



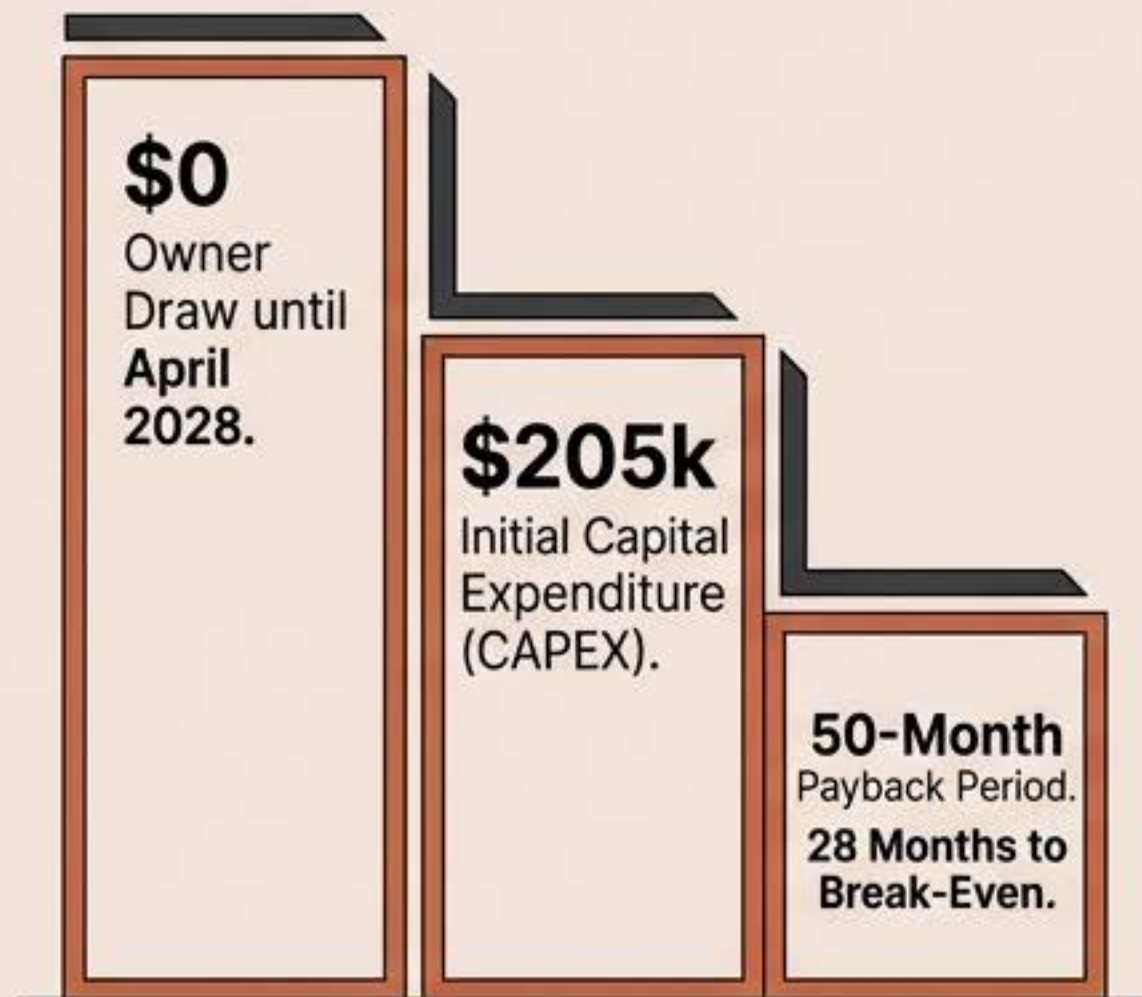
# The Garden Center Playbook

**A 7-factor operational roadmap for navigating high CAPEX, volatile cash flows, and reaching Year-5 scale.**

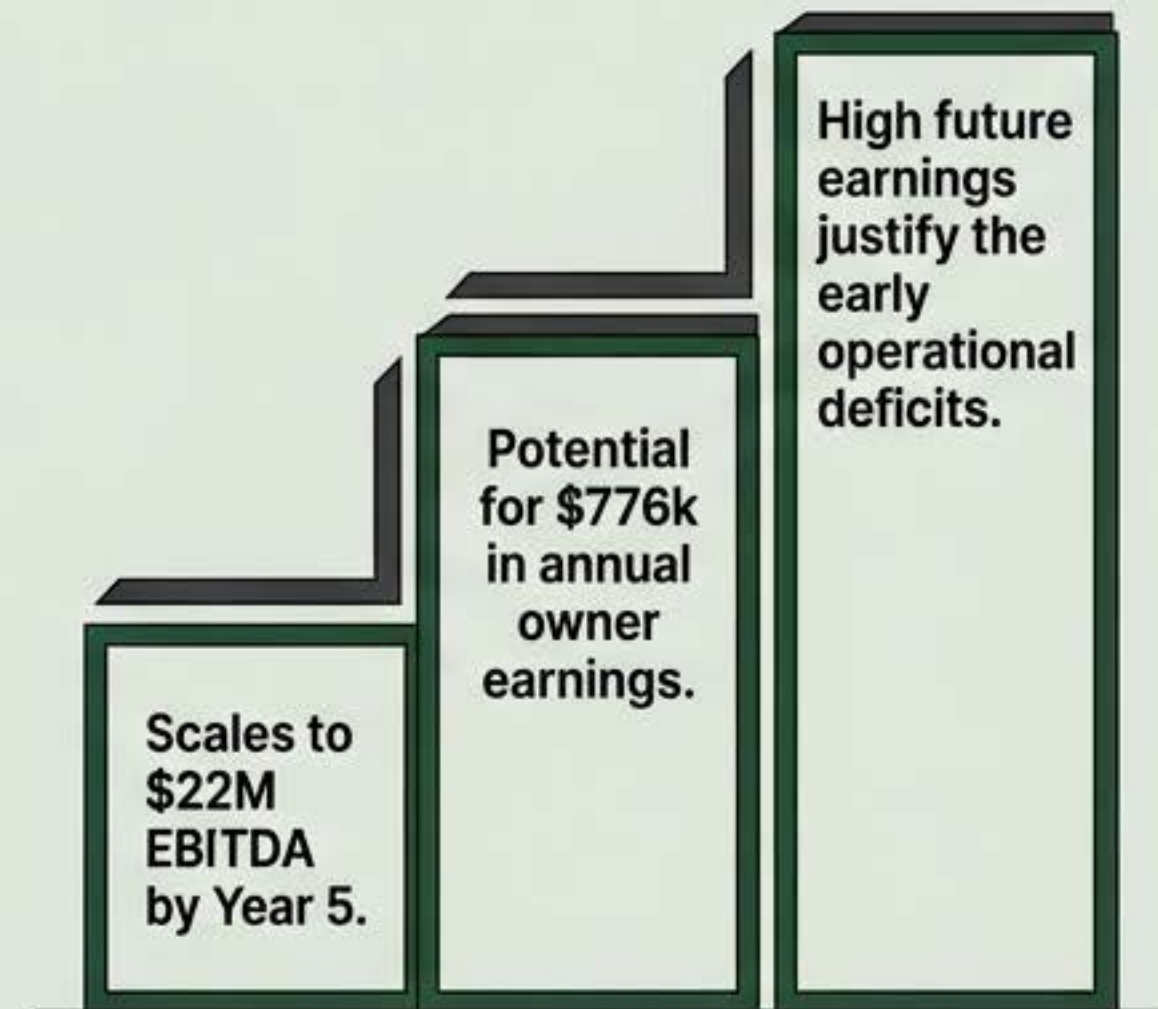
Built for retail entrepreneurs, investors, and operators.

# The 28-Month Sacrifice for a \$22M Upside

## The Sacrifice



## The Upside



# Overcoming the \$205,000 Entry Hurdle



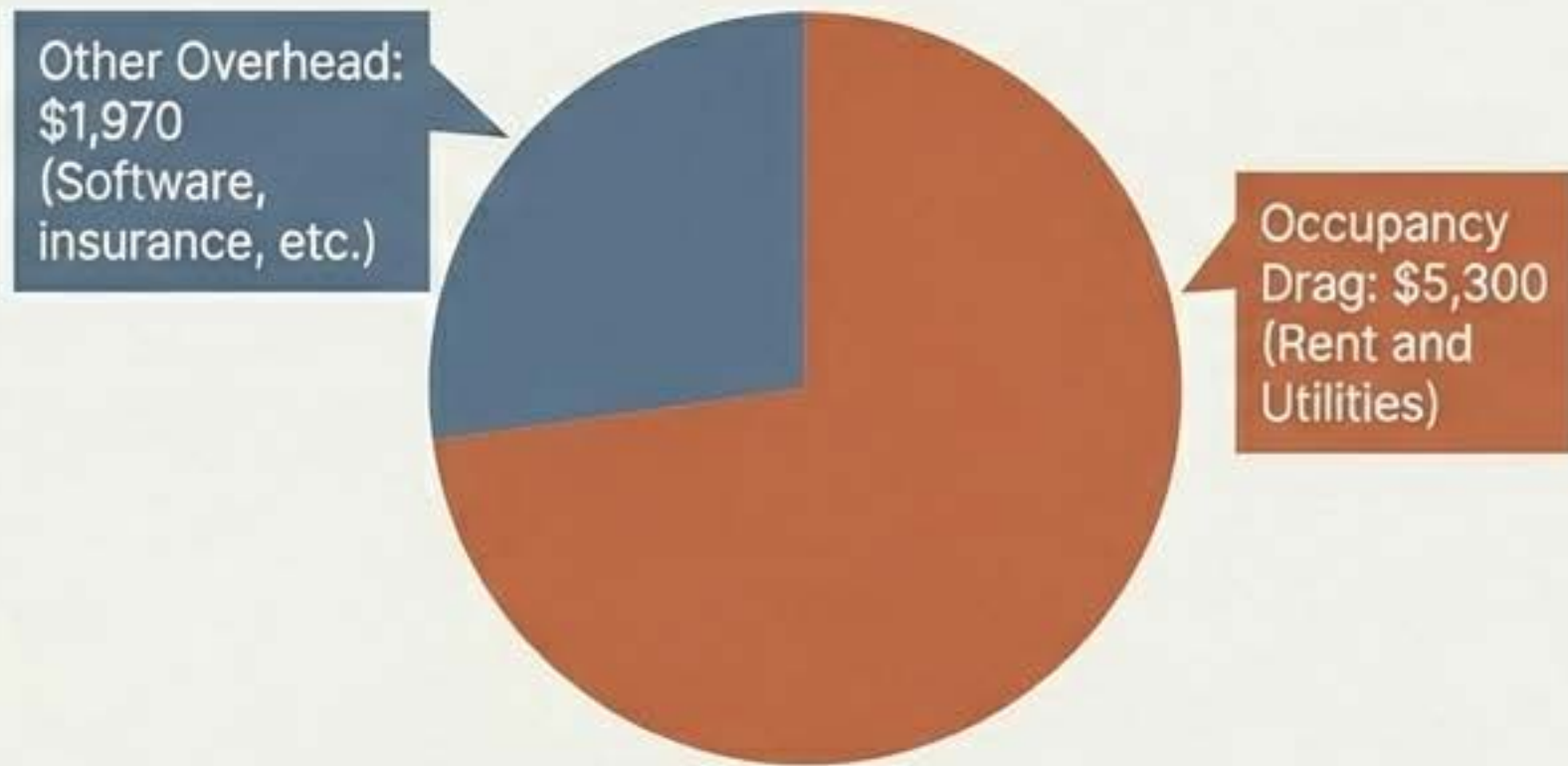
## Lifting the IRR

- Lease, rather than buy, non-core assets and specialized shelving.
- Negotiate longer payment terms with wholesale suppliers.
- Accelerate Year-1 sales velocity to service the initial debt faster.

# Surviving the \$7,270 Monthly Burn Rate

# \$7,270

Monthly Fixed Costs



## Occupancy Management

- Seek shorter, flexible lease terms initially to avoid being locked into long liabilities.
- Keep total rent expenses strictly below 15% of projected Year 1 revenue.
- Negotiate utility caps and install immediate energy-efficiency upgrades.

# Taming the Perishable Inventory Engine

## COGS Reduction Journey

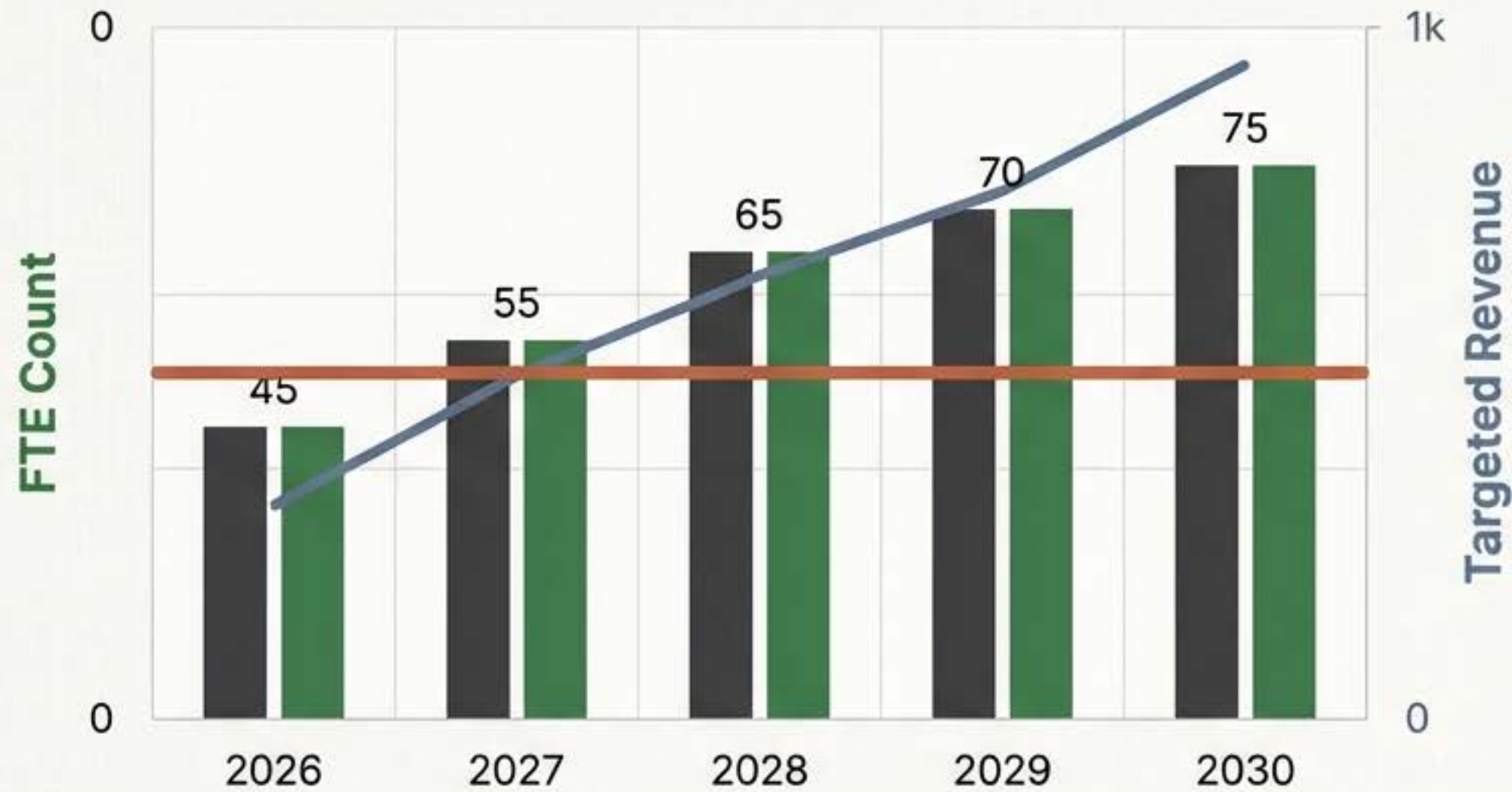


## Margin Improvement

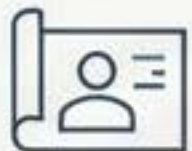
- Negotiate strict volume tiers with local growers.
- Shift sales focus to higher-margin non-perishable stock.
- Aggressively minimize dead stock write-offs and manage seasonal holding periods.

# Pacing Headcount Against Proven Volume

First-Year Labor Budget:  
**\$210,000**



**The Staffing Hurdle:**  
The \$65,000 fixed-cost Store Manager salary.



## Headcount Strategy

- Never hire ahead of proven sales volume or conversion rate goals.
- Rely on high-output, part-time staff during the initial cash burn phase.
- Delay salaried manager hires until revenue can safely absorb the \$65,000 impact.

# Multiplying Weekend Foot Traffic



**Acquisition Cost:** \$3,000  
weekend marketing spend  
(assuming \$5 CAC).



## Conversion Tactics

Train staff on high-value product selling techniques.

Bundle items (e.g., soil with plants) at the point of sale.

Use in-store workshops to turn browsers into immediate buyers.

# Engineering the \$35.70 Average Order Value

## Shelf-Space



**Starting Baseline AOV:**  
\$35.70

**Units Per Order (UPO)**  
**Target:** Increase from 18 to 27 items.

## AOV Defense

- Prevent low-value Soil & Fertilizer sales from cannibalizing the overall average.
- Incentivize staff on high-ticket, premium decor sales.
- Monitor holding costs on higher-priced tools to ensure inventory turns quickly.

# Stabilizing Revenue with a 15-Month Lifetime Value

Flywheel



**Lifetime Value (LTV) Goal:**  
15-month active purchasing window.



## Retention Mechanics

- Focus obsessively on making the customer's first 90 days post-purchase successful.
- Increase availability of high-success native plants.
- Provide expert post-purchase advice to differentiate from big-box competitors.

# The Definitive Roadmap to April 2028

## Capital & Timeline

- Plan for \$0 owner draw for 28 months.
- Service the \$205k initial CAPEX immediately.
- Maintain minimum cash reserves above \$197k.

## Cost Control

- Keep rent/utilities below \$5,300 monthly.
- Drive COGS down from 120% to the 90% threshold.
- Delay the \$65k Store Manager hire until sales volume is proven.

## Revenue Multipliers

- Lift visitor conversion to 28%.
- Shift product mix to hit a \$35.70+ AOV.
- Secure 55% repeat buyer retention.

**April 2028: \$22M EBITDA Target**