

UNICOM PRESS RELEASE

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UNICOM THROWS REDUNDANT PIPEX STAFF A LIFELINE.

Fast-growing Manchester-based telecoms independent Unicom, which specialises in services for small business, is recruiting staff made redundant by neighbour Pipex.

Unicom has provided jobs for a number of former Pipex staff, and wants to talk to as many more as it practically can.

"We're working hard, we're enjoying strong growth and we are looking to recruit experienced telecoms professionals to ensure that we maintain and further improve our service levels as that growth continues," said Tony Eagleton of Unicom.

"Pipex's loss is undoubtedly our gain – despite the questionable state of the economy and high levels of uncertainty, we are searching high and low for quality people. Pipex may be an unexpected source.

"Unicom retains far more of its customers than virtually any other telecoms provider - loyalty levels are running at 86% and of the 14% churn, only a third go to competitors, the remainder being businesses that close or move premises for one reason or another. They're staying with us because, unlike most of our competitors, we employ real people, based here in the UK, who answer 100% of incoming customer service calls within six seconds and 96% within four seconds.

"We don't just want to maintain that, we want to improve upon it – and more good people are the answer."

Unicom, with regional headquarters in Birmingham, Ipswich, Leeds, Milton Keynes, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield and Stoke-on-Trent, believes that businesses are increasingly recognising how its combination of low, fixed prices and high quality customer service compares very favourably with that of BT.

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 £40m, 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 26th in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2006, 89th in the Sunday Times Fast Track 100 index in December 2006 and 96th in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2007. In September 2007 it achieved a ranking of 95th in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index. The company employs 500 people.

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