

# STEERING COLUMN

LEASEPLAN MAGAZINE  
» SUMMER 2013-14

**LeasePlan**

*It's easier to leaseplan*



**ENDURANCE &  
EXCELLENCE:**  
**FLEET FORUM 2013**  
ROADS LESS TRAVELLED  
**DOWN ON THE FARM**  
**20 YEARS YOUNG**





**A**s 2013 draws to a close, we look back at a year of celebration. This year marked the twentieth anniversary of LeasePlan New Zealand and 50 years of the Group and, barring any last-minute disasters, both entities will post 'best ever' results. Following the GFC, growth has returned, overheads have been optimised and customer service-level indicators are strong.

Customer service and loyalty are key to our industry. Leases are on average over 40 months long, and most clients are rolling leases over weekly. This means long-term relationships are formed.

There are two key reasons why I think LeasePlan is strong in this area. Firstly, we have introduced a fresh response to the inevitable errors that occur from time to time. We communicate quickly and clearly and fix the matter fast, then follow up to ensure the fix has worked and the customer is now happy. We have also further strengthened our approach to investigating why the problem occurred in the first place.

The second reason is that staff who enjoy coming to work, and who revel in 'making it easier to LeasePlan' for our clients, will do a far better job than those who see it as a chore. We spend a lot of time focusing on our people, their development, their wellbeing and terms and conditions beyond just salary. It is no coincidence that staff loyalty and engagement correlates to client loyalty and engagement.

I wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and successful new year.

*Charles*

**Charles Willmer**

Managing Director, LeasePlan New Zealand

PS Make sure you check out page 22 and contribute to the Plunket appeal we are supporting this year.



**WIN  
A SUMMER  
GIFT PACK!**

FIND 5 SUMMERY XMAS THINGS  
ON THE MAGAZINE COVER  
AND EMAIL THEM TO  
MARKETING@LEASEPLAN.CO.NZ  
BY 20/12/13 TO BE  
IN TO WIN

**STEERING COLUMN** is published by LY Design on behalf of LeasePlan New Zealand Limited.  
**Art Director:** Toni Chase  
**Editor:** Sarah Ell  
**Printing:** McCollams  
**Print Contributors:** Alex Wallace (Photography); Richard Bosselman (Motoring writer); Cameron Officer. The information contained in this publication is not necessarily the opinion of LeasePlan or LY Design.

04



12



08



20

## CONTENTS

### FEATURES

#### 04 UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

Sharing the latest at Fleet Forum 2013

#### 08 ENDURANCE IS A DIRTY WORD...

Wit and wisdom from Steve Gurney

#### 10 CHANGE IS A CONSTANT

How the internet is affecting the vehicle market

#### 12 GETTING DOWN ON THE FARM

Helping to improve New Zealand's dairy herds

#### 18 TWENTY YEARS YOUNG

LeasePlan celebrates in style

#### 20 AROUND EUROPE IN AN AUDI

Relay offers fun and fuel-efficiency

#### 22 HELP BUILD A BUS FOR PLUNKET

Lending our smallest citizens a hand

#### 23 CHANGES AHEAD IN LEASE ACCOUNTING

Your questions answered

#### 24 ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

Check out some hidden gems this summer

#### 27 ON YOUR BIKE

Building a dream machine

#### 28 SUMMER TRAVELLING TREATS

Grab some goodies and get on the road

### REGULARS

#### 02 NEWS

What's happening on the road

#### 16 CAR CORNER

Towing the line

#### 26 MY DREAM GARAGE

Funnyman and Fleet Forum MC Jeremy Corbett



STAMP OF APPROVAL FOR 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Stamp collectors were all of a twitter about the special stamp produced for LeasePlan New Zealand for use on communications around its 20-year anniversary. LeasePlan Marketing Executive Duncan Griffiths says the stamp featured in NZ Post’s monthly newsletter of special stamp issues.

‘We then had enquiries from stamp collectors — two in New Zealand and one in Australia — requesting a block of 10 stamps, and to use the stamp on the envelope we were sending to them, so they could have a franked version.’ LeasePlan NZ also received a letter from one Auckland stamp collector, describing the stamp as ‘spectacular’:

**‘This is the best design[ed] stamp so far this year, so great artwork done by the designer . . . You cannot imagine my delight at my letterbox when I saw your mail. 9**



TWEAKS TO NEW WOF SYSTEM

The government has tweaked the introduction of the new Warrant of Fitness (WoF) system, with the new regulations being introduced in two stages. From January 1, 2014, vehicles first registered from 2009–2014 will require an annual inspection only, then from July 1 cars registered after 2012 will move to a system of being inspected only once the car is three years old.

Cars first registered from 2004–2008 will also require annual WoFs only from January 1, joining the group of vehicles that are currently younger than six years old on 12-monthly inspections. Slightly older cars, those registered between 2000 and 2003, will still require six-monthly WoFs until July 1, when they too will move to yearly checks. All cars first registered before 2000 will stay on the six-monthly cycle.

The NZTA says research shows that once cars are over 12 years old, the percentage of vehicles involved in crashes with warrant of fitness defects starts to increase, even if only slightly.

‘Even so, the package of changes takes a cautious approach and leaves vehicles older than 12 years . . . on six-monthly inspections. This allows the fleet to gradually move to annual inspections as pre-2000 vehicles leave New Zealand’s fleet.’

DATE OF FIRST REGISTRATION	FREQUENCY OF WOF INSPECTION FROM 1 JANUARY 2014	FREQUENCY OF WOF INSPECTION FROM 1 JULY 2014
2012–14	Annual	WoF to third birthday OR annual WoF
2009–11	Annual	Annual
2004–08	Annual	Annual
2000–03	6-monthly	Annual
Pre 2000	6-monthly	6-monthly

EARLY CHRISTMAS AT TURNERS AUCTION

Lucky buyers will be in for a Christmas treat at the last LeasePlan Certified Auction for the year. As usual, they will receive a bonus gift along with purchasing a fully serviced and maintained, New Zealand-new vehicle from a trustworthy source.

The auction will be held at Turners Auctions in Penrose, Auckland on Saturday, December 7, with online bidding available. Prospective buyers can test-drive any of the 40 vehicles which will be auctioned from 9 a.m., with the auction starting at midday.

Each ex-lease vehicle comes with a new WOF, a full service history, a six-month mechanical warranty and six months free Roadside Assist, provided by LeasePlan.



BE SUMMER ROADTRIP READY WITH

LEASEPLAN'S SUMMER HOLIDAY CERTIFIED CAR AUCTION

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER AT 12 NOON  
TEST DRIVES FROM 9.00AM  
TURNERS AUCTIONS PENROSE SUPERSITE  
OR BID ONLINE AT >> WWW.TURNERS.CO.NZ

**BONUS GIFT FOR EVERY BUYER**

LeasePlan  
It's easier to leaseplan

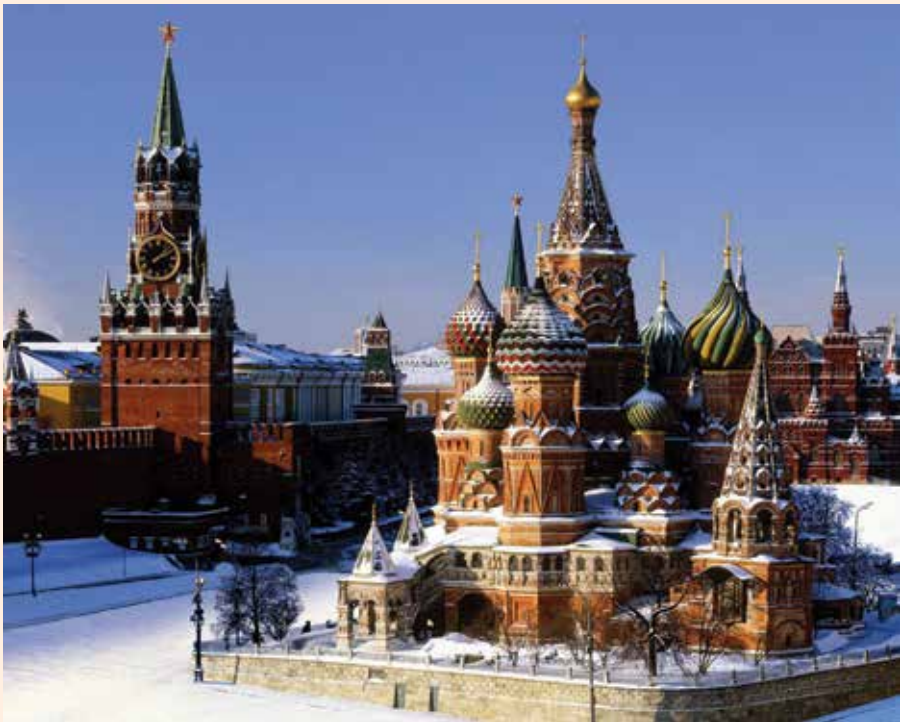
TURNERS AUCTIONS

\*Each ex-lease vehicle comes with new WOF, full service history, six-month mechanical warranty and six months free Roadside Assist, provided by LeasePlan.  
\*\*Gift offer only applies to the LeasePlan Certified Auction.



TWENTY YEARS AND GOING STRONG

Twenty years is a long time in business, but the two-decade-long relationship between LeasePlan New Zealand and medical equipment company Beckman Coulter is still going strong. LeasePlan Managing Director Charles Willmer (above left) made a special delivery in September of a new lease car to Beckman Coulter’s Service Manager Ian Fisher, at the company’s base in Hamilton. The Holden Omega station wagon is Fisher’s fourth LeasePlan car and will be put to good use on service calls around the North Island.



LEASEPLAN RUSSIA AIMS TO BOTH EDUCATE THE MARKET AND BRING INNOVATION TO THE FLEET MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY THERE

LEASEPLAN TAKES ON MASSIVE RUSSIAN MARKET

LeasePlan’s global reach now covers 31 countries, with the opening of the multinational’s Russian branch in July. The operation, run by Managing Director Sergey Dianin, is headquartered in Moscow — but covers a massive territory which lays within nine different time zones.

‘Our commercial operations are based in Moscow only, which has a population of some 20 million people, as it is the financial and decision-making centre,’ Dianin says. ‘Even though the decision-making is very concentrated, the fleet runs in the entire territory of Russia and clients expect us to deliver services in each and every location of their fleet. So, the challenge was — and still is — to build, create and then control and manage a huge network of suppliers.’

**‘Today we are ready to deliver cars to everywhere in Russia and to serve vehicles from the western borders to the Urals — a territory which is equal to all the Continental European countries combined. 9**

LeasePlan is only the third international player to enter the Russian market, which Dianin says is significant in the development of the sector there, ‘and not only from a volume perspective — it will also improve the awareness of the products and services of full-service leasing. Clearly, in terms of operational leasing we are a developing country.’

Subsequently, Dianin says LeasePlan Russia aims to both educate the market and bring innovation to the fleet management industry there, for both international and local clients.

‘A key driver for the opening of LeasePlan Russia was the request from a number of international LeasePlan clients to also serve them in this region. For that reason it is perhaps no surprise that we are already in discussions with the Russian subsidiaries of a number of these clients. However, we will of course also seek to serve local business clients,’ Dianin says.

LeasePlan Russia has worked hard to bring together a passionate, experienced team from around Europe to run the new venture.

‘The team is great — everyone is excited, challenged, attracted, motivated and inspired by the project, by the start-up and by the objective to bring the largest fleet leasing and fleet management company to the Russian market,’ says Dianin. ‘In fact, the reputation of LeasePlan went to Russia well before LeasePlan itself, which helped not only attract professionals to the team but also to start preparation.

‘And it has not only been work — there was and is a lot of fun!’ The current vehicle fleet in Russia is estimated at around 40.2 million vehicles, of which about 6% are corporate. Full-service leasing is currently estimated to be around 1.3% of the corporate fleet, or around 30,000 vehicles, but this is expected to grow, reaching 2.6% (65,400 vehicles) by 2015. Lada has a 37% market share in the wider Russian market, followed by Toyota (8%) and Nissan (4%), but corporate fleets have other preferences: Ford (8%), Toyota (6%), Chevrolet (5%), Renault and VW (4% each).

LeasePlan Corporation CEO Vahid Daemi says the expansion into Russia is an important step for the company.

‘We have seen continued interest among our multinational customers to internationalise throughout the Russian region. By launching LeasePlan Russia, we are making it easier for them to manage their global fleet and keep their workforce mobile around the world.’



# UP FOR THE CHALLENGE



**You don't get to celebrate 50 years in business without tackling the odd challenge head-on, as reflected in the twin themes of endurance and excellence at Fleet Forum 2013.**

WORDS BY CAMERON OFFICER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE

Featuring, as always, a panel of fascinating guest speakers — and a crowd-pleasing MC in the form of beardy, bespectacled TV host Jeremy Corbett — the 2013 get-togethers in Auckland and Wellington were well-received and well-attended. Representatives from a range of industries gathered at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland and Te Papa in Wellington to hear insights, learnings and a few good yarns from a hand-picked line-up of experts. Celebrations? Absolutely. Not only does 2013 mark the 'big 5-0' for LeasePlan Corporation — founded in Amsterdam in 1963 — but this year also marks LeasePlan's twentieth anniversary in New Zealand. Managing Director Charles Willmer reiterated the story of LeasePlan New Zealand's growth and development, starting with a blank sheet of paper on the local scene in 1993 to its position today as a trusted vehicle-leasing partner to over 350 Kiwi businesses.

## FLEET SAFETY

After a celebratory video which managed to assemble all the major players from LeasePlan's formative years, including remarkably fresh-faced founder Anton Goudsmit, Fleet Forum 2013 officially kicked into gear with New Zealand Police Superintendent Carey Griffiths, National Manager of Road Policing, outlining his thoughts on road safety challenges faced by Kiwi fleets. As Griffiths pointed out, fatalities on New Zealand's roads always get the headlines. But what doesn't often get recorded by the media are the injuries stemming from road crashes: over 2700 people this year alone, many scarred for life, suffering tetraplegic and quadriplegic trauma, head injuries or amputations. While our national road toll is actually trending downwards — with 2011 our best year ever — our record is only average when compared at an



international level. As Griffiths highlighted, there are plenty of countries with better road-safety records than New Zealand's.

Some might be surprised to learn that the real challenge in reducing the toll further doesn't lie in educating young drivers — fatalities among younger drivers have actually decreased, thanks in part to a zero alcohol limit — but rather those in the 40-plus age bracket.

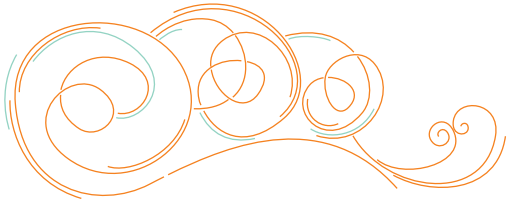
Many fleet and company vehicle drivers fall into this category. With on average 31 New Zealanders dying in work-related road accidents each year, and with many companies having no on-road component to their health and safety policy, Griffiths believes a new fleet safety initiative being run between the New Zealand Police, ACC, NZTA and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment can't come soon enough.

Accessed through the [fleetsafety.govt.nz](http://fleetsafety.govt.nz) website, the programme helps companies actively manage their on-road risk. The free service analyses data in order to help keep employees, contractors and other road users safe, and is a useful tool when investigating hidden costs like fuel usage and downtime for service vehicles, too.

**FBT ASAP**

With vast experience in advising clients on restructuring, acquisitions and disposals, financing structures and compliance issues, Rachel Piper, partner at KPMG Auckland, came to Fleet Forum well-versed in the intricacies of Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT).

While Piper said the basic structure of FBT has remained unchanged for the last five years, the big challenge for many businesses is in understanding this complex area of taxation law.



**“LEASING ISN'T A BALANCE SHEET ISSUE ANYMORE. IT'S ABOUT OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES AND RISK MANAGEMENT. IT'S ABOUT DRIVER EDUCATION AND IT'S ALSO VERY FIRMLY ABOUT PEOPLE.”**

Fleet Forum delegates were briefed on the rules and regs, with emphasis on the overriding fact that when a fleet vehicle (excluding those with a gross laden weight exceeding 3500 kilograms) is made available for private use, FBT applies.

Piper finished with — in her words — a bit of crystal-ball gazing, suggesting that the introduction of a Capital Gains Tax is not so much a matter of 'if', but 'when'.

**GET CONNECTED**

LeasePlan's Commercial Director Johannes Jacobs then gave some interesting insights into the future of fleet connectivity and how LeasePlan New Zealand is set to adopt the technology. As Jacobs pointed out, the chief goals of any automotive telematics system should be to gather accurate, real-time data in order to improve efficiency and — ultimately — save money.

‘There are a variety of reasons why we're excited about this technology,’ he told the Fleet Forum audience. ‘Telematics systems will give precise mileage, accurate fuel usage and carbon emissions data, as well as let fleet managers observe repetitive driver behaviours and optimise the best possible scheduling and route-planning solutions.’

While the cost-savings are obvious, Jacobs was also quick to point out other benefits, such as improving driving standards, increasing the safety of fleet drivers — through automated reminders about vehicle servicing or fault-code alarms — and strengthening both a company's customer service offering and reporting accuracy.

‘Telematics forms a large part of LeasePlan's integrated vision for the future. LeasePlan UK is already trialling systems from suppliers Bosch and Octo/Continental, both of whom have substantial infrastructure in place.

‘But make no mistake, if the European solution doesn't work for us, we'll find a local supplier. We're very excited about this technology and will be announcing further developments around the middle of 2014,’ he said.

**A NEW WAY TO SELL**

Steve Prangnell knows a bit about selling vehicles. As Toyota New Zealand's General Manager Sales and Operations, he's a part of one of the most successful brands not only in New Zealand, but the world.

Interestingly, it isn't only the vehicle market that is changing, but the way in which customers are buying vehicles too, he reported. Ultimately, even vehicle sales are moving online.

In the last couple of years Toyota has undertaken



Fleet Forum 2013 speakers. From left: Charles Willmer, Johannes Jacobs, Steve Gurney, Rachel Piper, Jeremy Corbett, Steve Prangnell, Carey Griffiths.

to sell specially targeted models online — most recently with a back-to-basics version of the 86 sports coupe (see story page 10).

‘The way a customer shopped ten to fifteen years ago is utterly different from how they do it now,’ said Prangnell. ‘You have to work with customers in this regard because often, through the sort of online research that is open to anyone, they'll know more than the salesperson about a specific car.

‘Tools like tablets and smartphones mean customers expect information instantly. But research also suggests they're more ready to purchase as well. Essentially, our customers are geniuses and the ownership of the Toyota brand has effectively shifted from us to them.’

The overriding message then is that the internet and social media isn't about technology: it's about people and relationships. This sentiment was echoed by LeasePlan Managing Director Charles Willmer in his summing up.

‘Leasing isn't a balance sheet issue anymore. It's about operational efficiencies and risk management. It's about driver education and it's also very firmly about people.’ ■



# ENDURANCE IS A DIRTY WORD...

**New Zealand's consummate adventure athlete Steve Gurney has tackled several lifetimes' worth of challenges. He entertained the audiences at Fleet Forum 2013 with hair-raising tales of scorpions, leeches, dust storms, kite buggies and — ultimately — overcoming adversity.**

WORDS BY CAMERON OFFICER PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE

Steve Gurney's opening salvo is an odd one — although after he's relayed a few stories from the extremities of the global adventure racing circuit, you can see a certain plausibility to it too.

'To be honest, people generally think I'm mad,' he laughs from the stage at Fleet Forum 2013.

For anyone whose idea of adventure racing begins and ends with trying to navigate your way through an unfamiliar Béarnaise sauce recipe 20 minutes before dinner guests arrive, Gurney's life in the muddy, sweaty hot seat of endurance sport seems almost too incredible to believe.

Adventure races can take up to a week and see a team of competitors — it is mandatory to have both male and female members — threading their way through a series of 40 or 50 remote checkpoints, navigating by compass. The only certainty is extreme discomfort. Sleep isn't mandatory either — it's up to the teams to manage their rest periods.

'Everything comes down to the team,' explains Gurney. 'It's the ultimate team sport in many ways, in that if one member goes down with a busted ankle or a virus or something, the entire team is out. You have to support each other the whole way.'

'You have to leave your ego behind when you go into these races, too. There are always a few military teams that enter the races but, interestingly, they never seem to

do well. In my opinion it's because they can't leave their egos aside.'

Training is crucial, says Gurney, but also a lot of the prep work comes down to kitting yourself out properly to be as light on your feet as possible.

'Obviously being in good physical condition is vital, but the other area you need to trim fat from is your pack,' he says. 'Reducing weight on your back and shoulders is crucial, so before racing we sort out what we can leave behind; what we can reduce.'

'Taking the webbing out of the interior of a pack, or pulling the metal tab off the end of a zipper and replacing it with lightweight Kevlar string might sound a bit obsessive, but it all adds up. All our modifications will generally result in over a kilogram's weight reduction, which pays dividends.'

Gurney is most famous in New Zealand for having won the gruelling Coast to Coast race, over the Southern Alps from Kumara in the west to Sumner in the east, an incredible nine times. But, as he's quick to reveal, it was a challenging path that got him to that point in his career.

'I trained hard for my first ever Coast to Coast race and came twenty-second. I thought that was OK, but I needed to train harder. I did just that and came third the following year. "OK, great," I told myself. But I knew I needed to put more effort in. So I trained harder and the year after that I came second. And the year after that I came second again.

And the year after that . . . yep; second again.'

Gurney realised that it wasn't so much about training harder, but training smarter. Training, Gurney discovered, is as much about attitudes and beliefs as it is about physical exertion.

**GURNEY'S LIFE  
IN THE MUDDY,  
SWEATY HOT SEAT  
OF ENDURANCE  
SPORT SEEMS  
ALMOST TOO  
INCREDIBLE  
TO BELIEVE.**

Although, as always, Gurney's latest venture still had its fair share of physical exertion. Initially devised as a race across the Sahara on kite buggies, Gurney and his fellow competitors faced such gruelling conditions and technical setbacks (they used up their entire reserve of kites within the first week) that the teams had to give up racing and work together just to get to the end point.

Scorpions, landmines, massive aerial crashes . . . turns out it takes teamwork to get through them all. And having Steve Gurney as part of that team would be a good start, to say the least. ■

STEVE GURNEY

## GURNEY'S GREAT BIG BITS OF WISDOM

- YOU'LL LEARN MORE FROM **WHAT WENT WRONG** THAN **WHAT WENT RIGHT**
- **WINNERS DON'T SEE FAILURE AS FAILURE:** THEY SEE FAILURE AS FEEDBACK
- INSANITY IS DEFINED AS DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AND EXPECTING DIFFERENT RESULTS: **'CHANGE' AS A CONCEPT CAN BE HARD TO EMBRACE, BUT IS EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL**
- THE HALLMARK OF A CHAMPION IS **SOMEONE WHO CAN PUT THEIR EGO TO ONE SIDE**
- **IN NEW ZEALAND,** MOTIVATION AND PRIDE MEAN MORE THAN **MONEY AND RESOURCES**





New technology is changing every aspect of our lives. At Fleet Forum 2013, Steve Prangnell from Toyota New Zealand gave an insight on how it will impact the vehicle sales industry.

# CHANGE IS A CONSTANT

WORDS BY CAMERON OFFICER PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE

Steve Prangnell definitely knows his stuff. After all, he is General Manager Sales and Operations for Toyota New Zealand — a company that has spent the last three decades breathing rarefied air at the top of the sales heap.

Sure, good products help in this regard; you don't sell a million lemons unless you're a particularly clever greengrocer. But sales strategies, engaging with customers and that all-important after-sales service remain key attributes for any successful business, whether it be automotive or otherwise.

And as Prangnell explained to Fleet Forum 2013 audiences in Auckland and Wellington in September, customers can't just be categorised as good, bad, loyal or indifferent anymore. By and large they're geniuses as well.

'Research tools like tablets and smartphones — and the websites and forums customers visit with these — mean that by the time a customer arrives at the showroom door, they'll probably know more about the car they're interested in than the salesperson will,' he says.

In essence, not only is New Zealand's vehicle market changing, but so are those buying within it.

On the customer front, Prangnell — and the wider Toyota operation — believes that unless social media is embraced by companies as a way of engaging with clients, those clients will go elsewhere. The worst misunderstanding that can be made about social media, he says, is that it is about technology. It's not: it's actually about people.

'Customers use social media in their personal lives, but they also use it to research, to gain word-of-mouth referral and advice. So people looking to buy a vehicle these days are far more widely researched.

'But the trade-off is that, according to research, they're far more ready to buy as well. At this stage the dealership is still an integral part of the process and, as is traditional, this is where the customer comes to transact.'

But as Prangnell suggests, this too is evolving, with a small but growing percentage of Toyota's audience willing to purchase large-cost items online. As a result the company has taken something of a hybrid 'clicks and bricks' approach and has even marketed a couple of key models exclusively through dedicated online micro-sites.

'For some aspects of our range, the days of the big-budget TV ad are drawing to a close,' he says. 'In fact, we've recently marketed a special edition of our 86 sports coupe — called the 86 RC — solely online, giving customers the chance to specify the car from a range of body kit and accessory options and then go through

**NOT ONLY IS NEW ZEALAND'S VEHICLE MARKET CHANGING, BUT SO ARE THOSE BUYING WITHIN IT.**

the checkout process like any e-commerce site. Eleven Toyota 86 RCs have been sold in this manner so far.

'Even with this idea though — which we believe will gain momentum — the dealership still has a place. The car still needs to be collected from the dealership, which gives us the chance to interact with the customer beyond their online experience.' ■



TOYOTA | Believe

TOUGHER THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE



# GETTING DOWN ON THE FARM

**Waikato-based herd improvement company CRV Ambreed is helping farmers throughout the country, aboard its new fleet from LeasePlan.**

WORDS BY SARAH ELL  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE







New Zealand might have been founded on the sheep's back, but now it's floating on a big pool of milk. Farming is still big business, with the dairy industry being our largest export earner.

And it hasn't got that way by chance. Careful herd management means we are not talking about just any old cows getting it on down on the farm. Breeding is a multi-million dollar industry, with farmers always on the lookout for animals that will produce large volumes of milk and high-quality calves.

CRV is part of the third-largest artificial breeding firm in the world — CRV, like LeasePlan, was established in the Netherlands, in 1969. The New Zealand operation's core business is the production and sale of dairy semen to farmers around the country, as well as herd management and monitoring systems.

'Herd recording, milk testing and artificial reproduction — it is all around improving the herd,' says Finance and Corporate Services Manager David Toon.

CRV is headquartered in the heart of dairy country in Hamilton, with regional offices throughout the country. It has been a client of LeasePlan's since 2000, leasing some vehicles and owning and managing part of its own fleet. However, after tendering this

year it has now moved to a full partnership, with LeasePlan providing and managing its entire fleet of around 50 vehicles.

As well as half a dozen corporate vehicles and a number of Toyota Hiace vans, the majority of the fleet is to be moved to Ford Ranger double-cab diesel utes, to be driven by the sales staff and Regional Service Coordinators. CRV is taking 10-15 new Rangers initially, then the remainder of the fleet will be converted over the next 48 months as leases turn over.

Just as CRV's 'elite' breeding bulls are selected for their genetic characteristics, generating offspring which produce good milk, calve well and are easy to manage, Toon says the Ford Ranger was chosen over four other competing utility models because of both its looks and its practical aspects.

'The Ford Ranger really suits us from a corporate branding point of view, in terms of our perception in the marketplace,' says Toon. 'It also has a five-star ANCAP safety rating, plus it was the vehicle that our staff liked the best.'

The ute's robustness was also a key factor, given that staff frequently have to get down to grassroots — literally.

'There are all sorts of farm tracks and cow races that they sometimes have to go down. We might not like it, but the Ranger can get

Previous page: Brett Thompson, CRV's Head of Sales and Service (left) and Finance and Corporate Services Manager David Toon in the field. Below right: A CRV driver loads frozen semen into a liquid nitrogen bank.



them there,' says Toon.

Being a utility, the vehicles are also practical, as staff frequently carry frozen semen to clients in liquid nitrogen banks.

'For safety, it has to be carried in a separate air space. The reason we went with utes rather than, say, station wagons is that utes have that feature. The trays have a hard canopy fitted so the equipment can be carried there, in a separate compartment to the cab,' says Toon.

As in any business, the bottom line was also a consideration: 'The Ranger was very competitively priced, but also worked from a fuel-economy point of view. It is a fuel-efficient vehicle with low emissions — not the lowest of what we looked at, but balanced against the other factors it came out on top,' says Toon.

Moving to a fully-maintained model for the company's fleet has also made life easier for Toon and his staff.

'There is not the same level of in-house administration required. Drivers just have their little LeasePlan driver guides and they know who to call if they need something.'

'Another thing we liked is that the vehicles come to us fully branded, like they have rolled off a production line. It gives us a

really clear market presence, using the same type of vehicle throughout the country. And we just order them and they get delivered, ready to go.'

CRV is on LeasePlan's PartnerPlan open-calculation model, which provides transparency and is easy to use and monitor, says Toon. 'Having the fleet under a single umbrella also means simpler reporting.'

'Putting the full fleet into one unit rather than trying to do some of it in-house has removed a lot of administration. All fuel is purchased through LeasePlan at a discounted rate as well, so we get all the fuel reporting and can see how the vehicles

are being used and who's using them.'

As well as the attraction of LeasePlan's local roots, the company's international expertise was also a drawcard for CRV. It plans to use LeasePlan to provide the same vehicles for its Australian sister company, extending its consistent

branding message across the Tasman.

'The biggest advantage of our new fleet is consistency of image and branding for our sales team. And what it means for us on a practical level is that it has removed the complexity and time taken to manage the fleet.' ■

**'THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF FARM TRACKS AND COW RACES THAT THEY SOMETIMES HAVE TO GO DOWN. WE MIGHT NOT LIKE IT, BUT THE RANGER CAN GET THEM THERE'**





# TOWING THE LINE

Summertime is the time for towing: boats, caravans, trailers. Check out these tough towing machines — all with 3.5 tonnes of towing capacity, they are serious fun to drive.

WORDS BY RICHARD BOSSELMAN

## FORD RANGER WILDTRAK

Macho good looks, the impressive feel-good muscularity and efficiency of that five-cylinder 3.2 litre, massive towability and having the deepest cargo box — that's the stuff about Ranger that gets the lads excited.

Yet what really sells this new Ford — and has all its rivals eating dirt — is design-phase thinking that went beyond the boys' zone. Ford has acknowledged that while blokes still largely profess to call the shots on truck-buying, family usage means the final say comes from a higher power. This drove the effort into making the Ranger quiet, refined, comfortable, safe and street-smart.

Thus, notwithstanding that the predominant colour within the cabin is still concrete-dust grey, it's actually very car-like, with a genuine air of sophistication.

True, it's too tall and chunky to be considered a sedan substitute — it's impossible to imagine you're at the wheel of anything but a sizeable, high-riding vehicle of significant dimension and singular demeanour — yet it is also a disservice to call it a tradie special. Crash-test compatibility with Ford's pure passenger cars is a great testimony; so too is the implementation of stability control, trailer-sway control for safer towing and rollover mitigation technology.



### THE SPECS

- **PRICES**  
\$64,640 (manual)–\$66,640 (automatic)
- **ENGINE**  
3199 cc five-cylinder diesel, maximum power 147 kW @ 3000 rpm, maximum torque 470 Nm @ 1500–2750 rpm
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**  
Overall 9.4 (manual)/12.2 litres (automatic) per 100 km, emissions 256 g per km

## TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 200 VX SERIES

Good design, it's said, will always stand the test of time. More likely key, however, to this machine's enduring success is its engineering excellence: it is beautifully built and it won't break.

LandCruisers have always been land crushers, and the basic recipe of this model — and every one of its predecessors spanning back six decades — is its basic strength, utter reliability and absolute sure-footedness.

You cannot drive a 'Cruiser like a car on the highway and it certainly doesn't promise Corolla-like manoeuvrability in town; hence it has a profusion of parking aids. But you want it for brawn, yes? That 4.5 litre twin-turbo V8 turbodiesel is old hat now, but still has the goods and runs smoothly in marriage to a six-speed auto.

Multi-Terrain Select, where the driver selects an off-road mode (there are five) to suit the landscape ahead, is well-timed and if the world's roads were to crumble overnight, the merits of the Crawl Control that allows this machine to self-find its way across really awful surfaces would be proven time over. Also handy are cameras to check blind spots.



### THE SPECS

- **PRICE**  
\$147,900
- **ENGINE**  
4461 cc common-rail twin turbocharged V8 diesel, maximum power 195 kW @ 3400 rpm, maximum torque 650 Nm @ 2600 rpm
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**  
Overall 10.3 litres per 100 km, emissions 273 g per km

## HOLDEN COLORADO 7

SUVs that are built like cars, because people want them to drive that way, are all the rage. So how important now is the need to perform well in the most arduous, most primal conditions thrown at man and machine?

Holden has identified a need to maintain old traits in a new setting; it says a sizeable count of customers still prioritise rugged 4x4 ability, significant towing capability and generous seating capacity. So, while it also offers a Captiva 7 for those who tread softly, Holden figured it would also take up where its last large SUV departed.

And yes, you can sense some link between this new model and that Jackaroo that went west 10 years ago: it's just as rough, tough and . . . well, perhaps not the last word in social grace and refinement; just keeping a separate chassis architecture is a concession. Still, the majority of countries taking it expect to use vehicles like these as hard-grafters.

Some edges are being smoothed; the useful-to-none mini-USB input jack and single Bluetooth audio/phone streaming are being axed in preference for the modern-day MyLink system seen in other Holdens. And at a more fundamental level, it is very much family-sized: you can get eight into a 7.

The 7 handles on-road situations more comfortably than the ute it's based on thanks to a coil-spring rear suspension set-up, yet there's no denying it feels big and a bit woolly. The engine is as shouty and gruff as a King Country farmer at mustering but, man, can it haul. And it feels relaxed piling through demanding off-road terrain.



### THE SPECS

- **PRICES**  
\$62,900 (LT)–\$66,900 (LTZ)
- **ENGINE**  
2776 cc four-cylinder diesel, maximum power 132 kW @ 3800 rpm, maximum torque 470 Nm @ 2000 rpm
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**  
Overall 9.4 litres per 100 km, emissions 252 g per km



## JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

An eight-speed auto brings Jeep's largest current achievement up to speed with modern expectation. And, you're probably thinking, 'so does the turn to rear-wheel-drive'.

Actually, that's where you're wrong. True, providing a rear-drive version as an option to nine ongoing four-wheel-drive offerings is a fashionable fresh offering here, but in fact the GC has always been built that way. It's just that, until now, this edition has been kept Stateside.

Because it's too tame? While Jeep isn't suggesting that the 4x2 will confidently follow its all-wheel-drive equivalent absolutely everywhere, they do assure that it is by no means limited to seal use, thanks to grip-assist technology and generous ground clearance. And it also maintains a mean towing ability.

The other savings are that it's \$4000 cheaper to buy than an all-wheel-drive equivalent and slightly cheaper to run — though only slightly. Rear-drive comes only in petrol form, however, not with the 3.0 litre turbodiesel that's the sales mainstay here, and just at base Laredo spec.

The rear and four-wheel-drive Laredos are alike in look — changed for 2013 as a result of a Fiat directive to sharpen up. While the two-wheel-drive model is 86 kilograms lighter than the 4WD, it's still a tall and hefty beast with an easy-going dynamic trait.

### THE SPECS

- **PRICES**  
\$64,990 (Laredo 4x2)–\$109,990 (SRT)
- **ENGINES**  
2987 cc common rail V6 turbodiesel, maximum power 184 kW @ 4000 rpm, maximum torque 570 Nm @ 2000 rpm;  
3604 cc DOHC fuel-injected V6 petrol, maximum power 210 kW @ 6350 rpm, maximum torque 347 Nm @ 4300 rpm;  
5654 cc VVT 16-valve fuel-injected V8, maximum power 259 kW @ 5200 rpm, maximum torque 520 Nm @ 4200 rpm;  
6417 cc 16-valve fuel-injected V8, maximum power 344 kW @ 6250 rpm, maximum torque 624 Nm @ 4100 rpm
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**  
Overall 7.5 litres per 100 km (diesel), 10.1 (rear drive 3.6 petrol), 10.4 (4WD 3.6 petrol), 13 (4WD 5.7 petrol) and 14 (4WD 6.4); emissions 198 (CRD)–327 (6.4 litre) g per km

IT IS BY NO MEANS LIMITED TO SEAL USE, THANKS TO GRIP-ASSIST TECHNOLOGY AND GENEROUS GROUND CLEARANCE. AND IT ALSO MAINTAINS A MEAN TOWING ABILITY.



# 20 YEARS YOUNG

**LeasePlan New Zealand celebrated its twentieth birthday in style, with a Roaring 20s-themed party at Auckland's Heritage Hotel.**

WORDS BY SARAH ELL PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE

The hotel's glorious Art Deco Grand Tearoom was the perfect venue for a night of celebration, dining and dancing for around 250 staff and special guests.

Attendees got into the spirit of the event by dressing in 1920s theme, and were treated to a sit-down three-course meal, followed by dancing and general festivity. A slideshow of 1920s images was projected as guests mixed and mingled, admired each other's finery and created special mementoes of the night in the photo booth.

Both LeasePlan New Zealand Managing Director Charles Willmer and Nick Salkeld, LeasePlan's Regional Senior Vice-President Southern Europe and Pacific, spoke about what a special year 2013 has been for the company, both locally — celebrating the 20-year mark — and internationally, with the wider Group racking up half a century

in business. Guests also watched a special video from LeasePlan Corporate about the highlights of the company's first 50 years.

Entertainment during the evening was provided by The Gramophone Band, featuring Rodney Fisher and Gareth Thomas of Goodshirt, who played a mixture of classic tunes and more modern songs given special treatment. The Candy Lane Dancers also performed a Liza Minnelli-inspired routine.

MC for the evening was LeasePlan's dapper-looking National Sales Manager Richard Christensen (opposite). In a past life he and his wife worked as entertainers on a cruise ship, and this experience came to the fore as he kept the evening running smoothly and entertained the crowd. He also took a turn on the mic, having the audience in the palm of his hand as he sang 'In the Still of the Night' by The Five Satins and 'Route 66' by Nat King Cole. ■







## AROUND EUROPE IN AN AUDI

Five weeks, 25 European countries from Russia to Portugal, 20,000 kilometres, 55 drivers . . . sounds like a crazy Contiki tour but in fact it was LeasePlan's fiftieth birthday relay.

The relay started at LeasePlan Corporation's headquarters in Amsterdam on September 2, then passed through Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and new territory Russia, before heading through Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Turkey; then on to Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, the UK and Ireland; then back across the Channel to Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany before returning to the Netherlands on October 7.

Twenty-five teams from the various LeasePlan offices took part, including Hans van Hensbergen and Ieke van Doorn from LeasePlan Corporation, who joined the Spain-Portugal journey. The vehicle was an eye-catching bright orange Audi A6, specially signwritten for the occasion.

LeasePlan recognises the importance of fuel-efficient driving from both an environmental and a cost perspective, so fuel efficiency was one of the key factors of the relay. Using advanced Bosch telematics, the car's journey and fuel efficiency could be followed online at [www.leaseplan.com](http://www.leaseplan.com), with teams competing to be the most fuel efficient. The company chose to use a regular petrol-powered car for the relay, as this fuel type is still the most widely used in the fleets of its customers.

Special celebrations and events were held in each country the car visited along the route, to commemorate LeasePlan's fiftieth birthday. Nicole Stoelinga of LeasePlan Corporate Communications says that in Portugal, the car was greeted by footballers from the Benfica team, as well

as a large crowd of media.

'In Romania, there was a special event organised on the lakeside and the car also joined in a team-building event with local staff. In Greece, staff greeted the car in real togas, and in Slovakia, the car arrived on the birthday of their MD, in time for the birthday party that evening.'

In the UK, a very British afternoon tea, complete with scones, was organised, before the car headed across to Ireland.

The car also made an appearance at the LeasePlan WorldGames event in Vienna, as part of events to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary, with many staff taking the opportunity to be photographed with it.

The last two relay drivers, Emanuela Reiners and Benjamin Jahnke from LeasePlan Germany, arrived to a special reception on



the steps of the LeasePlan Corporation office building at the end of the final stage. Applauding them both as they drove the final few metres was a welcoming team of LeasePlanners from Corporation and the LeasePlan Netherlands office.

Only one minor problem occurred with the car during the relay: a flat tyre was discovered when it arrived in Finland.

'Since there were only two suitable tyres left in the south of Finland, which couldn't be delivered fast enough as the driver, Tuula Kärkkäinen, had to leave for Moscow within two hours. The garage had to fix the tyre by putting a special kind of plaster on the leak,' says Stoelinga. 'After half an hour the car was good to go, but Tuula was quite nervous driving the road to Moscow and then to Warsaw, considering

the condition of those roads!'

Luckily, the tyre survived the experience, and all four tyres were replaced with a brand-new, fuel-efficient set when the car reached Luxembourg.

And the drive paid off for Kärkkäinen, too: she and her driving partner Victoria Solovenchuk of LeasePlan Russia were named the most efficient driving team of the relay for their leg from Russia to Warsaw. They bettered the Audi's factory fuel-efficiency numbers, driving at 5.39 litres per 100 kilometres. The team from LeasePlan Romania came a close second (5.42 l/100 km) and third was LeasePlan Greece (5.95 l/100 km).

At the conclusion of the event, LeasePlan CEO Vahid Daemi announced that the retail value of the car used for the relay will be donated to charity. ■

**TWENTY-FIVE TEAMS FROM THE VARIOUS LEASEPLAN OFFICES TOOK PART ... IN AN EYE-CATCHING BRIGHT ORANGE AUDI A6, SPECIALLY SIGNWRITTEN FOR THE OCCASION.**



# HELP BUILD A BUS FOR PLUNKET



**ANYONE WHO HAS HAD CHILDREN IN  
NEW ZEALAND — IN FACT, ALMOST EVERYONE —  
KNOWS HOW IMPORTANT PLUNKET IS.  
YET DESPITE SOME GOVERNMENT FUNDING,  
THE ORGANISATION STILL HAS TO  
SEEK SUBSTANTIAL SPONSORSHIP  
AND OTHER SUPPORT TO FUND ITS  
TRULY LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.**

LeasePlan is proud to be not only Plunket's leasing partner, managing its fleet and providing more than 500 cars for nurses and other staff around the country, but also a major supporter. This year, LeasePlan is helping Plunket to buy vans to be fitted out and used as mobile clinics. If Plunket can raise enough funds for a new bus, LeasePlan has committed to provide Plunket with a second bus — a sort of 'two for one' deal.

Plunket New Zealand President Tristine Clark says the mobile clinics play a valuable role, reaching families who, for various reasons, can't make it to a local clinic.

'Many parents find it difficult to take their babies and young children to doctors and hospitals. Some don't have

access to transport, some aren't fluent in speaking English, and some find visiting an "expert" a daunting prospect,' she says. 'Our job is to make sure that — no matter what the circumstances — the children get the checks and care they need, and that their parents and caregivers have the access they need to support, information and advice. These mobile clinics are a great way of doing that.'

Plunket already has four buses running in the Auckland and Northland regions, and has recently leased another in Canterbury, to meet an increasing need for services in the post-earthquake city. It would like to expand the service into other regions, with Wellington and Hamilton next on the list.

Plunket is canvassing its contacts and supporters for donations to raise the first \$55,000, and LeasePlan would like to encourage its clients and suppliers to come to the party.

'All my three kids were Plunket babies, and I know what valuable work the organisation does,' says LeasePlan New Zealand Managing Director Charles Willmer. 'We are always happy to give them a hand to make their job easier and be able to reach as many babies and young children — and their parents and caregivers — as they can. Please help us help them, by making a donation.'

Donations can be made online at [www.plunket.org.nz/buildabus](http://www.plunket.org.nz/buildabus) or by phone on 0800 20 55 55. ■

## PLEASE HELP BY MAKING A DONATION

**ONLINE >> [www.plunket.org.nz/buildabus](http://www.plunket.org.nz/buildabus)  
PHONE >> 0800 20 55 55**

**LeasePlan**  
*It's easier to leaseplan*

**SUPPORTING**  
**Plunket**

## CHANGES AHEAD IN LEASE ACCOUNTING

The wheels of change are continuing to slowly grind away in the field of lease accounting, with a new exposure draft released by the FASB and IASB in May. A final standard is not expected until next year, and any changes are unlikely to be implemented until 2017.

### WHAT IS LEASEPLAN'S POSITION?

LeasePlan is one of the many organisations that submitted a comment letter on the re-exposure draft and as an industry raised its objections to certain aspects of the proposed standard. We understand the joint efforts of the IASB and the FASB to harmonise the accounting treatment of leases. We also recognise the need for greater transparency. However, we have strong reservations against the proposals in the re-exposure draft. **Our main concerns in relation to lessee accounting are the following:**

- » the introduction of two types of leases, as well as the measurement of the rights and obligations, is too complex
- » the definition of a lease is not clear and will result in a new bright line test between a lease and a service
- » we do not support the proposed income statement approach for Type A leases which results in front-loading of expenses.

### HOW WILL THE CHANGES AFFECT ME AS A LESSEE?

First of all, you will now need to recognise your lease contracts on your balance sheet, which will be lengthened as a result. This is inevitably going to affect a number of key financial ratios, such as your solvency ratio and your leverage ratio. The way in which lease expenses are recognised in your income statement will also change. Second, in the future, lessees could be required to record each vehicle separately and to assess, as of the balance sheet date, the assumptions underpinning the 'right of use'. Third, you will have to reassess the lease liability at each reporting date in relation to changes in the main parameters such as the lease term, purchase options and residual value guarantees. And fourth, the new model may affect the tax treatment of lease contracts.

### HOW WILL LEASEPLAN HELP ME?

LeasePlan's aim is to make running a fleet of vehicles as easy as possible for you, whether you're a fleet manager, a finance director or a controller. That's why we're already thinking about ways and means of supplying you with the information you will need, and we'll let you know as soon as we have more definite information. We will keep a close track on the standard as it evolves, alert our clients to whatever changes are in the pipeline and provide them with all the information they need to prepare their accounts in line with the new requirements.

### DO I NEED TO WORRY?

Not at all! But it might be a good idea to start planning. Yes, your financial ratios will be affected, but leasing will remain an attractive option. After all, with the new standard affecting all companies working with IFRS or US GAAP in the same way, the playing field will remain just as level. Moreover, the amounts capitalised under lease contracts will still be lower than under outright ownership.



# ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

Instead of heading for the beach and sitting in traffic this summer, why not go somewhere a bit different? There are plenty of unusual corners to explore...

SUMMER ROAD TRIP

**DARGAVILLE**  
Find out all you ever wanted to know about New Zealand's super vegetable at Ernie's Kumara Box, and tour the farm on the kumara train. Bookings essential. [kumarabox.co.nz](http://kumarabox.co.nz)

**HAWERA**  
See the New Zealand wars and other scenes from our history lovingly re-created as scale models at Nigel Ogle's museum near Hawera. [tawhitimuseum.co.nz](http://tawhitimuseum.co.nz)

**KAPITI ISLAND**  
Take the rare opportunity to see kiwi in their natural habitat by overnighting on Kapiti Island. [kapitiislandnaturetours.co.nz](http://kapitiislandnaturetours.co.nz)

**TE AROHA**  
Detour to the charming Edwardian spa town of Te Aroha. Soak up the healing waters after browsing antique shops and enjoying great coffee. [tearohanz.co.nz](http://tearohanz.co.nz)

**GISBORNE**  
Come for Rhythm and Vines, stay for the wines. Become an expert on the region's chardonnays and sneak in a cheeky viognier. [gisbornewine.co.nz](http://gisbornewine.co.nz)

**MAKARORA**  
Get back to nature at Makarora on the scenic Wanaka-Haast highway. Bring a tent or snuggle up in an A-frame chalet, and wake to glorious birdsong. [makarora.co.nz](http://makarora.co.nz)

**REEFTON**  
Explore New Zealand's gold mining history in the town which was the first in the southern hemisphere to have electric street lighting. Great local mountain biking, too. [reefton.co.nz](http://reefton.co.nz)

**MOUTERE**  
Pay homage to the not-so-humble blackcurrant at the Sarau Festival in Upper Moutere on Sunday, February 2. [saraufestival.co.nz](http://saraufestival.co.nz)

**KAIKOURA**  
Groove to the sounds of The Black Seeds, Tiki Taane and others at the Summer Sounds Festival on January 11-12. [kaikourasummersounds.co.nz](http://kaikourasummersounds.co.nz)

**MARTINBOROUGH**  
Deep in the heart of the Wairarapa, New Year's Eve will be buzzing at the La De Da music festival. Bring your tent and camp out in Lullaby Lane. [ladedda.co.nz](http://ladedda.co.nz)

**CATLINS**  
Take the Southern Scenic Route between Dunedin and Invercargill and explore the Catlins. Blowholes, caves, seals, penguins and great cheese rolls. [catlins.org.nz](http://catlins.org.nz)

**DUNROON**  
Walk in the footsteps of the dinosaurs on the Vanished World Trail, from Moeraki to Oamaru. [vanishedworld.co.nz](http://vanishedworld.co.nz)





## MY DREAM GARAGE

All-round funnyman Jeremy Corbett brought his brand of humour to Fleet Forum this year as MC. Here's what he'd have in his Dream Garage...

### 1 MERCURY COUGAR

Is there a better-named car? Sure, some of the machismo has worn off the name 'cougar' since predatory women of a certain age claimed the term, but it still works. As a kid, I had a Matchbox one of these and I loved it: 'Where are the headlights? Where are the headlights?' Amazing. This is instead of the Mustang I'd also like, but from what I've read in previous editions there are heaps parked in dream garages nearby...

### 2 SHELBY COBRA

I dare you to look at it without experiencing a stirring in your internal combustion DNA. A work of art. A classic. A way to wake the neighbours when they've upset you.

### 3 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT SPEED CONVERTIBLE

Just a humble drop-top for when you pop to the shop, probably in something understated like purple.

### 4 CAPTAIN SCARLETT CAR

A childhood dream. I had one as a kid but smashed it in a fit of rage when my brothers refused to play zooms. Can't wait to see their faces when I won't let them drive this full-scale, completely operational one. When I get more space I'll park it next to the original Batmobile.

### 5 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER

For when I want a work machine that works. When everything else is broken, two things will still be moving: cockroaches and Landcruisers.

### 6 A GOLF CART

Sounds like I'll need one to get around my massive garage!



## ON YOUR BIKE



WORDS BY SARAH ELL

There are people who love cars and motorbikes... then there are people who love them enough to build them in their spare time. And then there are those who are married to the latter type, like LeasePlan New Zealand's Remarketing Coordinator Kim Sharpe, who has been the supportive spouse behind her husband Bruce's two-year project to build his own custom motorbike.

Bruce Sharpe, an automotive glazier who owns Auckland's Prime Autoglass, assembled the bike from parts bought on Trade Me and imported from the United States. It was voted top bike at this year's Whangamata Beach Hop celebration of classic vehicles, after making the top five in 2012.

The project began after Bruce hurt his back in a dirt-bike accident and was confined to the couch, watching reality shows like *American Chopper* and *Biker Build-Off*, in which custom dream-machines are created.

'Bruce has always been very clever with his hands and I said to him, "Why don't you try something like that?"', to try to give him something to do, and the idea was born from there,' says Kim, who has been married to Bruce for 11 years and at LeasePlan for 13.

The result combines an engine from a 2000 Harley-Davidson Deuce and gearbox from a similar-aged Softail (rear-suspension) bike with a customised aftermarket frame bought from a fellow bike enthusiast off TradeMe. Bruce then bought and modified or simply made all the remaining parts to create his own dream bike.

'I wanted it to be a bit more personal, rather than being a store-bought kind of bike,' he says. 'I was going for a retro look, kind of like a 1940s or '50s bike. It was around that time that guys started to get

**VOTED TOP BIKE AT THIS YEAR'S WHANGAMATA BEACH HOP CELEBRATION OF CLASSIC VEHICLES**



bikes and chop them up and turn them into "bobbers", and that was the style I tried to keep it in.'

'Bobbers', developed by American servicemen influenced by lighter-weight European bikes following the Second World War, were stripped-back machines with no front mudguard and a shortened or 'bobbed' rear mudguard. Bruce made his own bobbed mudguard by cutting 100 millimetres out of the middle of a regular mudguard and welding the pieces back together.

One modern touch is the bright acid green of the rear mudguard and fuel tank.

'I wanted to do it green, and the greens I liked were like those used by Holden and Honda. But I didn't want to pull up to the traffic lights and be next to a car that was the same colour, so I had a one-off custom colour made up for the bike.'

This is the one thing Bruce might change, maybe to a two-tone paint job to enhance the retro look of the bike. Other than that, it's on to the next project: hot-rodding a 1953 Chevrolet pick-up. Unlike the bike build, this is going to be a shared project with Kim — which she says will be much more up her alley.

'I am very proud of his achievement and it's great to see how proud he is of the bike, especially when people admire it,' says Kim. 'It looks great — I just don't want to ride on the back of it.' ■



# SUMMER TRAVELLING TREATS



Whether you're hitting the road or having a staycation, get into the holiday mood.

1 Holiday in miniature with the Box Clever Holden, \$74, and 2 Box Clever Caravan, \$88, by Ian Blackwell, [www.thevaultnz.com](http://www.thevaultnz.com). 3 Prepare for the inevitable with the Blunt Umbrella XS Metro in Yellow, \$84, [www.thevaultnz.com](http://www.thevaultnz.com). 4 Let the kids loose on a Wishbone Bike, \$275, [www.cleverbastards.co.nz](http://www.cleverbastards.co.nz). 5 Take the tech with you with this 15in laptop bag, crafted in NZ from a recycled billboard, \$199, [www.was.co.nz](http://www.was.co.nz). 6 Tag your luggage in retro style by 100% NZ, \$12, [www.thevaultnz.com](http://www.thevaultnz.com). 7 Cruise off on a Riviera Big Red Longboard, \$299, [www.hyperride.co.nz](http://www.hyperride.co.nz). 8 Test yourself with the Great Memory Game, \$49, [www.cleverbastards.co.nz](http://www.cleverbastards.co.nz). 9 Never be lost with Auckland map colour cufflinks by Eden Ripley, \$63, [www.thevaultnz.com](http://www.thevaultnz.com). 10 Point the way with sign magnets by Ian Blackwell, \$8, [www.thevaultnz.com](http://www.thevaultnz.com). 11 Back on the road, the Was Urban Satchel is made from used truck inner tubes, \$240, [www.was.co.nz](http://www.was.co.nz).





## The fuel card that helps you run things your way.

When the fish are biting, the last thing you want to be doing is paperwork. With Mobilcard, you won't be. It takes care of managing your fleet fuel costs, freeing you up to be more productive and helping you fit work around your life – and your fishing rod.

For more information please contact Mobilcard Sales on 0800 662 458, email [mobilcardsales@exxonmobil.com](mailto:mobilcardsales@exxonmobil.com) or visit [mobilcard.co.nz](http://mobilcard.co.nz)



**Mobil**

We're drivers too.