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SMALL BUSINESSES LOOKING FOR A BETTER ENERGY DEAL TOLD ‘SEND US YOUR BILL’

uSwitchforbusiness.com, is trialling a new service called ‘Send us your bill’, designed to make it easier for small businesses to get accurate and impartial information about energy prices and to switch to a better deal.

Businesses can post their energy bills for free to ‘FREEPOST uSwitch’ so that an expert business advisor can use the information to find the best deals and then call the customer back to talk them through their findings. The service will help companies that are short on time, but keen to save money on their energy bills. Freeing up this money means that they could invest the money into growing their business instead.

Energy costs are a significant overhead for many small businesses with nearly a fifth (19%) saying that they account for between 5% and 10% of their overheads. For over one in ten (11%) energy accounts for more than 10% of total overheads^[1]. And with small businesses spending on average nearly £9,000 a year on their energy bills and one in five (20%) spending over £10,000^[2], it’s not surprising that getting the right business energy contract is important for 86% of small businesses^[3].

However, some 70% of businesses remain with their incumbent or existing energy supplier. This is often because they don’t have the time or are simply unaware that they have the power to switch supplier and save significant sums of money in these challenging economic times. These companies could be missing out on a better rate for their energy.

James Constant, Director of uSwitchforbusiness.com, says: “Small businesses are key to the economy’s recovery, and this initiative will help them to focus their time and money where it’s needed – in growing their business. Energy costs can make up a large proportion of an

SME's outgoings and cutting them back can free up money to invest in growth. However, checking they are on the best deal isn't always a priority, and business owners often don't have time to look into it. This service means they can pop their bill with their phone number in the post, and a uSwitchforbusiness advisor can do the hard work for them.

"We already know that a lot of small businesses value our telephone service, but with 'Send us your bill' we can go one step further by reaching out to those who are really pushed for time. With current savings of up to £962^[4] we hope to help businesses put valuable pounds back into their pockets and into growing their business."

Businesses interested in the 'Send us your bill' service should post a copy of their latest energy bill with a contact telephone number to: FREEPOST USWITCH. Alternatively, people can call 0800 051 57 70 to speak to a customer services advisor. Copies of bills will not be returned afterwards, but will be destroyed.

For more information visit www.uSwitch.com or call 0800 093 06 07

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For more information please contact:

Jo Ganly, uSwitch.com on 0207 802 2915 or joganly@uswitch.com

Beth Murray, Lansons Communications on 0207 566 9728 or bethm@lansons.com

Lisa Grando, Lansons Communications on 0207 294 3669 or lisag@lansons.com

Notes to editors:

Research is taken from a uSwitchforbusiness.com poll, undertaken online with 240 key owners and financial decision makers of businesses with between 1 and 50 employees during January 2011.

1. When asked 'Thinking about your business' overheads, how much does energy account for?' 18.8% said 5%-10%; 11.4% said 10%+
2. When asked 'On an annual basis, how much does your business spend on energy?' the average amount spent was £8,990.90; 12.7% said £10,000 - £24,999; 3.9% said £25,000 - £49,999; 2.5% said £50,000 - £99,999; 0.5% said £100,000. Therefore 19.6% said over £10,000.
3. When asked 'how important is getting the right business energy contract to your business?' 57.8% said 'Very important'; 28.2% said 'important'.
4. uSwitchforbusiness customers have saved an average of £962 a year by switching supplier between 01/10/2010 and 31/12/2010.

About us

uSwitch.com is a free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones and personal finance products including mortgages, credit cards, current accounts and insurance. In 2010 uSwitch.com celebrated ten years of saving customers money.

The service is also available via fax and post. Consumers should fax 020 7233 5933 or write to Customer Services, uSwitch.com, Centro 3, 19 Mandela Street, London, NW1 0DU with their postcode and usage details.

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