Easy and Affordable Network Management:

New HP ProCurve Tools for Network Administrators

Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 2
Easy and affordable network management ................................................................................. 2
New tools for network managers ......................................................................................... 3
Necessary functionality: HP ProCurve Manager ........................................................................ 3
  HP ProCurve Manager Features .......................................................................................... 3
    Network status summary ................................................................................................. 3
    Alerts and troubleshooting ............................................................................................. 3
    Automatic device discovery ............................................................................................ 3
    Topology and mapping ...................................................................................................... 4
    Device management ........................................................................................................... 4
Advanced network management: HP ProCurve Manager Plus ................................................... 4
  HP ProCurve Manager Plus Features .................................................................................. 5
    Simplified configuration management .......................................................................... 5
    Advanced VLAN management ......................................................................................... 5
    In-depth traffic analysis .................................................................................................... 5
    Group and policy management ........................................................................................ 5
    Device firmware updates .................................................................................................. 5
The HP ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture™ .................................................. 6
Realizing the business benefits of HP ProCurve Networking solutions ................................... 6
Summary ........................................................................................................................................ 7
For more information .................................................................................................................. 8
Introduction

Today’s most pressing business requirements – reducing costs, creating efficiencies, doing more with less – are driving companies to continually evolve their network infrastructure. At the same time, there is a demand for tools that offer greater security, enable anytime, anywhere use, and support for multiple types of network traffic.

Affordability and ease-of-use are also critical elements network administrators require of their infrastructure management architecture. Without cost-effective, easy to use management tools, implementing new network technologies and applications can become more of a burden and less of a benefit for administrators.

To accomplish these numerous – and often times conflicting – objectives, many enterprises are adopting a unified, holistic approach to network management. Such an approach enables command from the center with control to the edge.

With command from the center, companies gain centralized control of network decision-making for easier implementation of new technologies and applications. With control to the edge, enterprises can easily enforce these centrally made decisions – security is enhanced, traffic prioritization is improved, and users can connect anytime, anywhere.

This paper will explore the changing network management environment and highlight new solutions that reduce complexity, improve overall network management, and provide maximum return on IT investment.

Easy and affordable network management

Implementing new technologies and applications must be transparent to the end-user. And it’s the network administrator’s job to make the transition seamless. To accomplish this feat, network management complexity must be reduced – or better yet – hidden. If the complexity remains behind the scenes, network management is simplified, functionality is not compromised, and the user experience is enhanced.

One way to do this is to implement a single network management console with an intuitive, easy-to-use interface. Such a console shortens the learning curve of how to manage the network and enables the network administrator to more quickly perform – or even automate – day-to-day work. This frees network administrators to focus on more value-added tasks.

In addition to a single, familiar console, management tools should also be modular and flexible. By enabling network administrators to add functionality according to business needs, companies are not forced to purchase an entire suite of products that overload the network with complexity and features that go unused.
New tools for network managers

Today’s network administrators require solutions that are easy to use, affordable, and scalable. Fortunately, HP has developed new tools to meet these needs: HP ProCurve Manager and HP ProCurve Manager Plus (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. HP ProCurve Manager

Necessary functionality: HP ProCurve Manager

HP ProCurve Manager is a Windows-based network management solution that is included in-box with all manageable HP ProCurve devices. It provides mapping and polling capabilities, device auto-discovery and topology, device configuration and management, and troubleshooting data and alerts for an HP ProCurve network.

HP ProCurve Manager Features

HP ProCurve Manager offers the basic functionality required by most IT organizations.

Network status summary

Upon boot-up, a Network Status screen displays high-level information on network devices, end nodes, events, and traffic levels, all on one screen. From here, the user can drill down on any one of these areas to get more details.

Alerts and troubleshooting

An Events Summary page displays alerts to the user and categorizes them by severity, making it easier to track where bottlenecks and issues exist in the network. Alerts present detailed information on the problem, even down to the specific port.

Automatic device discovery

HP ProCurve Manager is customized for fast discovery of all HP ProCurve manageable network devices. The user can define particular IP subnets on which to perform discovery.
Topology and mapping
HP ProCurve Manager automatically creates a map of all discovered network devices. Maps are color-coded to reflect device status and can be viewed at multiple levels (physical view, subnet view, or VLAN view).

Device management
Many device-specific tasks can be performed directly by the software, or the user can access web and command-line interfaces with the click of a button to manage individual devices from inside the tool.

Advanced network management: HP ProCurve Manager Plus

HP ProCurve Manager Plus is a complete, Windows-based network management solution that provides both basic and advanced management features for HP ProCurve devices. It allows users to discover, configure, monitor, and troubleshoot HP ProCurve devices. HP ProCurve Manager Plus includes features such as configuration management, VLAN management, in-depth traffic monitoring, group and policy management, and automated software updates (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. HP ProCurve Manager Plus
HP ProCurve Manager Plus Features

HP ProCurve Manager Plus offers advanced functionality that can dramatically improve the performance of an IT organization.

**Simplified configuration management**
Studies show configuration errors are the leading cause of LAN downtime, and more than 50% of organizations experience unexplained configuration changes to the network at some point every year.

HP ProCurve Manager Plus automatically tracks and logs configuration changes, and archived configurations can be applied to one or many devices. Configurations can also be compared over time or between two devices, with the differences highlighted for the user.

This functionality helps significantly decrease unplanned network downtime and reduce the number of repetitive, manual tasks that consume hours in a network manager’s day.

**Advanced VLAN management**
Many times, the most sophisticated tools a network manager uses to keep track of VLANs across the business are multiple spreadsheets. However, as more devices and ports are added to a network, managing VLANs across the enterprise becomes geometrically more complex. A singular tool to create, track, and manage VLANs is needed.

HP ProCurve Manager Plus provides a new, easy-to-use VLAN management interface, enabling the user to create and assign VLANs across the entire network, without having to access each network device individually. This tool enables network managers to create a VLAN in seconds, not hours. In addition, the point-and-click VLAN creation and VLAN roll-back features significantly reduce the likelihood of error.

**In-depth traffic analysis**
Traffic management tools help collect, measure and analyze data about enterprise network traffic, enabling network administrators to quickly identify issues, isolate problems, and optimize resource utilization.

HP ProCurve Manager Plus provides an integrated, low-overhead traffic monitor interface, showing detailed information on traffic throughout the network. Leveraging enhanced traffic analysis protocols such as extended RMON and sFlow, the user can monitor overall traffic levels, network segments with the highest traffic, or even the top users within a network segment.

**Group and policy management**
HP ProCurve Manager Plus enables the user to create device groups and set group policies for managing those devices. In addition, pre-determined configurations can be automatically applied to new devices that have just been added to the network.

**Device firmware updates**
HP ProCurve Manager Plus allows network managers to automatically update devices and obtain new device firmware images from HP. Updates can be scheduled easily across large groups of devices, all at user-specified times.
The HP ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture™

For companies seeking to make the transition to a unified, holistic network infrastructure, the HP ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture (See Figure 3) enables the evolution of the enterprise network into an anytime, anywhere resource that adapts to changing business needs with command from the center and control to the edge.

HP ProCurve Networking helps customers build an adaptive enterprise network ready to simultaneously deliver reliability, flexibility and return on IT business investments.

Figure 3. HP ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture Messaging

Realizing the business benefits of HP ProCurve Networking solutions

With the best price/performance in the industry and a lower cost of ownership, HP ProCurve Networking solutions are the proven, affordable path to a secure, multi-service network that can accommodate growing business demands.

HP ProCurve solutions move traffic routing and application connection duties to the network edge – protecting assets at the core. By strategically deploying intelligence this way, networks are better prepared to handle new traffic in a cost-effective manner.

HP ProCurve Networking solutions, by design, provide the support needed to solve specific business problems, thereby creating a competitive advantage, increasing revenue-generation opportunities, and delivering superior RoIT.
Summary

Network management requirements are changing. Affordability and ease-of-use are more critical than ever. Yet there is still a need to implement new technologies and evolve the network infrastructure according to business needs.

HP ProCurve network management tools offer a single console and keep complex functionality hidden – easing the learning curve and simplifying day-to-day network administration. These tools also offer modularity and flexibility to meet current needs and prepare for future business and technology requirements – while keeping costs down.

For improving overall network management and maximizing return on IT investment, companies cannot go wrong with HP ProCurve Manager and HP ProCurve Manager Plus.
For more information

To learn more about HP ProCurve Networking solutions, contact your local HP sales representative or visit the company’s Web site at www.hp.com/go/hpprocurve.