



Advanced Flex Control Builder Guide: Tricks and Tips

Default IP address:

All Flex Panels as delivered from FSR have an IP address of 192.168.5.70

Change IP address:

If your network is not 192.168.5 you may change the Flex panel's IP address from the touch screen on any panel with firmware of 2.16 or later by pressing on any part of the background graphic and holding for 10 seconds. A window will open that will allow you to change the IP address of the panel directly. To communicate to panels with an earlier firmware version you will need to change your computer's IP setting or connect to the serial port on the front or the serial port 2 on the back of the Flex.

Finding a Flex Panel's Ethernet Configuration and MAC address:

To check the current Ethernet Configuration of a Flex Panel, press and release the reset button under the front cover of the Flex panel, and then press anywhere on the Flex screen until the Debug Output Window appears. Once the project is loaded, the MAC address, Ethernet Configuration and Flex panel model number will be revealed. Press and release the reset button again to load the project normally. If you have a T6Flex, the reset button is under a small hole on top. Use a pin or similar object and insert briefly into the hole to depress the reset button then press anywhere on the Flex screen until the Debug Output Window appears. Alternatively, you may disconnect power then reapply power while pressing down on screen. If you have an LT-300 you will have to hookup serially using the Flex Control Builder 'Flex Connection' screen.

Control Libraries:

After initial FCB installation, you must go to the "About" tab on the FCB and click on Get Library Update to populate the Control Libraries in the Library tree.

Drag and drop folder to open that project, or Drag and drop folder content to open that project:

Open Windows Explorer and migrate to a project folder. You can drag and drop the entire folder or any of the contents of that project folder, such as a graphic, into the Project Tree of the FCB to open that project.

Open last 4 projects:

Right clicking in the project tree column opens a popup menu. Click on the Recent Projects and you can pick from the last 4 projects that had been opened.

Custom Buttons:

Selecting the Custom Button radio button will (if designated) display a selection of custom graphics you have selected. If you want to migrate to a different folder of graphics, just click on change folder. Once a button is in place it can be made larger, smaller, or repositioned. While the Alternate State radio button is not selected, this button becomes the primary button. To select a different button as the alternate, click on the Show alternate radio button, select, and drag and drop another button over the primary button. Clicking back and forth between the Show alternate radio buttons will show you exactly how it will look when complete.

Reposition Buttons in Grid Mode:

Using Grid mode and the arrow keys or mouse will make repositioning of a button and alignment easier. Turning the grid off permits free movement of buttons.

Resize Buttons:

Once a button has been placed, you can resize it by clicking on any of the small bordering boxes and holding the left mouse button down to resize. In Grid Mode, holding the shift key while using the arrow keys on the keyboard will provide a more precise sizing of buttons. The button can be placed into a template place holder again, if desired, by maneuvering the buttons top left corner of the button graphic into the template box, and then double clicking the left mouse button. Caution: Transparent pixels will be changed to black if resized.

Delete Buttons:

Right click on a button then choose "Delete selected" and left click to delete.

Library Tree and Project Tree Expansion:

If the contents of either tree column become hidden, you can manually resize them, or automatically resize them by clicking the buttons labeled "Library Tree" or "Project Tree"

Library file names (FSR) at end:

FSR created library files will have FSR at the end of the library name. Libraries modified or created by you will not have the FSR. Therefore, when new libraries are added or updated, those not ending in FSR will not be removed or modified.

Global Banner Hidden Buttons:

This is more of a precaution. If you have a button in any of the Banner Bars button positions and you chose to use the banner on that screen, the button actions on the original button will be executed, but the actions of that banner button will not.

Check for errors:

Click the Check for errors button often. It is the best way to catch errors before saving a project. Periodically perform an error check after adding a series of command actions, or if you are in doubt about the action you just added.

Check Current ADF file:

Should you get an error notification; a line number will also be shown. Right click anywhere within the project tree and select view current ADF. You can recheck for errors at the bottom of the screen, use the search bar on top, or scroll down to the line number reported as having generated the error. Note, the error may be caused by the line or segment above the error line reported.

New project, save with full graphics:

Checking this box in the New Project menu will save the entire (full sized) graphics used for screens and buttons. This will make the project larger and may be too large to send via email. Additionally, the Flex Control Builder will only save the file information to the project; it will not download the full graphics to the Flex Panel. Unchecking this box will save the graphics in the size they are actually used in the project.

COA Save:

Should an error in the project occur and you are unable to correct it before you have to save the project, a separate project file will be created with a COA file extension. This will allow the project to be loaded back into the Flex Control Builder. However, most if not all of the commands will be removed from the ADF file and not be transferred to the Flex Panel on a "Download". Best practice is to do frequent error checks while building your project to prevent the need for a COA file to be created.

LOG View for testing:

Adding the log command within a project is a good command verification tool. Adding it to timed commands or button presses will send the date and time along with the log text to the Flex Panel. While in the connect menu, you may use the log view command to view the log file entries. Note: The log will be cleared upon each re-boot of the Flex Panel.

Multiple projects:

Multiple projects can be opened. Note: While adding anything from the Library Tree column, make sure you drag that item ONTO the project you intend to use it on. Also, if you have multiple projects open and do a save project. Make sure the cursor is somewhere within the project intended to be saved.

Copy and paste:

Screens may be copied within a project, or from one project to another. Right click on desired screen you wish to copy and click COPY. Click within the project you want to copy to, then right click and PASTE. You may rename this screen or change the screen order number.

Note: Underlying button commands are not copied.

Command before or after line:

In options tab, a choice can be made as to where to place a new command action if the cursor is not positioned at the beginning of a command line.

About:

Click on the About button and you can then check for Flex Control Builder updates, or download updated control library files.

Action Markers:

While in button mode, clicking this radio button will reveal small yellow dots in corners of buttons where actions have already been added. A single yellow box on the top left of the button indicates a press command. A single box on top and another at middle left of box indicated a press and hold command. A single box on top left and another on bottom left indicated a toggle command. This is a quick way to review your screens to make sure you didn't miss a command step.

IR Pass Thru:

If this feature is on, it will pass all IR received at the front of the flex panel to all IR ports. This is handy in the event that you want to keep certain control functions executable from the remote rather than adding them all to the project. By default this feature is turned off. You can add it to the startup commands, or add a toggle button to your project to turn it on or off from the flex panel.

Flex remote:

This is a free program that can be downloaded from the www.FSRinc.com website. This will, through IP connection, provide a means to control a Flex panel from a computer. Similar but

not free apps are available from the Apple store, the Google Play store and Windows store. This is a good tool for demonstrations, help desks, and developing projects.

Flex Time server:

This is another free program available on our website. It provides a means to keep all flex panels in a network to maintain the same date and time as the server. This program is loaded on the server.

Volume Control:

Serial and Ethernet control devices cannot reliably use the increment and decrement commands for volume control, if using the bar graphs. Ideally, if these devices support direct volume input commands, they should be used instead. Refer to additional documentation on the FSR Inc. website for instructions on using those commands.

Adding Comments to Command lines:

Comment format is as follows: `*comment text *`