



THE LANDGEEK

The Art of Passive Income Podcast With Mark Podolsky and Scott Todd

Today's Guest: [Scott Alan Turner](#)

Transcript

Mark: Hey, it's Mark Podolsky, the Land Geek, with your favorite nichey real estate website [TheLandGeek.com](#) and I'm really excited for today's podcast guest for a number of reasons. But, I would be remiss if I didn't properly introduce my co-host, Six Sigma, you know him, you love him, the automation guru himself, Scott Todd from [ScottTodd.net](#), [LandModo.com](#) and most importantly if you are not automating your Craigslist's postings, [PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek](#). By the way, you can automate your Facebook postings as well. Today's podcast is sponsored by [Geekpay.io](#). The only set-it and forget automated financial CRM to manage your borrowers' payments.

Today's guest is really a pretty cool guy. He does a lot. Scott Alan Turner went from a money moron at age 22 to self-made millionaire 13 years later by using a number of savvy financial ideas. He's basically a financial rock star and you can see the ... Well, you can't see it but Scott and I can see it, he's got a guitar in the back there Scott Alan Turner has featured on Forbes, U.S. News, Business Insider, and Money. How are you?

Scott Alan: I'm doing awesome, thank you guys for having me on.

Mark: Tell us about your money moron days and how you got out of it.

Scott Alan: Sure thing. I grew up not getting a good financial education which I guess you can say is pretty common for most people. Didn't learn a lot from my parents, didn't learn it from high school, college. Got out of college had some student loan debt, got into some credit card debt, got into auto payments not knowing anything about interest rates or getting insurance for my car. So I had to run to a lot of debt coming out of school and that went on for a number of years, got into too much house at the recommendation of one of my bosses. He said, "Buy as much house as the bank will let you," which I almost did. Then in my mid-20s, I got my financial awakening from a guy named Clark Howard he's a syndicated radio host back in Atlanta. I started listening to him a lot making up on his tips and made that switch from being a money moron now to being better at money we will say.

Mark: Well. That's incredible. So, you are a self-made millionaire. How did you make your money?

Scott Alan: I have an IT background. I came from the corporate world, worked for a couple of startup companies then grew in employment there, got raises. From there branched out on my own started a business with some guys that approached me. So for me, it was getting in the corporate world, getting a late start in marriage with kids - So if you are single and not blowing all your money you can put away a little bit - and then getting into investing, passive investing, index funds. I lost a lot of money in the stock market. So I was getting money moron days, investing the wrong way. Entrepreneurship has been a part of it but really budgeting and saving and living a somewhat frugal life in other aspects has helped as well.

Mark: Phenomenal. Scott Todd, what are your thoughts about this financial rock star?

Scott: Obviously, he's done something right. I can't really poke holes on it. I would just say that I must have missed the class in high school where they taught about money management as well because I don't see it anywhere. My children are not going through it. It's really something you have to teach at home. I think that we would have a change by now, don't you think?

Mark: Yeah. Scott Alan Turner, why are we so deprived of a good financial education for our children?

Scott Alan: Do you want to just get into government education, period? By merit, we say in America we say we are teaching to a test if you want to go down the root level. We are not spending time on how to balance a check book, how to go out and get an auto loan, the pros and cons of credit card

use, and all this stuff, how to get a mortgage. Instead, we want to go through and teach vocabulary for SAT words that you are never going to use in life and teaching to a test is what it comes down to. Teachers have their hands tied, unfortunately. They do as good of a job as they can but it all stems back to them.

Then also its parent's involvement. What did you learn from your parents? For me I learned how to save, they said "Save." But my parents never owned a home. They rented their entire life. My dad had a pension. My mom didn't have any type of ... She worked in a coffee shop most of her life or in the Laundromats. They didn't have car loans so they couldn't teach me about interest. They didn't have student loans. They didn't go to college and all those things you would hope you could learn from your elders we didn't get it.

Mark: Sure, sure. What about an abundance mentality versus a scarcity mentality. Did your parents have that? Did they have an abundance mentality or did you hear growing up, "Money doesn't grow on trees," that kind of thing?

Scott Alan: It wasn't necessarily abundance. I grew up in a small town 2000 people. They lived a very simple life. My dad worked for the town. My mom is still in that town. She never travels. She has had the same friends for around 65 years now. She's almost 80. I think that environment of not having a lot of wants, not having a lot of needs, having lower incomes, not going to college and getting higher education contributed to a very simple lifestyle which I picked up on some of that. But then as soon as I get away from home it's like, "Alright I want to spend, spend, spend, now that I can."

Mark: Right, right. Tell us about the *99 Minute Millionaire* on your book.

Scott Alan: Yeah, absolutely. I host my own show the Scott Alan Turner show and I answer listener questions on there from anything from how to get started starting a business, beginning investing, beginning budgeting, earning more. One of the most common questions I kept hearing over and over again is, "How do I get started in investing. What do I do that?" That came down to, "I don't know what a stock is. I don't know what a bond is. What is the market?" and all these different terms. So I tasked myself I want to teach someone who knows absolutely nothing about investing, why you should invest even down to why the compounding power of money [00:06:35] [indiscernible] that over time. In 99 minutes take them from any of that stuff to you are a beginning investor and you are investing the smart way.

Mark: So, what is the smart way to invest?

Scott Alan: For me, I'm what I call a boring investor after losing \$40,000 in the stock market picking high fliers like Yahoo, Cisco, Home Depot, some Biotech technology companies I knew absolutely nothing about. Then I got into index funds, low cost, the Vanguard philosophy, buying whole, buying all of the market. That's my investing philosophy that I follow and I teach and it's based on academic research. It's based on guys who have PhDs, won the Nobel Prize in economics. Guys who they are not out to make money. They are just like, "Here is a research paper. I have done all this data crunching. Here is what I think is the right investing philosophy. It works most of the time if you follow this philosophy," compared to what I used to do trying to time the market, pick companies I knew nothing about and all that stuff. That's kind of what I try to teach people.

Mark: What do you believe about personal finance that other people think is crazy?

Scott Alan: For me, I do what I like to call value based spending. There are two different camps. Some people will say, "Don't ever have a Starbucks. It's five bucks a day and if you just didn't spend that money you would have a million dollars in 30 years." Then there is other people who will say, Forget about the Starbucks. Don't pay any attention to spending out. Go out and make another 20, 30 grand a year and that will get you where you want to go." What I found is you can never out earn poor spending habits. So, if you can recognize what makes me happy? What is the value I put into my different purchases? Track those very simply and direct your money towards things that are very important to you.

In my life, I like spending money on vacations. I like spending money on going out to eat really nice meals occasionally. I don't care much about clothes. Well, you guys can see me. I got a t-shirt on. This is my standard affair for most days of the week, shorts, t-shirts. So I don't spend a lot of money on that area in my life but I direct it to others. That's what I try to teach people. Find out what you want, what makes you happy, put the money there, cut back on the things that don't and then you can come out ahead.

Mark: Scott Todd, what are your thoughts?

Scott: I do kind of lean towards the school of thought of if I want to drink from Starbucks my problem would probably an income problem more so than an expense problem. But if I'm just out buying everything and going to Starbucks and saying, "Hey everybody drinks are on me today," well that's

the fastest way to the poor house, right? I do agree in the hybrid approach what you are saying is if something brings value or joy to you then there is nothing wrong with it. If Starbucks is what brings joy to your day and you have the \$5, great go do it. But I think that you can solve a lot of problems by generating more revenue more so than you can ... In my opinion, you can get rich quicker by generating more revenue than you can by skipping the Starbucks, right?

Mark: Yeah. I think that if you want to really find out what's important in your life, look at your credit card bill and see where you are spending your money on because that will tell you exactly what's really important in your life then you can look back and you are like, "Wait, is this really what I value or I'm I just on autopilot?" I think what's Scott making an argument about is being conscious of where you are putting your money. So, he is making a conscious choice that, "Hey look vacation is important to me."

But vacation is probably not that important to him. It's probably spending time with his family in a relaxed environment. That's truly what's important. It's probably not a fancy foodie meal. It's probably spending time with his family in an environment where they are having an interesting sort of gastronomic experience if you will. So experiences is where Scott is saying, "Hey this is where I want to put my money." I don't want to put words in your mouth Scott I think you are kind of making the argument that it doesn't matter how much money you make if you are not conscious of where your money is going.

Scott Alan: Yeah, exactly. Paula Pant, she has her own show and she's got a good quote, "You can afford anything, you just can't afford everything." We live in a very consumer oriented society. Don't get me wrong. I love stuff. I love buying stuff. You can see stuff in the background that I got. But I am also aware of I can't afford everything so I try to prioritize.

Since most people or at least half the people in their mid-40s have no money saved towards their retirement they have obviously spent a lot of money which I did earlier on till I changed that mentality. When you start recognizing, all right I'm spending every dollar and a lot of people carry credit card debts so they are spending more than their income allows, it's a bad place when retirement door approaches and you haven't saved anything.

Scott: Scott, let me ask you a question, just to pivot a little bit. Because you went through corporate environment, you went through like four rounds of layoffs at your company, you survived, right? You saw an IT staff dwindle from 50 jobs down to four. Most recently I heard like lows. I worked in IT as

well. When I left my corporate job, I was VP of IT for a Fortune 300 company. You see even IT jobs, these in demand jobs, you see them getting them outsourced more and more and more. What is your thought about the safety around the corporate job? Myth, is it real? What do you think?

Scott Alan: I think it's a myth. There is no such thing as job security unless you are the owner of the company and you don't have to report to a board because then you are not going to get fired. You are not going to fire yourself. Everyone has to be acutely aware of that and no matter what industry that you are in, especially in those industries that the writing is on the wall. If you were making Blu-ray players years ago everything is going to the internet, it's going to be streamed, you kind of see that your job is going to go away.

We're all aware of Tesla stock right now and self-driving automated cars. So if you are in the auto industry and started thinking about that, maybe, 10, 15, 20 years or somewhere down the road the entire auto industry is going to look a lot different than it does today. The writing is on the wall and that's something people need to be prepared.

I'm a firm believer that there is no such thing as a job security. But man, if you are rock star employee, you've kept up with your education, you are a good worker, you get along with your co-workers, the opportunities are always going to be there for great employees maybe not necessarily at that company but somewhere else.

Mark: Scott, if I had to put you on a desert island, besides your own book and you can only have one personal finance book and you are on the island for three months let's say and you have to read it over and over again, over again and really, really, take everything kind of to heart. What personal finance book would you pick and why?

Scott Alan: My favorite one is called *The Millionaire Next Door*. It was written by a guy from University of Georgia years ago. It's probably about 20 years old I think. He went out and had this perception of what is a millionaire? It's normally what Hollywood makes it out to be. They are wearing fancy clothes, Rolex watches, awesome Louis Vuitton purses, drinking Grey Goose all the time. He went out and rounded them all up across the United States, got them in a room and started to figure out what are three guys really like? They are drinking Budweiser. They rarely buy expensive wines normally 10 or 20 bucks. They've got blue jeans on, polo shirts. They are just the millionaire next door. You would never know who these guys are.

They didn't inherit their money is a big thing. We think rich people, they get all the breaks. They got all their money from their parents. No, it's about 8% of millionaires have inherited some type of money from their parents. They budget a lot. I think 60% maybe 80 % of millionaires budgeted and they budgeted to become millionaires. They didn't start budgeting after they became millionaires.

They drive used cars. They are not out in Mercedes. This guy broke down what do they drive and what percentages of these people are driving trucks versus Mercedes or BMWs or used cars? They don't lease cars. It's an eye opener because it gives you this whole new outlook on here is how you build wealth. That's essentially what's the book is about. You don't consume every dollar or more than every dollar you save and then you can become that millionaire if that's one of your goals in your life.

Mark: I love that. I had somebody on the podcast who said, "Mark, my rule of thumb is if you want a car then it should be one percent of your gross income. So if you want a BMW, make \$500,000 this year. Great go get your car." Otherwise, he's like it's like one of the worst money eating things on the planet. What would you say about the future of investing because now today more than ever we have artificial intelligence. So I could buy an index fund but I could buy a fund of funds and I can have something like Betterment, just robo sort of invest for me. Is this a good idea or would you say maybe talk to a human being about it still?

Scott Alan: I think if you are just getting started robo advisors are a great opportunity. I like Betterment, Acorns, I think Clink is another one and all three of those and there is some other ones as well. Vanguard one of the big brokerage has their own stuff. But they are all based on that academic philosophy of buying a little bit everything, low cost, proper risk tolerance for whatever your investment horizon is. I think that's a great place to start. As you start accumulating more getting closer towards retirement, your family situation changes, your wealth situation increases, that introduces a lot of more complexities. You have to start asking the question, "I'm I going to have enough for retirement." The question is, "Well, I don't know."

So sitting down with somebody at that point trying to figure out 10, 20, even 25 years ahead of whatever projective retirement date is can be very helpful because they can run all the simulations: here is your saving rate, here is what your expenditures are, here is how we think you are going to live. My wife and I talk about this quite frequently. It freaks people out. It's like, "How long are you going to live? When are you going to die? What happens if I die? Are you going to get married or not? What's going to happen with the kids?"

Those are conversations that are normal in our house but a lot of people treat them as, "No I don't want to talk about dying or anything like that." Well, sorry to say, you are going to die. Everybody is going to die so you might as well talk about it and get it out there in the open and start planning for it. So, I think getting started to answer your question yeah robos are great, moving on down the line as you accumulate more wealth a human can help you out and help you maximize your investments.

Mark: All right, I love it. What is the most frequently asked questions you get on the podcast?

Scott Alan: Probably number one is, "How do I get out of debt?" is a first one. Number two is the basis of the book, "How do I get started in investing?" So how do I get out of debts that gets back into having a spending plan, writing down where is your money going so that you can direct whatever free money is left over towards paying down the debts as quickly as possible? You've got high-interest credit cards, high-interest car loans, student loans, paying those off has a guaranteed rate of return compared to investing in the stock market even though it's flying high right now and has been for a while. That's going to come down. It will come down to reality or negative so the return may not be there like you can get with paying off 12% of credit card.

Mark: Yeah absolutely. Scott Todd, have you ever been in debt, like consumer debt?

Scott: Credit cards? Yeah, I have had credit cards.

Mark: You've had credit card debts?

Scott: Yeah. Yeah.

Mark: Buying stuff? I can't imagine you having real debt.

Scott: No, no, no. Yeah, stuff. Mark, I had to move twice in my corporate job and sometimes in doing so you would put the stuff on the credit card just so you can buy the house. You would move into a house and man you've got to furnish the house. I had to do that twice. You take your stuff with you but still the house. Like my last house down in South West Florida, it was a larger house than what we had. It was in a completely different area. We needed things in order to even live there because it was a brand-new house, blinds etc. So that's a huge expense all at one time. You know,

you've moved into a house. So some of that stuff gets added up but then you've got to attack it very quickly too.

Mark: Yeah. I like the David Ramsey approach of debt where he is just like the easiest thing ... What is it? The avalanche effect, is that what it's called?

Scott: Snowball, the snowball.

Mark: Snowball effect.

Scott: Yeah.

Mark: Yeah. You like that Scott?

Scott Alan: I think it works for the vast majority of people. They have been a lot of studies on there. There is some math people out which I have had right in my show with actual examples and paying off the higher interest loans first saved them money and got them out of debt quicker than what they would have done had they paid off the lower balance credit cards and worked through that way. So it's very situation dependent. It's very personal whether you are going to exceed at one plan or the other. But overall yeah debt snowball works for the vast majority of people compared to paying a \$50,000 student loan at 8% and then you've got a \$10,000 car loan at 3%.

Mark: Yeah. Education is becoming an almost untenable debt. It's the only debt you can't get rid of and you can make the argument the return on the investment is lousy unless, I guess you are going to become a plastic surgeon or something real high earning. But let's say that you are going to get a liberal arts degree. What would you say to that kid that wants to go to college and study liberal arts?

Scott Alan: For somebody who just thinking about getting started hopefully they have planned out, "All right I want to get this degree. Here is what I want to do with it." CollegeScorecard.com you can go to that particular website, type in, "Here is where I want to school, here is what I want to graduate with and here is what my potential earning is based on that specific degree coming out of that specific school." You can get an idea of, "All right it's going to take me 60 years to make this back. That's obviously not a good investment."

But for somebody else all right we are paying \$10,000 per year for four years, I'm going to come out I will be making 35-40 grand, more reasonable. Certainly, starting out at community college is a way to cut down on costs. I've had relatives that were in their senior high school and

they had they had knocked some of those core college classes that could have been transferred so they ended up starting in their sophomore year at college just by doing college courses in high school.

Mark: Scott, do you ever see a time where the degree won't ever matter. You can go on iTunes right now and take a Stanford class. You can go on Linda.com and learn how to do almost anything. Today, education is abundant why do I need a degree? Do I still need a degree?

Scott Alan: It depends on who you ask. In the corporate world, Fortune 500 companies a lot of them they are still in that old mindset. My wife went to school to get her a master's degree. She got her MBA because that was necessary for her career path. She wanted to get into commercial real estate development. I had a friend who had to get his degree as well. He wanted to be in finance. It's one of the checker boxes on the resumes in the HR, "Do you have your MBA?" "Yes, I've got this piece of paper." Nobody cares what your GPA is, nobody cares what's your score. It's just the checker box thing. A lot of people still have that mentality. If you talk to entrepreneurs or small business owners they are like, "I don't care what your degree is, if you can come here and do the job then it's yours."

Mark: Yeah. Scott Todd, does the cost of education bother you?

Scott: Yeah. I think it's extremely high. I read an article the other day that said economist if you will are saying that in 10 years education will be free but the biggest kind of resistance to that will be the universities who will scoff at the idea that you can get an education for free. There are signs out there that major employers, Ernst & Young a very big accounting firm for example in 2015 basically said that they would not require a college degree as an entry requirement to their firm. So, I think that as companies begin to begin to become aware that there is a lot of talent that you can have even though you don't have a college degree when companies realize this they are going to start to remove that barrier.

I think that the companies that do that will probably be the companies that rise to the top because there is a lot of untapped talent out there that don't have college degrees. However, it doesn't mean that they are not very intelligent. I have seen people with college degrees, you guys know people like this, they have got college degrees and they are like blank. You can't even have a conversation with them. Then you take someone who maybe barely even ... My father-in-law for example and my dad too both of them neither one of them went to college however they are very strong self-taught men who basically they will study a manual and they will plow down

until they are successful. That's the kind of people that I think you really want.

Mark: Yeah, absolutely. Scott Alan Turner, before we get to the tip of the week, any last words of wisdom for us as far as personal finance is concerned?

Scott Alan: Yeah. Since we are talking about robo advisors and all that I just like to encourage anybody who has not started investing yet to check out one of those options. You can get started in investing anywhere as little as a couple of bucks in 10 minutes and you've got your way into building wealth over the long term.

Mark: All right, I love it. Now we are going to put you on the spot and ask you for your tip of the week: a website, a resource, a book, something actionable where the Art of Passive Income listeners can go right now improve their business, improve their lives. What have you got?

Scott Alan: I have just started using this new tool called Boomerang for email. I don't know if you guys have heard it or not.

Mark: I love Boomerang, although I'm going to save you some money after your tip though.

Scott Alan: I love that application because when I'm answering listener questions I like to give them a notification when the show goes live. I can schedule that in advance. It's a big-time saver for me. Coupled with that there is another one called TextExpander, it can prefill emails for you with canned responses then you customize a little bit, also very helpful. So I'm big into the email tools right now that save me a ton of time.

Mark: I love it. I love. I'm going to save you some money because right now I bet you are paying 50 bucks month for the Premium Boomerang plan, correct?

Scott Alan: I am not sure. I just signed up for it a couple of weeks ago so I'm not sure.

Mark: Okay.

Scott Alan: It isn't free. Now I'm up for the new one.

Mark: Okay. If you go to [MixMax.com](https://mixmax.com), it's a Chrome extension for Gmail and you can do all the things that Boomerang does for free.

Scott Alan: I will have to check that out.

Mark: So, check it out, very, very, cool. Great tip, great tip. Scott Todd, what's your tip of the week?

Scott: We like to save time and we like to save money too. So check out this website Waatcher, W-A-A-T-C-H-E-R and basically, you can take an Amazon URL for something that you want to buy on Amazon and basically you can set a target price and when Amazon drops the price to what you want to pay it will automatically buy the item for you. So, when something goes on sale or you think it's going to go on sale and we all know that Amazon's prices they swing just like anything else, supply and demand so set the price that you are willing to pay and buy it at the strike price. It's like investing while you are spending.

Mark: Oh, that's a great tip. How did you find this?

Scott: I'm good man. I'm good.

Mark: You are good. Wow, that's really good. Huh, son of a gun. Alright, my tip is better because my tip is going to get you out of debt, show you how to invest, and all that good stuff. Go to ScottAlanTurner.com and learn more. He's got an iTunes show, Google play podcast, he's got a podcast, resources, articles on making extra money, getting out of debt, budgeting, insurance, investing, personal finance, and even how to avoid scams. It's awesome. Go to ScottAlanTurner.com. I will have a link to the site. Scott, are we good?

Scott Alan: Yeah. One last thing, I want to give guys a special URL at my domain/Arts, listeners will be able to pick up a free audio version of my book *99 Minute Millionaire*.

Mark: Oh, that's really generous. I love it. My second favorite word after automation. So, ScottAlanTurner.com/Art?

Scott Alan: Yes.

Mark: A-R-T, awesome, awesome. Scott Todd, are we good?

Scott: We are good, Mark.

Mark: I just want to remind all the listeners the only way we are going to get the quality of guests like a Scott Alan Turner to come on this podcast is

if you do us three little favors. You've got to subscribe, you've got to rate and you've got to review the podcast. Send us a screenshot of the review to Support@TheLandGeek.com. We are going to send you for free the *Passive Income Launch Kit*. Again, today's podcast is sponsored by [Geekpay.io](https://geekpay.io). Go ahead, sign up. We will send a way to get a free demo and see if it's for you. Start automating your payments. Scott, should we do it?

Scott: I think we just sign off gently, Mark.

Mark: We are just going to sign off gently. Let...

Scott: Freedom...

Mark: Ring.

Scott: Ring.

[End of Transcript]