



**LeasePlan**  
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**Facts and Figures:**

Total staff	535 in the UK, 6,200 worldwide
Locations	Slough (UK HQ), Milton Keynes and Rustington (West Sussex); 29 other countries including the Netherlands (group HQ near Amsterdam), Australia, India, New Zealand and USA
Sector	Automotive and finance
Annual turnover	£734 million (UK), €7 billion (global) in 2010

**Scoring from the Research:**

 <b>Primary Benefits</b>	★★★★★
Monetary benefits including pay, pension, and share options	
 <b>Training and Development</b>	★★★★★
The availability of function-related development initiatives and programmes	
 <b>Career Development</b>	★★★★★
Includes long-term career path development, talent management, succession planning, and performance management	
 <b>Secondary Benefits and Working Conditions</b>	★★★★★
Non-monetary benefits like leave allowance, and flexible working conditions	
 <b>Company Culture</b>	★★★★★
Culture management – the policies and procedures that a company has in place to establish and nurture a healthy culture, e.g. diversity, CSR and social/networking activities	

**Outstanding for:**

- Leading position in global vehicle leasing market
- Intense customer focus
- People-centric approach to management
- Supporting staff while they grow
- Great company car scheme



**Global fleet and vehicle management company LeasePlan is the world's largest fleet and vehicle leasing company, managing more than 1.3 million cars and vans and offering financing and fleet management services in 30 countries. It is a top-three player in most of the countries in which it operates, and is number two in the UK with 125,000 vehicles, mostly in company schemes. LeasePlan is jointly owned by Volkswagen Bank and the private Dutch company, Fleet Investments.**

### About the Organisation

Founded in the Netherlands in 1963 and active in the UK since 1979, LeasePlan doubled in size in 2000 when it acquired rival Dial Contracts, and it has grown organically ever since. Business has held up well during the economic crisis with global revenue rising by more than £500 million in 2010 with gross profit growth of 30%. "Our brand promise is to make it 'easier to leaseplan' for everyone we do business with," says David Brennan, managing director of LeasePlan UK. "The UK's leasing industry is very mature so we're very focused on customer service to ensure we continue to grow our business profitably."

Steve Moss, LeasePlan's UK HR director adds: "What we do is quite easy to copy, so to stay ahead our staff have to do it better than our competitors. That means really understanding our customers' needs." This can go well beyond the core activities of arranging finance, providing vehicles and keeping them in good working order. Environmental concerns and spiralling fuel costs are combining to put the spotlight on carbon emissions, so LeasePlan advises on environmental legislation and works closely with supplier partners to address this issue.

"The leasing industry is an exciting place to be," says David. "It's not just about cars: we often have to think quickly to overcome challenges to our business, and it's the ability of the individuals who work for LeasePlan that helps us to deliver." »

## Company Culture

"LeasePlan is a great place to work – you only have to look at the number of people who've chosen to stay here for many years," says the company's client services manager, Janine Hamblin. "We're a very people-centric organisation." This was a main reason why Steve joined the company in 2010. "If you work in HR you want to work for a business that takes people seriously," he says. "It was clear that a big part of LeasePlan's success was getting the right people doing the right things."

The people focus extends outside the company. "This is the most customer-focused company I've ever worked in," says Steve. "We're very much a service business and we encourage our people to

be proactive in solving customers' issues. What impresses customers most is not having no problems (which is almost impossible) but fixing problems effectively when they occur."

Steve insists there is no long-hours culture and the company cares a lot about work-life balance. But he admits that customers are not the only ones who can be demanding. "It's not about us being demanding of our staff, it's about staff being demanding of themselves. People may sometimes work evenings or weekends, but it's because they want to."

The organisational structure is quite flat, with most staff working in small teams that enable management to be personal and hands-



**"Developing people is something LeasePlan is particularly good at. Managers are keen to help you realise your career aspirations and allow permanent moves and secondments so you can get involved in areas that interest you"**

"In my four years here I've been actively helped by spending time in different areas of finance. This has been crucial in enabling me to gather experience for my CIMA [accountancy] qualification."

"Since I've become a people manager I've received support from the HR function as well as my manager and my mentor within finance. This support network means that when you come across an issue there's always a team of people there to help you."

**Clive Johnson, 26**  
**Treasury accountant**  
**First joined in July 2007**



**"What we do is easy to copy, so to stay ahead our staff have to do it better than our competitors,"**

**Steve Moss, HR director**

on. David gives an informal monthly briefing to all the headquarters staff, and isn't above leading the karaoke at the Christmas party. "I'm impressed by how visual and approachable our senior management team are, and the fact that our MD knows you by name," says Janine.

### Innovation and Creativity

"Vehicle leasing isn't an industry where there are massive product innovations because we're primarily service-led," says Steve. "But we're always on the look-out for ways to improve our products, and a lot of our best ideas come from our customers or employees." That said, the company has a consultancy team which analyses customer needs to come up with solutions. Some are bespoke for a single customer, while others are more widely applicable. Any employee can make suggestions which will be seriously evaluated.

One of LeasePlan's latest new products is SalaryPlan, a salary sacrifice product that enables a client's staff who don't qualify for a company car as a perk to pay for one themselves. With a low-emission vehicle such as a BMW 1 Series, the tax and National Insurance advantages can make this cheaper than the employee buying their own car, says Steve. LeasePlan was one of the first UK leasing companies to offer this, with great success.

Another UK first was it offering 'open book' accounting with its Open Calculation product, which enables customers to examine LeasePlan's costs and see exactly how much profit the company is making from the contract.

### Pay and Benefits

LeasePlan aims to pay median salaries for its Slough location and it benchmarks against other local employers. Annual salary rises have been around 2.5-3.5% in recent years despite the tough economic conditions. Salary scales are flexible, allowing scope to reward individuals' personal performance.

Sales staff are paid commission; non sales staff receive bonuses usually amounting to 7.5% or more of their salary, depending on company and personal performance. There's also an annual award of £1,000 to the four people who have most conspicuously upheld the company 'values' of commitment, expertise, passion and respect.

The pension scheme was recently revamped, with the company contributing 6% and employees 4%. It's a salary sacrifice scheme, and the company shares the saving in employer's National Insurance with the employee.

Unsurprisingly, the firm's flexible benefits has a top class company car scheme. All staff »



## **Training is all about giving responsibility to staff to not just meet, but exceed customer expectations**

(except for those on the most junior grade), qualify for a car and almost everybody has one. Additionally, staff can have a 'loan' car on an annual basis at very preferential rates, ideal for other family members.

Other flexible benefits include private health cover, life assurance, gym membership, critical illness cover, child care vouchers, annual health checks, and a wide range of vouchers and discounts. The standard holiday allowance is 25 days, and staff can 'buy' an extra five or 'sell' two. Flexible working is encouraged where roles permit, with people job-sharing or working hours that suit their family or other commitments. "I believe enabling staff to work flexibly is massively repaid by the loyalty you get," says Moss. "It shows that the organisation respects its employees and vice versa."

### **Career Development**

LeasePlan UK recruits about 80 people a year. Some are school-leavers or graduates but the majority already have some experience. "Most of our recruits don't come from within the leasing industry," says Steve. "The most important thing for us is a really strong customer service ethic."

A couple of UK board members have spent their whole careers at LeasePlan. "We prefer to promote people from within, partly because

personal attitude is so important to us," says Steve. A number of Brits have gone all the way to the top of the group, including the CEO and four senior VPs.

A person's attitude and the way they work is considered so important that it is included in LeasePlan's performance management process. In addition, each employee undertakes an annual 360-degree review, including input from customers as well as colleagues. "This approach generates much more buy-in from the individual," says Steve.

Training and development is tailored to fit the individual, with major emphasis on practical experience and guidance. "I'm a big believer that developing people involves much more than a series of training courses, and we make sure people's work takes them further than just doing their day job," adds Steve. There are plenty of cross-functional teams, new projects and opportunities for secondment and temporary promotion, and staff are encouraged to manage the direction of their own careers.

As part of its strong service focus, in 2011 LeasePlan began working with the Institute of Customer Service to get its people accredited to the institute's standards. Other staff can take relevant professional qualifications in fields

such as accountancy or HR, and sometimes first degrees and MBAs.

### Corporate Social Responsibility

In 2006 the LeasePlan group launched ChildPlan, a global community investment programme to improve the lives of disadvantaged children. It supports street children in Nepal, children with HIV/Aids in southern India and disabled children in Rwanda, and is building a school for 600 children, in southern India.

In the UK teams get a day off each year, on full pay, to do voluntary work, and staff are also encouraged to support national and local charities and community projects.

As part of its environmental fleet service GreenPlan the company supports its customers – and its own staff – in reducing their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by choosing lower-carbon vehicles and training drivers to drive more economically: the average new LeasePlan car in 2010-11 emitted just 134g/km and Nissan Leaf electric cars are being introduced.

Just over half of LeasePlan staff are female, although the proportion drops to 20% for senior positions, a disparity the company is trying to reduce. Slough is a racially diverse town, and 18% of LeasePlan staff come from ethnic minorities. The company has Investor in People Gold certification.



**“I’m lucky to work among a fantastic group of people. My management team and colleagues are amazingly supportive and the team I manage are energetic, fun, loyal and committed, with a huge knowledge and skills base”**

“We have a very approachable management team at all levels, and they are always pleased to share feedback and ideas from anyone. Even the MD will invite staff to ‘drop in’ to his office to have coffee and talk about any concerns, queries or ideas.”

“Great ideas are often investigated and implemented – for example, ideas and actions arising from our annual sales conference are often brought back into the business.”

**Janine Hamblin, 30**  
**Client services manager**  
**First joined in April 2004**

