

## **UNICOM**

### **Media release**

#### **Customer focus pays dividends for Unicom**

#### **A new customer signed up every three minutes**

The recession is proving beneficial to Manchester based telecoms firm, Unicom, with an announcement it is winning a new customer every three minutes.

Unicom, part of the Universal Utilities Group, calculated it signs up approximately 900 new business customers for telephone lines and calls every week. When broken down this equates to 20 new customers every hour, or put another way a new client every three minutes.

Unicom specialises in telecom, broadband and website services to the small business market and currently supplies 80,000 businesses throughout the UK.

Chris Earle, operations director at Unicom, said: "Although the recession is partly a factor, with smaller business of all sizes looking to save money on their telecommunications, we are also helped by many of our competitors continually raising prices and reducing service levels.

"A recession is a time when every business needs to focus on its customer service. There is no excuse for losing existing clients through poor service levels and it is economic suicide to lose customers who will see you through the hard times.

"That's why we have invested heavily in training and other staff initiatives rather than increasing our prices, something we haven't done since 2001. A well motivated team reflects positively in the levels of service our customers enjoy."

Asked if he was happy to maintain this impressive rate of new customer wins Earle added, "No; it is our aim now to attract a new client every two minutes and reach the 100,000 mark in the next year."

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### **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 44% 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.

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

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