

ProCurve Networking by HP

CFS, The School at Church Farm



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Charles W. Shreiner III
Headmaster
CFS, The School at Church Farm



Summary

In the mid-1990s, CFS began its metamorphosis into a well-equipped, connected learning community. Working from the outset with Hewlett-Packard Co. as a strong technology partner, CFS adopted a portable, networked environment for the students, faculty and staff. CFS recently deployed ProCurve Networking by HP's ProCurve Manager Plus (PCM+) and Identity-Driven Manager (IDM) solutions to help boost the security, management and performance of the CFS network, creating an even more effective learning environment.

PCM+ and IDM have positively affected many areas at CFS: Students and teachers can concentrate more completely on academics, the technology fosters the kind of connected environment the school seeks to achieve, and the information technology (IT) staff can focus less on implementing technical factors and more on harnessing the network in service of the school and its students.

Using Size as an Advantage

When CFS administrators committed to the creation of a connected learning community, Neil Fanelli, CFS's Vice President of Finance, recalls wondering: "Why install desktops, if our goal could be better achieved with portable computers?" CFS used the school's small size - approximately 200 students - to their advantage, universally adopting Hewlett-Packard laptops as the client standard from the outset.

CFS also sought to implement a progressive network architecture to support their connected learning goals. CFS was impressed with ProCurve's strong support for standards, the ease of deployment of its products and the company's willingness to do more than just sell products. "HP really committed to our plan and became an important partner in executing our vision," said Fanelli.

CFS has deployed several generations of ProCurve products over the past decade, and the school recently embraced ProCurve's Identity Driven Manager (IDM) to further support the school's anytime, anywhere learning environment. Based on the foundation of ProCurve's Adaptive EDGE Architecture™, IDM software dynamically manages network devices to provide appropriate, optimized network access that increases productivity and overall efficiency while enhancing security.

Nearly Effortless Network Control

CFS's campus encompasses 2,500 ProCurve networking ports for connecting laptops and other devices. The network comprises multiple virtual LANs (VLANs), including one specifically for students and one exclusively for CFS's 50 academic and cottage faculty and 35 staff members. Previously, each network port belonged to a specific VLAN (e.g., "student" or "adult"). Students were not permitted to plug into the faculty/staff VLAN, nor would it be useful for faculty to plug into the student-assigned ports.

With IDM, manual port-by-port configuration is a thing of the past. Instead, network administrators can dynamically and centrally control access based on user, location, time of day and other variables at the very edge of the LAN - that is, before a device is even authorized to connect to the network.

"By controlling access through user profiles rather than statically, per port, our network administrator no longer has to spend time and energy reconfiguring ports," said Fanelli. "IDM takes access control, which is a huge part of security, away from the hardware and port level and puts it on a network management level, which is extremely powerful."

Making changes and updates to the network is quick and simple, too. Previously, it could take several hours to make configuration changes and updates. Using IDM and ProCurve Manager Plus, these same tasks now require as little as a few minutes.

"With PCM+, it's a matter of one interface and one click, and the changes we want are propagated everywhere," said Fanelli. "Now, reconfiguring the network is not drudgery for our network administrator; in fact, he claims it's a pleasure."

IDM Enhances Anytime, Anywhere Learning Environment

With IDM, both students and their teachers have more freedom in how they learn and teach. Faculty members no longer need to stay close to the "adult" ports, but can move around the classroom freely while remaining connected to the network.

Customer at a Glance
CFS, The School at Church Farm is an independent boarding school for boys in grades 7 to 12 that provides a rigorous, well-rounded, college-preparatory education in a caring environment. It was founded in 1918 as a private boarding school by The Reverend Dr. Charles W. Shreiner; his son, Dr. Charles W. Shreiner Jr., became headmaster in 1964 and was succeeded by his son, Charles W. Shreiner III (Terry), as headmaster in 1987.

Located in Chester County, Pennsylvania, CFS has 200 students, of whom 80 percent reside in "cottage" accommodations on the 141-acre campus. The mission of CFS is to provide an extraordinary education to promising young men, at an affordable cost, through smaller class sizes and connected learning in a caring community.

"IDM lets us balance network access for students and faculty with security needs, deciding who can do what on the network simply by controlling access rights," said Terry Shreiner, headmaster of CFS and grandson of the school's founder.

Such control is particularly important in the 24/7 environment of a boarding school such as CFS. The campus environment must support not only in-class learning, but also homework in the cottage dorms and network access in other living, eating, athletic, entertainment and meeting areas.

"We use IDM to eliminate rogue devices from the network and to enforce rules about when students can be on the Internet," Shreiner said. "IDM removes the temptation to break the rules without us having to use punitive measures, which we appreciate."

But Does it Really Make a Difference?

The CFS network administrators installed IDM over the course of one weekend, without fanfare. By Monday morning, network access was noticeably faster. As soon as IDM was implemented, students were unable to use unapproved devices on the network, and network performance soared.

Some of the school's top students told administrators that previously slow evening Internet performance had hindered their ability to complete homework assignments. After IDM was put in place, students had no trouble getting the bandwidth they needed for their Internet research, which might include streaming audio or multimedia current events content.

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A Stable Foundation for the Future

CFS has begun its transition to a wireless infrastructure, as a supplement to the existing wired connectivity.

"IDM can seamlessly support wireless networking, so it is part of our strategic thinking toward future network expansion," said Shreiner. "And because security and network access become even more complex and important with wireless networks, IDM will continue as a cornerstone of our architecture."

IDM's perimeter security access capabilities can prevent unauthorized users or devices from ever gaining access to the network, and it significantly streamlines the effort and cost required to configure and manage wireless security.

"IDM gives us the flexibility we need, by enabling every location on campus to be a potential place of learning, and by enabling us to expand our academic programs," said Shreiner. "The ProCurve network and IDM have put CFS at the leading edge technologically of what other schools or even businesses are doing. Academically, they support the kind of stable, secure and high-performance anytime, anywhere environment that will help our students succeed."

Business Benefits

- By greatly simplifying network administration and security, ProCurve IDM and PCM+ save CFS time and money on IT costs, and the IT staff has more time available to enhance the network.
- IDM boosts network performance by eliminating access of bandwidth-sapping rogue devices, such as game machines and MP3 players.
- IDM supports the school's connected learning community through more flexible access options and easy enforcement of network usage.

About ProCurve Networking by HP

The ProCurve Networking business unit of HP is a supplier of enterprise networking solutions comprising wired and wireless networking products, services and solutions-including WAN routers, Ethernet switches, routing switches, wireless access points and network management applications-that allow customers to build networks based on open standards that meet current and future needs for security, performance and reliability.

The ProCurve Networking Adaptive EDGE Architecture™ is a unique design strategy that creates a secure, mobile, multi-service network by placing intelligence at the edge-where users connect and policies are enforced. This innovative approach creates a dynamic network infrastructure designed to keep up with advancing technology and user needs while protecting business investments.

What Makes it Work Hardware

- ProCurve Switch 5300xl Series
- ProCurve Switch 3400cl Series
- ProCurve Switch 4100gl Series
- ProCurve Switch 2524
- ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl Series
- HP Compaq NC Series notebooks
- HP Proliant DL Series servers

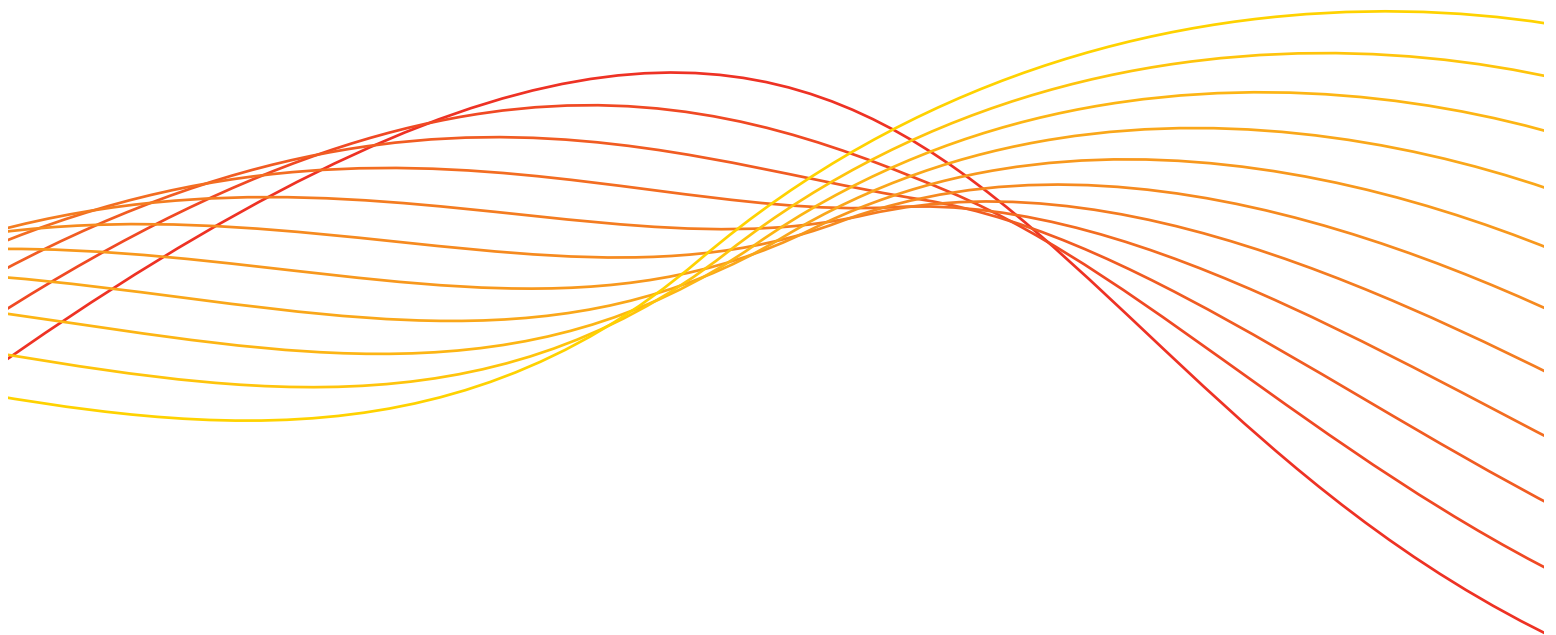
Services & Support

- Lifetime warranty with next-day advance replacement*
- Software updates, telephone and email technical support**
- Comprehensive network design and configuration services **

*Available in most countries, on most products, for as long as the original customer owns it.

*The ProCurve Routing Switch 9300m series and Secure Access 7000l series have a one-year warranty with extensions available.

**For the most up-to-date information, go to www.procurve.com.



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