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Boomerang Thursday the busiest day for parcel returns in 2011

*Over two million parcels expected to be returned following
Mega Monday'*

28 November 2011: CollectPlus today warns retailers to expect a surge in returned goods following 'Mega Monday' as online shoppers rush to secure replacement gifts before Christmas.

The innovative parcel service has conducted research showing that one in ten (10%)¹ festive gifts bought online last year were returned before Christmas. It forecasts that over two million parcels will be returned this week, with the peak day set to be 1st December, dubbed 'Boomerang Thursday'.

The next five weeks are set to be one of the busiest periods for returns, following significant growth in online retail, which is predicted to hit £7.75bn in the five weeks to Christmas, according to the IMRG, the UK's industry association for e-retail.

A 15% increase in parcel return volumes is expected during the week, thanks to increasingly high levels of consumer confidence in the returns process. Today, over one in three (37%) online shoppers are fully confident of receiving replacement gifts in time for Christmas, just three weeks out from the big day. Conversely, less than a fifth (17%) would request a refund and buy the gift elsewhere for fear of not receiving the replacement in time.

CollectPlus works with its network of over 4,500 corner shops to offer consumers the opportunity to pick up and return deliveries to and from their local shop at a time that is convenient for them. CollectPlus' innovative returns service allows parcels to be dropped off outside working hours, with 98% of outlets open seven days a week and, normally, early in the morning until late at night. Indeed, last Christmas, one enterprising shopper in Lancashire went so far as to return a parcel at 09.43am on Christmas Day.

CollectPlus is a joint venture between PayPoint, the UK's leading retail payment network, and the UK's leading parcel delivery company Yodel.

Mark Lewis, CEO of CollectPlus, comments:

"Despite the tough economic conditions, we're still expecting a bumper Christmas for online retailers. Throughout 2011, the commercial benefits that a clear and efficient returns service can bring, has increasingly become clear to retailers. However, with customers staying loyal to those that make this area a focus, it is important that this is sustained throughout the festive period. More and more consumers are becoming confident in the ease of use of services such as Click & CollectPlus and with a greater number of retailers recognising this, we see it as a growth area as we move into the new year."

Thanks to CollectPlus' innovative parcel tracking system, which sees returns scanned immediately when dropped off in a store, retailers this year will have better and earlier visibility of the volume of goods being returned, allowing more effective warehouse and stock management to ensure availability for shoppers in the run up to Christmas.

82% of people in towns in the UK are within a mile of a CollectPlus shop, which are all part of the PayPoint network. CollectPlus provides additional choice, flexibility and convenience for retailers and their customers. Not only do customers benefit from the extended opening hours, but retailers are able to accurately track goods as they make their way back to the depot, allowing them to manage stock more effectively.

ENDS

For more information or to speak to Mark Lewis of CollectPlus, please contact the CollectPlus Press Office on:

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About CollectPlus

CollectPlus is a delivery and returns service giving online shoppers greater freedom and flexibility with the choice of collecting and dropping off parcels at local convenience stores.

With 98% of CollectPlus outlets open seven days a week and, normally, early in the morning until late at night, the service offers online shoppers the option to pick up or drop off purchases at a time and place convenient to them. 82% of the UK population lives within a mile of a CollectPlus store in urban areas, and 83% within five miles in rural areas.

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In 2011, CollectPlus has been named 'Third Party Logistics Supplier' of the year at the Retail Week Supply Chain awards; 'Innovative Delivery Service' at IMRG's eCommerce Excellence Awards; and has been highly commended by Retail Systems for 'Supply Chain Solution of the Year'.

[1] Figures taken from research carried out by Opinium on behalf of CollectPlus. 2000 online consumers were polled in November 2011