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John Lewis to offer free returns and collections through convenience stores

Watford, 22 February 2013 - John Lewis has announced that it will give its customers the choice to return online purchases of clothes, shoes and fashion accessories for free via a network of over 5,000 local convenience stores, newsagents and petrol stations.

The returns option will be offered in partnership with CollectPlus, the largest store-based parcel service in the UK, making it easier and more convenient than ever before for customers to return items.

With over 5,000 stores in the CollectPlus network, all of which are open early until late, seven days a week, customers will be able to return items at a time and place that suits them, as well as accurately track their package every step of the way back to John Lewis.

From early autumn 2013, John Lewis will also trial a 'Click&Collect+' service from CollectPlus in Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of South-West England. This will give customers the ability to pick up their John Lewis online purchases from their local CollectPlus parcel store. The service will cost £3 and will typically take three days to fulfil.

The announcement follows a successful roll-out of John Lewis' 'click and collect' service, to 234 collection points within its department stores, 'at homes' shops, and Waitrose branches.

Karen Dracou, head of omnichannel development at John Lewis, says:

"Orders using Click & Collect have nearly doubled over the past year, and accounted for an impressive 35% of online sales over the Christmas period, so we know that customers are looking for ever-more convenient ways of shopping with us. By partnering with CollectPlus, we can extend our existing reach of John Lewis and Waitrose collection points to a wider geographical base, providing an even more convenient way for our customers to shop."

Neil Ashworth, CEO of CollectPlus, says:

"We've designed the CollectPlus service to ensure that customers find collecting and returning items as easy and as painless as possible. The extended opening hours associated with all CollectPlus stores allow customers to drop off or return items outside of the traditional trading day. With this in mind, the CollectPlus service will fit perfectly around the busy lives of John Lewis customers, making it easy for customers to fit collecting and returning purchases into the rest of their day.

"We are delighted that John Lewis has chosen to partner with CollectPlus and are looking forward to working closely with them to make their customers' online shopping experience even more easy and convenient."

A recent IMRG Home Delivery report indicates that almost three quarters (72%) of online shoppers would not be willing to travel more than five miles to collect goods ordered online, demonstrating the value of the CollectPlus network as it brings retailers that much closer to their customers. With over 85% of people in towns in the UK within a mile of a CollectPlus store, CollectPlus is answering this growing consumer need.

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ABOUT COLLECTPLUS

CollectPlus is a delivery and returns service giving online shoppers' the choice to collect and drop off parcels at local convenience stores. 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 160 retail brands that CollectPlus provides returns solutions for, with nearly 100 added over the past year. Delivery to local store, "Click&Collect+", is provided to a rising number of retailers from Amazon to House of Fraser and ASOS to Very.co.uk. This complements the returns offer that CollectPlus provides to retailers, offering a complete delivery and returns service. CollectPlus also offers the option for UK residents to drop off eBay items to buyers, or presents to friends and family at their local CollectPlus stores for delivery to any UK address.

With a network of 5,000 shops open early 'till late seven days a week; 87% of the UK population already live within a mile of a CollectPlus shop in urban areas and 88% 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 the John Lewis Partnership

The John Lewis Partnership - The John Lewis Partnership operates 39 John Lewis shops across the UK (30 department stores and nine John Lewis at home), johnlewis.com and 288 Waitrose supermarkets. The business has annual gross sales of over £8.7bn. It is the UK's largest example of worker co-ownership where all 81,000 staff are Partners in the business.

John Lewis - John Lewis, 'Britain's favourite electricals retailer 2012'* and 'Best Multichannel Retailer 2012' **, typically stocks more than 350,000 separate lines in its department stores. The website stocks over 200,000 products focused on the best of fashion, beauty, home and giftware and electrical items including online exclusives. johnlewis.com is consistently ranked one of the top online shopping destinations in the UK. (www.johnlewis.com). John Lewis Insurance offers a range of comprehensive insurance products - home, car, wedding and event, travel and pet insurance and life cover - delivering the usual values of expertise, trust and customer service expected from the John Lewis brand.

* Verdict Consumer Satisfaction Index, April 2012

** PayPal etail Awards 2012

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www.johnlewis.com/twitter

www.johnlewis.com/facebook

[www.johnlewis.com/youtube.](http://www.johnlewis.com/youtube)