

# UNICOM PRESS RELEASE

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## **IS YOUR BUSINESS USING ITS PHONE TO THE MAX?**

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

We may be a nation that thrives on new technology, but we still rely on our good old fashioned landline phone features to stay in touch.

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.

There are five key network features that stand out as being the most used to help create time, breathing space and business opportunity for smaller companies - but not everyone fully exploits them.

Call Diversion is the most used landline feature amongst the 70,000 small business customers of Unicom. Nearly 12,000 customers use this feature to divert calls to almost any phone, including mobiles. It can also divert calls while a line is busy or the phone isn't being answered.

Caller display comes in second with 8,400 businesses using this service to show the number that's calling on Caller Display compatible equipment.

1571 provides an answer machine service without the need for equipment. When a message is left, the customer's dial tone will sound slightly different as a notification there's a message waiting - however only half as many businesses use 1571 as Call Diversion.

Call Minder Standard is similar to 1571, however, it has more mailbox space for messages and can record a personalised greeting. Just under 5,000 Unicom small business customers use the feature.

4,900 businesses take advantage of Call Waiting - if a customer is on the phone and someone calls then the customer hears a 'beep' noise to let them know someone is waiting on the line. The caller is told the customer has been notified rather than getting an engaged tone.

"Small businesses need every possible time-creating advantage in the current economic environment, but while many are completely up to speed on all the network features that can help them on both the

time and business fronts there are still a great many who could still benefit - we're always happy to help with guidance," said Chris Earle, Operations Director of Unicom.

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#### 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, 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.

This year Unicom launched a new directory enquiry service, 118 777. Based on calls from a BT or Unicom telephone line, 118 777 is 34% cheaper than 118 118, and 30% cheaper than 118 500 and 118 247. 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 in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index.

For the year ending April 2008, Unicom reported pre-tax profits of £9.8m on a turnover of £41.6m (with profits up 29.2% and turnover up 12.3% from April 2007). Unicom expects profits to be in excess of £11m on a turnover of more than £45m for this year.

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