



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

Today's Guest: [John Lim](#)

Transcript

Mark: Hey, it's Mark Podolsky, the Land Geek, with your favorite nichey real estate website, www.TheLandGeek.com. I always get a little intimidated, but I'm always excited when our guest is like the smartest guy in the room. But before we talk about our guest, I would be remiss if I didn't properly introduce my co-host, Six Sigma, making the world a better place one land listing at a time at LandModo.com. Then also making the world a much better place because he's saving so much time and time is money at PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. If you really want to see what this guy's all about, go to ScottTodd.net.

Scott Todd, how are you?

Scott: Mark, I'm great. How are you?

Mark: I'm great. I just want to remind everybody that today's podcast is sponsored by PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. Because when you can create 124 listings on Craigslist with the touch of a button and Facebook postings, there's nothing better PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. Let's talk about our guest today. Should I put on my anchorman voice, John?

John: Yeah, go for it.

Mark: John Lim, Esquire MBA.

John: Oh geez.

Mark: He's an entrepreneur specializing in public speaking, high impact presentations and social digital media marketing for small businesses. John, you're a big deal.

John: I don't know about that. You make me sound like a bigger deal than I am. But I love that voice.

Mark: You know you're in the Ivy League University of Pennsylvania; you got your JD from George Town Law, MBA from John Hopkins University. I mean, you're just dropping the mic academically every second you get. And then you go, "Oh, by the way, I've got a podcast Moving Forward," and you happen to be a huge Star Trek fan. Which is also very geeky.

John: Yeah, I am a big Star Trek fan.

Mark: Tell us about your transformation from academia, and I would assume the corporate world, and then kind of doing your own thing.

John: Absolutely. First of all, thank you both Mark and Scott for having me. This is what I call a who-me moment. Mark, when you invited me to be on the show, I was like, "Who me?" It's an honor and a pleasure. My background, I followed a very traditional path. I went to school, I went to law school as you mentioned and then I went into legal practice. I remember stepping into those doors thinking, "Oh my gosh, am I going to do this for the next fifty years until I retire? Am I going to be doing document reviews and basically dotting i's and crossing the t's for the next 50 years?" I wasn't terribly happy doing that.

I think the low point for me in the legal practice when I kid you not, I had a partner call me into her office and say, "I'm going to show you the best thing that's going to be the most amazing thing for your career." And she showed me how to use bankers wax so I could riffle through about 40 boxes of documents. And that's when I said to myself, "Okay, there's got to be a better use of all of this schooling and all of this time that... I did not go through this just to be learning how to use bankers wax."

So, I transitioned out of law into Corporate America. I worked for a major Fortune 500 Company for over a decade and actually, I was doing a lot of fun things. I was doing sales, I was doing account management and presentations and I had a really good time. In fact, there was a time where I

could picture myself basically riding off into the sunset collecting a pension and the 401K. And then of course, there was a point, I think about four years ago where my company actually decimated about 40% of my department. I was actually one of the survivors but I saw the writing on the wall and I said to myself, "You know what; I don't want to roll the dice with this. I don't want to play musical chairs." And so I decided to leave.

I finished my MBA, I was going part-time and I thought to myself, "If I'm getting a business degree, why not take this thing out for a test drive? Why not become an entrepreneur?" And I'd heard, I think it was a professor in one of my classes who actually took time out of the class to say, "I just want to take a few minutes to say this. I know a lot of you are in here, your companies are paying for you to get this degree, a lot of you are thinking of just moving up the corporate ladder, but I'm going to suggest that you really think about doing something on your own." And that's I think where the seed was planted in my head to think about well I have all these skills that I've developed over the years, and I also love to learn. So I basically decided, all right, now is the time to do it.

So, spring of 2014 is when I decided to make that break and it's been a fun bumpy ride all along the way. As you mentioned, Mark, Moving Forward, the podcast has been my continuing education. I mean, as incredible as the education that I've had already in school, I am learning every single week and I just had you on, Mark, not that long ago. I'm amazed that all the wonderful people I've connected with and I'm continuing to learn every single day.

Mark: Yeah. It was great being on your show and the questions you asked were fantastic. Scott Todd's smiling by the way as you were telling that story because he can really relate. So Scott, I think John might be your doppelganger, your corporate doppelganger.

Scott: He might. John, like I spent 10 years working for a Fortune 300 Company and in my last where I served as a VP in that company. I was smiling as you were talking because I survived a number of layoffs. There was a number of rounds of layoffs and it's crazy because I was just thinking about the emotions. It's always emotional when that happens because you see co-workers and you see friends that you work with on a daily basis they're gone. Riding off in the sunset to go do whatever and then you get stuck with one more work.

But two, you also get stuck with survivor's guilt because, "Man, I survived." It literally just drains all your energy out and I was kind of rethinking, rehearsing all of the survivor's guilt that I've ever experienced in my career

and then also thinking about my last day because I too saw the writing on the wall. And what I started doing was, I basically started investing like Mark does and investing in land. Literally on my last day that I walked out, I was kind of like I was scared, but I was also laughing because I had replaced my income through passive income. I was walking out like, okay it's a scary new world out there for me. It's the next chapter but at the same time I had replaced my income through land investing. Your story brings up a lot of emotion because I still remember all those things and I don't want to go back.

John: Yeah, I don't either. It feels like a lot longer ago than it was.

Mark: All right. So John, you've got all this education and you've got this career, you've got probably an amazing resume... Are you married?

John: No. I'm not. Not yet. One day.

Mark: In 2014, were your parents involved in your life at that time?

John: Oh yeah. My mom actually unfortunately passed away a couple of years ago, but both of my parents were entrepreneurs and my dad is still a really fantastic entrepreneur. He's actually one of my mentors. Obviously he is a great dad, but he's now become something of a business mentor to me and he's been a serial entrepreneur for many, many years. I've learnt so much actually just working with him and spending time with him in addition to all the other things that I'm doing.

He's been great and he was the one who all along the way was saying, "Think about doing something on your own. I know you've got a great career, you've got a great education." He was someone who basically has been on his own since he was a teenager and to see what he's been able to do, what my parents were able to do. They came to this country in 1970 and basically less than \$200 and to build up a really successful business that gave me an incredible life, that's something that I take to heart every single day now.

Mark: Wow. Can you describe that conversation when you first mentioned to your dad that you wanted to drop this potentially very lucrative career and start your own thing?

John: Yeah. It's funny, Mark. That conversation happened over a series of conversations long before I actually turned in my notice. He had known all along that that was part of the plan for me and so one of the things that he did was, he actually worked with me to make sure that I had systems in

place so that I could actually make that leap. He worked with me and made sure that I had some investments in place so that when I did make that leap, I wasn't simply just leaving without a plan. That's one of the things I credit him with actually.

He's the type of guy who always does something with a plan and for me; I'm a little bit more impulsive. I'm the guy who, "I just want to leave now." He's like, "No, no. Think about this. Make sure you do this smartly." And we actually had many different conversations and meetings and stuff over a period of a year and a half so he knew it was coming. By the time I had made the decision, it was already actually in the plan.

Mark: I love it. I love it. Best advice your dad has given you since you started your entrepreneurial journey?

John: One of the things my dad has installed in me throughout is to live below your means. This held true when I was making the high six-figure salary in the Fortune 500 world he said, "Live below your means." And really, I'd learned from him the different between a want and a need. Is it something that you really need or is it something that you want? It's something that has definitely carried me through over the last couple of years. I think that's probably the most valuable lesson that I've learnt from him.

I remember from a young age, he always taught me, it's not how much you make, it's how much you spend. He just kind of drilled that into my head over and over and over. No matter what job I've had, no matter what place I've been in my career, he's always reminded me of that and that has been incredibly valuable for me.

Mark: Yeah. Scott Todd, what do you think of that? As far as amazing advice.

Scott: I think it is good advice because I mean, Mark, you and I, in a prior podcast we had somebody on their cost of living is really, really low. I don't know, \$1,200 a month or something, right? And so, the lower that cost of living, the lower it is or the easier it is for you to find the freedom that you want. There's not necessarily this number that defines wealth. Because as we all know, you can make a million dollars a year and your expenses could be \$950,000 a year you're not wealthy. You can't survive that way but, you can take and lower the expenses to create a quality life that you want and then you can easily get to the freedom that you want.

Mark: John, don't you feel like in our world, the podcast world and entrepreneurial journeys and these people that have done amazing things and successful, that the part about living below your means kind of doesn't get talked about enough and I think it's really important because ... I'm going to ask you, as far as like everything in your life, what do you think is it that makes you the most happy?

John: That's a great question, Mark. I'm not going to shy away from this. I think having very little debt has definitely been a factor in being happy. Obviously, I am fulfilled by what a lot of people are fulfilled by. Having meaningful relationships, family but I don't discount the fact that having very little debt is huge. Not having that burden. I know a lot of people who make a lot of money but carry a lot of debt. They have a lifestyle that they can't bank roll or that they're constantly living paycheck to paycheck and it's stressful. I see that, and I say to myself, "I really don't want to have that kind of stress." For me, just having a level of freedom I think is very much synonymous with being happy or at least being on the path to being happy.

Mark: I agree. I think for me it's about working when I want, where I want, with whom I want. So there's total freedom and there's total... I don't always have total control. I could tell you right now like just this morning, getting my kids off the camp, I had very little control. That kind of ebbs and flows but as far as in my work life, that feeling of total control is amazing. But I agree, not having the stress of financial debt or creating this huge treadmill I think really can increase a lot of people's happiness. Scott Todd, what about you?

Scott: You know, Mark, yesterday was Monday and I'm trying to be like you and take Mondays and Fridays off. So yesterday literally, I spent the entire day not working on my business and I did have a little bit of guilt associated with that. I had a little bit of guilt but I was able to come back in the evening and spend a few hours to satisfy my own guilt, right? I think beyond that, I think that being able to do the work that you want when you want without wanting to necessarily answer to people and deadlines and demands is really a good feeling.

If I was an attorney, I could be self-employed and I could be an attorney and I could be doing my own work. But the reality is that I'm going to be having clients call me. I never know when they're going to call me, I've got to respond back to them, I've got to email them. I have all of these people controlling my time and I think that you can literally create a lifestyle where you can control your own time.

I still have people email me. I still have people call me. It doesn't mean that I have to respond to them when they call. Mark, you always like to say there are no land emergencies and there are not. Literally, nothing is as important right now that commands attention and drop everything. In my corporate world, that was not the case. Like the computers systems would breakdown, it was an emergency. It was all hands on deck and it could come at any time, day or night. So, you didn't know when it was going to come. It's like being a fire fighter. Forget it. I'm out.

John: That's another thing Scott I don't miss about the corporate world or all the clichés. I would literally get emails that say, "All hands on deck." I just had to resist the impulse to type, "When were you in the navy?"

Scott: Mark, I'm going to steal the show here for a minute because one of the things that absolutely drives me insane and always did, was when someone new would show up to work and they would say, "Welcome aboard." And I'm like, "I wish this was a ship. This is not a ship. If it is, it's like a slave ship, but this is not a cruise liner. Welcome aboard? Forget it man." [00:17:23] [indiscernible].

Mark: This conversation kind of reminds me one of the best personal finance books I've ever read. It's called *Your Money or Your Life*. Have you read that John?

John: No, I haven't.

Mark: Oh my gosh. He was sort of like one of the pioneers of the minimalist movement in saying get to the point where your passive income exceeds your fixed expenses, so you're working because you want to, not because you have to. He kind of walks everybody through that and the perils of debt and asking the three critical value based questions about stuff. I mean, is this really going to make me happy or is this ultimately going to make me miserable because of all the stress involved and kind of figuring out your hourly rate. It's just really an interesting book, great book.

John: I have to check that out. I'm always looking for good ones to add, so I'll definitely put that on the list.

Mark: Speaking of books, John, this is a very Tim Ferriss-like question, most gifted or recommended books?

John: I have to say, this one I just recently read *Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook* by Gary Vaynerchuk. I loved that book because as an entrepreneur, it's inevitable you have to have some social media presence. When I was in the

corporate world I was a very casual Facebook user, I had a LinkedIn profile, but as an entrepreneur I'm on these platforms every single day. Over the past year, I've been learning Twitter, which is a whole different language if you're a GenX or it's not one you take to naturally. And Gary V's book was really great about just kind of breaking down the language of each social media platform. I really liked that one and he gives great examples, lots of pictures which is also helpful just showing successful examples of effective uses of social media. That one I definitely recommend.

Mark: Okay, great. What is some of the worst advice that you see or hear given in your digital marketing expertise?

John: The worst advice I think I see, and it's not even so much advice, it's just what I see people doing, it's that I see people pushing a little too hard when they're trying to sell a product or when they're trying to sell a platform. I think it's just the nature of someone being very passionate about their product or platform. I even have friends who I know that they give a great service or they have a great product, but when they're posting on social media, it's always, "Here, check out this product," or, "Here, check out my service." As opposed to learning the art of, like anything else, you have to develop a relationship. Get into conversations and really get to know people.

That's kind of the thing about social media it's no different than the way business used to be, where you would have to get to know someone before you would talk about ... And having worked in sales, you don't go for the pitch right away. There's an art to building that relationship, having that conversation, getting to know the person. Social media, it's one of those things where you feel like, "I should just promote myself," or, "I should just pitch my product or service." But social media really is all about getting to know people and being transparent yourself. I think that's probably the biggest mistake that I see a lot of people make.

Mark: Yeah, I have to correct Scott Todd every day because all he does is post, "PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek". List your properties on Land Modo."

Scott: I don't do that.

Mark: Nothing educational, nothing helpful. I'm being completely facetious because I think Scott does it completely the way you should do it, where he leads with, "How can I help you? How can I help you? Did you know this?"

Here's a read tip. Oh, and by the way, check this out. This is what I'm doing."

John: There's a way to do it. There's a way to do it so that you can lead people back to your website, so you can lead them to sign up for your mail list. It's an art and someone actually explained it to me this way. If you're going out on a first date and all you do is talk about yourself and you don't talk about the girl you're with and you don't ask her questions, she's going to be turned off very quickly. I love that analogy and it just makes a lot of sense when you think about it.

Scott: John, you got that from Posting Domination, because that's in one of my modules.

John: Oh is it.

Scott: I'm not saying that you did, but—

John: I actually got that from one of my recent guests. It just kind of stuck with me.

Scott: They must have got it from Posting Domination.

John: Yeah, they probably did, who knows.

Scott: That is a module where I talk about the fact that if you're trying to go on a first date or you've been on a first date, you know you can't tell your whole life story and expect a second date. I mean, you could tell your whole side of the story and that's the end. That's it. No one does it. You leave mystery, you leave mystique, you leave reason for engagement and that's the way I approach my marketing too. I will put something in there, but I'll leave stuff out so that I get the person asking me questions.

Mark, we haven't really talked about this, but a great thing is the 12 Steps of Intimacy. Anybody can Google that. You can try to shorten that intimacy cycle and go from eye to eye all the way to intercourse if you will or you can compress that all into like one event, but the relationship probably isn't going to last. But if you do it over time, if you drip it over time and then you build to that piece, then you're going to have a much more solid relationship and that's like my take on marketing and sales too. It's the same thing as what you were saying.

Mark: I just Googled it because I've never heard that Scott. *The 12 Stages of (Business) Intimacy* - Dan Bradbury, *12 Stages of Intimacy* - Noble Choices. Which one do I want to look at?

Scott: The history of this is James Dobson. I think it's James... no, no, no it's not James Dobson. It's a...

Mark: Oh, Dr. James Dobson - *12 Steps of Intimacy*.

Scott: Hold a minute, let me look it up.

Mark: All right. Let's get back to John.

Scott: Go ahead. I'll research it.

Mark: Alright. John's like, "By the way, am I on this podcast?"

John: No. I'm interested in this too. I'll probably take a look at that after the interview.

Mark: John, before we get to your tip of the week, I'm going to ask you one more question.

John: Sure.

Mark: I mean I've that one more question but one more. What one thing would you most like to change about yourself or improve on as of today?

John: Oh wow. I think Scott touched on this earlier and I think this is just a habit that is hard to break when you come from Corporate America is, not answering those emails when they first pop up. I'm just naturally tied to my phone anyway and so when those messages pop up I am inclined to want to reply. I've gotten better at this in just prioritizing my time so that I'm not always being reactive, I'm being more proactive about what I need to do and then allocating the time as I need to respond to messages. I think when you're in Corporate America; you're just so used to that pavlovian reaction. As soon as you hear that email ding, you just respond right away and that's a habit I'm still trying to break.

Mark: I have the same problem. I'm like a drug addict on my phone and actually I read that book *Deep Work* by Cal Newport. At the end he's like, "I would do this." Like at 5:00 o'clock he's like, "Commencing shutdown." And for a few weeks this worked and then suddenly, like an alcoholic, I regressed and now I'm back to constantly checking emails. Actually, you know what,

as of today, I have been getting a little bit better. I'm trying to get back to just checking at 10:00 and 4:00. I get excited sometimes with my emails.

John: I do too. There's that.

Mark: It's like pulling a slot machine. "Oh, did I get a good one?" You know. Scott, what's on your mind there? I can see you're about to say something. Oh, you're on mute.

Scott: I wish I could commence shut down, but I can't. I'd love to say that I only check emails twice a day. I can't do that. I try, but the only way I do it Mark, is to get rid of my glasses and go on the boat. Trade them for sunglasses.

Mark: You know what Scott, you and I need to actually motivate each other to do this. I'll tell you what, we're going to make a little side thing to make each other stick to it. If I check email more than twice a day, okay, I've got to buy you the latest drone from Maverick a \$1,000. If you check email more than twice a day for the next week, you've got to buy me that mini drone you just got, which is like \$1,000.

Scott: Okay.

Mark: You're not saying okay. I know for sure you [00:26:56] [indiscernible]. You really want to do this?

Scott: I guess it's like a gentleman's agreement, "Oh no, I only checked it twice today."

Mark: I would be completely honest about it.

Scott: I would too absolutely.

Mark: I might as well write you the check right now because I'm just not mentally there. John, could you do it?

John: No.

Mark: But for \$1,000 John, you might be able to.

John: Maybe. I don't know.

Mark: Maybe \$5,000. John, you want to get in on this action? \$5,000 if you check email only twice a day.

Scott: Wow. I would just delete it from my phone. That's what I would do.

John: Yeah. I'd have to turn off the notifications.

Mark: I've got notifications turned off. Like a habit, I still check it. I hid my mail. I hid it. I hid the app and I still found it and I look for it. I've done all of it. John, would you want to do it? \$5,000?

John: For how long? How long are we talking about here?

Mark: I think it takes 30 days to develop a habit, right?

John: Yeah, it really does.

Mark: So let's do 30 days.

John: 30 days?

Mark: Scott, you want to do it for 30 days? I have a huge advantage by the way because I'm going on vacation.

John: Oh geez.

Scott: Oh man.

Mark: All right. We'll talk about this later. John, let's get 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 businesses, improve their lives. What have you got?

John: I've got two if you don't mind me sharing two.

Mark: No, you can even go three if you want.

John: One is a website housekeeping practice that I'm surprised I see a lot of big websites aren't even doing this yet, is to make sure that you update your website to SSL protocol HTTPS. Google has started flagging with the scarlet 'I'. A scarlet letter 'I' on websites that don't have that, that's letting people know that it's unsecured. Having that HTTPS protocol will not only make it more secure and give that piece of mind to your user, but Google will also, I think, rank it higher for SEO purposes. It's worth doing in almost every website host provider whether it's Bluehost, GoDaddy, Weebly, Wix,

whatever, they will have that option. It's either free or low cost to upgrade it to HTTPS protocol.

The other one I have is a social media share. We were talking earlier about just building relationships, showing value. I do this every time I share a podcast episode or a blog; I use a service called Sniply, S-N-I-P-L-Y.

Mark: Oh, I love Sniply.

John: What's great about it is that you can create call-to-action tags on your posts and things. You can even use it on some news websites and articles. Not all of them, but some of them. If you're posting an article of interest, you can post a call to action such as, "Hey, check out this blog post if you're interested in learning more," or, "Listen to this podcast." I love Sniply. I think it's really great. It's a great way to draw in your users and your user base or whoever's looking at your content and engage and further develop that relationship.

Mark: That's fantastic. Great tip of the week. Scott Todd, what's your tip of the week?

Scott: Question. Sniply, does that just add them to my email list too?

John: You can. What it does is, it just creates a call-to-action button and a little flag will pop up at the bottom where you can have them actually go to your website or you can have them go to a landing page, so if you have a landing page for something. It's one of those things – it's just an invitation or like your Facebook page or follow you on Twitter. Basically, you just create a call-to-action button and you can lead them anywhere you need to.

Scott: Nice. All right Mark, my tip of the week is very simple. Look, do yourself a favor and just Google "12 Stages of Intimacy". You don't have to buy the book just Google it. You want to look for any reference to Desmond Morris. He was a... or is, I think he was a zoologist and the cool thing about him is that instead of studying regular animals, he decided to study humans. I think this was back in the 70's and he basically came up with the 12 Stages of Intimacy. If you did read the book, I think the book's name is *Intimate Behavior*. Yes, *Intimate Behavior* from 1971.

If you did read the book, he would basically say what I said earlier. Which is, you can compress time and move through these 12 stages very quickly and the first stage is like eye to body. Basically, you notice the person that you're interested in. You can compress all of these things into literally like hours, which probably is not a good thing to do or you can build it over time.

But every solid relationship has all 12 of these and you can't skip. You don't have to go from like, I think one of them is hand to hand and then hand to shoulder. You don't necessarily have to go from hand to hand to hand to shoulder. You could go from hand to hand, to hand to waist. You could skip the hand to shoulder and still be okay. But if you try to go from number one to number twelve you might be successful, but it won't be a successful relationship.

Mark: All right I love it. I love it. My tip of the week is, learn more about John Lim at [be B-E-movingforward.com](http://be-b-e-movingforward.com). BeMovingForward.com the podcast is phenomenal. We haven't even gotten to what the coloring book is.

John: The coloring book, actually calling back to those corporate clichés my partners and I, we decided to take our most annoying corporate clichés and turn them into a coloring book. We've done that and that's available on the website or you can go straight to Amazon.

Mark: All right, fantastic. Learn more about John, BeMovingForward.com. Look listeners, thank you so much for spending your valuable time with us. We really hope you're getting value. If you are getting value, please do us just three little favors because it's the only way we're going to get the quality of guests like John Lim to come to the podcast. You've got to: subscribe, you've got to rate, you have to review the podcast, send us a screenshot of your review to Support@TheLandGeek.com and we're going to send you for free the \$97 *Passive Income Launch Kit*.

Geekpay.io is stable. Check it out if you want to have a set-it-and-forget-it financial CRM. Most importantly, start automating those Craigslist and Facebook postings, PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. Scott Todd, I'll let you lead us out here.

Scott: All right. Everybody knows. Ready!

All: LET FREEDOM RING.

Mark: All right. Awesome. Thanks everybody.

John: Thank you.

[End of Transcript]