

STEERING COLUMN

LEASEPLAN MAGAZINE
>> WINTER 2013

LeasePlan

It's easier to leaseplan



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LEASEPLAN NZ
CELEBRATING
TWO DECADES



**'I TRULY BELIEVE
THAT IF YOU ARE
GOING TO SPEND
AS MANY HOURS
AS WE DO AT
WORK, OVERALL
IT HAS TO BE FUN'**

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2013

is an important year for the LeasePlan Group. It was 50 years ago that the group first started operating in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Today it manages more than 1.3 million vehicles across 31 countries. And it was 20 years ago that I was offered the opportunity to establish LeasePlan here in New Zealand. Little did I expect to still be here in 2013, let alone have a business that manages over 18,000 vehicles and employs more than 70 people.

During this time, we have built a successful business that outperforms many of our sister companies. I believe this is due to a number of factors. Firstly, our staff believe in what the company delivers to its customers. If they don't or can't, then how are our customers going to believe it?

Secondly, these people listen carefully to our customers. Again, if they don't, how are we going to be able to deliver what our customers want?

Lastly, we have been able to provide a great place for our people to work. I truly believe that if you are going to spend as many hours as we do at work, overall it has to be fun. If it's not, it's bad for LeasePlan, bad for our customers and ultimately bad for the wellbeing of our staff.

To all our customers, suppliers and staff, both past and present, thank you for helping us build a successful LeasePlan here in New Zealand. We look forward to another 20-year partnership.

Charles Willmer
Managing Director, LeasePlan New Zealand



14



HAPPY BIRTHDAY LEASEPLAN!

13



10



18



06



CONTENTS

FEATURES

04 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LEASEPLAN!
Best wishes from clients and suppliers

06 THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD
LeasePlan's journey over two decades

12 LOOKING BACK
A timeline of LeasePlan's history here and internationally

13 STAYING STRONG
Operations Manager Dave Pedersen looks back on his time at LeasePlan

16 IT'S IN THE BLOOD
LeasePlan NZ's first client, Beckman Coulter, is still on the books

18 TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY...
A lot has changed since 1993

20 INSIDE LEASEPLAN INTERNATIONAL
An interview with Chairman and Chief Executive Vahid Daemi

REGULARS

02 NEWS
What's happening on the road

03 WINTER AGENDA
Events and happenings in the cooler months

10 MY DREAM GARAGE
Charles Willmer, Managing Director of LeasePlan NZ

14 CAR CORNER
What's changed in 20 years

KICKING OFF IN CHRISTCHURCH

LeasePlan's Christchurch clients and suppliers have been enjoying supporting the Crusaders in their Super XV season, being hosted to the home games at the AMI Stadium at Addington. LeasePlan New Zealand's man on the ground in Christchurch, David Yardley, says the rugby nights 'have been great to build rapport and, of course, thank our partners for their business and support of us, as we establish ourselves in the south.'



PETROL TAX INCREASE AHEAD

Petrol will rise in price by three cents per litre each July for the next three years, after Parliament met under urgency to pass the Customs and Excise Amendment Bill in May. The rises mean that by 2015, the tax component of the price of a litre of petrol will be 59.5 cents. The increased revenue will be spent on public transport initiatives as well as infrastructure development, through the National Land Transport Fund. The tax increase comes as fuel prices move up again. Though prices in early May fell to below \$2 a litre for the first time since June 2012, this drop was soon reversed by the effects of the falling New Zealand dollar.



TAURANGA LINK PROJECT FORGES AHEAD

Work on the longest bridge on the Tauranga Eastern Link (TEL) project was completed in early June. The final concrete pour, which will form the deck of the 150 metre long Kaituna River bridge, was made in mid-May. The bridge, which crosses over the Kaituna River at the newly aligned Bell Road, will consist of two lanes in either direction, with access available for pedestrians and cyclists. The Kaituna River bridge will be open to traffic when the Tauranga Eastern Link project is completed in 2016. Six more bridges are to be built, with two more scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013: the Maketu Road bridge and the rail bridge at Paengaroa.

The four-lane Tauranga Eastern Link will run from Te Maunga (near Baypark Stadium) in Mt Maunganui to the existing junction of State Highways 2 and 33 (the Rotorua and Whakatane highways) near Paengaroa. It will be made up of 17 kilometres of new road and an upgrade of six kilometres of existing highway. The new highway is expected to open to traffic in 2016. The TEL is part of the NZTA's roads of national significance (RoNS) programme. Once completed, the seven RoNS routes will reduce congestion in and around New Zealand's five largest metropolitan areas.



Image: NZTA

FUTURE DREAMS ON DISPLAY

A two-door Ferrari sports car without a windscreen was just one of the eye-catching new innovations at the 2013 Geneva Motor Show, held in Switzerland. The Pininfarina Sergio, named after the Italian coachbuilder's late chairman Sergio Pininfarina, who died last year, is built on the platform of a Ferrari 458 Spider. It has a 'virtual windscreen', in which wind is directed through the lower bumper and out the front bonnet, over the cabin, bypassing the driver and passenger. Also unveiled at the Geneva show was the Toyota i-Road, described as 'a cross between a small car and a scooter'. At just 2.35 metres long but only 850 millimetres wide, the electric-powered three-wheeler takes up around the same amount of road space as a motorcycle. It uses 'Active Lean technology' to maintain stability as it corners. Other new concept cars on show were the Subaru Viziv and Kia Provo two-door compacts and the Spyker B6 Venator and Giugiaro Parcour sports cars.

Image: World of Wearable Arts Image; Noor Reverie, Rebecca Maxwell, Massey University, Wellington

2013 WINTER AGENDA

JULY

12-14

Get your geek on at the Au Contraire science fiction and fantasy convention in Wellington. Enjoy a swap meet, masquerade night, quiz and some late-night filking, as well as Rocky Horror with audience participation. AUCONTRAIRE.ORG.NZ

19-21

Watch all kinds of people fling themselves off the Russell Wharf into the wintery waters of the Bay of Islands. RUSSELLBIRDMAN.CO.NZ



AUGUST



24

Cheer on the mighty All Blacks as they take on Australia at Wellington's Cake Tin in the Investec rugby championship. ALLBLACKS.COM/FIXTURES

AUGUST 30- SEPTEMBER 1

Love to salsa and tango? Check out the new dance craze and get your hips swinging at the second annual Bachata Festival in Christchurch. NEWZEALANDBACHATAFESTIVAL.CO.NZ



SEPTEMBER

20-21

Celebrate ecologically, environmentally, ethically sustainable and upcycled fashion at New Zealand Eco Fashion Exposed at Lower Hutt's Dowse Art Museum. NZECOFASHIONWEEK.COM

28

Run one of New Zealand's iconic tracks in the Abel Tasman Coastal Classic, from Awaroa to Marahau. NELSONEVENTS.CO.NZ



OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 6

If you can dream it, they can wear it. Check out the remarkable creations at the World of Wearable Art Awards in Wellington. WORLDOWEARABLEART.COM



24-27

Welcome in the spring at the Willowridge Wanakafest, including a wine and food festival, a fashion show and mountain bike racing. WANAKAFEST.CO.NZ



OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 3

Get cultural in the Bay at the Tauranga Arts Festival, featuring 80 events over 10 days. TAURANGAFESTIVAL.CO.NZ

HAPPY BIRTHDAY **TO YOU!**

LeasePlan New Zealand couldn't have made it to 20 years in business without the support of its loyal clients and suppliers. Here some of them offer their best wishes to the company.

We were one of LeasePlan New Zealand's first clients and the reason that we're still one of their clients is their open and honest approach to dealing with customers. We also admire their commitment to sustainability, such as through the GreenPlan programme. Congratulations on reaching the 20 year mark, which is a big achievement, and all the best for the future.

Patricia Castle, Managing Director, Bayer New Zealand Limited

I HAVE NEVER, EVER, EVER IN 20 YEARS HEARD ANYBODY SAY A BAD WORD ABOUT LEASEPLAN, WHICH IS TESTAMENT TO THE FACT IT OPERATES TO A VERY HIGH STANDARD. CONGRATULATIONS TO LEASEPLAN ON THEIR FIRST 20 YEARS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND ALL THE VERY BEST FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUCCESS.

Ivan Marinovich, Giltrap Prestige, who sourced LeasePlan New Zealand's first fleet, for Bayer

CONGRATULATIONS TO LEASEPLAN ON THEIR ANNIVERSARY. WE HAVE HAD A LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH LEASEPLAN OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS, AND HOPE WE CAN HAVE A RELATIONSHIP FOR THE NEXT 20 — WE'D BE HAPPY TO.

Pamela Youngman, HR Manager, Beckman Coulter (LeasePlan New Zealand's first client)

We have been with LeasePlan for 17 years, forging a very strong relationship based on a history of very open and transparent business transactions. LeasePlan has a strong business ethic and corporate culture which keeps staff morale and retention high, making it easier to LeasePlan. That starts from the top, with the kind of person Charles is. Air Liquide congratulates LeasePlan New Zealand and internationally on reaching its two milestones this year.

Glenn Miller, Finance Manager, Air Liquide New Zealand Limited

Best wishes for LeasePlan's twentieth anniversary and keep up the good work, team! We have had a great experience all the way through. Congratulations to LeasePlan for its support of the Auckland rescue helicopter, too.

Rory O'Donnell, Finance Manager, Waikato District Health Board (one of LeasePlan New Zealand's first major fleet client, with a current fleet of around 420 vehicles)

WHEN LEASEPLAN CAME TO NEW ZEALAND, IT WAS A HARD MARKET. THEIR APPROACH WAS TOTALLY DIFFERENT — THEY ARE VERY DIRECT IN THEIR DEALINGS AND EVERYTHING IS UP FRONT — AND IT HAS HELPED THEM TO SUCCEED. CONGRATULATIONS TO LEASEPLAN ON ITS 20 YEARS AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO DO BUSINESS WITH THEM.

Chris Frost, Ultimate Motor Group (formerly of Manukau Nissan), who helped LeasePlan New Zealand source its first vehicle

WE HAVE HAD A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP WITH LEASEPLAN NEW ZEALAND AND VIEW THEM AS A REAL PARTNER TO OUR BUSINESS. WE HAVE FOUND THEM TO BE VERY PROACTIVE IN LOOKING FOR WAYS TO OPTIMISE THE EFFICIENCIES OF OUR FLEET. CONGRATULATIONS ON REACHING THIS 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

Alistair Smith, Chief Operating Officer, Lumley

KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK, LEASEPLAN NZ!

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

LeasePlan New Zealand has a lot to celebrate this year, having come a long way in the past two decades.

WORDS BY SARAH ELL

It was a wet, wintery Sunday in 1993 when LeasePlan New Zealand's Managing Director Charles Willmer stepped out of his downtown Auckland hotel and had his first look at the city which was to be his new home. And it was closed.

'It was just dead,' Willmer remembers. 'Everything was shut, you couldn't get a drink and there were virtually tumbleweeds blowing down Queen Street. During the week it wasn't much better. I wondered what we were doing here.'

Now, 20 years later, both Auckland and LeasePlan's New Zealand operation are thriving. While Auckland's waterfront is now the centrepiece of an exciting international city, LeasePlan New Zealand has also gone from strength to strength over the past two decades. Willmer has seen it grow from three staff to a team of 74, which now look after a fleet of more than 18,000 vehicles.

In 1993 Willmer, originally from Rutland in the East Midlands of England, had already been with LeasePlan for six years, working first in its UK office, then in its Australian bases in Melbourne and Sydney. He saw huge potential in the relatively undeveloped vehicle leasing industry here.

'We had the opportunity to bring the product and the industry to another level, as the only major international players in the market at the time,' says Willmer. 'There was a lot of growth potential here.'

Photography: Alex Wallace



With our international customer base, we found LeasePlan already had a relationship with the overseas parents or sister companies of many of the large companies in New Zealand.’

However, first the newcomers had to learn the Kiwi way. ‘It was a matter of adapting our key points of difference to the local market, rather than it being just another international market.’

EARLY DAYS

LeasePlan in New Zealand began with just three staff: Willmer; an operations manager who knew the local industry; and Willmer’s new wife Louise, who had worked for LeasePlan in the UK, running the office. The early 1990s were ‘not the best of economic times’ to be starting a business, as the fallout from the 1987 stock market crash descended into the recession of the early 1990s.

‘We did it quite tough for the first couple of years,’ Willmer recalls. ‘There was relatively slow growth, and it wasn’t until the late 1990s-early 2000s that we started turning the corner.’

Nevertheless, by the end of 1996 LeasePlan New Zealand’s staff had grown to 14, running a fleet of 1000 cars, and in 1997 head office moved from its City Road offices to new premises in Market Road in Epsom. In 1998 a Wellington office was opened, to provide enhanced service for corporate and government clients in the capital, and by the turn of the millennium the company had a staff of 25 and a fleet of more than 3000, and reported its first full-year profit.

An early challenge was communication with a parent company on the other side of the world, in the days when fax machines were the cutting edge, email and the internet were in their infancy and ‘down under’ felt a lot further away from Europe than it does now. Willmer says the time and culture differences made for lots of late-night phone calls and the odd misunderstanding.

‘In my early days in Melbourne we got a fax from one of the directors of the parent company to say he wanted to come over and have a meeting with us and see how it was going,’ Willmer says. ‘He suggested we do that in the morning, and in the afternoon go out for a trip to the Great Barrier Reef.’

Another early challenge — and an aspect which Willmer says continues to be critical in the company’s success — was ‘finding the right people to come along with us for the journey.’

‘It doesn’t matter if it was back then in the pioneering days or now in the more mature market — finding, recruiting, inspiring and retaining the right people for the business is critical,’ says Willmer.

Early additions to the team were Dave Pedersen, now Operations Manager, who came on board in 1994 (see page 13) and Finance Director Anthony Bayne who started in 1997.

THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The company enjoyed strong growth in the first decade of the new millennium. By 2002 staff numbers had reached 40 and the fleet had doubled to more than 6000 vehicles; at the end of the following year it posted its first financial net result over \$1 million. By December 2005 there were 64 staff, a fleet of nearly 12,000

vehicles and a result of \$1.3 million. Among those joining the team were Johannes Jacobs (JJ), now Commercial Director, who came on board in 2000, and John Hutchings, who started in 2004 and is now Operations Director.

Perhaps surprisingly, Willmer says the global financial crisis of the late 2000s actually had a positive impact on LeasePlan here.

‘What [the crisis] did was pull us out of the direction in which we were going,’ he says. ‘We got the message from Europe to say: review your business and look at everything and be careful. We looked at each aspect of our business: is our cost base right, have we the right blend of customers, do we really know what they want from us, are there different services they need? It was a brilliant exercise to go through to ensure we had a robust business to provide services to customers and employment for staff for many years to come.’

Willmer says the personal highlight has been the opportunity to grow a company which now employs more than 70 people.

‘For me that’s fantastic. It’s very satisfying knowing that my management team and I are able to provide careers and livelihoods and income to help seventy families, as well as everyone else who benefits from our business, such as suppliers,’ he says.

‘Secondly, I have enjoyed building really strong customer relationships over the years. Our first customer is still a customer, and that is something I am really proud of.’

Willmer says LeasePlan’s long-term success comes from its commitment to listening to its customers and ‘finding the best way of doing what they want to do’.

‘It is a partnership, and the key thing about partners is that they talk to each other and listen to each other and be sympathetic to each other. This way, customers stay customers, and they talk to other potential customers, and that brings you more business.’

WHAT NEXT?

The twentieth anniversary of LeasePlan in New Zealand — in the same year that the international parent company celebrates its half century — sees the company in good heart. There are now more than 70 staff, most based at new premises in Ellerslie, a fleet of more than 18,000 vehicles, the financial net result for 2012 was over \$8 million, and a Christchurch office opened in early 2013. So what lies ahead in today’s fast-moving, technology-driven world?

Willmer is quick to point out that whatever changes have occurred in the past 20 years, the fundamentals of the car leasing business remain the same.

‘Leasing is not a radical change industry. Relationships, and partnerships, are the important things. We are about finding solutions to the problems our customers face. That’s something that hasn’t changed in the past twenty years, and won’t change in the next twenty.’ ■

LeasePlan New Zealand Managing Director Charles Willmer says people are at the heart of the business. With plenty of fun happening alongside work, and opportunities for internal promotion, it’s no wonder staff stay with the company.





MY DREAM GARAGE

Having been at the wheel of LeasePlan New Zealand for 20 years, Managing Director Charles Willmer has seen a fair few cars. This is what he would have in his own dream garage...

1 ASTON MARTIN DB9

Aston Martin have been designing dreams for years. This is my current favourite. At a push I would have the four-door Rapide for practicality with family and friends but nah, this one is for me and the wife.

2 AUDI Q7 3.0 TDI

This is something a bit more practical for my current life. I have had two Q7s now and they are great for throwing everything in the back of (including the family and their mates), high enough off the ground to see what's going on, and on a good run you get under 8 litres per 100 km.

3 AUSTIN MINI 850 MK1

Doesn't everyone wish they still had their first car? This was mine, blue with a white roof, and no carpets as they were constantly wet because of the leaks. Top speed of not very much but it made up for it going round the corners.

4 AUSTIN HEALY FROGEYE

This would be my summer Sunday car, first released just before I was born and one of the ugliest or cutest cars ever, depending on your point of view. Twin SUs and not much weight make it a little more lively than the A35 948 cc engine might indicate. Nice for pottering around the 'hood in.

5 FERRARI DINO 246GT

Perhaps the most beautiful car ever designed by Pininfarina. Just look at it — a real child of the '60s. I still remember my first glimpse of one on Oxford Street in London.



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IN NEW ZEALAND AND INTERNATIONALLY

LOOKING BACK

THE STORY SO FAR...



STAYING STRONG

Long standing staff member Dave Pedersen, currently Operations Manager, looks back over his time with LeasePlan New Zealand.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX WALLACE

WHEN I FIRST STARTED AT LEASEPLAN I WAS LIVING IN HAMILTON. I DID MY INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES [WILLMER] IN A MOTEL, AND HE OFFERED ME THE JOB IN A PUB!

At the time [April 1994] LeasePlan had just got the Waikato District Health Board fleet, its first significant client, with a fleet of around 430 vehicles. For my first company car, Charles tried to give me a Mitsubishi Galant with something like 240,000 km on the clock, and I wasn't terribly impressed. It wasn't until I went home and read my contract that I found it said I was entitled to have a company car with air conditioning. The Galant didn't have that, so I went back and waved the contract in Charles's face, and he gave me some money to go out and choose my own car.



ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHANGES OVER THE YEARS HAS BEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS, WHICH HAVE HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON WHAT WE CAN DO FOR OUR CUSTOMERS.

When I first started at LeasePlan I didn't have a computer, and just a roll fax machine. If I needed anything typed I had to write it by hand, fax it to Auckland and get them to type it. They would fax it back down for proofreading, and if I was happy they would post the letter down to me to send out! The health board started feeling sorry for me and loaned me one of their computers to do work for them, but if I wanted to do other work I had to make a booking to use one of the two in the Auckland office.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY TIME AT LEASEPLAN HAS BEEN WORKING WITH CHARLES, AND WATCHING HIM LEADING PEOPLE AND LETTING THEM MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS.

I admire the interest he has taken in the people who work here and letting them develop, both professionally and personally. I to have worked in virtually every department within the business and had the chance to set up new teams. The opportunities to grow while working here have certainly not been lacking. And it's the people. When you get 60 or 70 people working together not everyone's going to get on, but round here we seem to. I think that's what's special about this place.



TIME LAPSE

A lot has changed in car design and manufacturing in the past 20 years, but these three models continue to be reinvented.

WORDS BY RICHARD BOSSELMAN

BMW 3-SERIES TOURING

BMW engineer Max Reisbock saw a need for a small station wagon and, since his employers showed no interest, he home-built one. His mates liked it, so he showed it to the BMW board. They signed off for production and a star was born. That was 25 years ago, and Reisbock's smart thinking has just been celebrated by BMW in Munich.

Look at the 3-Series Touring now and it's hard to believe it's an idea that had to be invented. And despite the fact SUVs have become all the rage, there are now seven Touring models, in diesel and petrol, across a wide price and specification spectrum — delivering more badge designations than are found on the stronger-selling sedan lineup. Models include the 318d (1997 cc four-cylinder turbo diesel), 320d (1995 cc four-cylinder turbo diesel), 320i (1997 cc four-cylinder turbocharged petrol), 328i (1997 cc four-cylinder turbocharged petrol), 330d (1993 cc six-cylinder turbo diesel) and 335i (2979 cc six-cylinder turbocharged petrol).

Enthusiasm is gripped by new-to-New Zealand four-wheel-drive — xDrive in brand-speak — which should take up to 50 per cent of Touring sales and woo new adopters from beyond the BMW owner pool.

So far we've only tried the rear-drive models and, unsurprisingly, despite being slightly longer (a bonus for rear leg-room) and weighing more (up 80 kilograms, then another 80 kilograms with xDrive), they stick to a familiar, enthusiast-driven formula.

Everything has full electrics, air con, Bluetooth, eight-speed auto, EfficientDynamics (including stop-start), the usual safety features and an on-board computer. In addition to the usual Sport/Modern/Luxury trim levels there's a sedan-matching M-Sport package plus a swag of options, including parking assistance.

THE SPECS

- **PRICES**
Rear-drive \$77,800–\$118,000; xDrive, \$83,800–\$118,000
- **ENGINES**
1997cc and 1995 cc 4-cyl turbo diesel (318d/320d); 1997cc 4-cyl turbo petrol (320i/328i); 2993 cc 6-cyl turbo diesel (330d); 2979 cc 6-cyl turbo petrol (335i)
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**
4.5 (318d) to 7.6 (335i) litres per 100 km; capacity 57 litres; emissions 123 grams per km (318d)



1993



THE BMW 3-SERIES ONCE CAME WITH ONLY TWO OR FOUR DOORS. BUT THEN ENGINEER MAX REISBOCK TOOK TO AN OLD SEDAN IN HIS FRIEND'S GARAGE AND CREATED THE FIRST BMW STATION WAGON...

HOLDEN COMMODORE VF

With Ford Australia pulling out of car-making, the pressure is now on Holden. And if this is to be the Aussie industry's Battle of Britain hour, then think of VF as the tide-turning Spitfire response. The impetus with this major VE reinterpretation, but with 70 per cent new or altered components, is to create a world-class car.

From first experience, it's a home run: sophisticated design, advanced technology, better value. VF in every form simply not only stands well above its well-received predecessor, but also hammers Falcon and climbs into view as a serious competitor for everything else in its price bracket.

There are very few shortcomings: an automatic stop-start would have emboldened the appeal of a carry-over petrol-only engine range that nonetheless effects greater efficiency through mechanical tweaks, weight savings and the adoption of electric power steering. Yet in looks, particularly within the wholly rejigged cabin, and driving feel, it's up there.

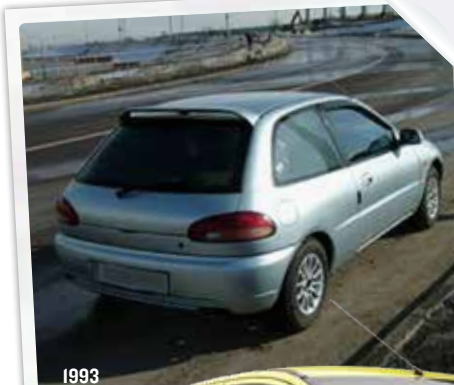
The technology leap from adopting a Cadillac global architecture also opens the door to exciting features and abilities. A very strong five-star safety score is also a positive.

THE SPECS

- **PRICES**
\$49,990 (Evoke sedan)–\$85,490 (Caprice)
- **ENGINES**
2997 cc six cylinder petrol; 3564 cc six-cylinder petrol; 5967 cc eight-cylinder petrol
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**
8.3 (Evoke) to 11.8 (SSV utility) litres per 100 km; capacity 71 litres; emissions 185 (Evoke) to 276 (SSV wagon) grams per km



1993



1993



THE SPECS

- **PRICE**
\$18,990 (LS) and \$21,990 (GLS)
- **ENGINE**
1198 cc three-cylinder fuel-injected petrol
- **FUEL AND ECONOMY**
4.6 (LS)/4.9 (GLS) litres per 100 km; capacity 35 litres; emissions 106 grams per km

MITSUBISHI MIRAGE

The 'old school reborn' advertising strikes a nostalgic note, but getting behind the wheel of the new 2013 Mitsubishi Mirage reminds us that the past is another country. This is new-age thinking in action.

With a 1.2 litre normally aspirated three-cylinder petrol engine, it's foremost a city car. While competence continues into the 100 kmph zone, it's the decent visibility, light and zippy manners and brilliant 4.6 metre turning circle that will be the talk of the town.

And beyond those city limits? Well, yes, the tri-pot is patently having to work harder; you'll be glad that the stereo has a good volume range. Being tallish, relatively narrow and very light also makes it a minnow. The greatest positive is that, even at highway pace, it retains thrift, wholly through numerous, painstaking weight-reduction methods.

The challenge comes in accepting the car at more than face value: it's an inexpensive vehicle that feels a touch cheap. A little more flair wouldn't have gone amiss.

IT'S IN THE BLOOD

LeasePlan New Zealand's relationship with its first-ever customer is still going strong, 20 years on.

WORDS BY SARAH ELL PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAI FISHER

While having a blood test, few of us give any thought to the technology behind the scenes that makes the process possible. Beckman Coulter is hardly a household name, yet without the local branch of this international company, the thousands of blood and other tests ordered by medical professionals every day could not be processed and analysed.

The company supplies and services blood and other medical testing equipment in laboratories, hospitals and other healthcare facilities around the country. Its small team of six staff, managed out of Beckman Coulter's Australasian base in Sydney, is almost constantly on the road providing sales and service throughout the country.

Beckman Coulter was the first client signed by LeasePlan when it set up its New Zealand operation, building on the relationship the two companies enjoyed internationally. Twenty years on, it's a mutually beneficial alliance which has stood the test of time.

Beckman Coulter's Sydney-based human relations manager Pamela Youngman says a major factor in sustaining the relationship between the two companies is the quality of customer service she receives.

'I personally have been dealing with LeasePlan since 2000, and have

enjoyed really good service,' she says. 'Every new account manager I have dealt with has been equally as good as the one before.'

The New Zealand team shares usage of two Holden Omega station wagons, which are replaced every three years or 100,000 kilometres.

'This model was chosen because they can carry the equipment, they are reliable, have a good service history and have to travel quite a number of miles.'

Having LeasePlan procure and manage the New Zealand fleet makes Youngman's job easier.

'I am the HR manager and also the company secretary, so I have a lot of things to do other than worry about vehicles. I don't have to think terribly much about it other than when the cars come up for renewal — it's a seamless process,' she says.

'I have very little more to do with it other than approving the monthly accounts. LeasePlan manages all the servicing, and the drivers just call LeasePlan if they have any problems on the road.'

The smooth running of Beckman Coulter's fleet is critical to enable medical testing and diagnosis to take place around the country, Youngman says. 'Everything comes out in the blood — blood tells you everything.' ■

BELOW: Beckman Coulter's Service Manager Ian Fisher spends many hours on the road around the North Island.



The Holden Omega station wagons were chosen because they have a good service history, are reliable and are large enough to carry the equipment required.

20 YEARS AGO TODAY...

It's been 20 years since LeasePlan opened its New Zealand office. Think 1993 wasn't that long ago? Look back on what happened that year and think again...

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2 LITRES OF
MILK \$2.42

PRICE OF
1 LITRE OF
PETROL 98c

PRICE OF
A BIG MAC
\$2.95

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(not born till March 1, 1994)

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20.

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AS THE 42ND
PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED
STATES OF
AMERICA

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FITZPATRICK**
CAPTAINS THE
ALL BLACKS
TO A SERIES
WIN AGAINST
THE TOURING
BRITISH
LIONS SIDE

APPLE
LAUNCHES
THE FIRST
MACINTOSH
COLOR
CLASSIC



Image: Photosport NZ

FEBRUARY
26.

**FIRST BOMBING OF
THE WORLD TRADE
CENTER IN NEW
YORK KILLS SIX AND
INJURES MORE THAN
1000 PEOPLE**



**BELL SOUTH (NOW
VODAFONE) SET
UP ITS MOBILE
PHONE NETWORK IN
NEW ZEALAND, TO
COMPETE WITH THE
NEWLY PRIVATISED
TELECOM**

**AUCKLAND'S NORTHERN MOTORWAY ENDED
AT SUNSET ROAD, AND THE
SOUTHERN HAD JUST BEEN EXTENDED
OVER THE BOMBAY HILLS**



Image: Alamy

**JANE CAMPION'S
FILM THE
PIANO OPENS
IN CINEMAS,
GOING ON TO WIN
THREE ACADEMY
AWARDS**

TOYOTA

FORD/
MAZDA

NISSAN

HONDA

**WERE STILL ASSEMBLING CARS IN NEW ZEALAND
(BUT ALL WOULD CEASE IN 1998, WHEN TARIFFS
ON IMPORTED CARS WERE ABOLISHED)**

**WHITNEY
HOUSTON TOPS
THE NEW ZEALAND
CHARTS FOR 10
WEEKS WITH 'I WILL
ALWAYS LOVE YOU'**



INSIDE LEASEPLAN INTERNATIONAL

Brian Rogerson of *Asset Finance International* talks to LeasePlan International's Chairman and Chief Executive Vahid Daemi about where the company is going as it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

LeasePlan had a good year in 2012 — on the eve of its fiftieth anniversary it recorded near-record results. With a global presence in 31 countries, and a recent record of consistent growth, LeasePlan's international success has been headed for the last seven years by Vahid Daemi.

COPING WITH CULTURES

How can a Europe-originated lessor enjoy global success over a long period given the multitude of cultures within which it must work? The secret lies within LeasePlan's own culture. Daemi said, 'Our focus is fundamentally based on the interests of our customers. Our staff are trained to seek customers' needs and requirements first and foremost. They are encouraged to realise that whatever work-action they take — be it good or bad — will have some consequent effect on their customers.'

'We have an extremely transparent hierarchical system with an open-door policy for all and where, for example, I make myself available to whoever wishes to contact me.'

He added: 'We believe that when employees feel engaged in all aspects of the business, it leads to higher standards of performance across our organisation. It is important for us to know what our employees think about what we are doing.'

LOOKING AHEAD

What does Daemi envisage to be a global fleet lessor's chief challenges in 2013?

'Well,' he stressed, 'the global recession has not gone away yet and demand in many markets continues to be slow. In some countries, however, such as Greece, where much competition has disappeared, we find we are reaping the benefits and doing well.'

He added: 'However, the principal challenge for any lessor operating today, and especially in Europe, is the ever-increasing tide of regulation that is aimed at the industry. I believe it is counter-productive and regulation has become over-done. If it continues to be applied at the current rate it will create real problems for the industry.'

So how does Daemi see LeasePlan faring globally over the next two years?

'I believe that LeasePlan can generate long-term growth opportunities through geographic expansion,' he said. 'We have chosen to do so at a moderate pace which takes into account market conditions. Pursuing geographic expansion at a moderate pace allows us to finance this autonomous growth from successful operations in well-established markets.'

Otherwise, Daemi believes the small to medium-sized enterprise

IN NUMBERS:

7.4%

PROFIT INCREASE IN 2012 ON
2011 YEAR: €225M TO €241M

€19.5bn

TOTAL ASSETS 2012, UP FROM
€18.9BN IN 2011

1.34m

VEHICLES IN LEASEPLAN
INTERNATIONAL'S PORTFOLIO IN
2012, UP FROM 1.33M IN 2011

15.7%

CORE TIER 1 CAPITAL RATIO, WELL
ABOVE CURRENT AND FUTURE
BASEL III REQUIREMENTS

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customer segment presents the company with the opportunity to expand its client base because of the potential for higher growth in this area. In addition, second-hand vehicle market values look more positive than in previous months.

The qualities that helped define the company and propelled it from its beginnings in a small office in Amsterdam 50 years ago, to its presence on five continents, still apply today.

'They form the cornerstone,' Daemi added, 'of our values: a combination of commitment, expertise, passion and respect.'

To this you can add innovation — for as Daemi concluded: 'So far as LeasePlan is concerned, innovation is an ongoing quest.' ■

LeasePlan operates in 31 countries, including the new LeasePlan Russia, opening for business in 2013, and of course LeasePlan New Zealand.

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