Internet Essentials[SM] from Comcast

Q&A

What is Internet Essentials?

Internet Essentials is an ambitious and comprehensive broadband adoption program. It addresses the three primary barriers to broadband adoption that research has identified:
1) A lack of understanding of how the Internet is relevant and useful
2) The cost of a home computer
3) The cost of Internet service

Offered to low-income families with children who receive a free school lunch as part of their enrollment in the National School Lunch Program, Internet Essentials will be available in more than 4,000 school districts in 39 states plus the District of Columbia. The effort will help close the digital divide and ensure more Americans benefit from all the Internet has to offer.

While participating in Internet Essentials, customers receive:
• Residential Internet service for $9.95 per month plus tax
• No price increases, no activation fees and no equipment rental fees
• A low-cost computer available at initial enrollment for just $149.99 plus tax
• Access to free digital literacy training – online, in print and in person

A household is eligible to participate in the Internet Essentials program if it meets all of the following criteria:

• Is located where Comcast offers Internet service
• Has at least one child who receives free school lunches through the National School Lunch Program
   (As an example, according to the Department of Agriculture, a household of three would have to make less than $25,000 a year in income)
• Has not subscribed to Comcast Internet service within the last 90 days
• Does not have an overdue Comcast bill or unreturned equipment

How many households are expected to participate in Internet Essentials?

More than 17 million students nationwide receive free lunches through the National School Lunch Program, of which an estimated six million live in areas where Comcast offers home Internet service. However, taking into account that many of these students are in families with multiple children receiving free lunches through NSLP, and the other Internet Essentials eligibility criteria beyond the National School Lunch Program status, the actual number of eligible households is estimated to be between two and three million. However, because Internet Essentials is one of the first comprehensive broadband adoption programs of its type, we do not know exactly how many of these eligible households will choose to enroll in the program.

How will eligible families find out about Internet Essentials?

Comcast is promoting the program through a whole host of ways. We're asking local school authorities across the country to include information about Internet Essentials in their back to school mailings to parents. We're working with elected officials and community-based organizations to spread the word about Internet Essentials to families and communities. In major markets we will run Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and radio and print advertisements, host press conferences with local officials and go on talk radio to talk with press about the program. We have set up dedicated toll-free numbers for parents at 1-855-8-INTERNET (1-855-846-8376) or, for Spanish speakers, 1-855-SOLO-995 (1-855-765-6995). Those interested can also access a general information website at their local library or Internet café at www.InternetEssentials.com for English or visit www.InternetBasico.com for Spanish. Educators or third-parties interested in helping to spread the word can find more information at www.InternetEssentials.com/partner.

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How will eligible families sign up for Internet Essentials?
Families will receive notice about Internet Essentials at the beginning of the school year. Eligible families will be directed to a dedicated toll-free number to get the process started with specially-trained representatives on hand to answer their calls and ensure that the household meets basic qualifications. If eligible, the household will be contacted by a third-party administrator to verify they have a child receiving free school lunches, and to complete the enrollment process.

What is the toll-free number for Internet Essentials information?
The toll-free number is 1-855-8-INTERNET (1-855-846-8376). Spanish speakers can call 1-855-SOLO-995 (1-855-765-6995). The number went live on July 15th, before the first students started going back to school.

What is the digital literacy training component?
Internet Essentials participants will have access to in person, print and web-based digital literacy training programs. Training will ensure participants know basic computer skills such as how to access the Internet and email, and how to protect their privacy and the safety of their children online. Comcast is working with national partners such as One Economy, LULAC, and Common Sense Media to ensure we have the best digital literacy materials available to Internet Essentials customers. We will also work with local partners to identify the best locations for in person training. Locations may include tech centers, community centers, libraries and schools.

Where will Internet Essentials be available?
It will be available everywhere that Comcast offers Internet service – in 39 states plus the District of Columbia.

What software will be pre-installed on the computers?
The computers will have the Windows 7 Starter operating system and browser software. All participants, including those who do not purchase a computer, will be able to receive Norton™ security software. Additional software may be available with computers, but is subject to availability and may vary by purchaser.