



# THE LAND GEEK

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

**Today's Guest: [Cliff Hayden](#)**

### **Transcript**

**Mark:** Hey, it's Mark Podolsky the Land Geek, with your favorite niche-y real estate website [TheLandGeek.com](http://TheLandGeek.com) and today's guest is a little different, I'm very excited to talk to him. However, before we talk to our guest I'd be remiss if I didn't properly introduce my cohost you know him, you love him, the 'Professor', the 'Brain', your Flight School Sherpa; Scott Todd, from [ScottTodd.net](http://ScottTodd.net), [LandModo.com](http://LandModo.com) and most importantly if you're not automating your Craigslist and your Facebook postings [PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek](http://PostingDomination.com/TheLandGeek). Scott Todd, how are you?

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

**Mark:** Pulse is still normal, respiration is fine. I'm still trying to stay on that peloton man. 50 rides now, I hit 50.

**Scott:** 50, wow.

**Mark:** I know, you're way above that.

**Scott:** I'm almost to the century, I'm almost there and I hit a little road block here along the way. So [00:01:27] [indiscernible] a little bit.

**Mark:** Well, that's good. That will give me time to catch up.

**Scott:** There you go.

**Mark:** So, I want to talk about our guest Cliff Hayden. If you don't know about Cliff Hayden, he's a real estate investor and founder of [ShowMeTheRental.com](http://ShowMeTheRental.com); an online software that automates the most difficult part of property management finding and screening qualified leads. After just quitting his day job he pursued real estate investing as a career, Cliff grew tired of taking hundreds of calls and emails from unqualified leads just to find that one good renter. He was tired of managing showings and following up with people who're struggling to find time for his family. He decided he needed a better way and when he couldn't find a better way he built it. Since developing [ShowMeTheRental.com](http://ShowMeTheRental.com), Cliff is able to focus on his business and let the website manage the leads so they can spend more quality time with the people he loves. Cliff Hayden, welcome. How are you?

**Cliff:** I'm great, Mark. I appreciate you had me. How are you today?

**Mark:** I'm great. Your story sounds a lot like my own story with my own software [GeekPay.io](http://GeekPay.io). We should talk about the synergies of these, but I digress. So Show Me the Rental, so let's just kind of rewind the tape. What were you doing before you got into real estate?

**Cliff:** I was actually in the corporate world like you. I looked at your bio, same thing. I work for AT&T and back then, I want to say the late 90s, and my goal was to go up the corporate ladder. That was kind of my ideal to go to school, get the job, get a degree, work for a big company and then work my way up the ladder. I found out that corporate America was for me. So, I did that for about 10 years and I was an outside plant technician which is a fancy word for a construction worker. So, I worked in the bucket trucks and put up telephone lines and travelled around the country where there were storm damages and we made really good money.

So, I was a 20 something year old kid making almost a hundred grand a year, which was a lot of back then. So, doing very well and then some things happened where the company kind of I'd say, screwed me over. They thought we were more of a team and I learned it the hard way that I was basically a puppet on a string. So, they were pulling my strings and I was going along with it and I realized there had to be something else.

So long story short, my sister and brother-in-law came back from Iraq and I want to say in 1999 or 2000 somewhere in that range and brought a game called Cash Flow - Rich Dad Poor Dad and we started playing that game and whatever happened. My brother in law said that he could see the hamster

turning in my brain, I run on that wheel and so, I was just really intrigued by real estate. So that's when I kind of got my first dose of it and from there I had a bunch of money saved up from working overtime and I just went out and I bought a duplex which was a horrible idea and a horrible deal.

From there, I learned about a local real estate club that we have and I started going to those meetings then I found my first mentor, a guy named Mike Butler, who took me under his wings and from there I started buying rental houses. I bought the wrong rental houses for a long time and just got overwhelmed with this amount of stuff I was doing. I was buying houses, fixing up rental houses and all the while doing this working a full-time job I then began to hate my job and realized that I wanted to quit, but I could not walk away from that. I am a lower middle class guy, I could not walk away from that kind of money.

So, kind of a funny story I got suspended on purpose. So, I actually do hold the record for the longest suspension in AT&T history which I'm kind of proud of. So, how that happened was when you drive a bucket truck you have to have a CDL license and when you do CDL you have to have random drug test. So, my boss came in one day and it couldn't have been better timing because I wanted to take a break but I didn't want to quit. So, he said I had a random drug test and I refused to take it and so when you refuse to take it it's the same as a fail. So just coincidental stuff happened.

So then I go to the drug counselor and I started to talk to him and low and behold he was actually my aunt and uncle next door neighbor. So we had a rapport right away and I started to talk to him about what I was trying to do and I just told him, I just said I just need time. So, I don't have a drug problem I just want time to figure out if I can do this real estate full-time or if I need to stick to my day job. And so, he gave me and I'll never forget him looking at me and he goes, "I'll tell you what." He goes, "I don't agree with what you are doing, but I'll tell you what I'll do for you. You have... I forget how many hours I had 10 or 12 or 8 hours whatever of rehab. So, he said you can take this as fast or as slow as you want to take it. And I looked at him and I said, I don't know that means. Man I am slow, I don't understand and so he goes, "You can take it as fast or as slow as you want to." And I still didn't get it. He goes, "Hey, you can come 15 minutes a week or you can come 10 minutes a week or you can do it all in one day, all the classes." So, eight hours of rehab took me four and half months to complete. So, in those four and a half months I did and I mean blew the door, I did real estate deal 15 hours a day I worked my butt off and actually made my salary the first month that I was on suspension. So from there, I decided I could do it and my boss finally called me and said, "You either come back

here or you're fired." And I said well I guess I'm going to quit. And so, it couldn't have worked out better.

The problem I had from there was when you're on your own freedom, I was working and working and building every aspect of real estate you could think of. I was buying a lot of rental houses, I was fixing up houses, in this timeframe I got hooked up with some big foreclosure agencies this was probably 07'-08', which everybody knows what happened then and I worked with some big foreclosure agencies around town. I ran a general contracting company fixing up bank foreclosures. So, we run a whole company doing that for several years and just busy, busy, busy, and the whole goal at that time was to reach my old priorities where I made money the goal. Now, when I did that it caused a lot of problems at home.

I am now happily married. I have five beautiful children, but through these growing pains I was not around a lot. I was working, I thought that's what a dad needed to do was to provide, have a nice house, nice school, nice toys but I didn't realize I was causing a lot of problems at home. So, when I was home I wasn't present and I know if everybody has done real estate long enough and you've been busy you got 20 things going on all the times. So, when I was at home I can still remember sitting down and we might have 3 or 4 empty rental houses we were taking all the phone calls. So, when a tenant called about a house, email, text I'd be sitting at the dinner table and my wife, I don't know if you remember Superman when he got mad his eyes were turning red and he could shoot lasers out of his eyes?

**Mark:** Sure.

**Cliff:** I got that look a lot from my wife and so we were just... The money was great, but I just didn't have a good home life and I had to do something different. So, what I found out is about answering all these emails and phone calls and I actually had a guy in our office. We have two guys in our office and we just couldn't keep up, we couldn't screen people fast enough, we couldn't get everything done.

So, I went out and tried to find a screening service that could just automate this whole process because we found that we were asking these people the same questions: how long have you been in your current job? How much money you have in your bank accounts? Would you sign a five years or 3 to 5 year lease? Can you complete small jobs... yada, yada, yada same questions. So, we tried to find a system that could do this for us and we could not. So then Show Me the Rental created one to keep my sanity and to be a better father, be at home more with my kids and be present when I was home.

**Mark:** Scott Todd, I'm just going to jump in here. Scott Todd, does this story sound familiar to you.

**Scott:** A little bit. I didn't get suspended and like go to [00:09:59] [indiscernible] something but look here's the thing Mark, the cool thing about Cliff's story and the thing I'm taking away here is Cliff has something that you can't replicate. Cliff, if you didn't tell me anything else I'd tell you that Cliff is going to be successful in this because there is one thing that he has and it's the passion, it's the burning desire to get the heck out of Dodge and honestly, you know what happens is we become... and I was there too and I know you were there too. We become comfortable with that corporate gig; yeah, it's like a blanket - it's a nice little warm blanket that gets wrapped around you every two weeks. Oh, don't worry you have a job here until you don't. Like, hey let's go team. There is no team. The team is you're on the team until you're off the team. What happens is we get sucked into this comfort level of, okay I'm just going to be here and I hate it but I'm going to be here. But Cliff had a passion to get the heck out, he had a burning desire to go on a different path and he was scared like I was scared.

**Cliff:** Terrified.

**Scott:** Okay, and the thing is that, if you have that burning desire and you do it a smart way, the way you're just kind of, think of like an interstate exit, like slowly get off the interstate. It's not like you just drive off the interstate you take the exit. Like take an exit and guess what, there's a whole other world down there off the interstate that's there but it all comes back to that passion, that burning desire to make a change.

**Mark:** Yeah, you know, what I think is interesting Cliff, is the crossroads of the sort of existential crisis which I think you know once you make that leap like Scott was saying, like okay, here I'm creating this better life for myself but in exchange of doing that I'm sacrificing a lot of you know, what you would be like the big priority which is making myself, my family happy.

**Cliff:** Because that's why I've been doing it. That's why I'm doing it anyway. It's why most people do it, we want to have a better life and we think... In my mind we were talking about this a breakfast the other day. I hate to interrupt you but we were talking about... so, I have five kids like I said previously and how do you teach that drive, how do you get them to be driven and one of...

We have a group, we meet every Wednesday and kind of go over deals and life and what we're doing. One of the older guys said, kids watch you when

you don't think they're watching you. So, when I see you working hard, when they see you doing stuff, when they see you moving they are learning that whether you're talking to them or not, which was just pretty neat.

So out of five kids, they're all different personalities and this is where all my focus is now by the way, it's my kids and we're traveling now and doing fun stuff and I've got a mobile company, pretty much that I can run from anywhere. So, we travel all summer and my goal is to get them to find something they're passionate about and have that drive. So, for me it was real estate, for me it was getting out of that corporate world, stop being a puppet on a string and do things I enjoy doing, which I love putting deals together and talking to people and I love fixing up houses. It's very fun to watch the whole process through. So, back to what you were saying. Yeah, that drive is huge and how do you get that?

**Mark:** Yeah, I mean, I think for you it was just the pain of not, you know.

**Cliff:** Yes.

**Mark:** It starts with pain and I think for a lot of the people that's really where it needs to be, it's this feeling, not having this locus of control, never having freedom or flexibility, just this sort of underlying feeling where it could all go away at any moment with nothing you did. So, I think that's really important. What I think is interesting though is how you made the transition from working all the time to creating an automation systems delegation especially the automation with ShowMeTheRent.com. How did you go ahead and develop that? I mean basically, you stretched your own niche.

**Cliff:** Well, I'll tell you what, I'm definitely not the brains behind the operation. It was my idea, I knew there was a niche out there, and I knew there were a lot of investors out there like me who wanted time. The whole point of whatever that facade is, once you get money then everything will work out great, you will be happy. Well it's not true. I've got a lot but I've got more money than I can spend and I wasn't any happy and I was actually more miserable because I could not enjoy it, because I was so busy.

So, I spent the last five or six years putting systems in place and Show Me The Rental, was the one that freed up more time than any of them because if anybody... I know you do land, but I know if you're in the rental business the biggest time consumption is picking up the phone and talking to somebody about your three-bedroomed, two bath with a basement and giving them the spill only to find out they're not qualified. So, you literally

waste hours out of your day on unqualified people that you don't need to talk to anyway.

So Show Me The Rental, it's kind of like a funnel and we built the funnel and we're getting all the riffraff out of the way and just getting everybody through the funnel that is qualified automation that you're not going to waste your time on, which is such a huge timesaver. So, that's how it got developed and I partnered with the guy who does the development and kind of runs that back door stuff, because I don't understand anything about coding or websites or any of that. I just had the idea and we made it come to life.

**Mark:** Fantastic. So, who is your target market then for Show Me the Rental?

**Cliff:** So, our target market is anybody with rental houses. So, whether you're the new guy, intermediate or advanced guy, it's is for anybody that wants to save time on the rental properties. So, what it does which is really is neat is, we automate the whole process. So, we basically created an online system, it will advertise for you on all the major websites, it will generate leads, it will actually prescreen those leads automatically and set up showings automatically and basically turn those leads into applications while you sit back and watch and then you... We have an online application, if you have your own you can use yours if you want to but you literally just wait until you get applications and then from there whatever particular screening process you use, you put that into place.

**Mark:** So, you're eliminating like a property management company essentially.

**Cliff:** Well, not all the way because we're doing the crap of the property management side of it. So, you still need your property management company to handle work orders and collect rent. All we do is a screening process which to me is the most time consuming process and if you screen your tenants correctly and get the right customer in there you're looking for, your life becomes a lot easier.

It's when you get those bad people in there, which I did for a while because I got so many phone calls I would literally just get the first person who could breathe almost or turn into someone that had money in their bank account, I would rent them and then a year later it would cost me so much money because I had to turn it over because they weren't my right customer, because I did not spend the right time qualifying them. And I missed lead and after lead because I could not collect all the information, I was just

trying to put out fires. So, that's what this system does and it also does it for a price that's really cheap. So basically, it's \$49 until your property is rented. So, you put it on our system, it's 49 bucks until it's rented and then you literally turn it off and it shuts everything off.

**Mark:** Wow, that's a good deal, Scott Todd.

**Scott:** It is a good deal.

**Cliff:** So yeah, it's very cheap. We did it, basically because I would love to. I know there's a lot of people in my shoes where you're at home and you're not really present and you've just got so much going on and overwhelmed, if we can help those people out it would make me feel better. Because I do have some regrets and one of them was not being around for my two older kids like I should've been, because I was working all the time. So, I'm trying to make up for that now and with this system and with the other systems we're using I have time to do whatever I want, it's a new feeling but it's a great feeling to have freedom in your day to not just be putting out fires all day.

**Mark:** Absolutely, and that's you know, you're really preaching to the choir here because we always talk about you can always make more money but you can't get more time, and that leads me to today's podcast is sponsored by Flight School and Flight School Live. So, if you really want to be like Cliff and have money and time, let Scott Todd be your Sherpa up the land investing mountain and in three days or 16 weeks depending on which program you go into, he's going to teach you step-by-step how to create a fully functional land business where it's 90% automated right out of the gate and start building your passive income without renters, without rehabs, without renovations, without rodents. To learn more just go to [TheLandGeek.com/Training](http://TheLandGeek.com/Training) and schedule a call.

So Cliff, I think your story has been really inspiring. I love the fact that you really got your head on straight when it comes to your priorities and how you implement that into your own business and life. But now, we're going to 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 improve their businesses, improve their lives. What have you got?

**Cliff:** I'll tell you I said something to you earlier Mark, I just found an app called Blinkist. I don't know if your listeners have heard about it, but I've been reading a book called, *Traction* and I'm not a good reader. I can read for about 15 or 20 minutes then my brain just can't focus. So Blinkist, what it does is, it takes a book and it basically cliff notes it, it takes it down to a



summary and to all major points in the book you can either read it, which takes about 15 or 20 minutes to get through the book or they have an audio version where you can just listen to the audio version of the book. I started doing that, I found out about it a couple of weeks ago, and I have added to my morning routine where I get up and I start listening to a book or reading part of it and it's changed my life. It's got every aspect of life in it and real estate and whatever you're interested in, they have it and I recommend that because it's a really good tool to keep your mind sharp.

**Mark:** Yeah, it's so true like especially business books. Like you know, the typical business book all the meat is like in the first 20 pages and then it's just anecdotes and more examples of what they're trying to come across that. So Scott Todd, what's your tip of the week?

**Scott:** So, I have got a book that could help our listeners because one of the things that we hear a lot is like sales, like how people struggle with sales. So, check this book out it's called, *Questions That Sell: A Powerful Process for Discovering What Your Client or Customer Really Wants* and as our friend the Sales Whisperer says ask a lot of questions.

**Cliff:** I agree.

**Mark:** I love it. How did you find this? Who is Paul Cherry?

**Scott:** I don't know, man. He's an author, it is a good book.

**Mark:** We should get this guy on the podcast.

**Scott:** We should have him on our podcast that's right.

**Mark:** All right fantastic, *Questions That Sell*. Well, my tip of the week is going to be save some time go to [ShowMeTheRental.com](http://ShowMeTheRental.com). It's of amazing value 49 bucks until your house rents and I know a lot of you out there do both houses and land, so this could be a really, really nice tool. Cliff, I think you should integrate [GeekPay.io](http://GeekPay.io) into Show Me the Rental, so that you can start collecting on an automated basis rental payments on ACH, we'll talk about that. Anyway Cliff Hayden, are we good?

**Cliff:** Yep. Mark and Scott, I really appreciate your time, thank you for having me on.

**Scott:** My pleasure.

**Mark:** Scott Todd, are we good?

**Scott:** We're good, Mark.

**Mark:** All right. Well, I want to thank all the listeners and I just want to remind you the only way we're going to get the quality of guests like a Cliff Hayden from [ShowMeTheRental.com](http://ShowMeTheRental.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're going to send you for free the \$97 Passive Income Launch Kit course. So, please do that and it really, really helps. All right Scott, are you ready to do this?

**Scott:** Let's do it, Mark. One, two, three.

**Mark & Scott:** Let freedom ring.

**Mark:** All right, thanks everybody.

*[End of Transcript]*