



NEWS RELEASE

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BARBON CHOOSES SSP AS NEW IT PARTNER

Deacon, Letsure and new personal lines venture Avenue Insurance Services set to benefit from £1million investment

As part of an ambitious future growth strategy, leading UK property & commercial insurance broker Barbon Insurance Group (tel: 01420 488288 or visit www.barbon.com) has chosen SSP as its new IT partner for well-established businesses Deacon and Letsure, as well as new personal lines venture Avenue Insurance Services. Under the £1million agreement, the software provider's innovative Insight call centre solution will support a total of 150 users across the three brands.

Following an in-depth review of its current IT systems, Barbon chose SSP's Insight solution to streamline the number of systems currently being used by landlords & contents insurance provider Letsure and blocks of flats specialist Deacon. The new software will help facilitate the continued success and development of both brands as well as support the launch of Avenue, which will target niche household business through price comparison sites. In addition, the rationalisation will help Barbon significantly reduce its cost base.

Martin Oliver, CEO of Barbon comments: "Although Letsure and Deacon are already successful businesses, future development would have been hampered by a mismatch of technology that was inflexible and unable to support Barbon's growth plans. Letsure used four different systems that were no longer fit for purpose whilst Deacon's existing solutions were okay, but wouldn't provide competitive edge.

He continues: "Despite having a strong 15-year history with SSP, its people and products, I stipulated from the outset that the heads of business would be making the final decision. After several demonstrations and site visits, it was agreed that the SSP solution offered the flexibility, speed, usability and cost benefits required to meet the

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brands' business objectives. Plus SSP's experience of the insurance industry is second to none – making it a much valued partner for Barbon going forward.”

David Rasche, SSP's Chairman says:”Barbon is going from strength to strength and recognises that modern, flexible IT is fundamental to helping it achieve its ambitious growth plans. The Insight solution is highly efficient in processing insurance business with users claiming increases in staff productivity of up to 40 per cent compared to older technology. However, in designing the system we have been mindful of the need to allow users to be able to change and configure the system themselves.

“The flexibility and passing of control to the user really resonated with the Barbon businesses and we are delighted to have won this deal and strengthened our relationship across the group. It is especially pleasing to have been selected by all three brands independently, which is a great endorsement for Insight and SSP. This is an exciting time for Barbon and we look forward to working with them for many years to come.”

Barbon has strategic business units located in London, Glasgow, Croydon, Bordon, Lincoln, Chelmsford and Bournemouth.

The company's market leading brands include Keelan Westall, Cadogan Keelan Westall, Deacon, Cadogan Hanover Park (SaifInsure, TruckInsure, Plastech, Performance Media and CareAssured), HomeLet, Letsure, BIBALet and Farr.

Avenue will be operated by Barbon's Glasgow operation which is also the base of Letsure. As a specialist division with extensive experience of both the mainstream and niche home insurance markets, it is ideally positioned to support this first move into personal lines.

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Note to editors:

Barbon Insurance Group Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. It has a gross written premium of more than £150 million and is committed to delivering innovative insurance solutions, as well as risk management and consultancy services. It has built an impressive reputation through knowledge, experience and a commitment to understanding its customers' businesses.

Barbon is wholly owned, through Caley Limited, by leading banks HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group.

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