



## Top Telecoms Provider Calls For Toyota And Lex

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One of the UK's leading providers of voice, data, Internet and call-centre services, Thus plc, is moving its 300-strong operational fleet over to Toyota. The solus agreement with Toyota Fleet accompanies the award to Lex Vehicle Leasing of a contract to finance and manage the entire Thus fleet.

Glasgow-based Thus, formerly Scottish Telecom until its demerger from the Scottish Power Group, operates an extensive communications network throughout the UK. It offers a variety of Internet services under the Demon brand, and is one of the UK's largest Internet service providers (ISPs) for business and professional customers. It also provides call-centre services for clients including the BBC, Compaq and the US Embassy.

The company had previously organised its 300 operational cars, used by engineering and field sales staff, on the same all-make user-chooser basis as its 100 or so management vehicles.

In April this year, however, it undertook a comprehensive review of its fleet-management programme, and issued invitations to both manufacturers and finance providers to tender for its business.

In selecting a single make of vehicle for its operational cars, whole-life costs and reliability were the key criteria. Thus management had had previous experience of Toyota cars within the Scottish Power Group.

Now Avensis and Corolla models are expected to predominate in the fleet, with Lex supplying the cars on three-year full-maintenance contract hire with a variety of mileages.

Welcoming the appointment of Lex Vehicle Leasing Ken Moncrieff, Head of Procurement at Thus, said that following an extensive and keen tender competition he was confident that it would provide a "positive, pro-active and value-added service in successfully implementing our fleet management contract. We look forward to securing the further benefits attributable to a solus-badge agreement with Toyota."

"This is a significant agreement for us," said Toyota Fleet's General Manager Jon Pollock. "Thus is a major player and was clearly aware of the cost-effectiveness and dependability of Toyota vehicles and the support we are able to provide. Our reputation is one of our biggest assets and we look forward to working with Thus and Lex to justify it."

Fiona Hall, Regional Sales Director of Lex, added: "We are delighted to welcome Thus plc on board. It is one of the leading players in the UK telecoms market and we look forward to a long-term partnership."

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