

Professional ELECTRICIAN

AND INSTALLER

FREE!
TO THE TRADE

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR THE ELECTRICAL TRADE

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POWER TRIP

Behind the
scenes
at the



HEATING
The hottest solutions around
SMART HOMES
The intelligent route to success

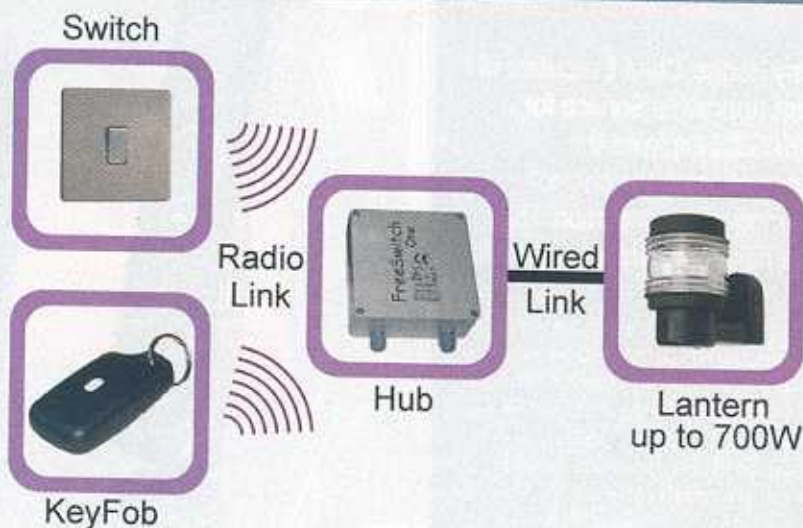


RACK & ROLL: Racking out our
Ford Connect pg 32

AND: BEAT ENERGY PRICE HIKES THIS WINTER WITH PV & HEAT PUMPS – pg 59

COMMON SENSE

PE embraces the new wireless world, both indoors and out.



Six months ago if you asked the PE team what 'wireless' meant to them you'd get two answers: the older guys would wax lyrical about the forerunner of the radio and the younger team members would tell you it's the way you connect to the internet. If you ask the same question today you get just the one answer: the latest way to control lighting.

Wireless switching opens up some fantastic avenues to working faster, with less mess and is a great way to offer customers increased functionality. Through this technology homeowners can have a light switch just about anywhere they like – even in retrofit scenarios, and without any channelling or chasing on the part of the electrician.

Free time

One UK company that has a wireless solution is SensorMech. Its core product, FreeSwitch Interior, is a three channel switch suitable for interior lighting. It is aimed at applications where the installation of additional lighting circuits is required, without causing the disruption to decor associated with cutting new switch drops. The terminal connections on it have passed the technical requirements of BS6220 allowing the product to be qualified as a junction box.

Using it an electrician can create wireless control of up to three individual light fittings with a total power not exceeding 700W on any one channel, or 1150W (5A) across all three channels. It is supplied with either four switch modules, allowing one channel to be

used for two-way switching, or with two switch modules and a multi-gang module, allowing all channels to be controlled through a 3-gang switch plate with 2-way switching available on two channels. The hub is designed to be wired directly into domestic 5A wiring and has a through connection to allow installation into radial or ring wiring.



Box clever

The switch module is designed to fit into a standard patress or surface mounting box. It is supplied with a battery and foam mounting pads to allow the module to be affixed to the switch back for convenience. This means you can fit it into existing switches; a real benefit if the homeowner is being particularly picky about the décor.

Both the switch module and hub have been designed and are manufactured in the UK. The man behind them is former fuel cell engineer Mark Turpin, who recognised the opportunity after his wife Jan complained about not being able to turn on the lights in the room from her bedside. Mark notes: "Throughout the product development we focussed on making the FreeSwitch as simple to install as possible."

Out and about

Outside the company has produced a similar solution for control of external or security lighting. The exterior products can be controlled either with a small radio module, designed to fit within a regular wall mounted light switch installed at a convenient location, or with a keyfob. The reception range is roughly 80m. As the switch module is approved for use down to -20°C it can be installed in most styles of IP rated switch for outdoor use.

Water features can also be controlled in a similar way.

For more information on wireless lighting circle readerlink 160