

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

Today's Guest: Tyler Sheff

Transcript

Mark: Hey, it's Mark Podolsky, The Land Geek, with your favorite nichey real estate website www.TheLandGeek.com. And I'm really excited to talk about today's guest because I love talking about cash flow. But before we talk about our guest, I'd be remiss if I didn't properly introduce my co-host, Six Sigma—you know him, you love him—Scott Todd from ScottTodd.net, LandModo.com. And most importantly, automating if you're not automating your Craigslist and your Facebook postings,

PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. Scott Todd, how are you?

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

Mark: I'm jealous of you.

Scott: Yeah. I can't understand that.

Mark: One of us has a pilot's license and one of us doesn't.

Scott: Yeah, I wonder who that is.

Mark: One of us can fly like an eagle and one of us can't.

Scott: One of us is like a container on the ground, right?

Mark: Yeah. That's okay.

Scott: Landlocked too by the way.

Mark: And landlocked.

Scott: Not like me or our guest today who has access to beautiful water.

Tyler: Well, it's paradise, Scott.

Scott: I know, I agree. I couldn't imagine living without water, Mark.

Tyler: I don't have a lot of sympathy for Mark, do you? I mean he just...

Scott: I know. Even though he tells me all the time you should move to Scottsdale. I'm like why?

Tyler: Yeah, there's sand there.

Mark: You know what? You Florida guys are soft. You've got to be tough to live in the desert, but let's talk about our guest Tyler Sheff from CashFlowGuys.com. Tyler is the CEO at CashFlowGuys.com based of course right next to Scott in Tampa. His company aims to educate their clientele in investing in real estate and building long-term wealth. The Cash Flow Guys treat each client as a student, giving them the necessary tools to succeed as a real estate investor from the ground up.

The Cash Flow Guys have one goal – to simplify the process of buying and selling real estate. Coupling his active involvement in real estate investments with his proven negotiation skills makes Tyler Sheff a valuable asset to any client. Tyler, let's get into it. Welcome to the podcast. So, let's rewind the tape a little, what were you doing before you got into real estate and how did you get into real estate?

Tyler: You know I've been doing this for a long time, Mark. I've been in it coming up on 20 years really soon.

Mark: Wow.

Tyler: I am that guy that got into real estate back in the early 2000s because I wanted to get rich quick. I was going to flip houses right and that was back before Home & Garden television existed and all those things. It's probably back when they had rabbit ears on them. I don't even remember if

they had cable back then. But anyway, I was going to get into real estate and get rich and started flipping houses.

Did well, did really well but what I noticed is every time I did well, at the end of all that when I was counting my dollars, there was somebody sitting there next to that kept saying one for me, one for you, one for me, one for you and that was uncle Sam. You see they like to tax us and they liked to tax me and I found that out the hard way. So, that was how I originally I got in, started in real estate investing.

Mark: Okay and then what happened?

Tyler: Well, I made it. I was one of those people that was able to... we got really good. We built some systems, we had several rehab teams going in town. If it wasn't tied down, we were figuring out a way to flip it. So, I thought because as charming as I am and that must apply down at the IRS office that I can just do a 1040EZ form and everything will be fine. Nowhere in that form had it asked me any questions about did I sell real estate so I filed my taxes one year and I got a bill from the IRS because apparently there are a lot of house that I sold that year. There wasn't a place to list all those on my tax return. So, I got a very large tax bill and a letter worded that basically said if you don't pay us, we're going to put you in jail; that's the short answer.

Mark: Wow.

Tyler: Yeah. So, I beat the crash. I didn't predict the crash; I'm not that smart. I just basically was greedy. I was younger then and I wanted to capitalize on my money. So, I put everybody... Back then property value [00:04:46] [indiscernible] market and I'm sure that Scott probably remembers this. He has been here for a length of time. They were appreciating 25% per year in '04 and '05. So, if I bought a house and I invested nothing and sat on it, I can make 25% more in 12 months. Well, I didn't want to pay the holding costs so I just let somebody live there for rent after I rehab the house and the deal was they keep it clean whenever, gave them reduced rent; they covered my costs. That worked out great but what I didn't allow for was capital gains tax. So, I got nuked in taxes in '05. It's when I basically sold off everything hoping and basically looking for a huge payday and then I was going to go take a year off and do whatever I wanted to do and part of that worked until I got the tax bill then I had to come home and get realistic.

So from there, I went to work you - if you can't beat them, join them. I quit rehabbing houses and I went to go work for the government. I got a job

working for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under the Department of Commerce. Here is what I figured out. This is interesting about working for the government apparently that if you are a touch over average, they think you're amazing as an employee. All you have to do is show up and stay sober and you will get promoted repeatedly. So, I went from like 35,000 a year into hundreds of thousands a year. Just last year I almost made 300,000 working for the government.

Mark: Wait, wait working for the government, they paid you \$300,000?

Scott: Oh man, come on, Mark. Oh, they've got big dollars man. The average pay in like Washington is like \$80,000, Mark. That's the average.

Tyler: Yeah, that's the average.

Mark: Really?

Scott: It's huge man, it's huge.

Mark: My son watched *Narcos* and he's like I want to be a DEA Agent. I'm like, "Yeah. First of all, you're going to get brown up in Mexico and number two, you're not going to get paid anything." Am I wrong?

Scott: He's wrong. You're wrong, man.

Tyler: Definitely wrong.

Mark: Oh wow.

Tyler: Definitely.

Mark: Okay.

Tyler: Now at the state level I'm sure maybe they don't make as much money but on the Federal level it's ridiculous. They had us under... We were making on average [00:07:00] [indiscernible] overtime was unbelievable. I was paying more in income tax than most of my friends made back here at home.

Mark: Okay.

Tyler: All I really had to do is kind of show up and do what I'm supposed to do. Figure out a couple of different ways to save the government money and I worked night shifts so I was always on overtime at sea and I just made

insane money. With that coming back to the same issue I had when I was flipping houses, I'm getting taxed to death. What do I do now? This is great, I'm making great money but now I am on W2 income so first I was paying all these capital gains now. I'm paying regular income tax, I'm getting nuked in taxes so I started Google searching.

I was on a ship and because your tax dollars are hard at work. Even though I was in the middle of the ocean, we have internet everywhere in the world via satellite. All of our ships were equipped with this high end satellite internet no matter where we went. So, I could be in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and have solid internet which is amazing in itself. Thank you for your donation by the way.

Basically, I learned from Google that the only way that I can really legally reduce my tax bill that made sense to me anyway that was within my reach was to buy real estate and hang onto to it, to change how I earned my income.

Mark: Okay.

Tyler: So, for me that meant buy and hold real estate. I already knew real estate from flipping houses but I needed to figure out a way to buy and hold. Of course I am not a young man anymore, I'm coming up on almost to my 50s I'm not there yet I'm fighting. I am at 47 but I've got to figure this out quickly. I can't scale fast enough on single family houses, right?

Mark: Right.

Tyler: What I have learnt guys is that when you make a lot of money as an employee you tend to spend a lot of money as an employee. So, I've got a certain lifestyle I got used to that I really wasn't one to compromise. Based on that, it made sense to go into multifamily real estate. So, my focus became initially laser focused on multifamily. Of course later we shifted into nonperforming notes. We can talk about that in a minute if you want but yeah [00:09:15] [indiscernible] multifamily real estate for buy and hold that was my strategy.

Mark: Okay, multifamily though, you've got to have big dollars to come in. It's not like buying a \$150000 house and rehabbing it. I mean multifamily if you're going... well, I guess lets define multifamily for you. I guess a fourplex might be different.

Tyler: Yeah. Multifamily for me basically is between it's really anything... I like to focus from five to 50 doors. I will go higher than that but I really want

to stay under 100 doors [00:09:46] [indiscernible] assets and here's why. [00:09:49] [indiscernible] competition on the residential side, right?

Mark: Right.

Tyler: [00:09:54] [indiscernible] units realtors are handling them, smart realtors are buying them and keeping them, not so smart realtors are selling them great that's what they do. Everybody can buy those, they are within the reach of the average person; it's easy. [00:10:06] [indiscernible] can do them, no problem. The bigger stuff I'm dealing with I'm going up against people like I don't know hedge funds and big money insurance companies and they are willing to pay whatever it takes to get it done because they have to place that money. You know they've got certain guidelines they got to put the money to work.

So, in my space where I play in the five to 50 unit arenas, I can pick up these little buildings that are Mom and Pops. So, generally speaking, they don't look good on "paper". You don't see a big fancy pro forma or prospectus they are all these big tools to help market it in these smaller buildings. Usually, their records are done on napkins, sometimes on chalkboards.

So for me, there is a lot of opportunity in the due diligence. I know you guys do it in the land business. You are looking for certain things, certain indicators that are going to draw you into that property and what I do is the very same thing. So for me, I don't really need my own money is what I learned. What I needed was the systems and the ability to identify properties because what I have learned is there are more people out there with money looking or something to do with it than there are opportunities. And once I mastered that, it all changed for me.

Mark: Okay, so you started a fund essentially?

Tyler: What we did we... yeah, essentially. We do it in a couple of different ways to put in buildings. We have done some larger assets in cases like that, we've started a fund that had to combine people's money and what not. But our sweet spot is we like to work with folks that have IRAs that are underperforming. We like to bring them in as one lender and as a note to mortgage type scenario so we don't have to do the PPMs and go through all the additional expense. We obviously want to remain compliant of SEC regulations.

But generally, we will bring one person in as a partner to take down the property to buy it private what not and then we will do the renovations.

Sometimes we sell from those renovations, other times at that point we will go to the bank small banks and leverage the equity to get the rehab money to put these things together and fix them up. Once we fix them up, we hang on to them for a couple of years, at that point they start to perform, when they start to perform the value goes up. We do a refinance and this is where it gets exciting. When we do the refinance and pull our money out, it's tax-free. It's borrowed money; it's a tax-free payday.

Mark: Scott, are you loving this?

Scott: I do love that.

Mark: I love that.

Tyler: Yeah.

Mark: So, this is like a little loophole on the refinance?

Tyler: I'm going to call it a massive one because it's just that.

Mark: A massive loophole.

Tyler: It is. It borrowed money. Borrowed money is not income; it can't be taxed at all.

Mark: So, you're getting your money out on the refinance. So, you get basically two bites of the apple. You are recapitalizing the asset essentially. So, your money is out and then you're going to get another bite of the apple, well, two bites of the apple really because you're still getting your income paying off your debt service. And then when you eventually sell the asset, that's when Tyler buys another ocean front home essentially.

Tyler: There you go.

Scott: There's nothing wrong with that.

Mark: Then on that, you've got capital gains. Now on the income side of it as the landlord on the door, you still got to pay ordinary income, correct?

Tyler: We will. It depends on how you are structured tax wise. You have the ability to take passive income losses some people do, a lot of people do. I have to take a deduction as a real estate profession. I spent more than 750, 60 hours engaged in real estate investing activities so currently; we are able to qualify for that. That's probably going to be changing this year. We will

see and we will go sit down with CPA and figure that out. But the bottom line is what I learned from I think it was Tom Wheelwright who wrote a book called *Tax Free-Wealth*.

Mark: Yeah, yeah, he was actually on our podcast.

Tyler: Okay, love that book and in there he talks about if you want to change your tax, you simply have to change your facts. By that, I don't think he meant lie in your tax returns. Because at first, I was like, "You put that in print. What do you mean by that?" But then when I dug in, I'm like, "Oh. So really if I want to change how I am taxed, I simply need to change how I generate income; interesting." So for me, that's kind of how I rolled into the note business because I started realizing I am always now focused on my taxes because I work as a realtor as well on the [00:14:51] [indiscernible] market. So, let's say I'm going to draw in a \$20,000 commission instead of taking that as a check and tax your 2018 I try to take it as a note. So, the buyer pays my fee and it's spread over several years that way I can apply my tax plan to that money because I know I have got 12 payments of \$124 a month coming in for the next five years or whatever it works out to be. Now I can scruff the tax plan to make that all lineup, makes sense?

Mark: Yeah, but what if they miss a payment?

Tyler: Well, if they miss a payment, we've got systems in place to take care of that and actually [00:15:31] [indiscernible] your product.

Mark: Yeah. Did you like Geek Pay?

Tyler: Geek Pay, yeah. I'm starting to look at Geek Pay, so that's an interesting little set up there.

Mark: Yeah. Geek Pay is perfect for you because it's going to automate the ACH. If the ACH fails, it will charge the credit card on file plus the 3 percent fee so it doesn't cost you anything with all the automation. I love Geek Pay.

Tyler: Knock on wood and I probably shouldn't say this because it will jinx me. I have never had to chase after a payment yet.

Mark: Wow. That's amazing.

Tyler: I'm still collecting on real estate commissions from 10 years ago, so I don't know.

Scott: I mean it is amazing, Mark, because like what Tyler just said is pretty genius in a way because literally, you can turn anything, anything into a note. Like if you sell something like I have sold things and I'm like, "Hey, I want to sell this thing," and they say "I just don't have any money," and it's people I might know, I'm like, "No problem. I will tell you what? \$100 today and \$100 the next seven months." "Oh, okay." The next thing you know they do pay it off early, but I have turned so many things into little notes. It's like why not? Like why wouldn't you do that because essentially everybody can afford 100 bucks a month for something.

Tyler: Absolutely right. It's about streams versus piles. That's what intrigued me about your Flight School. The land business, it's beautiful. I mean people we will finance anything. If they can finance it, they will buy it. There is no doubt. It's raising me. That's what had you on my show and makes it so exciting. It's like, "Oh my goodness, more streams of income. I love this." I mean this is good.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. What's the downside of your model? What's the headache part of it because every business there has got to be some headache piece?

Tyler: There is and for us it's the deal sourcing. It's a challenge right now finding decent opportunities. We pound the pavements, we work hard. We find a lot, yes, but a lot of people bought property in the last 10 years that's grossly overpaid for it. So, there are a lot of commercial properties out there, apartment buildings that are heavily in debt. The banks are not yet in the position to where they want to start doing short sales and forgiving some of that debt. So, these owners are kind of in a trap. You have to do the work but you can't sell your building yet because you can't make enough to pay it off. You know there is no payday at the end of it and we've run into a lot of that lately. So, we have been focusing a lot on the management issues, trying to find properties with management problems, things like that hoping that they have an open leverage. However, we exist in a society where we can finance just about anything as we all know and that creates a massive challenge for us. There are so many properties out there that are over-leveraged. It's sad.

Scott: Hey, Tyler, could you take... because I like what you said and I'm just thinking out loud but could you take a situation like that where maybe the profit is not there today and do a lease option on it or would that kind of violate the terms with the banknote?

Tyler: You can. I don't necessarily think if you do a lease option it will violate the terms because if you structure it like a master lease, I don't see

that it will really cause a problem. However, in almost every circumstance every landlord says the same thing to us, "Well, you know what? They will all rent for 900. I know I'm only getting 300 now but I know..."

Scott: Oh yeah, right.

Tyler: Right. No, they will rent for 275.

Scott: Yeah, that's right.

Tyler: When these people sober up, they are moving.

Scott: Yeah, right. They will rent for one month for 900 then they will be empty.

Tyler: Yeah, exactly. I've got some friends up in Charlotte that are doing the try it before you buy it plan. They have been fortunate to find an asset that will make sense for that. They haven't found lots of them. They are just doing one building I guess with 20 doors. But then again, you lose all the tax advantages. I'm sure you can structure it so that you can. I know you can butt out of the gate; most people don't do that. So, the owner wants his tax benefits; he's used to getting the tax benefits. Well, that's one the things that will keep me from it is if I can't reap the rewards of the savings on taxes, I'm not interested.

Scott: Right.

Mark: So, Tyler, I want to kind of pivot a little bit about <u>CashFlowGuys.com</u>. So, now you're kind of like, "Okay, I can do this and now I'm going to teach it," right? And the typical question I get is, "Well, you are doing so great, Mark, why teach anybody? Aren't you going to create your own competition?" So, I'm going to boomerang that back to you and how do you answer that question?

Tyler: Teaching for me was not intentional. I did not set out to be a teacher, a coach or any of that. But it came to a point to where I launched my podcast as a means to tell people about what I do, as a means to educate people that it's not rocket science to do what we do but with the right systems in place, the right training, we are not going to reinvent the wheel. But really the back end of that is I was looking to position myself in my marketplace as an expert, as a multifamily guy I wanted to position myself as an expert as a means to attract capital so I can raise private money. That's what I do. That's how I have done all my deals most of them. Well, all but three have been private money.

So, to do a lot of deals I've got to raise a lot of money which means I put on a podcast on teaching people because what I have learned is if you teach 100 people every step of what I do, only one will take action and that person will probably quit. Maybe two will take action the other 98% are going to look at what I do and go, "That's way too much work. I'd rather just have you do it. So, where do I write the check and then we are done?" It's that simple.

So, in the nature of building this podcast, the podcast kind of went crazy and I got this big audience and then with an audience comes this responsibility and next thing you know, I got the people sending me these emails going, "You absolutely have to train me." I got some off the wall requests. One guy offered me like 100 grand to be his personal coach guy for... I guess he wanted 90 days for 100 grand. I said, "I don't know. That doesn't even make sense. That weirds me out a little bit."

Mark: Right, right.

Tyler: I don't want to be anybody's personal anything. Sorry, I don't care how much money there is. No, thanks. But we've had to fill a void because the audience, the listeners of the show, of Cash Flow Guys, were screaming for it. They wanted to know exactly what we do. So, initially yeah, I thought I was helping people by doing it free, being the greatest guy in the room, that was great and I got wildly popular but what I found out is that people didn't really take it seriously because they weren't invested in it so I was pretty much talking to the wall and running myself ragged at the same time. So, I started charging for my services basically to qualify people so that I could weed out the people that weren't going to take the time and invest themselves number one and then later invest with us. And it worked out quite well and that's kind of how we feel into the teaching piece.

Mark: So, my last question before we get to the tip of the week, what do you think differentiates a successful client—one that takes action versus an unsuccessful client—one that might try, gets frustrated, and then ends up quitting?

Tyler: Sounds cliché, Mark, but their why, I think their origin why there are there is going to make all the difference whether they can do it or not. My wife has MS. What that means is at 47 years old in a matter of time I don't know how long, we don't know, it's roll or dice. She's going to be in a wheelchair which will become highly inconvenient for her, right? She is an identical twin. Her identical twin sister died two years ago - three years ago suddenly from the same disease, from MS, the complications of MS.

So for us, we wanted to live our life now. We didn't want to wait till we are 65 live the great American lie, "Oh, at 65, I don't have to work anymore, and I get to live on less money than I do now, yah." What's that? So, for us it becomes when we want to take the wave around on a Wednesday afternoon. Yeah, we are going and when we want to go to the Keyes or do whatever we want to do or fly to California, we won't be able to do that. The only way for that to happen was passive income. So, the people that aren't taking action simply are too comfortable. They don't have any real reason that's pushing them over the edge. It's a fact.

Mark: Great answer. All right, Tyler, we are now at that point of the podcast. We are going to put you on the spot. Your mentorship has been amazing. I love your model. Scott, I can tell he loves your model. He's got the whole note thing spinning in his...

Scott: Oh, Mark, and we didn't even get to like the bad, the nonperforming notes. That's a different podcast for a different day, Mark.

Mark: I know. I know. So, Tyler, what is 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 do you got?

Tyler: I would say go directly to <u>CashFlowGuys.com</u> right now and right on the homepage there is a little button that...

Mark: This is my tip. You are taking my tip, Tyler.

Tyler: Oh boy, that's not really the tip, that's just the instruction. You can keep the tip.

Mark: All right, fine.

Tyler: The instruction is there is a course in there; it's free. It's a bunch of series that's going to teach you how to analyze the multifamily deal, how to analyze an income property deal. It's going to give you everything you need to analyze a deal. It's absolutely free. My tip of the week is to take action and invest for cash flow. Don't invest in piles, invest in streams.

Mark: Don't invest in piles, invest in streams. Scott Todd, what's your tip of the week?

Scott: I think that was like the best comment ever don't invest in ponds or piles; invest in streams, right? Like that's a great one, but Mark, I started reading this book the other day and I'm really enjoying it. It's kind of an older book. I have seen it on the bookshelf for years but I might be late to the party but I'm here now. It's *Thinking Fast and Slow*. You've read that book?

Mark: Oh, Daniel Kahneman. I read it, great book.

Scott: Yeah, great book.

Mark: You know, there is another book that I read and it was a guy that, it's the guy right? Who is that great author that does all those great books? You know he wrote *Flash Traders*, he wrote *The Big Short*, Michael Lewis.

Scott: Yeah.

Mark: So, Michel Lewis wrote *The Undoing Project* about the story of their partnership Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman and it is fascinating.

Scott: I'm going to have to read that one too.

Mark: Great, great tip. We are getting really geeky now.

Scott: Yeah, we are.

Mark: About behavioral economics.

Scott: Yeah.

Mark: What did you like about that book, Scott? [00:27:21] [indiscernible] are the Godfathers of behavioral economics.

Scott: Yeah. I mean what I like about it so far I'm still reading is just the thought process between the two systems, system one and system two, right? The fact that essentially everything that you're learning to do kind of comes down to these systems of making choices. The system one is fast and the emotional, system two is the slower and more deliberate and more logical. So, I think what happens over time is some of the stuff you start off with that system. Two, that's more methodical thinking as it becomes engrained in your kind of the way that you think or your habits you start to put that into system number one. It just becomes faster and no thinking, right?

So, let me bring this back to what we do. We buy land. Okay, the very first time we buy land, we are using that system two like very slow, we don't want to take action. Now I'm buying land like crazy; it's now a system one piece but if I ever need to go back what I should be doing is I should maybe be scanning some stuff to really put it back into that system too whether I dig a little bit deeper on certain things, right? Other times it's good to go. So, it's really about balancing the way that you're thinking and just knowing like the reason I'm not taking action right now is the system two process that I'm trying to think through and once you kind of build that out, I think it helps you to kind of learn stuff better and faster.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. It's great. You know what? My biggest take away from that book is I don't know anything basically. You know you think you know something and it's like no, you could be wildly off. So, kind of walking through the world with a humble sense of uncertainty can really serve and make you a better decision maker.

So, my tip of the week is going to be learn more about Tyler Sheff at CashFlowGuys.com. And of course, I might as well plug it GeekPay.io because Tyler is eventually going to use it to manage the notes for him. So, the only way to automate collecting notes GeekPay.io. There is a lot of things out there but they are really expensive. This is the most affordable solution out there, GeekPay.io. Also, give Tyler some love. Go to CashFlowGuys.com. He also had yours truly on the podcast which was phenomenal.

Tyler: In fact, it's really a couple of weeks ago.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. So Tyler, are we good?

Tyler: We are awesome.

Mark: Scott, are we good?

Scott: Mark, we are great.

Mark: All right. I want to thank all the listeners and just remind them the only way, the only way, we are going to get the quality of guests like a Tyler Sheff from CashFlow.com 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 that review to Support@TheLandGeek.com. We are going to send you for free our \$97 Passive Income Launch Kit. Please do that. All right, Scott, you want to lead us out.

Scott: Mark, you know what? It's very simple one, two, three.

Mark and Scott: Let freedom ring.

Tyler: That needs some practice.

Scott: It's much better, much better than worse.

Mark: That was actually one of the better ones, Tyler.

Scott: Oh, go back to the first podcast, first few, oh.

Mark: Oh.

Tyler: Ready? One, two, three...

All: Let freedom ring.

Mark: It's hard to do on Zoom too.

Scott: It is much better in person.

Mark: It is way better in person.

Tyler: It's like a delay that's not really there.

Scott: Right.

Mark: Yeah, exactly. All right go enjoy your jet skiing, Tyler. Scott, go enjoy flying your plane and I will figure out some other means of getting an adrenaline rush. Maybe I will read a book.

Scott: Mark, you can fly a plane.

Tyler: Fly behind him with my drone and film it for you.

Scott: There you go. There you go.

Tyler: You could get the rush that way.

Mark: I want to do the paramotor thing. I really do. I just got to convince the wife. She's like, "Look, if you die, the kids are still too young." I'm like, "Oh okay, I'm going to wait, five more years." What's that?

Tyler: You will be okay. Wear a helmet

Mark: Yeah, exactly, exactly. All right. Thanks, guys, and thanks,

everybody. See you next time.

[End of Transcript]