———————COMPUTER SOFTWARE REVIEWS———————

Symantec Norton AntiVirus 5.0 for Windows

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Norton AntiVirus is one of the first programs I buy when I get a new computer. It has an excellent track record of finding and protecting your computer from the many viruses that people have developed. When I discovered that Symantec had released a new version, Norton AntiVirus (NAV) 5.0 for Windows, I looked forward to seeing its improvements.

The program comes on a CD-ROM and generally installs very easily and quickly. It takes about 24 MB of hard disk space, which will increase slightly over time as more virus definitions are added. Updating from version 4.0 or doing a completely new installation was simple. I tested version 5.0 on two computers. One was a Dell Pentium Pro with an Intel 200 Mhz CPU. The second was a E-Machines E-Tower with a 333 Cyrix Mhz CPU. Installation and operation on the Dell went smoothly and everything worked immediately. Installation on the E-Tower went relatively smoothly, but there was a minor glitch. The E-Tower is a new machine, and when I went to install the Norton AntiVirus software the installation died after copying the files and creating the groups and icons for windows. I do not know whether this was a Symantec problem or an E-Tower problem. However, since I was able to run the program, and even downloaded updates using the Symantec LiveUpdate facility, I decided not to worry about it. It now works perfectly, and my computer is protected from 21, 151 viruses. This is some 5000 more than when the software was first released in August 1998. Symantec has changed its policy on virus definition updates starting with this new version. In the past all updates were free via the internet. In the future the updates will be free for only a year (you must register on the Internet to get the updates after which they will charge $3.95 for each additional year).

I am pleased to say that everything that was in version 5.0 works as well, if not faster, in version 4.0. Version 5.0 offers a number of additional features, while not necessarily

critical to the computer running well every day, they are nice and could be very important if a problem arose. Since I consider this software as a sort of "insurance policy" to keep my computer from being destroyed by some killer virus, the update is well worth the price.

What makes this package really nice, like all other new Symantec products, is the new LiveUpdate feature. With LiveUpdate, all you do is click on the icon and the software automatically goes to the Symantec ftp site, looks to see if there is an update of the software and virus definitions, and automatically performs the update installation. Clicking on one button is something I can live with. One can also schedule LiveUpdate to run automatically if you have a hard wired dedicated connection to the Internet.

Among the new features in NAV version 5.0 is Scan and Deliver which allows you to send a potentially infected file to Symantec for analysis. Symantec has developed an artificial intelligence tool called Bloodhound to protect against unknown viruses, especially from Excel spreadsheet files. Quarantine is a program module which lets you isolate potentially infected files or programs. This version does seem to run faster, especially for files of compressed data, such as zip files. There is also protection from Java applets and Active X software code.

In summary, this is an excellent utility program and its LiveUpdate capability makes it as easy as possible to keep your computer system protected from the many viruses that, very regrettably, are lurking on disk, in e-mail attachments, and in downloaded files.

Norton AntiVirus 5.0 runs under Windows 95/98/NT and has a retail price of $49.95 ($29.95 for an upgrade from older versions) and is available from Symantec Corporation, 10201 Torre Avenue, Cupertino, CA 95014. Phone: 800-441-7234; WWW: http://www.symantec.com.

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