

focus on TECH

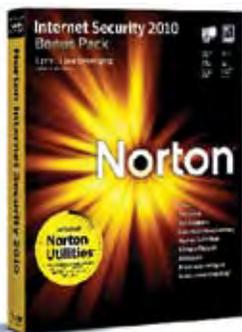
Norton software, EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser, YouTube marketing

By Art Snyder

The start of the 2010 New Year looks more promising than ever, thanks to new security software from Norton and graphics-editing software from Adobe. And, the digitally oriented EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser offers an ideal way to generate income. For great publicity, check out what YouTube offers you and your rink as you peek ahead to the days of January and beyond. Full details are below.

Norton Internet Security 2010

The Internet is essential to today's business activities, from ordering foodservice supplies to staying in touch with your accountant or offering a Web site to tell the public about all that's great at your rink. All of this means you have to be online much of the day, every



day of the week, throughout the year. That said, you need full-fledged software protection from Internet mischief. That's what you get with Norton Internet Security 2010, from Symantec. This mature suite of integrated programs carries out the Norton tradition of armor-plating your computer. Your checklist: Norton Internet Security 2010 provides a high level of safety against digital viruses, Trojans (stealth programs that wreak havoc), rootkits, malware and spyware of all kinds. Further, it sets up a digital firewall to stop unauthorized intrusions and attacks, which are likely to arrive via e-mail and through your Web browser. Norton Internet Security 2010 fully integrates with your Firefox, Internet Explorer or any other browser to accomplish its guardian tasks. An especially welcome feature of Norton Internet Security 2010 is its ability to automatically block digital traffic to and from any malicious or questionable Web site (you can opt for automated updates to the program, too, to keep your safety up to date all the time).

Another plus with Norton Internet Security 2010 is that despite its heavy-duty features, it goes lightly on your computer's RAM and other system resources. This helps your everyday word-processing and database programs, for example, run with ample

speed. A heavy footprint had been a bane of Norton's in the past. Also new is the Quorum feature of Norton Internet Security 2010. Quorum measures all Internet sites that you visit against each site's "good reputation." That is, many sites are known to be reputable, and Norton Quorum keeps tabs on all of them. But if the software finds an unknown or suspicious site, it intercedes and protects you. Beyond this reputation scoring, Norton Internet Security 2010 continues to evaluate sites and other Internet traffic in a host of other, proven ways that it has discovered over the years of offering security software.

Taking this Norton Internet Security 2010 identification feature another step is Norton Safe Web. It's a new layer of safety with Norton Internet Security 2010, and when you do Web searches using Google, Yahoo or Bing, Norton Internet Security 2010 identifies any turned-up site that appears untrustworthy and alerts you to the danger.

A handful of competitors to Norton security software includes tech manufacturers Kaspersky and Panda, both of which are well-regarded and will have forthcoming alternatives to Norton software. Look to these pages next time for reviews.

If you previously used Norton Internet Security 2009, the upgrade to 2010 is free. Otherwise, Norton Internet Security 2010 costs \$69.99 for a three-PC license. The software is available on disk or as a convenient download from symantec.com.

Adobe Photoshop Elements 8

Adobe practically invented high-end graphics software, and they deservedly "own" the advertising and publishing worlds. But they're not so esoteric or intimidating that they would overlook the more casual user of graphics-editing software, and that's where you find Adobe Photoshop Elements 8. The ability of this well-developed Windows program — now well into its second decade — to improve photographs and manage logos, typefaces and all sorts of graphics tools and accents is legendary, and to that end for the new year is Adobe Photoshop Elements 8. It's the perfect graphics program for rinks that create newsletters, media releases, marketing mail (with your rink photograph and fantastic logo, of course!), birthday reminders, and all sorts of other postal messaging, besides signage for your rink, fliers for schools, and handouts during sessions, among other uses. Adobe Photoshop Elements 8 is a richly featured program that encompasses a suite of useful applications that will superbly surpass your needs with graphics software. Someone of intermediate or better computer skills will be best-suited for Adobe Photoshop Ele-



ments 8. Still, before a user gets up to speed, the program offers an array of automated quick-fix features to make tasks successful, as with balancing colors, improving image lighting and contrast, and prepping photos, clip art and other graphics for print use.

A separate, full-featured program for editing video and sound files is Adobe Premiere Elements 8. It's similar in many ways to Adobe Photoshop Elements 8, and you can get it at a bundled, discounted price of \$150 for both Windows programs. Otherwise, the programs are about \$100 each. (If you want to create training videos or episodes for YouTube, you'll find Premiere Elements 8 invaluable.) For online training, do a search on either program as key words to uncover a wealth of instruction.

JScreenFix

JScreenFix is a "software solution that can fix stuck pixels, reduce screen burn-in and improve the quality of images displayed on a screen," they suggest, and they're right. If you're like many today who have made the switch to an expansive LCD screen, only to discover a bum pixel or a stuck pixel, which is a bright, unanticipated dot of color amidst the rest of the screen colors. Stuck pixels are not uncommon on high-resolution LCD screens, so the downloadable JScreenFix applet will correct matters and get your viewing on track again. The JScreenFix applet runs in your Web browser and takes care of stuck pixels on LCD screens, removes image-persistence on LCD screens, reduces burn-in on plasma screens, and works in Windows, Mac and other operating environments. At wikihow.com, do a search on "How to Fix a Stuck Pixel on an LCD Monitor" to see how the software works, with clear instructions and a video, too. For more on the free JScreenFix program, visit jscreenfix.com.

EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser

Here's an opportunity to work with area schools, churches or clubs, create goodwill, raise some money, and show your "green credentials." That's what you get with an EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser. The EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser pays up to \$300 per item (most items are more modestly priced) for donated consumer electronics items that can be recycled. To do this, your rink should work with schools and other such organizations and have parents, neighbors, co-workers and local businesses donate designated items that you collect at the rink (perhaps during a Saturday all-day fundraising session). These items include cell phones, inkjet printer cartridges, laptop computers, Apple iPods, digital cameras and digital video cameras. Earn cash for every item, and the company will pay for damaged, non-working and non-listed models, too. There is nothing to buy and nothing to sell. EcoPhones provides free, customizable marketing materials and free shipping from anywhere in the United States, including Alaska. So far, more than 32,000 schools, clubs and churches have raised much-needed funds for their organizations. For more information, visit greenschoolfundraiser.org or call (888) 326-7466. (Download and customize promotional materials from the EcoPhones Web site, which has all the other details needed to run a successful recycling fundraiser — posters, price lists, pre-paid shipping labels and everything else to get started.)

YouTube: Broadcast Yourself™

Now is the time to deliver your rink and its message of fun and value to the world at large. A visit to YouTube is in order. You'll find loads of videos on every facet of skating, including snippets from Three's Company and I Love Lucy (with the series' stars skating), jamskating, Miss Piggy on skates, the NBA's Rajon Rondo skating, instructional videos on how to skate backward/turn, buying tips, artistic skating and more. You can join the excitement and promotional outreach to tell the viewers about your rink, special sessions on the calendar, your birthday parties, church and other private parties, hockey leagues, day-cares and any other rink offering or session. Where to start? Go to YouTube.com and click on the YouTube Handbook of advice. And do a "roller skating" search on the site to see what looks good and see what sparks an idea or two. Make 2010 your "YouTube Year."

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