

Press release

27th October 2009

Unicom calls up £10m deal

Images available to download at www.unicomimages.co.uk

MANCHESTER telecoms firm Unicom is on target to top a £50m turnover after tying up major deal with international network operator Verizon.

The £10m deal will see Verizon continuing to supply Unicom with voice calls in the UK for the next 12 months. Verizon has 321 offices in 75 countries spanning 6 continents.

Unicom supplies business phone lines and broadband services to 80,000 small and medium sized businesses. The company employs 500 staff at ten UK offices, with 300 based at its head office in Northenden.

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 approaching £50m for the current year.

Chris Earle, Unicom operations director, said:

“This deal means we can keep prices low for our business customers and avoid the price increases noticed by customers of our main competitor, BT. We work hard to make sure we’re sourcing deals with suppliers to pass on savings to our customers.

“Tough economic conditions have helped us because businesses are cutting costs and it’s easy to change telecoms provider. Our proposition is strong and this deal, alongside others we have lined up, means we’re on track to reach a turnover of around £50m by the end of the year.

“Unicom wins a new customer every 3 minutes but we refuse to rest on our laurels and we’ll continue to market ourselves to small and medium sized businesses in the UK.”

See www.switchingon.com and www.verizonbusiness.com/uk

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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.
- 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 2009 Unicom became ISO 9001:2008 certified and was awarded both the Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People award by independent assessors.
- Unicom is a patron company of The Outward Bound Trust.