

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

Today's Guest: John Livesay

<u>Transcript</u>

Mark: Hey, it's Mark Podolsky the Land Geek with your favorite nichey real estate website <u>www.TheLandGeek.com</u> and today's podcast guest is going to help us with the thing that we all want help with making more sales. But before we talk to our guest I'd be remiss if I didn't properly introduce my cohost; 'the brain', 'the professor' you know him, you love him - Scott Todd from <u>ScottTodd.net</u>, <u>LandModo.com</u> and if you're not automating your Craigslist and your Facebook postings PostingsDomination.com/TheLandGeek and of course learn more at

InvestorNinjas.com. Scott Todd, how are you?

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

Mark: You know what, my pulse is still normal, my respiration is fine and I can track it now and I'm really going to try to convince you to get the Apple watch because I know my heart rate and you don't.

Scott: Well, I know that my heart rate is still pumping because I'm still here. So what's a numbe,r Mark? What's a number seriously? Like it's just something now you're obsessing over like oh my gosh, what is it now?

Mark: You know what, I'm really obsessing over though is making more sales and you know who is going to help us make more sales; John Livesay,

from JohnLivesay.com. If you don't know John he is known as The Pitch Whisperer shh. He's a sales keynote speaker and shares the lessons learned from his award-winning sales career at Conde Nast and his keynote *Better Selling Through Storytelling*. He shows companies, sales team how to become irresistible so that they are magnetic to their ideal clients. After John speaks the sales team becomes revenue rock stars who know how to form an emotional connection and a compelling sales story with clients. His TEDx talk "*Be The Lifeguard Of Your Own Life*" has over 1 million views. His bestselling book is *Better Selling Through Storytelling* and he's also host of *The Successful Pitch Podcast* which is a big deal in over 60 countries. John is a big deal. He's been on Larry King and John Livesay welcome.

John: Thanks Mark, thanks Scott, great to be with you both.

Mark: John let's rewind the tape and let's go to Conde Nast. What's going on over there? What happened when you became like The Pitch Whisperer?

John: Well, I was there for about 15 years and my job was to take the brands which you probably know some of them GQ, Wired, Vanity Fair, Digest and explained to brands like Lexus cars why they should run their ads on those brands, print, websites; and then eventually, some video platforms. That really was the genesis of learning how to tell good stories because each brand had a different story and of course each model of the car had a different target audience to reach. So it was that variety of pitches and stories that tried to find that like a puzzle and that really is where I crafted my selling and storytelling skills.

And then in the last five years I've been giving keynote talks specifically to audiences that have to win bake offs, shootouts, beauty contest, interviews whatever you want to call it. You know when it gets down to that it's final two or three and that agency has to do this to win new clients. I had to do it during media day when a big account like Lexus would bring in all the reps to pitch and I know that whoever tells the best story in those one-hour bakeoffs, shootouts whatever you want to call them is the one that's going to get the yes and not the one that tells a bunch of boring information.

Mark: Very interesting, and will this model of storytelling work with any size company or is it basically Fortune 500 companies?

John: No, it works with anybody. I mean, if you're whoever tells the best story to get hired. If you're in the real estate business I just gave a keynote talk to the Redfin Company you know that uses technology in a different way of compensating their agents to get people to do it and real estate agents have to do this all the time to get a listing. You know typically, the seller of a

home will say, okay I'm going to see 3 agents, everybody come in, do your dog and pony, show me what you're going to do to sell my house, how much you think it's worth and that that's the same exact situation, Mark.

So again, that real estate agent who is pitching someone to give them the listing can tell a better story of someone else they helped to own a house or condo very similar to theirs, what they did that separates them from the competitors whether it's social media or a cool party not just another open house. Then people say aha I see myself in that story and I want to go on that journey with you and therefore storytelling allows people to not have to push. The old way of selling is you know, hire me, hire me, bye bye-bye, give me the listing whatever it is and the new way is storytelling. So instead of pushing, you're pulling people in because stories are magnetic and then, you become magnetic and you can let go of this persona of being a pushy salesperson.

Mark: I love it. [00:05:47] [indiscernible].

Scott: Look I'm [00:05:52] [indiscernible] stories are meaningful, but Mark goes in and tells a story and I go in and tell a story because we both listened to you. Because we listened to you and we're going to go in and we're going to pitch our story.

John: Yes.

Scott: How do I beat, Mark? Like, what's the secret sauce? We can all go in and tell our stories but there's got to be something different to the story that's going to close the deal because I mean, they might just like Mark's story better than mine. Is that what it is or what's the recipe to get me and my story over Mark's?

Mark: I mean, Scott, no offence you lack warmth compared to me.

Scott: Maybe, but I do think I tell better stories, Mark. I'm just saying.

John: Got it.

Mark: No, you do but it's like look do you want to go to the horror film and hear that story or do you want to go to my [00:06:47] [indiscernible] and walk out feeling well?

John: That's hilarious. I love the rivalry.

Scott: Let's see what the expert says.

John: Well, there's a lot. First of all, Scott my mission is to help as many people start telling stories. So when in these situations where it's between you and two other people or two other firms 90% of people are not telling stories. Just the fact that you're telling stories sets you apart. Now, it is definitely my goal on this interview to give your listeners the secrets to telling a good story and then we can get into the nuance of what's going to make the story better and ironically what Mark was teasing you about is a big factor.

So there are three unspoken questions that everybody has when they hear you pitch anything. The first one is do I trust you? It's a gut thing. In fact, the handshake came about to show you didn't have a weapon in your hand and then it moves to the heart. Do I like you and that's what Mark was teasing you about. The more empathy you show the more likeable you are. And then, it moves to the head where people are listening to you tell that story and they are thinking to themselves will this work for me? That's worked for those other people but can I see you doing the same thing for me?

Now, here's the secret Scott and Mark, you are not the hero of your story the client is. I want you to think of yourselves as Yoda in Star Wars or the Sherpa helping people climb up Mount Everest and when you tell a story with that context then people are going to see themselves in the story and want to have you as there Sherpa or Yoda. So we can get into what makes a good story and I can give an example but I just want to let that land first to make sure that answered your question.

Scott: Okay, I got you.

Mark: Yeah, we totally understand that. So let's get into the nitty-gritty of breaking down the elements of what makes a powerful compelling story where the listener or the client or whomever you're trying to persuade is the hero of that story.

John: Yes, I think it's important first to say that there are three things you have to do when you're telling a story to sell. You have to sell yourself first, then you sell the company even if it's just a one-person company and then you sell the product or service. Most people forget the first two and jump right into the features and information of the product or service. So selling yourself is telling your story of origin.

So when I was working with an architecture firm when they were up against some other architects and they would get to the team slide I said all right what are you going to say here? And they were like, "Well my name's Bob, I've been here 10 years this is what I do." I go okay that's not memorable, there's no story there and I started asking him questions. It turned from that to, "You know when I was 11 years old I'd play with Legos and that's what inspired me to become an architect. Now, I have a son that is 11 and I still play with Legos with him. I bring that same passion I've always had to this project."

Okay great, what do you do? Well, before working here I was in the Israeli army and I bring that same discipline and focus I learned there to make sure that if you pick us we're going to make sure this comes on time and under budget from the discipline and focus I learned in the Israeli army. So there is how I turned team stories into memorable hooks that people go oh I get who they are. I want to work with those people.

Mark: I love it. More John, more.

John: So turning a case study into a story. Usually, again back to the architect example, they would show before-and-after pictures of here's what it looked like before we came in and redesigned the airport and the law firm and here's what it looks like after. So those pictures are great but other people have pictures of before-and-after so where's the story?

So a story has four elements: the exposition who-what-where-when paint the picture, the problem you're solving, the solution and the secret sauce the resolution. So Scott, if Mark doesn't do the resolution and you do you're going to beat him. So exposition with Gensler I said all right you're the top architecture firm lets here this story. They said, all right two years ago we helped JetBlue at JFK renovate this whole terminal. The challenge was we had to rip up all the floors in middle of the night and get it done, so that the retail stores could open on time. We knew of all potential things that could go wrong because we've been doing this a long time so we had all our vendors on call. Sure enough at 2:00 in the morning a fuse blew but we had somebody there in 20 minutes, fixed it and at 8:59 in the morning the last tile went down and all the stores opened at 9:00 AM on time, not one penny was lost. A year later their sales are up 15% because that renovation has caused people to spend more time shopping.

Exposition: we painted the picture, told them where it was. The problem: we turned it into a story there's a little bit of drama and conflict there and then the solution: was it got done right. At 8:59 you see the suspense and then the accident. The resolution: a year later revenues up 15%. So if you don't tell what life is like after you fixed the problem or if you just got up there and said 'we are somebody who uses critical thinking to anticipate problems'

that not really as memorable as the story where you show it instead of tell it.

Mark: So John, can we get really, really down to the details for like our niche.

John: Yes, please.

Mark: Of buying and selling raw, undeveloped land.

John: Yes.

Mark: So the hero for us is going to be our buyer that wants this asset that essentially will last forever with no restrictions, you can do whatever you want on it and potentially can go up in value, you will have generational wealth, you can build your net worth. So it has all these benefits to it but how can I... and not Scott, you can drop off now. How can I create a story where I'm leading that person you know as the hero of that story down the path of land ownership with the resolution being that you've got this generational asset that is only limited by your imagination or it could be you know something else that I'm just not even thinking about.

John: Yes. Let me ask you a couple of questions so we can horn in a little on the details. What made you get interested in raw, undeveloped land?

Mark: For me it was I wanted to quit my dead-end job as an investment banker and this was my way out to gain an income and so to build wealth.

John: Yeah, got it okay.

Mark: Yeah.

John: All right, got it. So this again this is rough obviously but it's probably a little more the right direction than what you might be doing now. So this will be something you can say at an elevator pitch possibly or at cocktail parties he's like, hey what do you do? You are a Land Geek what does that even mean or you have this I have listened to you and Scott, but I really don't get what you do.

And you say, you know picture this five years ago I was sitting at my desk as an investment banker and I gone to school to do this and I was completely burnt out: the hours, the stress, I just couldn't take it anymore. I kept thinking there's got to be something better than this where I can have some freedom and I remembered the movie *Gone With The Wind*. When Scarlett O'Hara dad said to her, "Land, Scarlett they're not making any more of it, get land." I also always use that quote with a slight southern accent. And so I thought to myself wow if I became a person that could help other people who wanted to invest in something that has such huge potential. I mean think of it, it undeveloped, it's raw, you can paint your own picture and buyers. It's like you know I don't really think the malls are the future. I want to do something else this is the place to do it.

So I found people who were just like you: who have money to invest and want to build it and I know exactly where they want to go with it and they want to build their net worth today because as you know they said they are not making any more of it. The thing that I love most about helping people increase their net worth while creating something great is that they're building a legacy for this generation and ones to follow. Because let's face it, the money you buy and the car there's no legacy there. Wouldn't it be great if long after you're gone that your future generations are grateful to you for buying this raw, undeveloped land and turning it into something that made an impact on the world. That's how I would tell that story.

Mark: I love it. Now would that be just as powerful in copy as it would faceto-face or on the phone?

John: Yes, emails, websites, all of that your story of origin. Most of the websites have an about page and telling that story is really where you put that.

Mark: Scott Todd, what do you think?

Scott: I think it's pretty good. Now, I have a question John, all right. Like when I get up there and I share the story like that about me, like nobody cares. Like people don't really care about me or they care about their own dang problems like you were talking about like I played with Legos when I was 11. If I had heard that I would be like so what? You played with Legos when you were 11 what's that going to do for me today and I know you kind of answered the saying oh I bring the same enthusiasm or whatever. But like to me that doesn't... like what Mark's story there it's a great little fluff piece but like man like I'm missing it. Like he's got to go back and show the resolution I think.

Mark: Got it. Let me just jump in here and as you can see Scott lack warmth because if I heard that same story I could connect immediately as someone that has a son that loves Lego, I loved Legos as a kid, it creates that immediate bond. So there's this new thing out there Scott called rapport.

John: Yes.

Scott: Its' called the what?

John: Rapport.

Mark: It's called rapport.

Scott: Oh no, come on, man.

Mark: [00:17:27] [indiscernible].

John: I think let me reflect back what I heard you say which is what is known as active listening which is a great way to build rapport as well, which is something that a lot of people are not skilled at doing. You have not accepted the premise that you have to sell yourself first before you sell your company or your product because you are someone who has the mindset of let's just get to it. However, I promise you buy emotionally and then back it up with logic.

If you go buy a sports car or Lamborghini or Ferrari whatever it is they don't say get this gets these miles to gallon. They're going to say Scott imagine how sexy you're going to look in this, how fun it's going to be to drive this car. They tap into the emotions. That's what storytelling does and if you're trying to become memorable and people hire.

You know like in the case of Gensler they were told it's between you and two other firms. You all have the skills to design this airport we're going to hire the people we like the most because we've got to work with you for five years. If you don't tell a story about who you are, how are they possibly going to get to trust' like and know you. So that's what in it for them to listen to that story and what you're going to say that in fact makes you memorable. So let me ask you the same question Scott what in the world made to get into raw undeveloped land and want to work with mark?

Scott: It was all about me honestly. Like it was about like my job was coming to an end, I had to get out of the rat race and so like I listened to this guy called The Land Geek. I followed everything he said and I replaced my income in like a blink of an eye just by following what he said not thinking for myself. So it's all pure greed on my part.

John: Got it, but you have been on a little bit of a hero's journey from hating what you did.

Scott: I do have the hero's journey that is right. I do have a hero's story there.

John: Yes. So if other people can see themselves going on that same hero's journey and want the freedom you have the resolution of your story would be what is my life like now that I don't have to worry about paying bills?

Scott: Yes, and it's much better than Mark's is.

Mark: And John, he's not exaggerating. This guy he's the marine of life. He's a pilot, so he flies, he owns a boat, he's in Tampa so he's on the water and then on land he actually is just building not only his own net worth through passive income but he's giving back and he's like the Sherpa helping other people get to where they want to be.

John: Yes.

Mark: He's like that land, sea, air...

Scott: Air dude.

Mark: ...marine. He's like a... So I don't even know how to picture it but...

John: Right. I think this concept... I also picked up some hesitation on your part Scott that you don't care about anybody else's story so why would anybody else care about mine. Would that be accurate?

Scott: No, no that's not accurate. The reason I'm saying this is like there's a guy out there who wrote the book *Story Brand*, like you know Donald Miller. I don't know if you've read his stuff or not?

John: I know of him yes, yes, yes.

Scott: The one thing that kind of, I'm going to say, the one thing that rubbed me in an interesting way was that the premise that I just took with you this was basically his premise, too. It was like if you go to someone's website and it's like hey this is who I am and it's about me and I see this happen on other land investors, people we're trying to help as well. They create a website like hey look at me you know this is who I am, we're brothers or whatever and honestly like someone's going to your website that's a nice little story piece behind, but they're going there to resolve the problem and you might be able to solve their problem but to lead with that

to me is not the right step. Like it's here lets help first you identify the problem that's what you talked about. Let's help identify your problem.

John: So let me clarify what Mark's question was to me. He said is the concept of storytelling something that can be used in a website and on copy?

Scott: Right, right and that's right I'm with you.

John: My answer to that was yes in the about section of your website it is not the headline. If you go to Donald Miller's website, you will clearly see I went there myself just now there's an about page. So I guess but the message of what he does is the middle. The same thing for my website whoever tells the best story gets the sale. I don't talk about my story of origin but it's there for people who want to know it once they know that I can solve their problem.

Scott: That's right.

Mark: And that makes sense because before we're going to transfer any kind of value to somebody we want that extra assurance about that person's credentials right. So I go to your website John and I'm like okay here's....

John: Can I trust you, do I like you and will this work for me? Those three things that everybody who is successful answers somewhere either in person or on their website. It's just a matter of Scott's priority and I agree with you Scott you definitely need to say here's who I help and here's what problem I solve and guess what, here's what life is like for them after I solve their problems.

In the case of our executive search firms that I gave a keynote to talk to in Vegas at the Four Seasons they were saying, you know, "We can't control what order we present in. We asked to go last hoping that will make as memorable. But you telling us if we tell a better story not just of who we are, but of other firms we've helped and placed and what their life is like after hiring us there that story makes as memorable even if we go first." So now they're winning more new clients from using storytelling as a sales tool not a branding tool - a sales tool. That's my unique niche.

Scott: Yeah. You know Mark, that's the thing it's like when you think about what John's saying and you think about how you can apply that one of the things that we don't do often enough is we talk about the land but then we don't talk about like our customer success on that land journey in the resolution of it. I mean like the guy that you have on your website, you know, I forgot his name but he gave you the testimonial video.

Mark: The guy, yeah.

Scott: What's his name again? It doesn't matter, whatever.

Mark: Yeah.

Scott: So essentially, like you have this testimonial video on your website which is cool. However, that's not the resolution to it. Like he's just talking about what a great and honest person you are but there is a great story behind that video that led to this that you could then take and incorporate.

Like hey listen, let me tell you how I've helped people on their land buying journey. We did this and then like take this guy for example. This guy he now owns his property even though, even though he almost lost what he did because of a health issue or an economic downturn or he lost his job. Here's what he has to say. So it's almost like you could take that piece and incorporate your testimonial videos into the customer's journey to the resolution piece and I think that gets missed up a lot of times and John kind of picked up on that.

John: Yes. If you have a testimonial Mark, that is just talking about how likable you are and how the guy trusts you you've got two out of the three, but you don't have people in their head going well, will that work for me? Okay Mark's a nice guy and he's trustworthy that's important, but I am still in my head going do I want to opt in for an email or learn more. What's the next step? I don't know that I would work for me and that if your testimonials can talk about that and then what life is like after it's working for me then I'm really your future pacing people.

Mark: Yeah, and that's why I'm going to buy your book and jot down to do all of these and at the same time make sure that Scott never gets a copy and just doesn't get the whole concept so that my sale quadruples, while he remains flat. So John, I want to know like what is the thing here in your sales expertise? Like what are some of the things people do wrong the most that you would say?

John: I think the thing that people do wrong the most is they think if I give you enough information you're going to say yes. I can inundate you with information you just don't have enough information to say yes when in fact people buy emotionally and back it up with logic and you have to tell a story of why they should care and show them someone else who's been through the exact same situation and use empathy. You know Maslow said that, "If the only tool your toolbox is a hammer, you tend to go around looking for a lot of nails to hit." Well, if Scott's only got the one tool of you know buy from me, information, don't tell me any stories bam, bam and throw a bunch of stuff on the wall and hope it sticks you know good luck, God bless, it doesn't work anymore. The new way is tell a story, become magnetic and the biggest mistake I see people make is not telling compelling, concise and clear stories of how it helps people and why they would want to be on that journey.

Mark: I love it. Scott Todd?

Scott: I'm still going to beat you in our sales pitch, I've got it.

Mark: Okay. Now, what do you have Scott because I want to know. I promise I won't use it.

Scott: Like, I've already told you like you've got to listen to me. It's the resolution Mark - the resolution.

Mark: So the resolution is before they didn't have this raw land they had xyz in their lives. After we were able to make this simplest, easiest, most transparent real estate transaction that they've ever had and not only that we didn't wreck their credit because we didn't give a credit check we're old-school land sellers you word is your bond. They were able to get an asset that they never thought they would be able to own and now that they own it life is like this: they can go and unplug, they can go out there on their raw land, there's no cell towers, they can be closer with their family and friends, they're impressing their banker with their net worth on their balance sheet having this asset and they go to sleep ever night knowing that God forbid they don't wake up the next day they have something of a legacy to pass on to their children. John Livesay, is that a good resolution?

John: That's a great resolution. What you're really selling there is peace of mind. Before you were anxious and worried and now after doing this process which we've walked you through you know it might seem overwhelming to try and figure this out by yourself what if I buy the wrong piece of land you know but you have all the step-by-step proven processes to buy the right piece and make sure that the solution is seamless without even impacting your credit and now you have peace of mind. That's really the resolution and something that yielding and leaving a legacy. You're tapping into all the mindset psychological reasons why people pull the trigger on something.

Mark: Yeah. You know what would be great, John, if there's like a book that gave you a roadmap on how to do this.

John: If only.

Mark: If only.

John: Yes. If that was the goal, yeah. We are on this journey, I'd be really curious to see what Scott Todd thinks of this, of going from invisible to irresistible and I talk about that a lot in *Better Selling Through Storytelling*. Each rung of a ladder - where do clients see you? Like, if I've never heard of you guys or The Land Geek then you're invisible to me. But I've heard of you, but I don't think I ever want to own land or couldn't then it's insignificant.

Then you say something to me like, oh maybe I don't need a gazillion dollars to buy some land then it's interesting. Still I'm not ready to do it. Then you really intrigued me with you start describing someone who's just like me age wise, income wise, frustration wise and I'm intrigued to learn more and then opt in for your free PDF or whatever it is your next part of the funnel is and then I actually buy land and give you a testimonial then you're irresistible to me. I become your brand ambassador. So that's really the road map to success is using those rungs of the ladder.

Mark: I love it and after the podcast John I do have 40 acres that we can discuss.

John: I'm hearing the theme song the *Gone With The Wind* in the back of my mind, I love it.

Mark: So I think your mentorship in this podcast has been really phenomenal and thank you for putting up with our shenanigans.

John: I love shenanigans. I love the word shenanigans let alone the actual shenanigans yes it makes it fun.

Mark: But I would like to ask you for one more piece of value: a website, a resource, a book something else actionable where the Art of Passive Income listeners can go improve their businesses, improve their lives. What have you got?

John: All right. Scott Todd, this is for you and all the other people listening take out your phone, text the word pitch spelled with a P keep it clean to this number 66866 and I'm going to send you a free sneak peek of *Better Selling Through Storytelling*. So text the word pitch to this number 66866

and boom, you'll get the sneak peak that gives you all the secrets of how to go from invisible to irresistible and become better storytellers instantly.

Mark: I just did and I'm giving my email right now.

John: Boom!

Mark: Boom. Yeah, and I think I beat Scott so that's good.

John: You've got faster thumbs.

Mark: Way faster. Yeah he's you know... He doesn't like when I talk about his slow thumbs but yeah.

Scott: It's okay Mark, it's okay. Don't worry about it.

Mark: I know you're sensitive about it.

John: None of us or anybody else, it's okay.

Scott: It's okay. I might not be able to share my tip of the week with you. I'll say it for John. Here we go.

Mark: Tip of the week for John.

Scott: Yeah, for John only and not you, Mark. So check out <u>Inyo.me</u>, I-N-Y-O.me and basically what this is basically is a way to help automate tasks that you just don't like and it's really geared towards like freelancers if you will. But essentially, to me I can see like getting my VAs to use this stuff to help them become automated better and working through.

For example you can teach them how to automate some reminders or how to get files that they might need and bring them all in together into a nice fancy platform. So essentially, it's got automation built into it, some pretty cool stuff that goes along with it. So upload and track documents and just everything that kind of a freelancer might need in order to kind of help automate some of their work without having to have me do it. So I'm sharing this stuff with my VAs so maybe you should too if it works for you.

Mark: Yeah, but why not use Zapier? How is this different?

Scott: This is like think of a platform that will help them kind of do your work better. Zapier will help automate other things but this is like another backend component. The thing is when you're automating through Zapier

that's really something that is really to help you automate more than just your VAs but this is stuff that they need to do and stay on top of. It's like basically helping, you helping them to automate their work with a pretty cool platform.

Mark: Huh, cool. I hate when Scott has a good tip of the week but that is a good one. Well my tip of the week is learn more about John Livesay and *Better Selling Through Storytelling*. If you go to JohnLivesay.com you can learn a ton more there and just if you break down John's website you'll see how he practices what he preaches and it's really interesting how he does that. So even if just as his own case study go to JohnLivesay.com and I know nobody can spell it so I'll have a link to it and do that. So John, are we good?

John: We're great. Thanks Mark and Scott, it was a lot of fun. Thank you.

Mark: Scott Todd, are we good?

Scott: We're good, Mark.

Mark: All right. Well, I want to thank the listeners and just remind you that the only way, the only way really we're going to get the quality of guests like John Livesay 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.

Also, this podcast is sponsored by Flight School. Have Scott Todd be your Sherpa, climb that mountain, start earning passive income in real time with somebody working the business with you that is what Flight School is all about. To learn more go to <u>TheLandGeek.com/Training</u>. Scott, are we ready to do this?

Scott: We are ready, Mark. Let...

Mark: ...freedom...

Scott: ...freedom ring.

Mark: Thanks everybody. Thanks John.

[End of Transcript]