CASE STUDY

Lit Outdoor Lighting

Seven months inside a two-owner lighting company in Covington, Louisiana. What got built, what it changed, and what the owners said about it.

LIT OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Landscape, architectural, permanent, and holiday lighting
Owners: Jonathan and Melissa Kujawski
Engagement started April 7, 2026

AT A GLANCE

+25%

over all of 2025 by October with the biggest contract in. Past the full year by August

2.3x

the April run rate in August, the biggest revenue month Lit has ever had

3x

the biggest contract tripled and went from year to year to four years, on a new pitch

44%

lower cost per Christmas lead than in 2025

THE SHORT VERSION

One weekly meeting, one shared portal, 330 finished to-dos.

The client

Lit Outdoor Lighting designs and installs landscape, architectural, permanent, and holiday lighting across Southeast Louisiana. Jonathan runs sales and the field; Melissa runs the office and the schedule.

Two owners, one install crew. Best of St. Tammany 2026 Gold in two categories. Official installer for one of New Orleans' largest public holiday light displays, four years running.

The engagement

Grow Citrus embedded its founder as Lit's Growth Operator in April 2026. Flat monthly fee, no equity, remote from Orlando with in-person sessions.

Scope: marketing, sales systems, SOPs, hiring, finance, software. Jon kept selling, Melissa kept running the office, and Grow Citrus built the operating system around them.

The results, April through November 2026

- Lit's largest contract, re-pitched with a new presentation: tripled in size and signed for four years, not one
- Revenue through October with that contract counted: 25% past all of 2025, with two months left
- Best sales week in company history: 8 jobs signed at a 90% close rate
- Schedule booked through December by mid-August
- Christmas lead cost on Meta down 44% year over year
- Same owners, same market, one crew. The one change in 2026: a Growth Operator on a flat fee
- Owner rating: 10/10 at 30 days and six months. Contract renewed.

Inside: where Lit started (p. 3), week one (p. 4), what got built (p. 5 to 7), the numbers (p. 8 and 9), the owners' reviews (p. 10), the misses and what's next (p. 11 and 12).

APRIL 2026

A good company that couldn't see its own numbers.

Lit was already winning. Customers called them the most professional company they had met. The sales presentation got rave reviews. The work was not the problem. Everything around it was.

On the intake call, the owners were asked how confident they were in their numbers, on a scale of one to ten. The answer was "They're there."

What the intake call found

- Revenue tracked as a monthly total, with no job costing and no way to tell which jobs made money.
- 14 leads in the prior 30 days, at a cost per lead nobody had calculated. No source recorded for any of them.
- Close rate and profit per job: "need to investigate." Marketing return: not tracked at all.
- Follow-up after a non-close: "yes, but not consistently enough."
- No written job descriptions and no SOPs. Asked whether job descriptions existed, Melissa said, "Oh my god."
- Goals talked about for four years, never written down.
- Asked what breaks first if revenue doubled: "Melissa's brain."

The owners' six-month goals

- Consistent lead flow instead of highs and lows.
- A marketing system that improves every month.
- Documented processes for every part of the business.
- A company ready to hire and run more crews.
- A clear grasp of the numbers and what to do next.

> ***"We've been talking about making goals for four years, and you did it in like 24 hours."***
>
> Melissa Kujawski, co-owner, on the second call of the engagement

WEEK ONE

A vision, a scorecard, and a meeting that actually runs.

Before building a single asset, Grow Citrus installed the system the assets would live in. All of it was in place within the first week.

- **A written three-year vision.** Three field crews, a brick-and-mortar shop, an office admin, two salespeople, revenue at four times 2025. Drafted April 7, confirmed April 9.
- **14 quarterly priorities,** each with one owner and a measurable finish line, from job costing to referral partners and SOPs.
- **A 15-metric weekly scorecard.** Leads, meetings, close rate, revenue signed and collected, schedule depth, return trips, posts, reviews, referrals, all graded weekly.
- **The Checkpoint.** One weekly meeting. Status every priority, solve what's off track, leave with owners and dates.
- **A shared portal.** To-dos, files, notes, and chat in one place. Within a week, Melissa was checking it first thing every morning.

MONTH ONE BY THE NUMBERS

95	to-dos finished
96%	finished on time
8 of 18	priorities done

Six meetings held. Melissa closed 53 to-dos, Grow Citrus 43, Jon 11. The owners did real work every week because the system asked them for specific things with dates, not for "more marketing."

> ***"The organizational structure implemented through dashboards, accountability systems, and task management has helped keep everyone focused and aligned."***
>
> Jonathan and Melissa, 30-day review

WHAT GOT BUILT

Seven months of building, in five lanes.

1 Sales

- Rebuilt the sales presentation, visuals only; the content customers loved stayed. One customer told Jon it was "light years ahead of everybody else." A second presentation, built with the owners for Lit's largest commercial account, tripled that contract and locked it in for four years.
- One-price quoting: one all-in number for the whole house instead of good, better, best tiers. Brass stakes standard on every quote, and the first thing removed when price pushes back.
- A job costing and quoting tool Jon runs on an iPad: catalog, labor, markup slider, margin readout, copy to Jobber. Margin visible before a quote goes out.
- Rules that stuck: every non-close leaves with a next step scheduled, both decision makers at every meeting, night demos only for design objections, and a close-today incentive funded by a buffer built into every quote. All of it written into the Sales Meeting Playbook, now on version 5.

2 Marketing

- A full-year email calendar: promotional blasts, seasonal tips, and automated drips for abandoned quotes, Christmas, and maintenance. Open rates ran around 60% against a 20% industry benchmark.
- Social on a schedule: three posts a week minimum, often eight to ten. A branded before-and-after of every install, texted to the client to post and tag Lit.
- Eleven ebooks as lead magnets, and an AI home visualizer on the website: upload a photo, see the house lit, book a call. Its first customer booked an install.
- Christmas season: new video and static ad creative, a rebranded mailer, A-frame signs with their own inquiry automation, and a four-email open-proposals push tied to a real November 1 price increase.
- Credibility and referrals: press releases for the Best of St. Tammany Gold wins and the four-year commercial contract, a company stats one-pager (87% booking rate, average lifetime value, return rate), the Lit Premier Partner Network with a partner drip and a video per trade, and a home show booth.

3 Operations and people

- 24+ SOP training packages: filmed by the crew, edited, packaged (thumbnail, objective, quality check, recap), and filed in IllumOS. Wiring, trenching, transformers, app programming, maintenance visits, the sales meeting.
- A hiring system: job descriptions, recruiting checklist, interview guide, phone screening reports, a 25-page handbook, a new-hire packet. The first new installer was hired before Christmas season, with the fully loaded cost modeled first: break-even at 11 jobs a year.
- The biggest install of the year: Melissa's handwritten brain dump became a crew-by-crew install plan (42 working days plus rain and power buffers) in six days. Lit bought a 34-foot lift instead of renting one; it pays for itself in under two seasons of rental.
- The customer journey written end to end, first call to the one-year mark, every step labeled Jobber, ActiveCampaign, or human. The Protection Plan rebuilt around a warranty-plus-maintenance structure with a homeowner care guide.
- Brick and mortar, a three-year goal in April, became a signed lease on a 1,200 square foot warehouse and office by July.

4 Money

- Onboarded a professional bookkeeper. Clean books from June 2026 forward, with Landscape and Holiday revenue separated for the first time.
- The State of Lit, a 19-page financial review: revenue mix, margins, labor ratio, cash, a three-case forecast. Then Finance Flash, a one-page monthly edition with a Financial Health Grade (July: B, 80 of 100. August: B, 85).
- Found the pricing leak. Quotes carried about twice the markup the books showed being realized. The gap was between jobs, not inside them: unbilled drive time, rain days, free check-ups, and Christmas inventory bought months before the revenue landed.
- Pricing moves with the math behind them: an across-the-board increase paired with cash pricing, the quote buffer, and a November 1 increase that gave every open proposal a reason to sign.
- A subscription audit, Jobber Marketing Suite replaced by ActiveCampaign, and a 2027 marketing plan: month by month, every channel, sign and mailer order dates built in.

5 Tools and automation

- The job costing tool, the AI visualizer with a lead grader, and the IllumOS hiring flow: job posting page, application pipeline, and onboarding with SOP videos assigned to each hire.
- ActiveCampaign automations: pre-sale video emails, a quote-sent follow-up flow (2 weeks, 4 weeks, 6 months), the maintenance drip, A-frame sign inquiries, a referral partner group. Manual pre-sale emails are gone.
- A commercial prospect list: 200+ HOAs, property managers, and subdivisions within 50 miles of Covington, each with a tier, a contact, and an angle, plus a 3-email outreach sequence. Website fixes nobody had time for, done.

TIMELINE

Seven months, in order

April 7	Intake call. Vision drafted, 14 priorities set, scorecard and portal live.
April 21	Job costing tool built live on a call. Email calendar two days later.
May 7	First monthly report: 95 to-dos, 96% on time. 30-day review: 10/10.
May 19	Seven SOPs live against a goal of three. AI visualizer live on the site.
June	Largest commercial contract re-pitched and signed: triple the prior year, four-year term.
July	Warehouse lease signed. The pricing leak found and sized.
August	Biggest revenue month in company history. Best sales week ever. Installer hired.
September	Two reporting divisions. Track campaign cut. Proposals push sent.
October	Commercial install wrapped. 2027 calendar delivered. Christmas ads: 35 leads, 44% cheaper than 2025.
November	Six-month review: 10/10, contract renewed. 330 to-dos complete.

THE NUMBERS, PART ONE

Revenue and sales, in Lit's own data.

+25%
past all of 2025 through October, two months left

2.3x
the April run rate in August, the biggest month ever

8 jobs
signed in a single August week at a 90% close rate

April 2026 baseline	Seven months later
Revenue pace No forecast.	The first half of 2026 was 51% of 2025's full year. With the largest contract counted, revenue passed all of 2025 by the end of August and ran 25% above it through October, with two months left.
Forecast None.	Three-case forecast built in July. Past its upside case by October with that contract counted; year two is planned as a seven-figure year.
Biggest contract Renewed year to year.	Re-pitched with a new presentation: tripled to 31% of all 2025 revenue and signed for four years.
Close rate "Need to investigate."	Measured every week. 75 to 100% in most summer weeks, 90% in the record week.
Schedule depth Two to three weeks.	Booked through December by mid-August, which made rush pricing possible.
Follow-up Inconsistent.	Every non-close leaves with a next step scheduled. Old quotes close by text with a reminder.
Job costing None.	Every quote costed, margin visible before it's sent. The pricing leak found and sized.
Add-on revenue No outreach.	Summer cleanup calls: 7 yeses from 20 in a week. One cleanup visit turned into an add-on worth 40 times the visit.

THE NUMBERS, PART TWO

Marketing and systems.

151.6K
Facebook views in 90 days, up 192%

419
Facebook link clicks in 90 days, up 1,300%

44.8K
Instagram views in 30 days, up 188%

44%
lower cost per Christmas lead on Meta, year over year

April 2026 baseline	Seven months later
New leads 14 a month, no source.	Five to six a week in August, source captured on every call. Facebook, Instagram, and ChatGPT showed up as sources for the first time.
Christmas lead cost 2025 campaign.	44% lower in October 2026, 35 leads in the month. The top ad, a vertical video of Jon and Melissa, produced half of them.
Email Ad hoc sends.	Full-year calendar plus automated drips. Open rates around 60%. A 524-person Christmas send with a 0.9% unsubscribe rate.
Processes Nothing written down.	24+ SOP training packages, a hiring system, a handbook, the customer journey, the sales playbook. First installer hired through it.
Financial reporting "They're there."	Clean monthly books, a one-page Finance Flash with a health grade, and two reporting divisions: Landscape and Holiday.
Work completed Goals discussed for four years.	330 to-dos and 31 quarterly priorities finished, 86% of dated to-dos on time, 122 assets filed in a shared workspace Lit owns.

Sources: Lit's weekly scorecard, bookkeeper-prepared financials through October 2026, the signed commercial contracts, Meta Business Suite, Eversight PPC reports, and the Grow Citrus portal.

IN THEIR WORDS

Two written reviews. Two 10s.

Jonathan and Melissa wrote formal reviews at 30 days (May 2026) and at six months (November 2026). Excerpts, in their words.

30-DAY REVIEW

Overall rating: 10/10

> ***"We have already noticed an increase in inbound calls during what is traditionally one of our slower periods."***

> ***"Overall marketing materials and customer-facing presentation have noticeably improved."***

> ***"The first 30 days have exceeded expectations."***

SIX-MONTH REVIEW

Overall: Excellent, 10/10

> ***"There has been a very noticeable increase in business since he joined, and we believe his efforts have been a meaningful contributor to that growth."***

> ***"A substantial amount has been accomplished in a short time."***

Six-month review, by area

Marketing and growth	**Excellent**	Referral partnerships	**Strong progress**
Operations and SOPs	**Excellent**	Finance and KPIs	**Strong progress**

The owners renewed for another six months and asked to discuss a larger role as Lit's second location takes shape.

> ***"I just needed a third neutral brain to hash this one out with. We've driven ourselves nuts on this."***
>
> Melissa Kujawski, after the session that rebuilt the maintenance plan pricing

THE HONEST PART

The misses, and what we did about them.

A case study that only lists wins is a brochure. These are from the same seven months.

- **Permanent track lighting.** We built the campaign plan, then killed it in September. Competitors were installing at barely above material cost. A race to the bottom isn't a campaign. The marketing dollars went to landscape and holiday.
- **BNI.** Melissa interviewed, referred three members before she was even in, and still lost the seat to a competitor on chapter politics. Lit pivoted to the Chamber and home shows instead.
- **Cold email vendors.** One booked a demo and never followed up. Dropped. Lit's own 200-contact prospect list replaced it at no monthly cost.
- **The AI visualizer.** Live on the site and used by customers, but it didn't produce leads on its own in the first month. It became a home show attraction and a sales aid instead of a passive funnel.
- **Field quality.** Three return trips in one July week. The fix wasn't a document. It was Jon back on site, unannounced spot checks, and a gift card for clean inspections. Return trips went back to zero.
- **Pace in busy season.** New initiatives slowed in the fall because Jon and Melissa were on the biggest install of the year. The answer: sequence work around their calendar and push adoption of what was built.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE FROM THE CLIENT'S SIDE

- One hour a week in the Checkpoint. Everything else runs through the portal.
- To-dos that ask the owners for specific inputs (a cost list, a photo, a yes or no) and turn them into finished assets within days.
- Every email in Melissa's voice, every document in Lit's brand. Nothing reads like an agency wrote it.
- Pushback when an idea is bad, including the owners' ideas and our own.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR LIT

Year two has a plan.

- **The seven-figure year.** 25% past all of 2025 through October with the biggest contract counted, and November and December still on the board.
- **Two divisions on paper.** Landscape and Holiday, each with its own goals, close rate, labor benchmark, and marketing spend.
- **2027 campaign calendar.** 12 monthly campaigns, every channel planned, signs and mailers ordered ahead of time.
- **Orlando.** Lit's second location, planned for fall 2027. Grow Citrus, based in Orlando, is the partner on the ground.
- **The year-one review.** A December planning session in Covington: 2026 results, 2027 goals, and the first quarter's priorities.
- **The post-Christmas audit.** Margin by job size and zip, overtime cost, clients kept and lost, written up by January 15.

HOW GROW CITRUS WORKS

Be a grower, not a show-er.

Show-ers perform growth: followers, branding, big talk. Growers produce it: systems, repeatable sales, retention, numbers the owner can read.

A Growth Operator sits inside the business. We run the weekly meeting, build the assets, write the processes, read the numbers, and make sure things get implemented.

What an engagement includes

- The Checkpoint, one weekly meeting, plus a shared portal
- Quarterly priorities, one owner each
- A weekly scorecard and a monthly Finance Flash
- Flat monthly fee. No equity and no long-term contract.

Want this for your business?

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