

# **UNICOM PRESS RELEASE**

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## **GO PAPERLESS PHONE BILL – SAVE HALF THE LOCAL FOOTBALL GROUND’S WORTH OF TREES.**

Trees covering an area half the size of the local football ground could be saved from deforestation every year if a telecoms company succeeds in persuading its customers to switch to paperless billing.

Unicom, the small business specialist telecoms provider, which is based in Manchester and has regional headquarters in Birmingham, Ipswich, Leeds, Milton Keynes, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield and Stoke-on-Trent, is working on converting its 70,000 business customers to online billing.

“Currently Unicom provides telephone services for around 70,000 business customers, each one of which requires a monthly invoice detailing their service charges. For each of those customers an average of four pages will be used in a monthly invoice including the envelope,” said Tony Eagleton of Unicom.

“This equates to using 280,000 sheets of paper per month, and works out at over 3.3 million sheets of paper per year used on invoices alone.

“Our research shows that the average tree can produce around 8,500 sheets of paper, which equates to 34 trees worth of paper used every month, or more than 400 trees a year.

“If every Unicom customer signed up for e-billing, trees covering an area the size of Trafalgar Square would be saved from deforestation – that’s an area around about half the size of the football grounds in most towns and cities.

“E-billing is massively more environmentally friendly way to receive a phone bill. Instead of receiving a paper invoice through the post, we send the bill by email in the form of a PDF file.

“Customers with paperless billing can opt to have full itemisation on their bills - where every call made is listed - at no extra cost. On a paper bill there is a £2.50 charge for this option to cover the extra paper/postage costs and so on, so we’re passing the savings on to our customers.”

The offer is open to all Unicom customers. As well as helping the environment and reducing carbon footprints, switching to e-billing will benefit another worthy cause. For every Unicom customer that makes the switch to email billing, Unicom will make a donation to the NSPCC, helping to support the important work they carry out to prevent cruelty to children.

### **About Unicom**

Unicom, part 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 £40m, with 10 regional offices situated around the UK.

Unicom has 70,000 customers, primarily small or owner-managed businesses with telephone bills of approximately £1,000 a year. The specialised nature of the telephony and broadband products offered by Unicom provides significant savings for its business users.

Based in Manchester, it has regional headquarters in Birmingham, Ipswich, Leeds, Milton Keynes, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield and Stoke-on-Trent.

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 26<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2006, 89<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Fast Track 100 index in December 2006 and 96<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2007. In September 2007 it achieved

a ranking of 95<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index. The company employs 500 people.

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