

# FileMaker Go on the Apple iPad Helps Nurses Track Catheter Use

By [Brian T. Horowitz](#) | Posted 2011-10-25 [Email](#) [Print](#)



Lee Medical, a vascular access contractor, uses FileMaker Go on the Apple iPad to manage administration of catheters in hospitals to help guard against bloodstream infections.

Lee Medical, a provider of vascular access to health care providers, has built a custom database that uses FileMaker Go on the Apple iPad to help nurses better manage catheter use and reduce bloodstream infections.

Based in Brentwood, Tenn., and founded in 1993, Lee Medical employs vascular access nurses that install IV catheters in various hospitals to deliver drugs and nutrition. FileMaker is a subsidiary of Apple.



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Vascular Access Surveillance and Tracking (VAST) runs on [FileMaker Go for the iPad](#) and connects to 3G and WiFi networks using the Apple tablet. VAST provides real-time surveillance of catheter use, Michelle Lee, president and head of clinical operations at Lee Medical, told *eWEEK*.

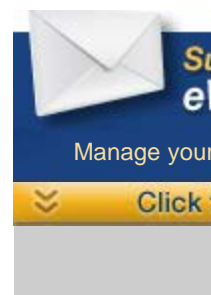
"Our nurse compliance with electronic charting has soared since the implementation on the iPad," she noted. Through FileMaker, VAST also handles billing and generates invoices for the company.

IT consulting firms iSolutions and Computer Support Service built VAST for Lee Medical. Although nurses are using FileMaker Go on the iPad, Lee Medical first implemented VAST using FileMaker Pro for Macs and PCs.

Poor management of intravenous catheters in patients' veins leads to about 250,000 bloodstream infections each year and an estimated 60,000 or more deaths annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These infections are called central-line bloodstream infections (CLABSI).

By using FileMaker, Lee Medical, along with 60-plus hospitals and other health care facilities in Tennessee, have been able to lower their bloodstream infection rate to 0.5 infections per 1,000 catheter days, compared with several



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hospitals with infection rates between two and 18 per 1,000 catheter days, FileMaker reports.

Lee Medical clinicians use VAST to track the life span of catheters and access [electronic health records \(EHRs\)](#) from a central FileMaker server.

Accessing information from a central location is important in health care, according to Ryan Rosenberg, FileMaker's vice president of marketing and services.

"That's really essential when you're talking about super-confidential information like medical information, and the mobile device never stores the [data]," Rosenberg told *eWEEK*.

Through VAST, they also receive orders on which facilities to visit. Nurses then schedule procedures through the software.

FileMaker allows companies such as Lee Medical to manage data more efficiently, according to Rosenberg. "It's more than just capturing information; it's running business logic," he said.

VAST can help bridge information silos in medical facilities by allowing multiple people to know the status and location of a catheter, according to Charles Lee, CEO of Lee Medical.

"While there may be a lot of communication within a hospital, there's a loss in the sharing of the data," he told *eWEEK*. "With our system, we are extracting all of the data within a patient's care."

In VAST, radio buttons allow nurses to select conditions that may apply for vascular access equipment at the various sites they're visiting, he said. Nurses are able to use the software, even with a lack of experience with databases, Charles Lee added. The nurses are familiar with the medical terminology in the checklists, however, he noted.

"It just sort of empowers us in the medical space to really keep that intuitive experience at their fingertips while pushing to them the very specialized datasets that they're used to dealing with anyway," Charles Lee explained.

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*Brian T. Horowitz is a freelance technology and health writer as well as a copy editor. Brian has worked on the tech beat since 1996 and covered health care IT and rugged mobile computing for eWEEK since 2010. He has contributed to more than 20 publications, including Computer Shopper, Fast Company, FOXNews.com, More, NYSE Magazine, Parents, ScientificAmerican.com, USA Weekend and Womansday.com, as well as other consumer and trade publications. Brian holds a B.A. from Hofstra University in New York.*

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