

For immediate release: 10th November 2009

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Sky and Unipart create state-of-the-art repair process

Unipart Technology Logistics (UTL) – part of the Unipart Group and a leading integrated technology logistics and repair provider – recently extended its long-standing partnership with Sky, which operates the most comprehensive multi-channel television, entertainment and communications service in the UK and Ireland.

In addition to partnering with UTL for its logistics operations, Sky has now awarded its set top box repair business to the company in a ground-breaking project aimed at revolutionising set top box repairs. This extension to the existing logistics outsourcing contract will create a state-of-the-art, dedicated logistics and repair centre at UTL's Baginton site in Warwickshire. UTL will test, refurbish and repair Sky's set top boxes, developing industry-leading processes on the very latest cutting-edge technology like High Definition (HD) digital television.

David Picton is Sky's Head of Logistics, Repair and Fleet, with responsibility for supporting Sky's field operations in customer homes. Impressed and convinced by the 10-year reputation that UTL had built as one of Europe's largest repair and refurbishment operations for mobile technologies, with clients such as Vodafone, Apple and '3', David said: "I sought an innovative and progressive team, which clearly cared passionately about optimising the end user experience for Sky's 9.5 million customers. As Sky continues to grow and deliver an unprecedented choice of movies, news, entertainment, sports channels and interactive services on Sky digital, we wanted to select a flexible and efficient repair and logistics partner."

"In evaluating this tough repair market, we were thoroughly won over by UTL's adaptability and fresh-thinking, by their understanding of what we are trying to achieve and by their people," explained Picton. "We know that the UTL team care as passionately as we do about getting things Right First Time for our customers. When you match that with a relentless focus on continuous improvement and field engagement, we are confident in a productive and exciting extension to a partnership which is already exceptionally successful."

UTL is currently the centre for Sky's UK logistics and distribution activities, supporting 7-day a week operations for 5000 in-house and business partner field engineers nationwide. The two companies have worked together for nearly five years, specifically in their commitment to reducing the environmental impacts of business operations. When Sky became the world's first carbon neutral media company in 2006, UTL were a key component of Sky's commitment to environmental sustainability across the supply chain, from energy-efficient buildings to optimising recycling.

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To support that commitment even further, UTL will take more than 610 tonnes of carbon dioxide out of Sky's annual distribution emissions with this new repair operation. That amount of carbon would equate to the electricity required to power over 75 homes¹.

The new reverse logistics operation at Baginton also incorporates field recycling, which enables all set top boxes to be tested, screened and either repaired and refurbished for re-use or broken down parts for recycling. By committing to a 'zero landfill policy', UTL and Sky are working together to ensure there is a valuable use for all waste, which supports the joint commitment to reduce the impact that their supply chain business has on the environment.

Claire Walters, Managing Director, Unipart Technology Logistics, underlined the company's commitment to the partnership. "We strongly believe that Sky's vision, combined with UTL's on-going mission to drive out waste, reduce cost and improve customer satisfaction, will deliver a truly innovative solution that reinforces Sky's market position as the leading entertainment and communication provider in the UK.

UTL's ability to deliver highly innovative solutions is based on our commitment to The Unipart Way – a proprietary approach to business that consistently reduces waste and creates additional opportunities to do more for our customers.

UTL will draw upon its considerable expertise in the technology sector – built on solid experience with other large customers such as Vodafone – and our talented and passionate workforce to deliver an integrated logistics and repair solution that clearly demonstrates our absolute customer focus, outstanding operational efficiency and commitment to continuous improvement."

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Notes to editors:

The following images are available to accompany this release:

1/ Image of Sky set top box

2/ Image of UTL, HQ in Nuneaton

3/ UTL Sky Operation

About The Unipart Group

The Unipart Group employs more than 8,000 personnel worldwide and has an annual turnover of more than £1billion. It is a leading third party logistics provider and consultant in operational excellence, operating across a range of market sectors, including automotive, leisure, marine, manufacturing, mobile telecoms, rail, retail and technology.

All Unipart sites operate according to the Group's proprietary version of Lean known as The Unipart Way. This is a philosophy of working underpinned by tools and techniques that inspires efficiency, flexibility and outstanding customer service in any process.

Unipart also offers expert consultancy in implementing Lean principles and in supply chain management to a wide range of both public and private sector organisations.

The Group's clients include Sainsbury's, ASOS.com, Homebase, Vodafone, 3, BSkyB, Jaguar Land Rover, Severn Trent Water, the NHS and HMRC.

¹ Source: US EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator. NB: This figure is based on US electricity to CO2 conversion factors.

About Unipart Technology Logistics

Part of the fastest growing division within the Unipart Group, Unipart Technology Logistics (UTL) was created in 1997 to bring Unipart Group's expertise to the technology logistics sector. The business has grown dramatically over the last eleven years.

Operating out of the Midlands, UTL employs over 1,600 people and has delivered world class, market leading supply chain solutions to high profile technology companies that have increased their competitive advantage in the market.

UTL's consultative approach to logistics management starts by understanding deeply a customer's needs and requirements, then refining them into efficient, reliable and replicable processes. UTL can handle every part of a customer's supply chain, from warehousing and distribution, to customisation, repair, installations, reverse logistics, recycling and running call centres.

With customer relationships that are built upon rapport and openness, Unipart Technology Logistics' goal is to achieve a true partnership where UTL becomes an extension of the customer's organisation - working together to increase revenue, lower costs and exceed customer and staff expectations.

About Sky

Sky operates the most comprehensive multichannel, multi-platform television service in the UK and Ireland. Over 9.4 million homes enjoy an unprecedented choice of movies, news, entertainment and sports channels. Sky continues to break new ground with its own portfolio of channels: Sky1 combines its commitment to UK production with the best of the US; Sky Arts continues to embrace new audiences as the UK's only dedicated arts channel brand; Sky Sports is still raising the bar in sports broadcasting; and Sky News remains a pioneer in multiplatform television news.

Over 5 million Sky homes now enjoy the control and flexibility of Sky⁺ and 1.3 million homes have already joined Sky⁺HD, which provides access to 34 dedicated HD channels. Sky is also the UK's fastest growing broadband and fixed-telephony provider.

About the UTL/Sky Partnership

UTL is very proud of the strategic partnership it has developed with Sky since first partnering in 2004. Originally fulfilling next day orders for Sky's 850 installation engineers, the operations have expanded to accommodate Sky's significant growth and drive into new markets. Today, UTL provides a range of value added logistics services, supporting nearly 5000 field engineers from dedicated facilities in Rugby and Baginton, via Unipart's branch network of 131 sites throughout the UK. Using The Unipart Way, UTL has been able to touch all areas of Sky's business, including Sky Broadband, with up to 80,000 routers delivered direct to homes each month, through to Sky HD, where UTL's logistics expertise has pushed penetration to over 1.6 million homes, and on to helping lead Sky's environmentally aware reverse-logistics and repair operations.