

SwitchIP Delivers Heaven Scent IP-based Network for The Perfume Shop ahead of Valentine's Day Compliance Deadline

First IP over broadband solution to be used for Chip and PIN transactions

London UK, 2nd February 2006 – SwitchIP, one of the first companies in the world to provide integrated voice, data and video conferencing over a secure managed broadband connection today announced that its InPurple Freecall solution has been deployed across each of The Perfume Shop's 130 stores to support in-store Chip and PIN payments and provide high-speed data links to the company's central warehouse ahead of the February 14th Chip & PIN compliance deadline. After this date, customers will no longer have the option to sign for goods at check-outs and will have to know their PIN numbers in order to complete transactions.

Following an accreditation by Barclays Merchant Services, InPurple is now authorised to carry out Chip and PIN transactions. By deploying InPurple in this way, The Perfume Shop will benefit from much faster connections than would be possible using older PSTN networks – keeping the company's chain of shops free of long off-putting queues at checkouts, and ensuring payments are dealt with in a secure and efficient manner. InPurple achieves such a high level of security by using a single centrally managed firewall to protect the entire network. This means that a specifically trained network security expert can apply one stringent policy and that potential exposure points are kept to a minimum.

InPurple Freecall also provides each of The Perfume Shop's stores with a fast and reliable link to its central warehouse. Alex Bezer, IT Director for The Perfume Shop, comments: "Last year we were running a night shift in order to meet delivery targets, and managed connectivity rate of 80% max. This might sound acceptable but, believe me, when 20 per cent of your data – that's one in every 5KBs of information – can't get through first time round, tempers start to get a bit frayed. By contrast, having deployed InPurple Freecall, we achieved a 99.99% connectivity rate this year, which contributed considerably to the collective Christmas cheer across the company."

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In addition, The Perfume Shop is now perfectly placed to make the move to a converged Voice over IP (VoIP) environment as InPurple Freecall is specifically designed to support concurrent voice, data and video over IP communications. The company wouldn't even need to change its phones or telecommunications hardware in the first instance – unlike many other IP solutions, which require a major up front investment in network architecture and hardware.

Alex Bezer concludes: “We have gone from a situation where sending the most basic data over the network was a dreaded and cumbersome task, to an environment where we can be confident that even time-sensitive and highly secure transactions will be completed quickly and reliably. As a result we have a network in place that has helped us maintain our place in a competitive market and that allows us to make future provisions for further enhancements to meet tomorrow's communications requirements.”

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About SwitchIP

SwitchIP, one of the UK's most innovative IT networking and communications companies, was formed in January 2004. With its groundbreaking InPurple product portfolio – the first network solutions to deliver voice, data and real-time video conferencing over a single broadband connection – SwitchIP has distinguished itself from its competitors and won significant contracts in a highly competitive and volatile market sector. The company's clients span the retail, manufacturing, leisure and voluntary sectors and include Knight Frank, Virgin Active, Diabetes UK and The Bollom Group. Through parent company, Switch Communications, SwitchIP enjoys close working relationships with Alcatel, Cisco and BT – and was appointed as a BT Wholesale partner in its own right in August 2004. For more information, please visit <http://www.switchip.net>

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