HPE ProLiant Easy Connect User Control Console

User Guide

Abstract

In this User Guide we will introduce the User Control Console, explaining how it enables non-IT-experts to perform day-to-day user administration, file administration and system monitoring tasks for a HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Server.

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Introduction

The unique design of the HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Server features tightly integrated compute, storage, and networking, together with Zynstra virtualization and cloud management software and is delivered as a managed service. It is deployed onsite and comes pre-integrated with cloud services and remote management from the cloud.

In this User Guide we will introduce the User Control Console, explaining how it enables non-IT experts to perform day-to-day user administration, file administration and system monitoring tasks for an HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Server.

Who Uses HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Servers?

When describing a server's user interfaces, it is important to understand the role of individuals who are users of the server or who are responsible for carrying out IT support tasks on the server.

The following terms are used to identify roles and responsibilities throughout this guide:

IT users need IT that just works, with secure access to their files, the network, and the organization's applications from their workstation or laptop. IT users are not expected to be IT experts. Nor are they expected to require access to any administration or monitoring interfaces of the server.

Office administrators are typically also IT users themselves, but fulfil a 'super-user' role carrying out some IT administration tasks such as user account management and liaising with IT service providers. Office administrators are not expected to be general IT experts, but will need to be familiar with some of the server's tools and interfaces that are necessary for carrying out their responsibilities.

IT service providers are responsible for the operation of the server on behalf of the IT users, providing expertise in the areas of server installation, networking, and system administration. IT service providers may be an internal IT team employed by the IT users' organization and based on-site. Increasingly though, IT service providers work remotely or are an external team contracted to support an organization's IT. IT service providers must therefore be able to carry out their work using secure, remote access to the server's administration and monitoring interfaces.

How Are HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Servers Monitored?

HPE monitors, manages and updates the server as part of the service being provided. HPE and the server itself automatically monitor hundreds of test results to ensure the hardware, software and network are operating correctly. If there is a problem, the server is capable of auto-healing in many cases. The HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Support Team will also be alerted and take action to resolve issues, often before IT users are affected.

Office administrators and IT service providers require visibility of the server state and must be able to control server settings to carry out day-to-day user administration and IT administration tasks.

HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Servers include a cloud management platform which provides secure, remote access to centralized and on-server interfaces.

Two of these interfaces are used by IT service providers only for monitoring HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Servers. They are:

- The Monitoring Console. This provides a means of monitoring one or more HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Managed Hybrid Servers— collecting logs, alerts and performance statistics on all aspects of the hardware, software and network.

- The server's Internet gateway and security settings are configured through the Gateway Control Console, allowing configuration of security between the LAN, the server, and the Internet, including firewalls, web filters, and network antivirus services. In addition to configuration changes, the Gateway Control Console provides monitoring of network statistics such as bandwidth utilization, network session, and blocked web sites.

End users do not need access to these interfaces.

For office administrators who want to retain visibility and control of the service, a dedicated interface is available. The User Control Console includes a dashboard on the operational state of the server, IT services, and network. It also provides the ability to add, modify and disable user accounts, including assigning users to groups or departments.

What Is The User Control Console?

Office administrators may have an interest in the performance of the server and the network, and may also wish to perform user administration tasks.

Taking control of these tasks can accelerate day-to-day user-focused administration tasks, without requiring extensive IT skills.

The User Control Console provides these capabilities.

- A dashboard on the operational state and performance of the server, IT services, and network.
- The ability to add, modify, and disable user accounts, including assigning users to groups or departments.
- Reporting on file space available and used by both individual users and groups.

All of the above are available through a simple to use web-based interface.

Accessing the User Control Console

Prerequisites

In order to access the User Control Console you must first be a user who has been assigned the correct privilege by your IT service provider.

You must access the User Control Console with a modern web browser. Chrome is recommended as the most compatible cross-platform browser. The latest versions of Internet Explorer, Safari or Firefox can be used. Browsers cache data in different ways, which may affect how screens update automatically. We recommend setting your browser to check for new data every time it visits a URL or web page, to ensure compatibility.

Note that the User Control Console is hosted on the server. You must either be on the same local network as the server, or connected via VPN.

Log in To the User Control Console

The following steps will connect you to the interface:

1. Open a web browser.
2. Enter the URL, which can be found in the Commissioning Console by selecting a server and its service summary page.
3. Enter your username and password to authenticate.

Once you have successfully logged in you will see the User Control Console dashboard.

The User Control Console Dashboard

To give office administrators visibility of the server and network status, service experience tests are executed and their status can be reviewed in the User Control Console.

Rather than low-level system diagnosis, these tests emulate tasks carried out by IT users and applications, such as logging in to the local network, opening a file, or connecting to an external website. Similarly, security tests ensure restricted actions are blocked, such as trying to access a restricted website.

Therefore, these service experience tests provide a high-level view of the status of the server and network.

The dashboard shows a red-amber-green status for each category of IT service, and any of these items can be selected to show the underlying service test results and alerts.

- Green – The tests ran successfully, and the service is working normally.

- Amber – Indicates a warning, but may not be affecting IT users. Warnings may include a threshold approaching and non-service-affecting alerts.

- Red – One or more tests failed, indicating a potential problem with the server, local network, cloud services or Internet connection.

Service categories include: Cloud Backup; Local Backup; Network; Disk Space; File Sharing; and Virtual Machines.

The exact categories, and test results within, will vary depending on the configuration of a server and optional features or services purchased.
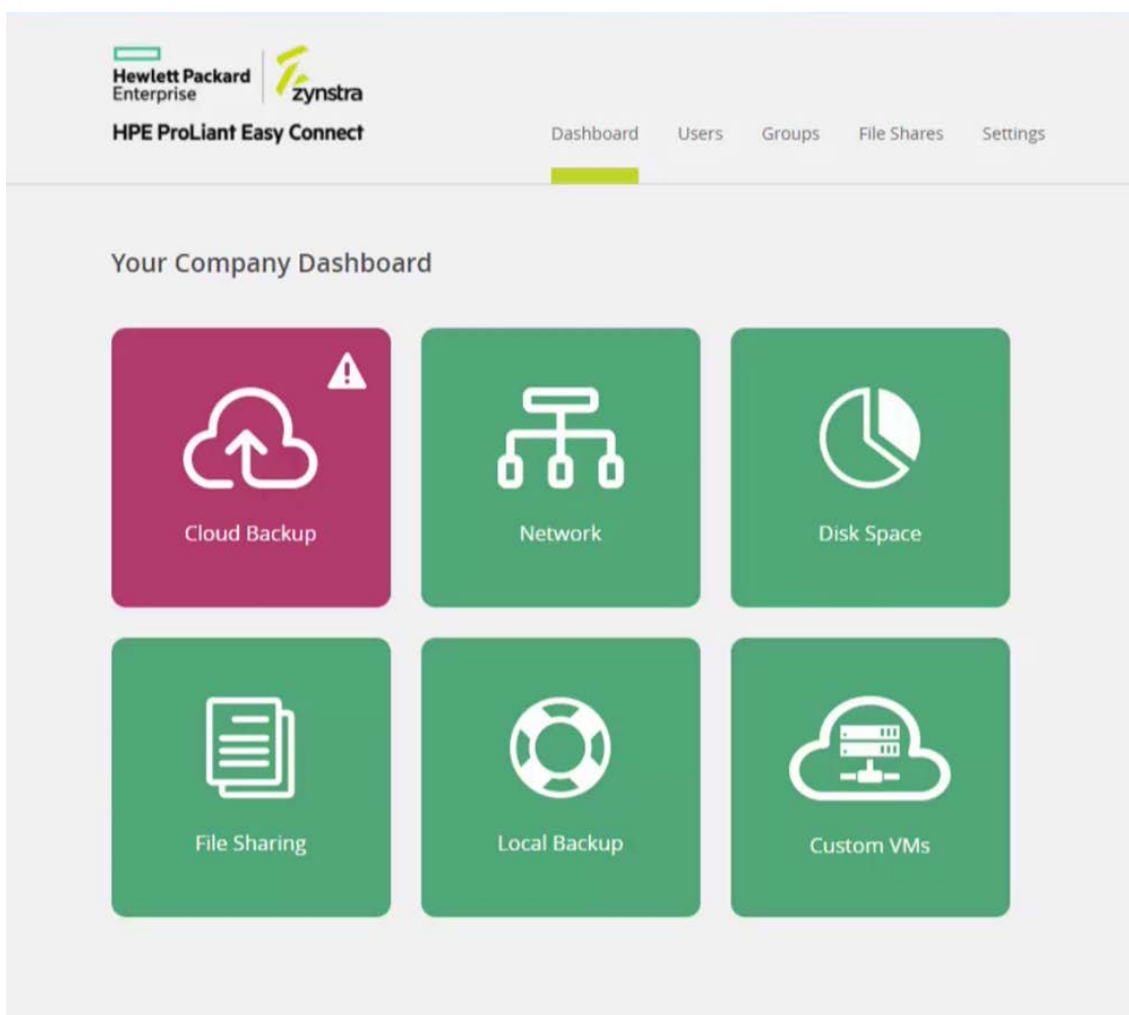
Cloud Backup

If the server includes the optional service, click the Cloud Backup icon to check whether your cloud data and system backups are executing correctly.

The tests show that the backup has taken place and that the encrypted backup files have successfully be saved to the Cloud, according to the expected backup schedule.

The time since the most recent backup point is also shown.

The backup time is described as RPO. RPO means Recovery Point Objective, a technical term for the maximum period in which data might be lost from an IT service due to a major incident that causes a loss of all data on the server.

Local Backup

For servers without the optional Cloud Backup service, backup files are held locally on the server. These tests confirm the backup has taken place as expected and show the RPO.

These tests are also of interest when the server does include the optional Cloud Backup service. If the Cloud Backup fails, for example if there is a WAN outage, then the Local Backup tests can assure you that backup files are at least available on the server if required.

Network Status

Network status checks connectivity and services that enable users and applications to access both the local network and the Internet.

Once again, the dashboard icon gives the high level status and you can click on the icon to see tests results for various network components.

The exact list of tests you see here may vary depending on your server or network configuration.

The tests look at external networking, such as the ability to resolve domain names and reach external servers. Network services on the server are checked, such as DHCP, and the ability for user registered in Active Directory to connect successfully.

Please note that many of these network tests are checking services *external* to the server, but may affect the performance of the server. For example, if the DNS test indicates a problem, the likely cause is the responsibility of your Internet service provider or telecoms service provider, but the problem could be impacting any server services that require an Internet connection, such as cloud backup.

Disk Space

Select the Disk Space icon, to check the status of file storage on the server.

This is the high-level view of disk space; you can see how individual users and groups are using their file space in the Shares section of the User Control Guide. This is covered in a later section of the User Guide.

File Sharing

This checks that the user and group file share is functioning correctly, by attempting to read and write files on the server's file system.

Custom VMs

A number of performance metrics for custom Virtual Machines (VMs) are reported, including alerts for high CPU utilization, RAM utilization, disk space, disk performance, and network traffic volumes.

Taking Action

In the event that the User Control Console dashboard alerts you to a problem, what action should you take?

As noted previously HPE, as the provider of the HPE ProLiant Easy Connect service, has access to extensive reports on the state of the server. In many cases, issues will be identified and resolved before IT users experience any practical problems.

However, if a problem is ongoing, you should use the information provided by the dashboard to discuss it with your IT service provider.

You can then use the dashboard to confirm that the problem has been fixed, but note that some status updates may not occur until a scheduled test has taken place, potentially sometime after the actual issue has been resolved.

Managing User Administration

Day-to-day user administration can also be carried out by office administrators.

The server's security architecture is built around tightly integrated components such as Active Directory, a next generation firewall, and Windows and Linux security functions. Nonetheless, it is simple to add, modify, and disable user accounts on the server, without needing to be familiar with the underlying security architecture.

Naming Conventions

The default naming convention in the User Control Console refers to IT users as Users, and collections of Users as Groups.

Servers that have been specialized for specific markets may use other naming conventions, for example:

Users	Groups
Employees	Departments
Students	Groups

User List

When the User menu item is selected, a list of all IT users enabled on the server is displayed.

The list shows the IT users' first names, last names and user names. The user name is their network log-on username, which would be used to log on to the local network on a workstation, or remote connect over VPN.

The list shows whether the IT user is enabled or disabled. Disabled IT user details are retained on the server to make restoration of their account and files possible, if required. In order to 'fully delete' an IT user, removing their details and files from the server, requires the IT service provider to delete the IT user from Active Directory, then delete or archive the IT user's files.

This may seem like a lot of steps, but it ensures IT users are not accidentally deleted. It also allows an organization to retain and archive business critical files associated with former employees or contractors.

Filtering the User List

Enter any text relating to the IT users' first, last and user names to filter the list of IT users shown.

The filter is not case-sensitive.

If you want to show the complete list again, after filtering, simply select the Show All button.

Sorting the User List

You can sort the list of IT users by selecting one of the column labels at the top of the list. Clicking the label will first sort the list alphanumerically in ascending order then, with a second click, descending order.

View User Details

Click on a row of the User list to show the details of that IT user.

The additional information available on the User Details screen includes:

- Their email address, if this is set on the system.
- The location of their file share on the server file system.
- A list of groups, such as departments, of which the IT user is a member.

On this screen, click on the Back button to return to the User List, or select Edit to modify this IT user's details.

Edit User

The Edit User screen allows you to modify a number of the IT user details, including:

- The user's name.
- Groups the user is a member of.

The user account can be enabled or disabled from this screen. Disabling an account does not delete the IT user or any of their files on the server, but it does stop the user from connecting to the server and the IT service running on the server. Re-enabling the account would grant an IT user access to the server again, and the IT user will again have access to their files that were already on the server, unless the IT service provider has fully deleted their account.

User passwords can also be reset. If the Reset Password button is selected, an IT user is assigned a temporary password and will be required to change this immediately after their next log-in.

New User

On the User List screen, you can select the New User button to add a new IT user.

This adds the IT user to Active Directory, enabling them to access the server's IT services and the network.

The IT user's default user ID will follow the format of *first-initial* and *last name.* This can be edited if a different user ID is required.

The IT user will have file space allocated and, if included in a Group, they will also have access to a file share space.
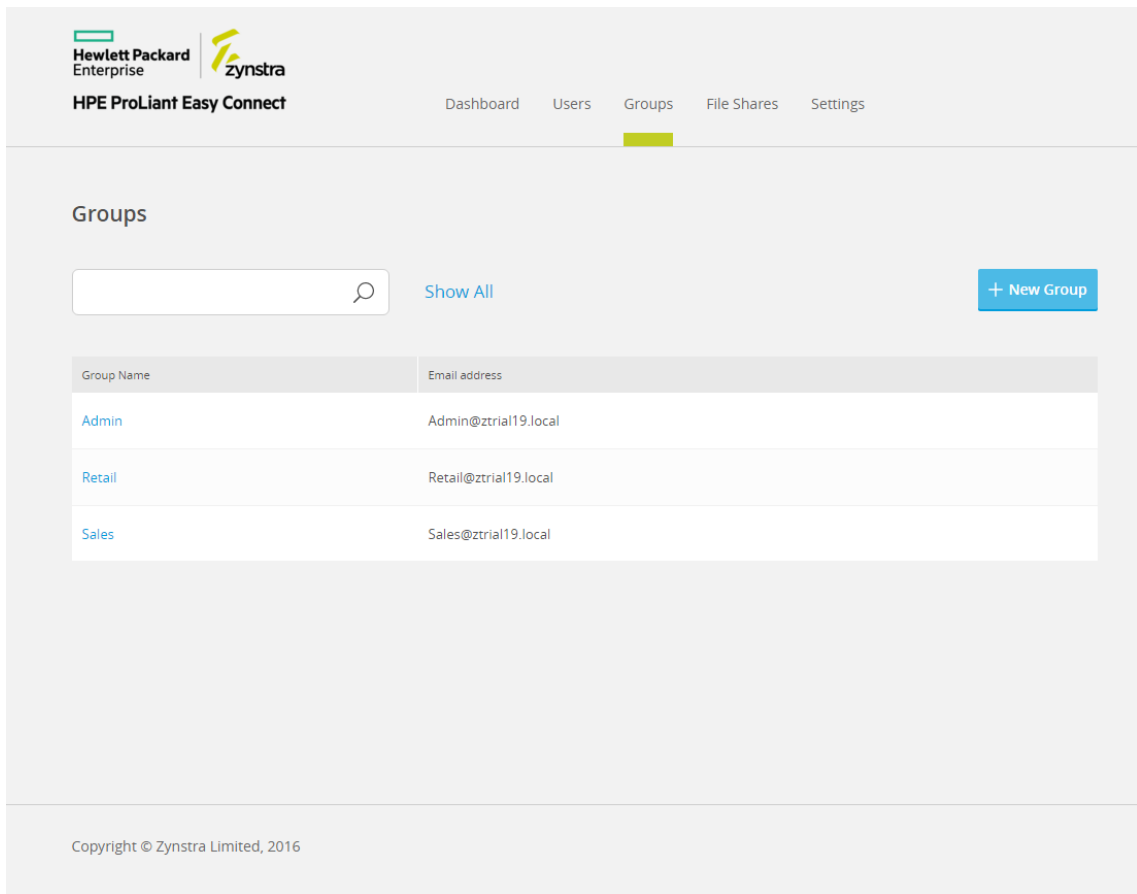
Groups

IT users can be assigned to Groups.

The benefit of doing so are:

- It provides a convenient way of identifying and managing IT users in larger organizations, as IT users can be listed by Group.
- File shares can be set up for these groups, meaning Users in the same Group can share a common set of files.
- IT service providers can implement custom group policies in Active Directory that can then automatically be applied to IT users assigned to a Group.

Selecting the Group option from the User Control Console menu shows a list of Groups available. The list also includes the default contact email address for the Group.

Filtering the Group List

Enter any text relating to the Group name to filter the list. This is not case sensitive.

To show the complete list again, after filtering, simply select the Show All button.

Sorting the Group List

You can sort the list of Groups by selecting one of the column labels at the top of the list. Clicking the label will first sort the list alphanumerically in ascending then, with a second click, descending order.

View Group Details

Clicking any Group in the Group List displays a screen showing the Group's details.

The additional detail shown includes the location of the Group's shared files on the server file system, and a list of all the Users who are a member of this Group.

At this point, you can select the Back button to return to the list, or the Edit button to make modifications to this Group.

Edit Group

The Edit Group screen simply allows you to rename a Group and add or remove individual User from the Group.

Renaming a Group has no effect other than to change how a Group is displayed in the User Control Console. Other properties that may be based on a Group name, such as the file share location or the default email address will not be changed.

New Group

On the Group list screen, you can select the New Group button to add a new group.
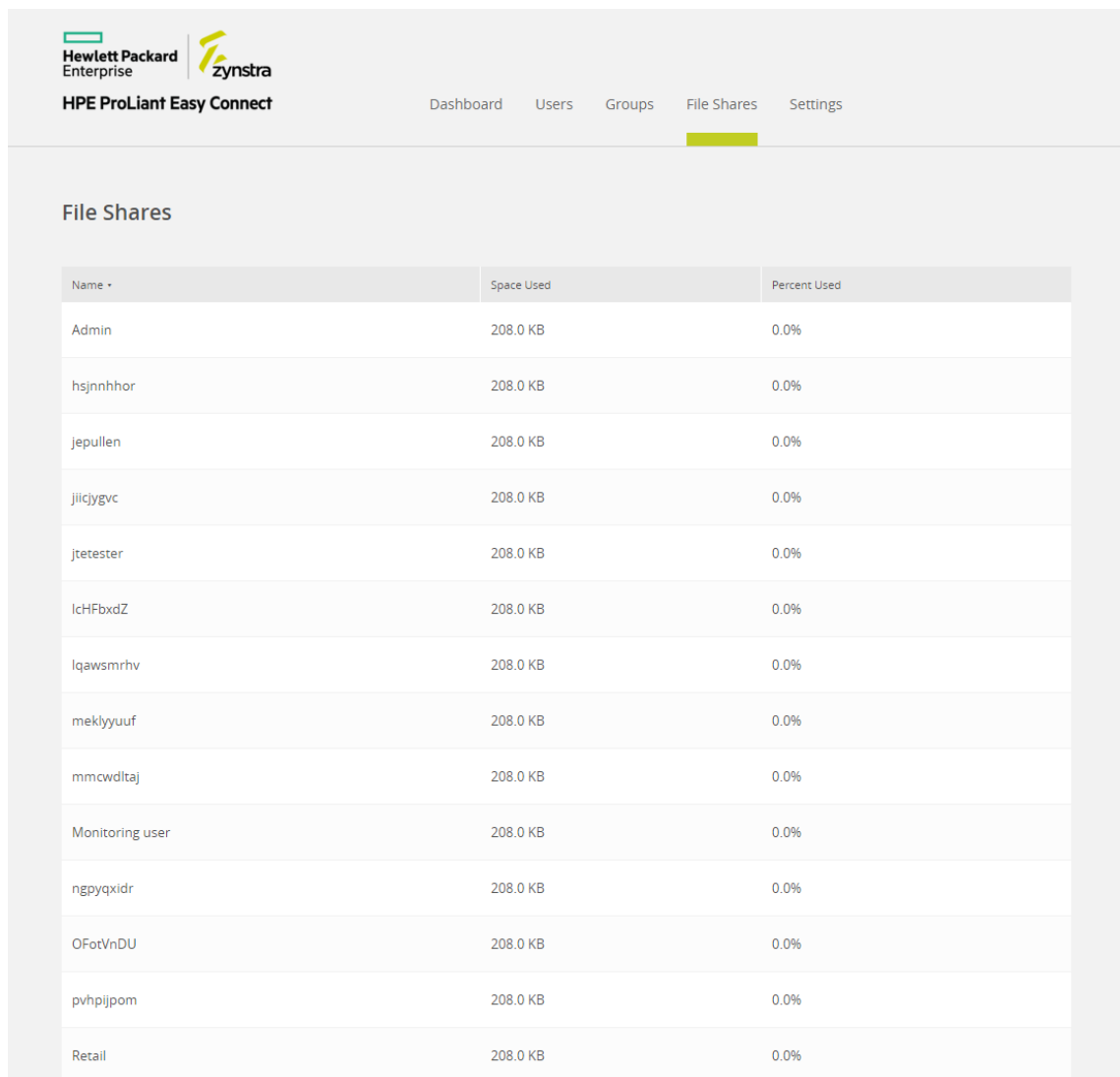
Managing File Shares

The Console provides the details of File Shares that are setup on the server.

File Shares enable IT users to store their files and exchange files between members of their user group.

From an administration point of view, the main point of interest is how much file space is being used, and whether Users or Groups have sufficient capacity.

This extra level of detail builds on the Disk Space status found in the reporting dashboard. While the Disk Space status reports that there is available storage capacity, the File Share reports how this capacity is divided between individual Users and Groups.

Shares List

Click on the Shares menu item at the top of the User Control Console.

A list of all File Shares setup on the server is shown.

The information in this list includes the name of the File Share, how much capacity has been used in terms of megabytes, and also capacity used in terms of percentage of the total available storage capacity.

The name shown in the first column could refer to one of three types of File Share:

- Each User with an account on the server is allocated a File Share which is identified by their user ID.

- Each Group automatically has a File Share, with the name of the Group shown in the Name column of this list.

- Finally, an IT service provider may have created an additional File Share with arbitrary names shown in the Name column.

Taking Action

The File Share capacity is a shared resource. If one User or Group is deemed to be using an unfair percentage of the available space, or if space becomes limited, the information in the Share List should be used to identify who should be asked to delete or archive unnecessary files.

Creating and Modifying File Shares

New Files Shares are automatically created when a User or Group is created.

As previously noted, using the User Control Console to delete a User or Group does not delete their files. File Shares can only be deleted by an IT service provider, to avoid the risk accidental deletion.

Settings

The Settings section of the User Control Console provides access to the advanced server settings.

Because the User Control Console runs on the local server, rather than in the cloud, it can be used for certain configuration tasks locally, without requiring remote access. In the rare event of a server becoming disconnected from the Internet or being unable to reach the HPE cloud management platform, an IT service provider may not able to resolve the problem remotely, and so the Settings menu can be used to reconfigure the server locally.

You should only modify these settings if advised to by your IT service provider or by HPE.

Support and other resources

Accessing HPE ProLiant Easy Connect Support

For the latest server support information, see the Hewlett Packard Enterprise ProLiant Easy Connect Support Portal (https://support.prolianteasyconnect.com).

Accessing Hewlett Packard Enterprise Support

- For live assistance, go to the Contact Hewlett Packard Enterprise Worldwide website (http://www.hpe.com/assistance).
- To access documentation and support services, go to the Hewlett Packard Enterprise Support Center website (http://www.hpe.com/support/hpesc).

Information to collect

- Technical support registration number (if applicable)
- Product name, model or version, and serial number
- Operating system name and version
- Firmware version
- Error messages
- Product-specific reports and logs
- Add-on products or components
- Third-party products or components

Websites

- Hewlett Packard Enterprise Information Library (http://www.hpe.com/info/enterprise/docs)
- Hewlett Packard Enterprise Support Center (http://www.hpe.com/support/hpesc)
- Contact Hewlett Packard Enterprise Worldwide (http://www.hpe.com/assistance)
- Customer Self Repair (http://www.hpe.com/support/selfrepair)

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