

# Pocket VetGo, Protecting Profits in the Field

**Profile** Dr. John McConnell operates a mixed-animal practice in La Quinta, California, where he sees an average of 100 cases a week, typically 25 equine and 75 small-animal. While his small-animal profits were on target, the profits from his equine practice seemed to be “off.” He suspected that, like many large-animal vets, he was leaving profits in the field.

*“I would work in the field all morning and then go back to my truck, get out my travel sheet, and mark down what I did that morning,” Dr. McConnell said. “I found that I wasn’t catching everything. A missed suture pack here, a missed wrapping there: it all adds up.”*

Even if he did catch everything, there was still the overhead associated with transcribing the paper-based travel sheets into his practice management system back at the office. *“We use AVImark, which is perfect for our practice, but it took at least eight hours a week to transcribe the 25 travel sheets into the system, not counting the time it took for the data-entry clerk to track me down and ask me about notations she couldn’t decipher.”*

**“Pocket VetGO protects your profits by ensuring that you capture charges for all the services you perform, as you perform them...”**

**Dr. John McConnell**



According to Dr. McConnell, the problem is not unique to his practice. *“I’ve seen estimates in journals that indicate veterinary practices lose 10 to 20% of their profits industry-wide through missed charges. The reality of the situation is that despite our best efforts, we simply don’t charge for ALL the services we perform.”*

Recognizing this problem early on, Dr. McConnell purchased a laptop and carried it with him into the field. *“Working with a laptop just wasn’t viable. The environment is not laptop-friendly and if I drop it or a horse steps on it, I’m out a lot of money. Working with it in the truck isn’t that easy either. You have to fidget with the angle of the screen to keep it from washing out in bright sunlight. You have to use that little pointing device instead of a mouse. Since we’re in the desert, here, where our summer temperatures get up to over 110 for weeks at a time, I have to worry about it melting. Then, in the winter, when I’m working up in the surrounding mountains, I need to worry about it freezing. Besides, every time I turn it on, I have to wait for Windows to load and then I have to load my application. It takes too much time.”*

Clearly, what Dr. McConnell needed was a simple, easy, and more convenient way of capturing charges directly at the point of care. **That solution arrived in the form of Pocket VetGo.**

**Solution** Pocket VetGo is the first pocket PC-based charge-capture system designed specifically for veterinarians on the go. Since Pocket VetGo runs on a Pocket PC, it can be slipped into your pocket or clipped onto your belt and carried with you into the field. Since Pocket PCs are “always on,” there’s no waiting for Windows to load, and, since Pocket VetGo is “always loaded,” you don’t need to restart the application every time you turn your Pocket PC off and on. Instead, as soon as you turn your Pocket PC on, you can immediately pick up where you left off.

**Solution** *"With Pocket VetGo in my pocket, I go into the stable and before I enter the stall, I pull it out, turn it on, and bring up the horse's record. When I'm ready to start working, I turn it back off and slip it back into my pocket. I then go into the stall, work on the horse and do everything I need to do. When I come out of the stall, I take my PocketVetGo out of my pocket, turn it back on, and select the services I performed by simply tapping items on a service 'menu' that I created when I first set up the system, and that's it. I then tap a button and Pocket VetGo generate the invoice on the spot."*

Dr. McConnell then goes on to treat the next horse. When he's done for the day, he goes back to his truck, gets out his Pocket VetGo unit, points it at the portable, battery-powered, infrared-compatible printer mounted in his truck, taps a button and beams the invoice to the printer, where it is printed on the spot. *"I can't believe how easy it is to generate invoices using Pocket VetGo. Clients seem to be very impressed and very pleased when I hand them an invoice on the spot. By the time I leave, they have in their hands a complete detailed record of the services I performed. They don't have to wait two weeks to see what I did or what I charged."*

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**Dr. John McConnell**

When he gets back to the office, Dr McConnell prints another copy of the invoices that were generated in the field and hands them to the clerk to enter into his AVImark system. *"Until the AVImark interface is ready, we still have the transcription task, but now the clerk is working from a clean and very legible copy of the invoice. She doesn't have to try to decipher my handwriting through layers of smears, stains, and other organic matter."*

The interface to his AVImark system, as well as those to QuickBooks Pro and several other practice management systems, will be released in the upcoming months. *"We're working on the various interfaces now and expect to have the QuickBooks interface and AVImark interface finished by the end of 2003,"* says Mike DeAndrea, President of DocSolve, Inc., the developers of Pocket VetGo. *"Once we release the AVImark interface, Dr. McConnell will be able to come back to the office and sync his Pocket PC with his office computer system. This means the data he collected in the field will be automatically transferred to his office system, eliminating the need for re-keying."*

It also means that users will be able to download their current client list, patient records, and service charges from their existing systems to Pocket VetGo. When Dr. McConnell first started using Pocket VetGo in his practice, he had to re-enter all of his equine records. According to Mr. DeAndrea, *"The interface will eliminate this step and will allow bi-directional exchange of data between the two systems. This means you will be able to sync your Pocket VetGo data with your practice management system at the touch of a button."*

According to Dr McConnell, *"I had a choice of waiting six months for the interface or buying the system now. I'm glad I didn't wait. The first time I used Pocket VetGo, I picked up at least \$100 in charges that I would have otherwise missed." At that rate, the entire Pocket VetGo system would pay for itself in a matter of weeks. "The return on investment time is so short that it's hard to justify NOT using Pocket VetGo."*

Dr. McConnell was also surprised at the robust set of features packed into Pocket VetGo. *"I purchased Pocket VetGo to help make sure I charged for all of my services and that I charged consistently across clients. What I soon discovered, however, was that I could do a lot more—like print dispense labels, print prescriptions, look up drug reference information, create medical records in the field, check a client's account in the field, apply payments to an old invoice, look up patient medical history, look up the invoice associated with a particular medical history entry, and a ton of other things."*

While Pocket VetGo is primarily a charge-capture/point-of-care billing system, it also offers a robust set of features that were previously only available in desktop practice management systems.

**Summary** Pocket VetGo protects your profits by helping you to capture charges at the point of care and shortens the invoicing cycle by allowing you to generate invoices in the field. It's ideal for mobile practices and busy clinics, where you need a quick, easy, and convenient way of capturing data, entering medical records, and checking patient history. Pocket VetGo offers a robust set of features and offers a very short return on investment.