



# Creating the Prescription for Build Out Success

**Doctors Express** is an urgent care concept that specializes in providing a convenient, lower-cost alternative to the emergency room. The first medical franchise of its kind, Doctors Express sets itself apart by having licensed physicians onsite to see patients and treat a wide-range of non-life-threatening illnesses and conditions.

## The Situation

Doctors Express had one location open and plans in place to begin franchising. The company’s founding team had a feeling the concept had high potential, but being the first franchise in the industry, it remained an unproven business model. This made selling and forecasting franchise locations difficult, but Doctors Express had two distinct advantages on its side:

1. Doctors Express had developed a model that allowed franchisees to operate centers in all states.
2. Banks remained more inclined to lend to medical concepts in spite of the economic downturn.

Doctors Express knew it needed to create a strong build out program that included a branded design and a repeatable, turnkey process that reduced the need for franchisee involvement. With a Franchise Disclosure Document (FDD) already in place, Doctors Express also knew that the selected partner would need to work within the budget parameters laid out in the FDD. Finally, it needed a partner with flexibility in its processes in order to be able to incorporate existing program elements and accommodate the franchise’s indeterminate growth.

## The Solution

Receiving a referral from Baum Realty, the franchise’s real estate partner, Doctors Express approached F.C. Dadson. Project teams from both companies met to extensively discuss Doctors Express’s business model, franchising plans and goals for the program. With this information, F.C. Dadson began developing a build out program that would satisfy the franchisor’s needs.



The first step of the customized program was to design an office prototype that expressed the Doctors Express brand, created a warm and inviting environment, and was priced within the budget parameters expressed in the franchisor’s FDD. Through extensive product research, smart material selection, and open communication between the two teams, F.C. Dadson was able to produce a design concept that satisfactorily met these objectives.

New signage emphasized the Doctors Express brand throughout the space while the inclusion of modular components made the design easy to repeat



and roll out in future Doctors Express locations. A warm color and material palette welcomed customers and the cost-conscious price tag was welcomed by the franchise.

Once the design was approved, F.C. Dadson researched the site requirements needed to best accommodate the new design. The project team communicated these to Baum Realty as considerations to make during site selection. With these requirements in hand, the real estate partner would be able to efficiently choose spaces and negotiate favorable lease terms. This would lead to further reductions in build out costs as tenant improvements can be minimized as much as possible.

Wanting to create a “turnkey” experience for franchisees, F.C. Dadson also developed a complete construction management program and prepared to offer décor and equipment fulfillment services for Doctors Express. The construction management program involved the total oversight of the build out by F.C. Dadson’s project team, minimizing the franchisee’s time spent on the process. This included getting plans through architecture and permitting, coordinating contractor bidding and selection, monitoring site construction, facilitating inspections and managing contractor payouts.

Also part of the program, F.C. Dadson would take on the responsibility of ordering and coordinating the delivery of major décor and equipment pieces needed to finish a space and make it functional. This included all cabinetry and counter tops, interior and exterior signage and graphics, furniture and décor pieces, and medical equipment. While many new design elements were either produced in our production facility or sourced from vendor partners, F.C. Dadson saw value in supporting the existing relationship between Doctors Express and its existing medical supply distributors. F.C. Dadson’s project team opened up communication with these companies’ internal teams in order to fully incorporate them into the new fulfillment program and facilitate the transfer of project and order details as well as ensure the timely delivery of supplies to the site.

## The Result



One year after its implementation, Doctors Express is extremely satisfied with F.C. Dadson’s program. The new design has provided the franchise with the branded image they were looking for, and with the addition of a few tweaks for functionality, it continues to remain true to the original design concept.

In developing a turnkey build out program, F.C. Dadson was not only able to minimize franchisees’ involvement in the process, but we were able to streamline build out to an average of 12 to 16 weeks from start to finish. To date, F.C. Dadson has achieved our forecasted timeline for each location and we continue to dial in the process in order to further reduce build out times.

Working with vendors and closely monitoring build out costs, F.C. Dadson’s project team has been able to keep each location’s costs within Doctors Express’s desired budget range. The open and thorough communication between F.C. Dadson’s project team, franchisor and franchisee, and all contractors and vendors has also resulted in accuracy and on-time delivery with each location.





During the first months of F.C. Dadson's partnership with Doctors Express, a lot of forecasting and planning was done to anticipate numerous growth scenarios. F.C. Dadson knew it could support the locations currently in the pipeline, but we also wanted to make sure we could support the franchise's future growth –whatever that may prove to be. Planning with this flexibility in mind has helped F.C. Dadson grow with Doctors Express from its first franchise location to 12 completed locations and 30 projected openings in 2010.

***“Doctors Express is very pleased to have found FC Dadson as a design, construction, and millwork vendor partner. They have been dedicated to ensuring quality design and buildout services. They are responsive to franchisees. They communicate well. They are always willing to correct and adapt as issues arise. They continue to be a significant part of Doctors Express’s growth plan.”***

**-Kathleen Huntsman, Vice President of Operations, Doctors Express Franchising LLC**

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 FC Dadson

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