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CollectPlus reveals significant 2014 expansion plans as it aims to challenge the Post Office

Store network set to grow by 33% this year, following 25% growth in 2013

London, UK - 12 May 2014: CollectPlus, the UK's largest store-based parcel delivery and returns service, today revealed plans to expand its network by 33% - from 5,500 to 7,500 stores in the next twelve months, with a longer term aspiration of achieving 12,000 stores and becoming a more convenient option to the Post Office. The news comes as the company prepares to celebrate its fifth birthday, and follows a 25% network growth last year off the back of record online retail sales and volumes with a growing element of volume driven by mobile sales.

The expansion of the CollectPlus network forms part of the company's ambitions to become the UK's best loved parcel service and a more accessible alternative than the Post Office in terms of opening hours and locations. Founded in 2009, CollectPlus has grown rapidly, with over 5,500 convenience stores, newsagents, supermarkets and petrol stations currently offering the CollectPlus service.

The expansion of the CollectPlus network is made possible thanks to the company's access to PayPoint's extensive store network and the reach of Yodel's parcel delivery services. However, as part of its aim to offer people the most convenient way to send, return and collect parcels where and when has been right for their customers, CollectPlus has also established a number of Parcel pick up and drop off points at non-PayPoint locations, such as [CollectPlus@Westfield](#), a dedicated customer lounge which allows shoppers at the west London shopping centre to try on online purchases before they take them home and then accessorise or complement those purchases with other merchandise from the Westfield London portfolio of retail brands. CollectPlus will, as it continues to grow, continue to seek new types of locations that suit customers' busy and variable lifestyles.

There are significant commercial benefits for stores offering CollectPlus, which is proven to increase sales over and above the commission earned from parcel transactions. The latest research from CollectPlus outlines that stores offering the service can expect an annual revenue increase, on average, of more than £2,700. In addition, 86% of people who have used the service rate its convenience and value for money highly, with 63% using it more now than they did a year ago and 90% planning to use it again in the future. CollectPlus handled its 10 millionth parcel in November 2012, hitting 15 million and 20 million milestones in June 2013 and November 2013 respectively, with the company now handling in excess of 250,000 parcels every week.

Neil Ashworth, CEO of CollectPlus, says: *“Our philosophy has always been to make life easier for our customers. Whether a customer is returning, sending or collecting one or several parcels, we want them to have the best possible experience from start to finish. As such, we are committed to expanding the CollectPlus network to ensure our unique offering is available wherever our customers are, and in stores that have the capacity and ability to deliver a great service even during busy times.*

“The CollectPlus network has been strategically developed to incorporate the best local stores, which are close to where our customers spend their time on a daily basis, whether that is their home or place of work. We are now providing returns solutions for over 260 retail brands, resulting in an ever-growing and wide-ranging customer base. We’re extremely proud that, as we approach our fifth birthday, we are accelerating our network coverage and will be almost two thirds the size of the Post Office this time next year, which, in its current form has been around for nearly thirty years. Furthermore, we are working towards a longer term goal of having 12,000 stores in our network and strengthening our position as the largest store-based parcel service.”

CollectPlus provides people with more flexibility, choice and simplicity when collecting or dropping off parcels. With nearly all CollectPlus stores open early until late seven days a week, the service offers customers a convenient alternative to Post Office queues or having to wait at home for a courier delivery.

A strong performance this past Christmas and the subsequent growth of its Click and Collect service has reinforced the need to provide people with a convenient delivery and collection channel that fits into their day, with CollectPlus seeing 58% of online click and collect purchases being collected by customers outside of traditional opening hours.

Neil Ashworth, CEO of CollectPlus, continues: *“The internet gives shoppers the ability to browse and purchase goods whenever and wherever they like. However, we know from our own research that inflexible deliveries can damage the overall shopping experience for customers. Part of the appeal of shopping online is the convenience it offers, but as well as being able to make their purchases when they want, people also want to be able to get their goods at a time and a place that suits them.”*

As part of its 2014 expansion plans, CollectPlus last month unveiled its new integrated marketing campaign – which includes TV, TV Sponsorship, Radio, PPC, Display, Digital out-of-home (OOH), Search, PR and Social. The campaign takes CollectPlus into new territory with its first ever TV ad, as it looks to become a household name. The ad highlights the number and variety of CollectPlus parcel stores by showing them wrapped as parcels and is running over five weeks across satellite TV.

CollectPlus is also sponsoring Pick TV until 23rd May with a series of idents, plus, there will also be digital OOH advertising in CollectPlus stores offering new customers 20% off their first CollectPlus purchase at collectplus.co.uk.

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

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For further information, please contact the CollectPlus team at the Red Consultancy:

Email: collectplusteam@redconsultancy.com

Tel: 0207 025 6500

Notes to Editor:

Size of CollectPlus' network compared to that of the Post Office:

In the last Post Office Network report (March 2013), the Post Office network stood at 11,780 outlets (down from 11,818 in 2012).

CollectPlus' current network is just over 5,500 outlets, which is just under half the size of the Post Office.

When CollectPlus reached 7,500 stores, this would make its network just under two-thirds (64 per cent) of the Post Office network at its current size.

CollectPlus customer experience research

CollectPlus commissioned Market Measures to research the experience of its customers. 3,700 online interviews were conducted among current and lapsed CollectPlus customers. All interviews were completed between 7th and 17th February 2014.

ABOUT COLLECTPLUS

CollectPlus is the largest store-based delivery and returns service giving online shoppers the ability to collect and drop off parcels at their local store. Founded in 2009, it answers a clear need for a modern alternative to the Post Office that is convenient and easy to use.

The success of the innovative model is reflected in the 260 retail brands that CollectPlus provides returns solutions for, with nearly 100 added over the past year. Click&Collect+, which enables customers to order online and have their items delivered to their local CollectPlus store, is available from a rising number of retailers; from Amazon to Asda and House of Fraser to River Island. This complements the returns offer that CollectPlus provides to retailers, thereby offering a complete delivery and returns service.

With a network of over 5,500 stores open early 'til late seven days a week; 89% of the UK population already live within a mile of a CollectPlus shop in urban areas and 89% within five miles in rural areas. The store network has grown by over a quarter in the last 12 months and continues to expand.

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

ABOUT YODEL

Yodel is the UK's leading parcel carrier, offering the widest range of service options. The company handles over 135 million parcels every year. It has approximately 1,500 clients and a relationship with 80 per cent of the UK's top retailers.

Yodel is headquartered in Hatfield and has over 60 locations across the UK, including three central sorts and over 50 service centres.