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Dunbar's digital safe, Iomega, Norton Internet Security 2011

By Art Snyder

Autumn traditionally is your super-busy time with rink sessions, sometimes day and night, from Monday through Sunday. With that type of schedule, you need to make sure your back office is running in tip-top shape. That calls for a lot of attention being given to your computer, the very heart of operations, as well as a few other aspects out of public view. So, a look at the new Dunbar digital safe is on the agenda, as are Iomega hard drives, Norton Internet Security 2011, and Revo Uninstaller Pro, among other attention-getters. Full details are below.

Dunbar Cash Manager Safes

Serving hundreds of cities from New England to the West Coast, Dunbar Armored is one of the largest security services in the country. They recently added some high-tech flare to the venerable office safe, with the introduction of Dunbar Cash Manager Safes. If you have a daily cash flow larger than the average rink, you might find this Dunbar safe a good fit. Essentially, a Dunbar Cash Manager Safe allows you to lock up funds "safe and secure" with this new line of in-store, electronic cash-validating safes. This safe entered the digital age by incorporating two-way digital wireless communication capabilities.

"The Dunbar Cash Manager Safe is designed to provide immediate, wireless transmission of cash-deposit data from safes located in retail outlets, to the Maryland corporate headquarters of Dunbar, "where the information is consolidated and formatted into multiple cash-management reports available for real-time access by corporate offices," a company spokesman stated.

In effect, you're able to stash rink cash receipts throughout the day into a compact, vault-like safe that has specialty doors and other design elements that keeps cash from piling up in cash registers and drawers. This ongoing deposit of cash reduces theft and related concerns, and no one has to tote a bag of cash each night to a bank branch for deposit. Hence, outside robbery exposure is eliminated, too. For more on the Dunbar Cash Manager Safe, call Dunbar Armored Inc., at (410) 229-1904, or e-mail them at wayne.birely@

dunbararm.com. Online, they offer a full accounting of their security cash-management safes. They're at dunbararmored.com.

Iomega hard drives

Iomega has designed and manufactured dozens of feature-laden hard drives that are perfect for backup tasks of your rink business. Over the years, the company has earned its well-deserved reputation for quality hard drives, internal and external alike, including compact and rugged, pocket-sized portable external drives that feature plug-and-play ease of use, to let you take work home (no groans, please), or simply give you peace of mind regarding your digital safety. As these secondary external drives — a simple USB cable is all you need to use them with any modern computer — evolve, you can today get enormous hard drives in the 1,000-GB range (called a terabyte) for \$100 or less. Further, these ultra-high-capacity drives are physically no bigger than, say, a 50-GB drive from 2005, and with the advent of super-fast USB 3.0 standards, performance is startlingly fast. In all, these developments quickly force retail prices down, so keep your eye on Iomega and their class-leading external hard drives. These include drives engineered for several categories: portable, desktop, multimedia, network (for two or more computers in use in your back offices, perhaps a workhorse desktop and a secondary laptop), removable, extreme/rugged-duty and others. Note, as well, that many company drives for 2011 are as small as a deck of cards — easy to carry in your shirt pocket as you travel about. For more, visit Iomega at go.iomega.com and spend time there to get your money's worth for your rink that serves your community so well.

HP PhotoSmart eStation All-in-One

Inkjet printers today are so sophisticated and loaded with features (as with the ability to print superb color photographs) that no matter how strong a printer may be, it'll often be priced under \$150, and perhaps under \$100. Still, a few manufacturers that are dominant — Hewlett Packard, or HP, is one — can design a state-of-the-

art printer that stands ahead of the class. Such is the case of the \$249 HP



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Envy 100 e-All-in-One. It's a compact, beautifully designed inkjet that is less than 5 inches tall. It's really fast, too, with nearly perfect print output every time. The other HP printer is the HP PhotoSmart eStation All-in-One, essentially the gold standard all-in-one, complete with a handy 7-inch, detachable color touchscreen that allows hands-on management of many print tasks. This super-fast (32 ppm in color!) flagship model lists for \$400, although such printers often have a more competitive "street price," to jack up the value. The HP PhotoSmart eStation All-in-One additionally incorporates the very latest print technology, which markedly reduces your print costs as it produces prints second to none. Check your local tech palace for some hands-on evaluation of this printer. You'll be as pleased as a 5-year-old in a Gummi-bear factory.

Windows XP security

Windows 7 is proving to be a worthy successor to Windows XP, and Microsoft has addressed an array of XP security concerns with the development of their latest operating system. There's little need for add-on protection with Windows 7. While XP has evolved into a terrific operating system, its one area needing help is that of digital security. Fortunately, to strengthen your computer's digital security as you work with Windows XP, you have several excellent options. Better still: Most are free for the downloading. Yes, free.

XP digital security generally entails two areas of concern, firewalls and antivirus protection. With many years of Windows experience, I have narrowed my list of recommended soft-

ware enhancements to Comodo Firewall Pro, Avast Antivirus Home Edition and AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition. The details of their multitude of features are too numerous to recount here, so trust me on this: If you download and install those three programs, you should be set for many more months of life with your trusty Windows XP system. To see what the software companies offer, visit them at enterprise.comodo.com, avast.com and avg.com.

Norton Internet Security 2011

Here's some outstanding news: Norton has revised its category-leading safety software so it now accomplishes two major feats at the same time. Norton's antivirus, firewall and other digital safety packages have enjoyed a love-hate relationship with consumers for two decades. As good and reliable (especially with regular updates) as Norton has been, their multifaceted software has been ponderously huge, many times slowing computers down to the great exasperation of users. And, the sheer magnitude of Norton software really took a bite out of hard-drive resources. In short, Norton usage has been fat and slow. That's history with Norton Internet Security 2011. The software is sleek and fast, impressively so. In tests, I was able to boot a Windows XP computer running Norton in less than a minute. That's right. Under 60 seconds. Now you have almost no excuse with staying with, or rejoining the Norton bandwagon, in the practice of digital safety. Also, many Norton products like Internet Security 2011 allow you to load the software on up to three computers, all for one very competitive price. For more, visit Norton at Norton.com.

Products mentioned in this column are widely available. Check local office suppliers, computer and technology vendors, mass-merchandise and discount retailers, and mail-order and online sources. With broadband Internet access, software programs are a fast, easy and often cheaper download, saving you staff time and improving efficiency in many ways.

Art Snyder is a longtime RINKSIDER contributor. He lives in Centerville, Ohio, and has used computers and technology since 1986.