

**PRESS RELEASE – LOCAL PRESS**

**15 September 2009**

**118 777 starts directory enquiry price war**

**New service cuts call costs by half**

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

Men with moustaches beware. A Manchester based competitor is going head to head with the market leaders and is slashing the cost of directory enquiry calls.

New figures released show 118 777, from Northenden telecoms firm Unicom, is on average 28 per cent cheaper than 118 118 and 53 per cent cheaper than BT's 118 500.

Calls to 118 777 have trebled in the past three months as customers discover the huge savings they can make.

Chris Earle, Unicom operations director, said, "The success of 118 777 in the relatively short time it has been operational proves you can deliver a high quality directory service for a fraction of the cost of our competitors.

"We are standing up against the corporate Goliaths who pass on huge overhead and national marketing costs to customers. We choose to focus our efforts on providing the quickest and most accurate service and keeping call costs as low as we can."

Buoyed by the new figures and proud of its Manchester base, Unicom has branded Manchester Airport with 118 777 imagery.

Earle added: "Returning holidaymakers can now start saving money the minute they land by saving 118 777 in their mobiles.

Unicom's directory enquiry service is available to both business and consumer users.

**~ ends ~**

**Photograph Caption:** Set to take off - Chris Earle, Unicom's operations director, is pleased with the performance of 118 777

## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About Unicom**

Unicom, a trading name of Universal Utilities PLC, is a telecommunications service provider specialising in the small business market. It currently provides telecom, broadband and website services to 80,000 small businesses throughout the UK. Unicom has an annual turnover of over £45m, and employs 500 people at its 10 regional offices situated around the UK.

Unicom has attracted its 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 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 has a directory enquiry service, 118 777. Based on calls from a BT or Unicom telephone line, 118 777 is 28% cheaper than 118 118, and 53% cheaper than 118 500. Calls from other networks may vary.

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, and in September 2008 a ranking of 88th, in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index. In October 2008 Unicom became ISO 9001 certified.

For the year ending April 2009, Unicom reported pre-tax profits of £11.2m on a turnover of £44.5m (with profits up 14.3% and turnover up 7% from April 2007). Unicom expects profits to be in excess of £12m on a turnover of more than £48m for the current year.

Unicom is a patron company of The Outward Bound Trust.

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