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Integrating Forbes & Lomax Switches with Lighting Control and Home Automation Systems

Basic Principles

Forbes & Lomax contact closure push buttons and toggle switches can be used as controls for panel-based home automation systems such as Mode Edin, Lutron Homeworks, Crestron KNX, Control 4, Rako and many more.

The switches connect to these systems using contact closure interfaces. Once connected, different functions can be assigned to the switches via programming in the system's software. Typical examples of functions would be selecting and dimming a lighting zone or scene, cycling through multiple scenes, switching the "whole house off", raising and lowering window shades, etc.

Cover plates can be custom engraved with text to denote the functions of each switch. Whilst our contact closure push buttons and toggles function as the front-end controls (an alternative to standard "keypads"), it is the lighting control systems and "panel" of dimmers, which are hidden away in an electrical closet, that would handle the lighting loads.

The contact closure interfaces can either be housed in the back boxes behind the Forbes & Lomax switches or in the electrical closet with the system's processor. If the interfaces are located with the processor, data cables would need to be run from each switch location back to the interfaces. If the interfaces are in the back boxes behind the switches, the switch locations can be wired together as a network. One must bear in mind the size of the interfaces, when considering housing them in the back boxes behind the switches.