- Combined Scanner/Scales
- Label Printing Scales (eg. priced barcodes)

Non-OPOS devices include: Receipt or Invoice Printers with Windows drivers (USB, parallel or serial); Cash Drawers triggered via a receipt printer or serial port device; Barcode Scanners (USB, serial or keyboard-wedge); Customer Pole Displays (serial port); some models of Scales, Scanner/Scales and Label Printing Scales (serial).

POS TRANSACTION TYPES

These include:

- Sale and Credit (even in the same sale)
- Cash Sale
- Frequent Shopper (accumulates reward points, based on sales or GP values)
- Account Sale (normal or with payment if customer has no credit, exceeded their credit limit or is on stop-credit)
- Layby (can define several types and conditions)
- Customer Order (can be filled in one or more supply sales)
- Quote (can be edited and/or be converted to a sale)
- Hires and Returns (with definable type, format, rate, duration and late fee)
- Payments (account, layby, orders and late hire returns)
- GST-exempt Sales (eg. to overseas customers)
- New customer details can be easily added at POS
- Selected items or customers can auto-display a picture, notes and alerts

PRODUCT TYPES

These include:

- Individual products (by unit, pack, weight, sell price or measure). "Measure" includes detailing various lengths of a product, eg. 3x1.2m and 4x1.8m of 90x45 Oregon.
- Kits/Assemblies (use one product code and description to sell several items, with definable full or part quantities).
- Departmental/Miscellaneous sale of GST-inc or -ex items (with optional deemed profit margin).

PRODUCT LOOKUPS

These include:

- Word Finder* (unique to RetailTouch, exceptionally effective)
- Barcode
- PLU
- Product Code/Reference Number
- Supplier Part Number
- Product Group (user-selected grouping of products)
- Family (similar products with same cost/sell prices)
- Sub-Department
- Promotion
- Supplier
- A plain "string search" of any text in a Description

*Word Finder is a unique, very fast multi-word search of product Descriptions, which can be any length and can include all relevant detail, eg. style, size, colour, material. Long descriptions auto-wrap on screen and in printed documents, including receipts, invoices, detailed/itemised statements and reports. All other lookups can have multiple alpha-numeric entries, resulting in virtually unlimited flexible lookups (eg. a product can have multiple barcodes, PLUs or part numbers).

ADMIN/BACK OFFICE

RetailTouch's comprehensive and powerful Admin/Back-Office features include:

- Stock Control
- Stocktake (all-store or partial)
- Ordering (including buy-only promos) and Deliveries (including custom Electronic Invoicing)
- Product and Price Maintenance (including Host Support functions)
- Sales and Promotions (including Mix & Match and Combination Deals)
- Sales Analysis
- Media Reconciliations, Pickups, Topups, Banking

- Labelling, label designer (optional)
- Flexible Reporting (fixed or custom, with SQL queries or Crystal Reports)
- Debtors and Creditors
- Statements (standard or itemised)
- Hire products (formats, rates)
- Integrated General Ledger (with Trial Balance, P&L and Balance Sheet reports)
- Cash-book (maintains Cheque, Credit Card & Petty Cash type Business Accounts)
- Operator Securities (multiple definable levels)
- Takings Media control (flexible parameters, multiple types)
- Data Import/Export (see next section)

DATA IMPORT/EXPORT

RetailTouch can easily load and transmit data files, eg. for automated supplier communications (Host Support). It also interfaces with portable data entry (PDE) units, to streamline routine procedures, including:

- Product and Promo file maintenance (auto add/update products, prices and sales/promos)
- Transmit electronic purchase orders to suppliers (with optional supplier confirmation)
- Auto-load electronic invoices from supported suppliers (and add new ones)
- Stocktakes (all or selected sections of store, and/or rolling reconciliations)
- Purchase Orders (several efficient methods are available, eg. max/min, top-up)
- Label price checks and reprints

RetailTouch can also interface with internet-based sales catalogues and shopping carts, via SQL queries and/or CSV files, to automatically update products, prices and specials, and to download sales, orders and enquiries.

NETWORKING

RetailTouch is customised specifically for fast, reliable POS on multiple PCs, through its unique and very smart design (unlike typical Windows programs that need expensive, specialised hardware and software). This world-benchmark design is fully "scalable", working equally well for a single store on 1 or 2 PCs with a small database, or for an enterprise with literally hundreds of PCs in many locations and with extremely large databases. RetailTouch's data sharing and networking combines 2 main elements:

- Each RetailTouch PC always runs fully stand-alone, ie. independently of other PCs, the network and modem or internet connections (and is therefore independent of any of their various possible problems).
- Each PC also copies its own, very compact transactions to a "shared" file, over a network or modem/internet connection. It also picks up and processes transactions copied to that shared file by all other PCs. This is done very quickly by an exceptionally efficient, purpose-built function that runs in background, with minimal effect on normal POS and Admin jobs. All RetailTouch PCs do this, so they all get each other's transactions, ie. their individual databases are constantly and automatically synchronised. Any time a PC can't see the shared file (eg. if the network or internet connection is down, or between modem calls), it still operates 100% normally, with zero disruption and with no need for operator intervention - in fact the operator would often not even be aware of any problem. Meanwhile that PC's transactions accumulate, ready for when the shared file is available again (and for the related automatic data merge and synchronise).

This advanced and powerful combination can be summarised as "full-time stand-alone operation with constant transaction sharing". It delivers maximum reliability and robustness with minimum down time, since every PC can run whether the network or modem/internet connections are running or not. (This is very significantly superior to other Windows programs, which rely on virtually constant contact with a central database, or that require "special procedures" to set up or recover from temporary "emergency stand-alone" operation).

DATA SAFETY, OFF-SITE CONTROL & MULTI-STORES

RetailTouch's superior, industry-leading design (briefly described above) also provides unequalled levels of data safety and redundancy, in that each PC has a full copy of the complete

RetailTouch database. The integrated "DataSafe" module allows extremely fast, full-operation "real time" links between multiple computers, whether they are in-store or at multiple other locations.

DataSafe also provides the efficiency and convenience of central off-site control, from head office and/or home, to one or many stores, without any compromise in functions or operating speed. This is available through RetailTouch's built-in functions and smart low-level design, ie. it does not require special, expensive hardware or software. In addition, all off-site control and multi-store updates can be carried out in real time and while trading, using even the most economical of dial-up modem connections (or via basic Internet connections), due to RetailTouch's very compact transaction sizes and its super-efficient method of data sharing and networking.

OPEN DESIGN, INDUSTRY STANDARDS

RetailTouch uses only the most widely used and accepted standards and tools, such as:

- Microsoft Visual Basic and Visual C++ programming languages and compilers
- Windows and OLEPOS (OPOS) drivers for interfacing with all POS peripherals
- Microsoft Data Access Components (MDAC), under Microsoft's Universal Data Access (UDA) specification for high-performance, cross-platform database access and compatibility.

From the outset, RetailTouch's design has been optimised for the latest versions of MDAC, which comprises:

- ADO (ActiveX Data Objects)
- OLAP (Online Analytical Processing, for OLE-DB)
- OLE DB (Microsoft's open standard, efficient, low-level interface for universal data access and integration).

This combination ensures RetailTouch's compatibility with the widest possible range of hardware and other applications, and allows it to take full advantage of the latest developments in database speed and connectivity.

DATABASE EFFICIENCY AND SQL QUERIES

RetailTouch uses the latest Microsoft OLE-DB provider for Jet, to connect to a local Access 2002 or later database. Our evaluations show this to be the fastest, most efficient connection to a local-hard-disk database, as required by RetailTouch in its uniquely effective "full-time stand-alone" design for POS (coupled with constant transaction sharing between multiple workstations, via a shared log file). RetailTouch then uses the power and speed of SQL to query its database.

Compatibility Note: While RetailTouch internally uses the most efficient OLE-DB/Jet connection, its database can also be accessed by ADO, Microsoft Access 2002 or later, ODBC and DAO (Database Access Objects). Other databases can be used, eg. Microsoft SQL ("Sequel"), Oracle or DBase, but our tests show these are not as fast for a stand-alone local-hard-disk database (as deliberately designed for and used by RetailTouch). If other databases are used, some of RetailTouch's Access-version SQL queries would need to be revised, eg. to Oracle-version SQL.

PERFORMANCE, DURABILITY AND COMPATIBILITY

RetailTouch combines:

- A smart, robust design, optimised for POS and Back Office
- On-going updates to the latest versions of the industry-standard tools and utilities described above
- The universal accessibility and connectivity of its flexible, open and industry-compatible database
- Exceptionally efficient and professional programming, based on 18 years of industry-specific specialisation and expertise
- The continuous addition of new and productive modules and features, based on extensive experience in the installation and long-term support of many hundreds of POS systems (retail, wholesale and hires), together with the constant user-feedback we receive on current trends and developments

As a result, RetailTouch continuously provides the highest levels of stable, reliable and genuinely cost-effective performance and functionality. With our long-term track record of POS-specific development and support, users can be assured of this being maintained and enhanced on an on-going basis, and that their investment in RetailTouch will provide a very powerful, flexible and durable solution, for their evolving current and future business needs.