

**The Lippis Report Volume 45:
ProCurve Networking by HP Enters Trusted Networks and WAN Routing Markets**



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From the Publisher:

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The ProCurve Networking by HP group has built a broad switched Ethernet product family over the past few years. The product portfolio spans stackables including the 2600 10/100 switches, 2800 Gigabit Ethernet switch, the 3400 24/48 Gig and 6400 10GbE series. Its chassis products start with the triple speed 10/100/1000 4100 series, then the popular 5300 series adds PoE while the 9300 series is its high performance and functional 100/G/10G chassis OEMed from Foundry

Networks. In addition to its switched Ethernet product set, the ProCurve group has introduced the 420 and 520 wireless LAN access points and the 720wl Access Control Server providing secure roaming services.

The intelligence within the ProCurve product set, i.e., its software, is distributed, yet the ProCurve group has been steadily moving network services closer to network access points or the edge of the network. This means that network services such as power over Ethernet, quality of service, deep packet inspection, load balancing, caching, encryption, virus protection, etc., are available at the point that packets enter the network rather than in the core of the network. HP calls this the Adaptive EDGE Architecture™. Network management of a ProCurve-based network is centralized via ProCurve Manager, Manager Plus and Identity Driven Manager 1.0 software. As the edge becomes more service rich, the core's role becomes one of high performance and availability. Limiting the core's service responsibility to switching and routing across a dense set of high performance modules, which enforce edge service decisions, should lower network acquisition cost. In effect the Adaptive EDGE Architecture strives to deliver intelligence at access, performance and reliability in the core while centralizing management. This should all add up to lower capital and operational cost in theory.

The ProCurve group has taken a significant step at expanding its product set with the introduction of the ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl, the ProCurve 5300xl software release 3 and ProCurve Switch xl Access Controller Module. HP has re-entered the wide area router market, joined the Trusted Network initiative that we have been discussing here and closed the gap between wired and wireless LAN security.

The ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl is a branch office router platform that will go head to head with Cisco's popular 2821 and 2851 routers. There are two products in the 7000dl series, the 7102dl and 7203dl for small and medium sized branch offices, respectively. 7000dls offer integrated stateful firewall, VPN support, secure access control via ACLs, 802.1x and RADIUS. Its routing protocols are RIP V1/V2, OSPF and BGP4 support. The 7102dl and 7203dl form factor is a 1U rack mount that supports two 10/100 ports and up to 8 wire speed T1 ports. Here's

the kicker: HP offers a lifetime warranty on hardware and software, an item that would cost as much as 18% on top of acquisition “list” cost from other vendors. HP has priced the 7000dl platform between 40% and 50% below acquisition cost of similarly configured Cisco 2821 and 2851 branch office routers. When you add HP’s lifetime warranty the cost difference is 50% to 60% below Cisco’s 2821 and 2851 routers. Expect an increasing range of router products that scale up to large sites over the next few quarters. Entering the router market at the branch office is a good move for HP as MPLS transport services diminish the need for large routers at central sites.

Invented and patented at HP Labs, HP has introduced its first Trusted Networks product in the ProCurve 5300xl software release 3. This software release provides client-based anti-virus software protection for end points connected into the ProCurve 5300 series managed Ethernet switches. Included in software release 3 is what HP calls virus throttling, which monitors network behavior across all ports to detect virus propagation. If anomalous virus traffic behavior is detected on a 5300 port, it will slow down traffic on that port and notify ProCurve Manager Plus so further action can be taken if warranted. Software release 3 possesses NBAD or Network Based Anomaly Detection functionality fully integrated into the switching fabric rather than housed in a separate appliance.

The ProCurve group, like many in the industry, is unifying wired and wireless access so that mobility and roaming is enabled in 802.11 networks. To meet that end HP has introduced the ProCurve Switch xl Access Controller Module. This module plugs into the 5300xl series Ethernet switches and provides all the functionality found in the standalone ProCurve 720wl. This means that wireless security, access control, and layer 3 roaming can now be provided by the 5300 xl. Integration of authentication or AAA services can now be provided to both wired and wireless end points from one database, simplifying administration.

This is a significant announcement from HP which demonstrates its expanding presence in the networking market place beyond Ethernet switching. The ProCurve group is fully committed to Trusted Networks by integrating virus scanning and NBAD functionality deep within its switching fabric to provide network security services at lower acquisition and operational cost than with an appliance-based security architecture.

The most significant aspect of this announcement is the ProCurve group’s entry into the routing market. ProCurve Networking by HP is the number two market share leader in Ethernet switch ports. Clearly the ProCurve group has not been shy in competing with Cisco. But its gloves have been taken off since Carly Fiorina stepped down from both Cisco’s board and as CEO of HP.

With Carly on Cisco’s board the ProCurve group felt constrained in which markets it could enter and compete with Cisco. That’s all changed now and the 7000dl is perhaps the first silo in what, more than likely, will be a blistering array of routing products to come out of the ProCurve Networking by HP group. Its financial stability, excellent brand, innovation, distribution, sales and price leadership have served it well competing in the Ethernet switch market. Expect the same in the router market with the addition of this big motivator; enterprise customers want another option to source routers. The ProCurve Networking by HP group is well positioned to receive a warm enterprise welcome as it enters the router and Trusted Networks markets.

Your comments and questions are always welcome; please send them to info@lippis.com and I'll see you April 19th and 20th in New York City at the [Enterprise IP Communications Symposium 2005](#).

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The Lippis Report is written by Nick Lippis, a world-renowned authority on corporate IP Communications and consultant to CxOs of Global 2000 companies.

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