



## ***"Prefab panel construction is the building of the future"***

Dave Fabian with Falcon Holdings

David Fabian, chief development officer for Falcon Holdings Management, Ltd., a Westlake, Texas-based multi-unit franchise owner, has partnered with Fullerton Building Systems for a long time--so long, in fact, that he has observed the full arc of its growth from early innovator to its position today as the leading provider of prefab building packages for restaurants and other retail stores across the nation.

In the early 2000s, as then-head of development for Church's Chicken, Fabian was faced with the challenge of remodeling older units without interrupting their daily operations. For a solution, he sought out Fullerton, working closely with its staff to develop a pre-built panel system specifically for such remodels.

Fabian says he spent days in Fullerton's Worthington, Minnesota factory, learning first-hand all of the pros and cons of panelization, but even more importantly, "how to take construction itself to the next level--finding a better way to streamline the process, taking out as much of the construction time and as many of the on-site trades as possible."

Many people simply didn't understand the benefits of the Fullerton system, which he says was 15 years ahead of its time. "They didn't realize the advantages of pre-manufacturing a building in a controlled environment--particularly in areas where the weather can limit the window of opportunity--and where all of the trades can work logically, rather than bumping into each other on the job site."

"It's really a better process for construction," he adds, "one where you can take out all of the imperfections in the factory. The result is a much better finished building than is possible otherwise." Fabian ultimately used Fullerton Building Systems to build out Church's entire program, consisting of dozens of units spread across much of the Southwest.

Fabian later left Church's to join SUPERVALU, working in its Save-A-Lot stores division, before joining Falcon Holdings three and a half years ago. The firm is a large franchisee of Long John Silver, Hardee's, Carl's Jr., and Church's Chicken. They are also a large developer of Taco Bell.

In his new position, Fabian and Fullerton continue to have a very close working relationship, completing more than 50 stores across Falcon Holding's multiple brands. Fabian says he prefers to do pre-fab if it is "cost neutral" on a project. He especially likes the fact that Fullerton's system is not a "cut and dried" program.

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"It's customized to fit our needs across all of our concepts, and we work together on engineering the process so that it can meet those needs efficiently."

Fullerton Building Systems continues to deliver the same benefits to Falcon Holdings as it did to Fabian's prior employers, he says. "The biggest is the speed of construction—for me, it's all about time. It takes three weeks out of the construction process, a big win for us because it means the cash register begins to ring that much sooner."

That speed of construction was evident in Falcon Holdings' recent development of a new Taco Bell restaurant in Converse, Texas. Falcon started construction of the restaurant's shell at 9 a.m. By 4 p.m. the same day, the shell was done and ready for interior finishing.

It's also about higher quality. "When a Fullerton building goes up, it is stronger than any other building we can build, including stick-built," he says. "The Worthington factory does a really good job of building the panels and ensuring their strength. In our case, the panels have to survive the trials and tribulations of the American freeway system before they ever get to San Antonio or wherever we are going to erect them---and they do!"

Exterior finishes is also a factor. Fullerton applies finished veneers, such as stone and brick, to the panels in the factory, using the same exact materials that would be applied in the field, but in a controlled setting. Fabian points out that "we have never had a stone fall off a Fullerton panel," a testament to their engineering and construction quality control and consistency.

Falcon Holdings also likes the instant marketability that panelizing affords. Fullerton is able to install a concept's distinguishing signage directly on the panels, so that as soon as they are erected on site, the consumer knows instantly that it is going to be a Church's Chicken, Taco Bell or another brand of store. "Little things like that, that cannot be done on a conventional construction job, we have found to be unbelievably important as we try to roll out different concepts," says Fabian.

As for cost, he says "the difference is in the things that are difficult to control. For example, if you are building in a heavily unionized environment, your costs---all day and every day---will be cheaper. If you are building in an area where construction is hot and trades people are in short supply, like Miami or Texas, you will come out ahead. And if you are working in a region with high labor costs, such as along the East Coast, the savings over traditional construction methods will be really significant."

"And there is always the problem of dealing with the trades on-site," he says, "the framers, caulkers, insulators, electricians and everyone else that is needed. Will they show up? And if they do, when?" By partnering with Fullerton, Falcon Holdings takes seven building trades

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and consolidates them in one relationship, "If you can take seven people off the job by building in a controlled factory environment, rather than in the field, you will always be way ahead cost-wise."

Fabian says Falcon Holdings has a strategic plan to grow exponentially throughout the U.S., "coast to coast and border to border." He fully expects Fullerton Building Systems to continue to be the firm's strong partner in that growth, and adds, "We look at prefab panel construction as the building of the future."



Taco Bell – Converse, TX. FBS supplied this building package in 2014 for Falcon Holdings

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We pledge to our customers that we will continue to be a proactive leader in changing or developing innovative products for the industry. If you have any questions or want to discuss this directly, we welcome you call.

Best Regards,



**Dave Walock**  
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