

# UNICOM PRESS RELEASE

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## **42% OF SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS SAY A SUMMER HOLIDAY IS OUT OF THE QUESTION IN 2008**

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

Just 58% of small business owners believe they will be able to take a holiday this summer, while only 39% say they could take a holiday when they really wanted to.

That's the finding of Manchester-based Unicom, which has regional headquarters in Birmingham, Ipswich, Leeds, Milton Keynes, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield and Stoke-on-Trent, and which specialises in telecommunication services for small business.

Unicom asked 433 business owners whether they would be able to take a holiday at all this summer, and 183 (42%) said they would not be able to because of work pressures.

Meanwhile of 365 business owners who responded to the question of whether they could go on holiday at a time that suited themselves or their family - school holidays, for instance - only 142 (39%) said they could.

"Small business owners and managers are clearly working harder than ever to weather the current economic storm, and just when many of them really need a break they find they can't take one," said Chris Earle, Unicom's Operations Director.

"What is notable is that we're not seeing any fall off in the levels of phone calls made by small businesses during what should be a period when they should be taking summer breaks - they're working much harder just to stand still."

The news comes hot on the heels of another study by Unicom which revealed that 44% of businesses are being forced to raise their prices because of increasing costs creating further pressures.

Ends

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 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 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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