



HP ProCurve Networking

# HP ProCurve Networking sets the pace at the 2008 London Marathon



**“Thanks to HP ProCurve’s Lifetime Warranty and open-standards technology, our switches are highly reliable and adaptive. Consequently, it is not surprising that ProCurve is the only networking vendor prepared to feed information to a live leader board and provide the world’s broadcast media with exactly what they need.”**

**Colin Myers**  
Head of Finance/assistant race director  
Flora London Marathon  
UK

After the inaugural race in 1981, the London Marathon has steadily grown in size, stature and popularity to become one of the most established events in the world's sporting calendar. Sponsored by Flora since 1996, the London Marathon continues to be a massive draw to runners, spectators and television audiences in over 150 countries worldwide. Since the race's conception, fun-runners have raised over £38 million (approximately €50 million) for charitable causes.

At this popular annual road marathon, elite athletes, wheelchair athletes, club and funrunners make their way around the 42.195 kilometres course from Blackheath, south of the River Thames to The Mall, near St James's Park. Interesting sites en route include the famous Cutty Sark clipper, Tower Bridge, London's redeveloped Docklands, the Tower of London and Buckingham Palace.

#### HP ProCurve partners with the TI Group

During the event, the world's media demands incredibly detailed statistics about runners as they progress around the course. Commentators expect 'live' information about the leaders of each race including their position, split-times and projected finishing times. Broadcasters need to direct cameras to specific locations for interviews with well-known celebrities or to relay interesting images of the fun-runners.

The TI Group in conjunction with Mika Timing have implemented network solutions for the London Marathon for several years. Mika Timing is a leading sports timing company that covers over 200 events annually. It delivers services such as graphical representations of real-time results.

"Every year the Wide Area Network (WAN) and applications we use become more sophisticated as the demand for more race information, and the service level expectations of the BBC and other media organisations increases. This is the first year we have used an HP ProCurve Adaptive Network solution," explains the Technical Director of the TI Group.

#### Twenty-four hours and counting

"The challenge is quite daunting. Our team manages everything including the creation of a WAN that covers ten strategically placed data stations used by the BBC, information centres, press centres and London's Metropolitan Police Service. Each station has to receive information about every runner as they traverse the course."

To do this, every runner wears a unique chip and Mika Timing personnel lay mats at five kilometre intervals around the course. As runners pass over the mats, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology relays their location automatically to one of the stations so that team members can process the data for instant transmission by the BBC.

"However, we only gain access to the sites 24 hours before the race," adds the TI Group. "We have minimal time to equip the main Tower Hotel press centre with the ProCurve networking infrastructure. Moreover, every station must be equipped with a suitable number of laptops or PCs, routers and BRI/VPN modules to receive the incoming data.

#### Objective

- Flora London Marathon needed a reliable and secure Wide Area Network (WAN) to provide journalists with 'live' information about the competitors as they progressed around the 42 kilometre course.

#### Approach

- Assessed the requirements of the world's journalists and broadcast media.
- HP ProCurve and technology partner, the TI Group, created a Wide Area Network (WAN) covering ten strategically placed stations around the course.
- Incorporating RFID technology, each runner wears a unique chip which provides real-time data as runners pass over mats at five kilometre intervals around the course.
- Set up the equipment off-site in advance of the race day and conducted a 'real-time' simulation of the race using a recording of the previous year's event.

#### IT improvements

- Highly reliable and secure WAN for the delivery of information.
- Live leader board information for the broadcast media.
- Graphics and real-time results for the Internet, television and media.
- Advanced wireless technology at the main press centre.

#### Business outcomes

- Held a highly successful event to fulfil the expectations of contestants, viewers and the public at large.
- Satisfied the service level expectations of the world's media and the BBC.
- Delivered information efficiently to spectators, television audiences and the security services.
- Boosted its image as an efficient organiser of a world-renowned sporting event.
- Aided fund raising for numerous charitable organisations.

HP ProCurve switches stay the course. At the core of the HP ProCurve Adaptive Network solution is a highly reliable ProCurve 5400zl series switch based at the Tower Hotel, near Tower Bridge. It supports a ProCurve 1800 series web-managed switch, two ProCurve 2600 PWR series managed edge switches for Power over Ethernet (PoE), ten ProCurve Radio Port 210 units and a ProCurve Wireless Edge Services Module (WESM). Two ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl series and a Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line (SDSL) bridge respectively link the hotel to the Internet and marathon.

To cover the course, two ProCurve 2600 series switches provide the required intelligence at the edge of the network. They are linked to a further 12 ProCurve secure routers which control data feeds to each station. A ProCurve Wireless 530 Access Point with its flexible radio and antenna configuration is also linked to the switches to transmit the finishing line commentary.

The ProCurve 5406zl switch provides security, enhanced resiliency, bandwidth scalability and convergence capabilities. It is ideally suited to wireless technology. The WESM solution delivers secure, advanced wireless services to the 500 journalists in the press centre and offers simplified management and unified wired and wireless operations across the network. The ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl series provides simple, secure WAN enabling edge-to-edge connectivity.

To aid network management, the solution incorporates ProCurve Manager Plus (PCM+), a software package that allows administrators to configure, update, monitor and troubleshoot the switches centrally. All of the switches come with ProCurve's comprehensive Lifetime Warranty.

To find out more about ProCurve Networking please visit: [www.procurve.eu](http://www.procurve.eu)

For information about the ProCurve Network Design Centre, visit: [www.hp.com/go/requestyournetworkdesign](http://www.hp.com/go/requestyournetworkdesign)

### Everybody's a winner with HP ProCurve

This year, 34,607 runners of the 48,630 entrants crossed the marathon's finishing line in the Mall. Most were oblivious to the technology involved in the success of the event. However, the HP ProCurve solution relentlessly relayed all the data to the appropriate parties, and broadcasters, spectators and viewers were readily furnished with the information they needed.



The award-winning ProCurve 5406zl switch

"We will always use ProCurve switches because of their reliability, performance and ease of configuration. With journalists and broadcasters driving the demand for more statistics during races, it is essential we provide a solution that satisfies their exact needs, year upon year. From a technology standpoint, the only winner is HP ProCurve," concluded the TI Group.

### Customer at a Glance

Industry sector: Entertainment  
Name: Flora London Marathon  
Headquarters: London, United Kingdom  
Founded: 1981  
Telephone: +44 (0)207 902 0200  
URL: [www.london-marathon.co.uk](http://www.london-marathon.co.uk)

### Partner:

Company: TI Group  
Headquarters: London  
Telephone: +44 (0) 845 685 0890  
URL: [www.thetigroup.com](http://www.thetigroup.com)  
Business: IT Reseller, Consultancy, Event Support (IT)  
Products: HP ProCurve, Microsoft, Citrix

### What Makes it Work?

#### Primary solutions

- Adaptive Network
- Branch Office
- Mobility
- Network Systems and Management
- Security

#### Primary hardware

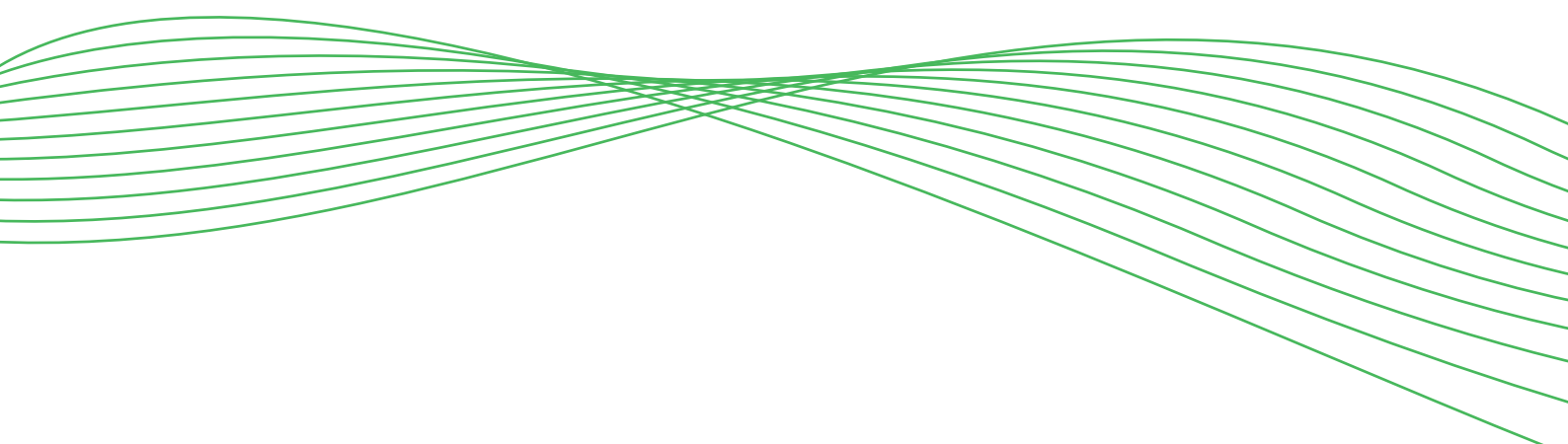
- HP ProCurve Switch 1800 series
- HP ProCurve Switch 2600 PWR series
- HP ProCurve Switch 5400zl series
- HP ProCurve Secure Router 7000dl series
- HP ProCurve Radio Port 210
- HP ProCurve Wireless Edge Services Module (WESM)
- HP ProCurve Wireless Access Point 530

#### Primary software

- HP ProCurve Manager Plus (PCM+)

◆ For as long as you own the product, with next-business-day advance replacement (available in most countries). For details, refer to the ProCurve Software Licence, Warranty and Support booklet at [www.procurve.eu/warranty](http://www.procurve.eu/warranty)

The following products and their related family modules have a one-year warranty with extensions available: The ProCurve Routing Switch 9300m Series, ProCurve Switch 8100fl Series, ProCurve Access Control Server 745wl and ProCurve Network Access Controller 800. Stand-alone software may have a different warranty duration. For details, refer to the ProCurve Software Licence, Warranty and Support booklet at [www.procurve.eu/warranty](http://www.procurve.eu/warranty)



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Publication Number: 4AA2-1384EEW, July 2008 Written: August 2008

