



THE LANDGEEK

The Art of Passive Income Podcast With Mark Podolsky, AKA The Land Geek

Mark talks with: Erik Peterson - LandOpia.com, Tate Litchfield - FrontierPropertiesUSA.com, Mike Zaino – TheLandGuru.com, Aaron Williams – BearLandProperty.com, and Mimi Schmidt on the Land Geek Round Table

Transcript

Mark: Hey, it's Mark Podolsky, The Land Geek, with your favorite nichey real estate website, www.TheLandGeek.com and on this week's round table, we've got the usual suspects, except we are missing the big poppa this week whom had such a huge amount of volume over Black Friday. He's notarizing ten deeds and as a result could not make the round table podcast. But we've got Erik 'the Technician' Peterson. What's up Erik?

Erik: How are you doing Mark?

Mark: I'm good. I'm good. We've got 'Bear Land' Aaron.

Aaron: Hey, great to be here.

Mark: Good to see you. Oh, we've got Scott 'the Nite Cap Meister' Bossman.

Scott Bossman: Hey Mark. Hope you had a good thanksgiving.

Mark: I know you did. I know what was on that menu. By the way, is it wrong for me to be like, "Okay, save me some?" Like what does Erin do, freeze the food? Can you bring me some in San Antonio?

Scott Bossman: Yeah. Definitely, we can bring you some turkey. Turkey Casserole we're making that tonight.

Mark: No pressure, no pressure.

Scott Bossman: All right.

Mark: We've got the 'Zen master' breath in the mailing, breath out the marketing, micro to the macro, Mike Zaino. Mike, how are you?

Mike: I'm doing great, but [00:01:35] [indiscernible] like to say, "Don't forget to breath."

Mark: That's right. That's right. We've got the most fierce some in the country, Mimi, 'the Terrorist Hunter' Schmidt. Mimi, how are you?

Mimi: I'm great. How are you?

Mark: Good. Are we safer?

Scott Todd: It's a loaded question.

Mark: Last but not least, we've got Scott Todd, from ScottTodd.net, LandModo.com, and most importantly about automating your Craigslist and your Facebook postings, PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek. Scott Todd, good thanksgiving?

Scott Todd: It was a great Thanksgiving Mark. How about with you?

Mark: It was great. I went to DC. I was in Mimi's Neck of the Woods. It was good. Showed the kids the monuments, did the whole DC thing, George Town, checked out American. Honestly, I felt smarter. I think people on the East Coast are just more intellectual than us West Coast people. The weather is nice, I'm going out hiking. It's cloudy. It's cold, they're all reading. Oh, let's see. What's going on here?

[00:02:51] [indiscernible]

Scott Todd: So Mark, what you're saying is that based on that comment, what you're saying is that essentially we should be having another East Coast Bootcamp soon?

Mark: [00:03:08] [indiscernible] left ear. We've got to move on to our topic because this is an important topic. It's a philosophical common topic. So essentially what we've seen happen in the past and has probably happened more often than we realize is let's say that I create an incredible deal with of the week or I have... I mean, we can all argue I've got the best website out there, right?

Is it okay for somebody to go out and plagiarize or essentially take, borrow, steal my content either word for word, right? Is it okay for someone to take pictures: flat maps, GIS maps from the website? And ... I don't know. I'd like to hear what Mimi thinks. Mimi?

Mimi: I don't know. I see both sides. I see both sides.

Mark: Well, let's look at the first side of it. What's the first side?

Mimi: Well, beside don't do it, because folks have worked hard or paid for, content, pictures, things like that, right, and create your own. I understand that and then I understand the other side where you see it happen to you enough and you think, "Well,"... And then you go to...You listen to Round Tables and you go to boot camps and you see other folks ... "Hey, yeah, I'm going to do it. What's the big deal?" And I think, "Does it hurt?" I mean, if you want to be at the top of your game you go to be developing your own stuff too, right? So I see both sides of it. I don't really have a strong opinion either way.

Mark: 'Zen Master', what's your thought?

Mike: This is an interesting question. I mean, EBay ads all the time...I'll tell people, "If you see an ad that looks good, copy it, enter your own data, go." I mean, that's the way it is.

Mark: But when you say, "Copy it," what do you mean by copy it? Do you say...?

Mike: Well, I do say copy [00:05:23] [indiscernible] it's the format and certainly you have to change on certain things. I think...and maybe it depends on what... a few things in my mind, right? What exactly it is that's being copied. And maybe also the proximity like if it was...like maybe say it's Scott Bossman, I get something and I would...he took something...I think I

would have liked him say, "Hey, jeez, that's really cool. Do you mind if I use it?" Because we are close, we are in a relationship...

Like he is not the average bear out there that...not Bear Land, pun intended. Not with your average bear out there but going and doing that, right? It's going to happen and I guess it's commendable that I have such a great whatever it may be that they'd take that. But I don't know...I do feel that they do that a lot with pictures and things of that nature. A lot of us do that. But then there is some more creative type content that maybe is more private. I don't know.

I think it's the relationship too, like I get it. With someone like...One of us here, right. I would think to be like, "Jeez Mike," you know. And I'd actually be quite honored if you guys said that to me. And so feel free at any time. "That's great content you put out there. Can we utilize some of that?" I don't know. It's kind of a very difficult question to answer Mark. I think because it crosses over to personal relationships too. I don't know if we are talking about like, again, an average person that I don't know or someone that's like a close friend like one of you. I think that might make a difference to me.

Mark: Would it make a difference if I just did it without asking permission?

Mike: If you did it without...yeah, I think that would probably...

Mark: I just did it. I didn't ask permission. We have a good relationship.

Mike: [00:07:11] [indiscernible]

Mark: Would that sower the relationship a bit?

Mike: I'd be like, "Mark, why didn't you ask me? What's going on?" I feel like there would have been a communication like, "Mark, that's a really cool thing you did there. I'd like to work off of that." And I'd be like, "Great, yeah. Here are some other things." We'd talk about it, right? And I would give you some info as to why I did that and we'd have a nice conversation. And it would come out, you would have your version and I would have mine and probably it would be identical, but you'd be inspired by what inspired me and I think we'd have a deeper relationship. More than if you just said, "Huh, that's great. Got it," and you did that because we are all close here. So I think its proximity.

Mark: Okay. Scott Bossman, let's say you've got an ad out there. I don't take all the content, I just take your pictures. You hired a photographer to

go out there. Let's say you paid a hundred bucks. They shot a video. They shot pictures. I have property in the same area. I don't ask permission. I utilize your content. It's not copyrighted. It's not watermarked. It's easy to do. Would you be upset by it? Do you think it's wrong?

Scott Bossman: This is an interesting question because I've been victim of this, but I also have to be honest and say that I have pirated some pictures myself, right?

Mike: Scott the pirate Bossman?

Scott Bossman: What's that?

Mike: Scott the pirate Bossman?

Scott Bossman: Right. So I will say that a few years ago I actually did take some pictures and used them on my website. I did disclaim on my website, "This picture is not of the property. It's a mile away," that type of thing. I have a couple of pictures on my website right now, Google Earth images. How many of us have taken Google Earth images if there is not a copyright seal on it, a watermark on it?

But I will have to say I did hire a lady one time to take some pictures for me and her pictures were phenomenal and I've used them in my marketing material over and over and over again and someone did take that picture. Now, partly...it's partly my issue because I didn't watermark the picture, right? And maybe I should have done that. So maybe I don't own the material in that regard, but it did sting a little bit. And I found out the person actually asked me afterwards and I'm like, "Yeah, that's fine, whatever."

So it did sting a little bit knowing that I had paid that person. Now, that being said I think there is a difference between... to get back to kind of the base of the discussion, there is a difference between copying and maybe emulating and stealing. I think it's a boundary issue and I've gotten better with having discussions with myself about that. I don't want to steal content, but I may copy to a certain degree.

Mark: 'Bear Land' Aaron, what are your thoughts?

Aaron: Well, as far as things like pictures, I have used a picture from actually somebody in this group on one property. It was disclosed that it wasn't a property that it was taken by a colleague of mine, but all the land in the area looks identical kind of thing. But, when I have used pictures like action or activity kind of photos that I've found on the web, to advertise and

show, "Hey, this is stuff you can do out here. I don't ever claim it's the property." And if there is, I don't... like I check to see if they are copyrighted, that sort of thing.

The only things I try to grab picture wise, anymore is comments, stuff that's right for the most part. As far as ad copying, stuff like that, I won't do it, you know. I might read somebody's ads or, something like that or browse listings on Land Modo. I might get some inspiration from them. That's inspiration, you know. That's definitely not copying and I'm not going copy, word for word or even really close to what somebody else has written because it's just like the line I'm not going to cross because that's their work. That's not my work, you know. So for the most, you just kind of don't do it, you know.

Mark: Would you be offended if someone took from you?

Aaron: Yeah. I mean, we've had it happen. Melissa wrote a great ad about a year ago, maybe a little more and we used it on various similar properties and we've used it several times and it works really well. And not too long ago, she found that ad on somebody else's property, and she was pretty...She showed me she was pretty steamed about it and, it was her intellectual property. She put her hard work into it and she was upset that somebody else took it and was, reaping the benefits of her work, you know so yeah. And there was no... nobody asked permission or anything like. I mean, you can look the flip side. Imitation is the, you know is the most sincere form of flattery. But that's not really imitation, is it? That's just copying, laziness.

Mark: Right.

Aaron: So...

Mark: Erik Peterson, the technician, what are your thoughts?

Erik: I think, in terms of content and things like that, I mean, if you're going to utilize maybe an idea or ad content or whatever from someone else, I think it's really important to rewrite that and make it your own because in this business... I mean, first of all, we are all kind of like our own people, right? Like we connect with different buyers and sellers differently and it's because we communicate differently, right? So to take, someone...If I took Aaron's ad and run that ad, it wouldn't really be my voice necessarily, like there would be things about it that don't really identify the way that I do with my customers. So if I put a spin on it and make it my own, maybe I

was inspired by it, what have you, then it's going to do better for me anyways. And then I'm not, taking Erin's ad word for word, for example.

And likewise, in kind of the graphics world, the photography world like, I would say the same thing when it comes to websites. If you are out there and you see a land investor's website or any website for that matter, and you're like, "This is a great site. I want to do something like it." Well, do something like it. Don't do the same thing because again, your audience is very likely different from, whomever's website that might be and obviously, I mean there is all these underlying aspects of that too, like, whoever built that thing or wrote that thing or whatever, put time and effort into that. It may not only be just the actual physical creation of it but the actual thought and kind of concept behind it all. So there is a lot to it.

It's definitely happened to me in the past in different areas of the business. When someone talks to me about it first and they are like, "Hey, I love your website. I want to do something like it or I love this or that or whatever," and we have a discussion about it, one of the things I always talk about is, "I feel flattered that you liked this or that or whatever, but let's make sure you make it your own when you actually implement this." And I think that's really important.

Mark: I like it. I like it. Scott Todd, what are your thoughts?

Scott Todd: Well, oh man, how much time do we have? So Mark, here is the deal. I think it's kind of been said. There is a difference between kind of a copy and a steal, right? Like so when I got going you made a big deal out of, "Hey, you need to lead that magnet, okay?" So like your lead magnet is like the *Fatal Land Buying Mistakes* or something like that.

Mark: *Three Fatal Land Buying Mistakes.*

Scott Todd: Okay. So I needed an idea, like I needed something new. So what I did was I created *The Three Biggest Land Buying Mistakes*. Very, very similar to what you did but yet different, okay? So I took your conceptual idea. I changed the title very simply, but then I wrote all new content. I read what you wrote, right, like I read what you wrote, but I didn't paraphrase it. I didn't steal it. I basically sat down and said, "I like this about it. I don't like that about it." and I rewrote the document. It's like six pages. It's not that big of a deal.

So, if you're going to go out and you are going to use people's ideas as an inspiration, so be it, but then improve on it. Make it better. Make it your own. But to go and to steal something like word for word, not cool. I've had

that, Three Biggest Land Mistakes, I've had people... I've had coachings... My own coaching students have stolen from me and I'm like, "That's not cool." I mean, these are not people who can't write either, like these are people that they just wanted like something to do and as Erik said, it's not their voice. It's not their message and I don't think it's cool to go and...

I mean like there is somebody that took one of the courses that I made. They went out and they basically like replicated it with their own little spin on it. We won't name any names but basically they took my content and instead of adding to the community, they basically went off and started their own community. So that was their choice and whatever. But what's not cool is to take something that somebody sat down and wrote and like put thought to. And I think it's in that other course that they say like, "Just stop stealing people's ads." That's not cool,

Like Aaron mentioned. Melissa sat down and she had creativity. She had thoughts. She had intellectual property and my point to Scott Bossman is look man, just because you didn't watermark it, does not mean it's not yours. I have sent people out there to take pictures. I've paid people to go out and take pictures when I got going. Those pictures are my intellectual property. They are my copyrighted material and you know what, when I see people that are using them, we enforce it, like we enforce it because they did not pay. It's not cool.

Mark: Yeah. I mean, I always think about, let's just take for example, the movie theatre, right? We can all agree the popcorn is exorbitantly high, the candy we are being taken advantage of. Nobody is going to pay \$7 for a packet of skittles, right? It's very easy to go, bring and sneak in your own candy, right? But I always like to think about it from the owners point of view. So if I owned that theatre, right, how would I feel if everybody snack in popcorn and everybody snack in candy?

Now ultimately I know that there is going to be a percentage of people that are going to do it, right? And it's not going to be worth the bad PR to please people doing it. That being said, should people do that? Well, I think if you have empathy for the actual owner, you won't necessarily do it because you wouldn't want it done to you.

So if we golden rule it, right, if you don't want somebody taking your pictures or taking your content, right, you wouldn't do it yourself. So it's just that simple. Now if you're the kind of person that doesn't care if people steal from you or it's a little bit nuance like what Scott said or Mike said, it depends on the relationship. That might be a different philosophical issue. I

also like to think of...have any of you guys watched The Good Place? The show, The Good Place?

Scott Todd: No.

Mark: It's like a really cute show. It's, you know...Mimi, you watched it?

Mimi: Yeah.

Mark: So one of the favorite moral philosophers is Immanuel Kant and he always talks about essentially, what if everyone did that, right, what would the consequences be? And what if everyone just stole pictures? What if everyone just stole content, what would it look like? It would just be one creator and then a bunch of hippies, right? So there would be one purple cow and a sea of brown cows. It wouldn't look right, right? So I think it's an interesting sort of moral dilemma as well. Let's just face it, like...yeah. Go ahead Mimi?

Mimi: How many of us are actually writing our ads, because I don't. And so if I'm putting out 300 a month, I'm certainly not going and reviewing each one all over Craigslist's, Land Modo, and Facebook to see if there are similar. Now, I don't write my ads. I do pay for all my pictures, right? Now if I have a poster that I have people that create like Google Maps or Google Earth pictures too, if I'm pre-selling something, right.

So I don't have the time to review everything that they are doing. Now, do I spot check things? And when I'm running my own ads, do I check the links or read through things when I'm responding to people and sending them links from my website? Of course, I do. So I think there is a challenge in that too and how much oversight you've got on your ad writers and your VAs. So I did have...

Mark: Unless you trained VA and said, "Hey, go to LandModo.com and just copy their content. You know I've got property in a similar place."

Mimi: Of course, you are right. Of course, you don't tell them that.

Mark: That would be wrong, right?

Mark: Of course, it would be and recently I had an issue where I paid like \$120 for some material that turned out...was copied. So I have a dispute with him in Upwork right now. So I mean, it's something that's important. But I can't spend all my time reviewing all my ads either, so you know.

Scott Todd: So I think it's really how you approach it. Like what practice are you going to be cool within your own business, right? Because if you go out, like you just said, if you go out and you train a VA that says, "To create content, just go here and steal it." Well, that's the organization that you have created.

However, if you find that someone did that and it's not the way that you've trained or maybe you even told them like that is unacceptable in your training. That's not cool. Well, then do you enforce it, right? It's a copyrighted violation of somebody's copyrighted violation. Do we have a zero tolerance on that and if you do it, you're gone and you tell them that and you train them that, well then it won't happen. And if it does happen, then you have to enforce it. They are gone. But it's all about the company that you want to be.

Mimi: If you see it, right, let someone know, right? So that they don't have to review all their work and so that they can make those kinds of cultural policies with their staff, with the teams they lead.

Mark: I mean, even if we throw out morals and ethics and philosophy, if we just get down to the cold hard economics and capitalism of it, the right thing to do as a capitalist is to be unique.

Mimi: Completely.

Mark: That's really ultimately in your best interest. It is easier for me to steal from Tate because let's face it, I have a little insecurity about not being creative. But that being said, if I spend an extra five minutes and maybe I was inspired that Tate did, but I could actually maybe make it better. That's my own creativity. That's my own thing. That's better for the customer in the market place because I'm coming through. The unique me, everyone else is taken, you might as well just be yourself, right? And that's the beauty of the marketing. But so I would even say that. I mean, Erik, do you agree? I think you said in a way?

Erik: Yeah, I agree.

Mark: It's just better marketing practices to be [00:25:28] [indiscernible], right.

Scott Todd: Mark, I mean another great example of that is like find a flaw in something... Like you just said, find a way that you can add value to something and go create more value in the world. And you did that with Geek Pay, right? Like there was other softwares out there that did similar

but yet lacking, right? Like you came to this and you're like, "Hey, it's all cool." You used these other products and you didn't just say, "Let's just go copy it," that would be ridiculous.

But what you did was you said, "Hey, listen, I could do this better if this, this, this and this added up." And that's what you did. You went out and created a solution not to like steal other people's business but what you did was you went out there and you created a solution of something that was missing in your eyes. And then you went out and you created value in the world with that. And so it's unique. It's not necessarily new, but it has a unique spin on something. There is better take aways and I think that that's what is kind of gets missed sometimes. Do you want to be the cheap knockoff or do you want to be an originator?

Mark: Right? Well, I think it's a really interesting topic and I'm glad that we discussed it for sure. Does anybody have anything else they want to add because I got portentous hard stop in three minutes? Mike?

Mike: When you were saying about, what was it? Purple cow in a sea of brown cows, I say, be green, be yellow. Like you said, just because you can, doesn't mean you should. Be unique and capitalize on that like you said. I think you made a good point.

Mark: Yeah, absolutely. And if you want to capitalize on this, how to be unique, how to be effective in the market place, there is an easy place to go. It's called *Flight School* and they run every month, sometimes even twice a month depending on class sizes. If you want to learn more about going up that Land Investing mountain, quickly efficiently, uniquely...I feel like Johnny Coquelin here, just go to the [LandGeek.com/trainings](https://www.landgeek.com/trainings), and schedule a call with the night cab moister, Scott Bossman or Zen Master, Mike Zaino. They will give you a free strategy call to see if it is the best fit for you. So thank you for listening listeners.

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Tate: I heard the most of it. I think we are talking about...

Mark: Do you have a view on it?

Tate: Yeah. Don't steal people's work. It's not nice.

Mark: There it is.

Tate: That's just the way you got to look at it. It's not nice.

Mark: It's not nice.

Tate: Everything I needed to know, I learned in Kindergarten, right?

Mark: It's really that simple.

Tate: Exactly, right.

Mark: All right. Well, are we ready to do this? One, two, three...

All: Let freedom reign.

Mark: Good, not bad. Did 'Bear Land' Aaron say anything on that one?

Scott Todd: No.

Tate: He's still waiting to hear it.

Mike: He doesn't know we are doing it yet.

Aaron: Ring.

Tate: I'm glad I got on in time to do that. I was going to be kind of sad if I missed it two weeks in a row. That wouldn't be good.

Mark: Yeah. Well, I'm glad you were able to jump on. It's always good to see.

Mike: The holiday haircut Tate, loving it.

Tate: Yeah. The in-laws were in town, trying to impress them.

Mark: Yeah. By the way, if you're listening to this bonus part, I forgot to mention, San Antonio boot camp is filling up. Go to LandGeek.com/Bootcamp, get that going. Are we all going to be at Bootcamp?

Tate: Yeah.

Scott B: Going to be there.

Mark: It's going to be awesome. San Antonio...Mike is going to be bring his cowboy hat, cowboy boots

Mike: I got a jacket, hat, and boots. Ya'll be there.

[00:30:12] [indiscernible]

Scott Todd: Why do you need a jacket man? You are coming from...

Mike: It looked like a Steven Seagal jacket. It was on clearance at the last time we were there and I couldn't resist. They got me. It was good marketing.

Scott Todd: Come on man. Dude, like you're from Massachusetts it's cold and it's supposed to be warmer in Texas so.

Mimi: Makes sense.

Mike: It's like a light leather.

Mark: I've got one more minute. We forgot to do the tip of the week. I got so wrapped up in the discussion I forgot to do the tip of the week. So as is Land Geek tradition Mimi, what's your tip of the week?

Mimi: Okay. It's a monthly report that Lands of America, Land and Farm puts out and I put the link there. Usually, if you just search for like 2018, land news, trends they'll come up. We talked about how those big platforms, how their market is different from Land Modo. And I specifically mentioned it last week how Land Modo is made for our niche this kind of shows that.

If you scroll down to past the pictures, it kind of gives the highlights, the biggest ranch, the newest listing, that kind of thing. But what I find interesting is there's most searched counties and then top ten most searched counties Farm Lands of America, all of those are on Texas. So I think that right there shows how Land Modo is different because...And our market is different from what's being sold on these sites because they are all in Texas, right? And Texas is not our top state that we sell land in. So they have to make a second category for other Non-Texas Counties which I find very interesting and so those are in a lot of the states that we use.

But I just find it interesting to look at. It's just a little different than our market. But I do read them for trends and things like that. You'll see the county name, for instance, it says Edwards County, Texas plus one. It probably...last month, it was second most searched county. So that's why it says plus one. It probably moved up one in the minus two. It probably moved down two spaces. I'm not sure if that's making sense, the way I'm describing it. If it's not a good tip, you can go ahead and say so.

Scott Todd: I liked the tip. I thought it was really good. Data is key in this business.

Mark: Yeah.

Erik: It made me so well respect that no one will slam her tips, and I won't. That's a great tip.

Mimi: No. It's because I am a girl.

Mark: If Erik gave that tip, we'd all be eye rolling right now. Oh, that's so geeky. But since it's Mimi, it's like, "Oh that's a great tip." No, I'm just joking. It is a good tip. I'm not trying to be jerk.

Mimi: Okay.

Mark: I'm trying to like really go after Erik and his tips because it doesn't matter what Erik says. It could be the greatest tip. Are we ever going to be like, "Great tip Erik?"

Erik: Every once in a while [00:33:47] [indiscernible].

Scott Todd: I do that.

Mark: See, Scott, comes to your rescue. He's always got your back which is nice. All right. Well, thanks everybody and we'll see everyone next week.

[End of Transcript]