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PRESS INFORMATION

The Phone Co-op picks up the torch as BT announces price increases

Survey results issued by The Phone Co-op today give some hope to customers despairing of a positive customer service experience in today's telecoms market.

Last year OnePoll named BT as offering the UK's worst customer service with other telecoms suppliers Sky, Virgin, Carphone Warehouse and O2 also featuring in the top 10 worst offenders.

The Phone Co-op, meanwhile, which is the UK's only telecoms provider owned by its customers, says that over 90% of its customers rate the helpfulness of its service team as very good or excellent.

According to chief executive Vivian Woodell, "These figures indicate that it is still possible to get good service even in the cut-throat world of telecoms. The difference is that, because we are owned by our customers, we only ever act in their interests.

"And this extends to how we manage pricing," he added. "Unlike BT who have just announced yet another set of price increases, we do not have to squeeze every last penny of profit out of our customers in order to satisfy City investors."

Overall, the results of the survey bear out the co-operative's belief that its business model plays a key role in its success. An impressive 97% of respondents said that they feel they can trust The Phone Co-op, whilst over 85% would definitely recommend the co-operative to their friends and family.

Notes to editors:

The Phone Co-op invited 6,593 home users of its services to complete the survey in March 2010. 1,416 responses were received and analysed. Summary results can be downloaded at http://www.thephone.coop/images/stories/about_us/press_releases/Customer_Survey_results_July_2010.pdf

The Phone Co-op is the UK's only telecommunications co-operative, procuring telecommunications services on behalf of its customers, many of whom are co-operatives, charities and other not-for-profit organisations. The Phone Co-op's service has been taken up by over 15,000 customers, including Midcounties, Channel Islands, Southern, East of England, and Radstock Co-operative Societies, Suma Wholefoods, Christian Aid, Amnesty International, Triodos Bank, the Centre for Alternative Technology, Manchester City Council and Unison. As a co-operative owned by its customer members, The Phone Co-op distributes any profits which are not re-invested back to members via a dividend based on each member's spend and through a loan fund which supports other co-operatives. For more information, visit www.thephone.coop