

# UNICOM PRESS RELEASE

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## **UNICOM APPOINTS PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS AS AUDITORS.**

**Images available at [www.unicomimages.co.uk](http://www.unicomimages.co.uk)**

Northenden-based Universal Utilities PLC (UU), which trades as Unicom and specialises in telecoms for small business, has appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as its auditors.

The move to appoint a "big four" accountancy firm comes as Unicom continues its relentless growth having just posted 2007/2008 financial year sales of £41.6 million.

Unicom saw a 13.5% increase in sales and a 23.6% rise in profits to the end of April 2008, its ninth trading year.

The Manchester-based business saw turnover increase from £36.7 million to £41.6 million, with pre-tax profits at £9.5 million compared to £7.7 million to the end of April 2007.

"2007/08 has been another excellent year of trading and forecasts for 2008/09 are equally positive – we're expecting turnover to reach £45 million and profits are projected to rise to more than £11 million," said Chris Earle, Operations Director of Unicom.

"Furthermore, we saw our highest ever monthly sales in May 2008, which is also a strong indication that despite difficult economic environment, we are clearly providing a highly-competitive and highly-rated service which seems to be pressing all the right buttons with a very price-sensitive small business customer base.

"Our customer retention level is currently running at 86% against a sector average of around 70%. Of the 14% we lose, only a third go to competitors, the remainder being businesses that close or move premises for one reason or another, which is obviously beyond our control.

“By appointing PwC as our auditors, we are also sending clear signals that it is our intention to operate to high standards, and to provide the highest-quality products, service and support.”

Ends

### **About Unicom**

Unicom, part of Universal Utilities PLC, is a telecommunications service provider specialising in the small business market. It currently provides telecom, broadband and website services to 70,000 small businesses throughout the UK. Unicom has an annual turnover of over £42m, with 10 regional offices situated around the UK.

Unicom has attracted its small business customers by offering discounts of up to 60% off BT's prices, at the same time as keeping customers on the BT network. Unicom currently supplies in excess of 450 million minutes of call time to its small business customers each year. Unicom differentiates itself by offering a high standard of personal customer service, with no premium rate 0845 or 0870 numbers, no recorded messages or menus, and no overseas call centres. Unicom boasts one of the highest customer retention rates in the industry.

Unicom was ranked 26<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2006, 89<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Fast Track 100 index in December 2006 and 96<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2007. In September 2007 it achieved a ranking of 95<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index. The company employs 500 people.

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