



**SPI Podcast Session #005 -
Podcasting and Passive Income –
Interview with Cliff Ravenscraft of PodcastAnswerMan.com**

Pat Flynn: This is The Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn Session #5. DJ, where you at?

Intro: Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host, he loves California Golden Bears football, Pat Flynn!

Pat Flynn: Hey everybody, what's up? Go Bears and welcome to the fifth session of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. I got a quick announcement before I get into the featured content today, a featured interview actually with someone who is very inspirational. It's a very inspirational story. He makes a lot of money and reveals exactly how he does that, doing something he loves. So we'll get into that in a second.

But before that, I just have a quick announcement and that is, we're only four sessions in to the Smart Passive Income Podcast but we're already approaching 2,000 subscribers on iTunes. Thank you so much for your support. I can't believe we've already reached that point this early in the series of podcast that I'm doing. So, thank you so much for those of you who are long-time followers of the Smart Passive Income blog, to those of you who have just found me through iTunes, which I know a lot of you have. Some of you emailed me, which is really cool. Feel free to check up the blog and just email me and just say hi because I love to know if you just found me through the podcast. But to all of you, thank you so much. You're really keeping me motivated to keep doing this and I don't plan on stopping. So, thank you for that.

So today, I'm actually really, really excited to bring you a guest who I actually hold responsible for bringing you the audio that you're listening to at this very moment. Our guest is none other than Cliff Ravenscraft of PodcastAnswerMan.com and GSPN.TV. Cliff, thank you for coming on the show. Welcome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Hey, thank you very much, Pat for having me on. I love your new podcast.

Pat Flynn: I appreciate it. Well, for you listeners out there, Cliff and I first met a few months ago when I was actually getting interested in podcasting. And when I was asking people, "Well, who should I go to? Where should I get equipment?" Cliff's name



was being thrown around and I checked him out at PodcastAnswerMan.com and we ended up doing a really, really awesome consultation together and really opened my eyes to exactly what was possible with podcasting. And he hooked me up with exactly what I needed to get started.

And Cliff, just thank you so much for all you've done for me in the podcast so far. The quality is top notch. And that's not coming from me. That's coming from the mouths of some of my listeners and some emails that I've been getting. They just really love how good the podcast sounds, and I attribute that to you and your help. So thank you again for that.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Well, thank you. I'm glad to hear that it's going that well for you. And I mean I can't tell you how much of a blessing it is to wake up in the morning and absolutely get up and do what you love for a living. And I love it when a client comes along and says, "Hey, I want to do a podcast but I want it to sound great too." And when I hear that, I love working with those sorts of people. So, I'm very excited about the content that you're producing, it's something that I think is going to be very worthwhile to a lot of people.

Pat Flynn: Oh, thank you. The only thing I wish I did was start earlier. But I was lost in the beginning but you definitely got me on the right track so thank you for that.

As I got to know Cliff a little bit better and going around his website and seeing exactly what he did, I discovered a lot of really cool things about him and what he does. He – oh gosh, he is just a prime example of someone who makes money by doing something they are totally passionate about, something they really love to do. Taking a passion and just going all out with it. And he is making good money online from doing something he loves and his passion is of course podcasting.

Cliff, why are you into – why podcasting? Where did this all start and why do you love it so much?

Cliff Ravenscraft: All right. So here's the deal. I'm a technology geek. I took my first computer apart, a Commodore VIC-20 when I was eight years old and I have been into technology and computers and gadgets since then. And when I learned about podcasting in mid-2005 from [Leo Laporte](#), I fell in love with the idea that I could actually find content that was geared around things that I'm passionate about.



Being in Northern Kentucky, going to high school, everybody is into sports, I'm not into that. Everybody is talking about this, they're talking about that, I'm not into any of that. But nobody wanted to talk technology and geek stuff.

And so, I was one of those guys whenever you go to a little social gathering at a conference, I was an insurance agent and run into people. It's like nobody ever wanted to talk about anything that I was talking about and I didn't know anything about the things they were talking about it. So it was real frustrating. And when I was introduced to the world of podcasting, it's like there was a podcast about everything.

And so, I started to consume podcasts about topics that I was passionate about. And one of those things was the TV show *Lost*. The TV show *Lost* was something that I was already blogging about, about this – I had screen captures of things that I found that were hidden inside this show as Easter eggs. And I saw my blog just explode personally when I started blogging about that stuff. And I was already listening to a couple of other *Lost* podcasts out there and they said, "Hey, you probably should start your own *Lost* podcast." And I'm like, "Yeah, who is going to listen to me?" Although the idea and the thought intrigued me so I asked my wife if she would join me and we recorded our first show in December of 2005 and well, within a couple short weeks, we had tens of thousands of subscribers.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome! And I love *Lost*. I'm so sad that it's over. But you actually did have an awesome win during the finale. You had actually a *Lost* party. Is that correct? And that all came from your podcast.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely. During the years, we've always thrown a *Lost* premier and finale parties in our home and in local businesses that would sponsor locations. And we've had people travel from 7 countries and 32 different states just to come to Northern Kentucky and hang out with my wife and I to watch the TV show *Lost*.

Pat Flynn: That's so cool. And these people just found you through iTunes and through your blog and through podcasting, right?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely. A majority of those people were to looking to either buy the soundtrack in iTunes or they were looking to maybe download a single episode for a \$1.99 of the TV show on iTunes. And as soon as they did a search for those things in iTunes, right below the results for music soundtracks and TV episodes were these things called podcast. And they were free and yeah, thousands and thousands and



thousands of people. My daughter is ten years old, and when she was eight, she launched the Hannah Montana fan podcast, 32,000 subscribers for an 8-year-old.

Pat Flynn: That's amazing. That's so cool. Wow! So you're doing podcasting and all this full time. And this is exactly how you support your family and put food on the table, right?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely. For the first two and a half years, it was just a hobby. It started out as a hobby. I never dreamed in a million years that I could do this full time. I was working as an insurance agent in my family run insurance agency. It has been in the family since 1969. I was doing that for eleven years before I left. And I was making \$87,000 a year, 25% of my income going into a pension account. I mean I had the life. And in about five years before I left, my dad would have retired if I would have stayed around and it would have been a guaranteed \$250,000 a year minimum and nothing but upwards and onward from there. But I hated my job. I despised it. I didn't want to even wake up in the morning.

Pat Flynn: Well, that kind of sounds similar to my story except I loved my job but then I just got laid off. But you made the choice to switch over to podcasting because of your lifestyle that you're living that it just wasn't for you. So that's really, really awesome of you to make that leap and we'll get into that in a second.

But – so you make a living with podcasting. Now, what is it that you're involved in? Like what do you do when it comes to this world of podcasting? Like what do you have?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Well basically, we have a couple of different things. We have GSPN and then I have a couple of other brands that are under that umbrella. So I started a business called Ravenscraft Enterprises, LLC which basically has the GSPN, it's the Generally Speaking Production Network. It is a network of all of our shows.

Since 2005, I've personally launched 24 of my own podcasts. And out of those 24 different podcasts that we've launched, I have produced more than 2,200 individual episodes. Those are all shows that I'm in. And I've added it up once before. So just a little bit over 2,000 hours of content that's available online.

Pat Flynn: Wow! OK. So you're really going all out with this and you love to do this. So it doesn't even really feel like work to you, does it?



Cliff Ravenscraft: It doesn't feel like work at all. I'm not kidding when I say sometimes I wake up at 5:00 o'clock in the morning and just can't wait to get started on my day. And sometimes it's just not healthy and I had to launch a new brand called [Pursuing a Balanced Life](#), which is another podcast that I have. And it's basically – it was really difficult because I would get up at 5:00 o'clock in the morning and I would want to work until 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning. And it got crazy because I love what I do. I mean it's not work. It's play. I play all day long.

Well, that's not true. You're going to ask me some other things down the road that I know about so it wasn't all funny games but now, I'm at a place where it is so awesome.

Pat Flynn: So you're really like as Gary Vaynerchuk would say, you're really cashing in on your passion. And like you're a living proof that what he says in his book is it can be done because I would never have thought that anyone would be able to make a living off of podcasting just like how I never thought that I would be able to make a living selling a study guide for this little tiny exam in the architecture industry.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It is definitely possible. Guys, if you haven't done so, go get [Crush It!](#) from Gary Vaynerchuk. Read it and believe it. It is absolutely true. In fact, out of that entire book, I actually decided at the time I was wanting to do a companion thing. I wanted to call it Cliff's Note on *Crush It!*. And I was just going to go chapter by chapter and just give my thoughts on everything he said, why I believe, with the exception of one thing he said that I totally disagree with.

Pat Flynn: Which is?

Cliff Ravenscraft: There is one spot in his book where he talks about somebody says, "So Gary, I need to figure out what camera should I get?" And he goes, "Who cares about that crap? Your video quality doesn't matter." And I hate to argue with him. I believe quality does matter.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. We've had this conversation before when I was starting out.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Yeah. That one is a big one for me. I believe content is king. There is no question. You got to have good content. But man, I believe quality is the queen and we all know especially if you're married, sometimes the queen will trump the king.



Pat Flynn: I mean some people, they listen to podcast or they read blogs and if the content isn't presented in an easily digestible fashion, they just won't even read it at all or listen, right?

Cliff Ravenscraft: That is absolutely correct. In fact, if you have just a second and I know this will come through for you, what I'm going to do, I'm going to play just a little audio clip for you. Listen to this.

Pat Flynn: All right.

[Audio Clip]

Mignon Fogarty: I think I had listened to them early on when they didn't have their sound quality and I dismissed them because I'm really picky about my sound.

Male Speaker: Oh, I love to hear that. Did you hear that, folks?

Mignon Fogarty: I won't listen to a podcast that has bad audio even if it's very interesting.

[End of audio clip]

Cliff Ravenscraft: There you go. That's Mignon Fogarty, also known as [Grammar Girl](#), one of – arguably, one of the more popular podcasters in the world.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, quality matters. I mean like you say, content is important but the way it's presented is just as important. I feel the exact same way especially coming from a design background.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Very cool. I'm glad you agree. Your show's quality is amazing and I have no doubt, because of the content matched with your quality and the fact that you have this thing called passion for what you're talking about, I think you have a recipe that is literally impossible to fail with.

Pat Flynn: Oh, I guess only time will tell. But I'm going to keep going at it because I just enjoy doing it. And even it doesn't go to extreme heights, it doesn't matter because I'm really enjoying what I'm doing.



When you were talking about Gary Vaynerchuk, you were talking about belief in what you are doing and in your passion. And a lot of people don't have that belief. They don't really think they can do what they love for a living. They just don't think it's possible. And I remember listening to a recent episode of [Podcast Answer Man](#) where you talked about that leap of faith you took from working your 9 to 5 job, your \$87,000 a year job over to going to podcasting full-time. Like can you tell us that story and how you made that transition and how it all worked out for you?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely. Do you mind if I plug two personal podcasts real quick in this?

Pat Flynn: Of course not.

Cliff Ravenscraft: All right. The very first one because there's two hours' worth content that if you want to hear the full story, here's where you go. The first one, go to [GSPN.TV/passion](#), that will take you to episode 425 of Pursuing a Balanced Life, which is called Pursue Your Passion and the Money Will Follow. And then immediately after that, go to [GSPN.TV/passion2](#). And that's going to forward you to a link that is [Family From the Heart](#), and I don't remember what episode number. But anyway, it's called Difficult Decisions, and it's where my wife and I sit down and talk about what the first year was like.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, I would want to definitely listen to that.

Cliff Ravenscraft: So check those two podcasts episodes out. But let me just give you the very, very short Cliff's notes version of this one. The first year, very scary, lots of anxiety, leaving \$87,000 a year behind with no business model, which I don't recommend by the way, and no business experience. I've always worked for other people my entire life. So running a business, I had no clue what to do and really no idea of how I was going to earn any income. I just knew I was going to do it.

I had the passion. But it was very scary. There were nights literally, I didn't sleep because I was afraid that if I fell asleep, I might die. I mean that's how high the anxiety was the first year I decided to step out and do this on my own especially the first three or four months. It was really bad.

And by the way, I quit my job. I gave a 90-day notice. And from that point forward, I had nothing else other than the option to – it was kind of like they say, "Hey, did you hear about a commander who took his men to battle to this island and then he



demanded that they burn the ships because there's only two things, it's either you die or succeed?" I went in with that mentality.

And so, a lot of sleepless nights. It was very scary and very difficult. I will be – I will tell you, I was debt-free minus my mortgage, thanks to some insights from Dave Ramsey. We had completely paid on our debts. So we were debt-free minus my mortgage. I told you, I had very successful financial career in insurance which had a pretty sizable pension. I don't believe in debts so I didn't want to borrow any money. I did borrow \$14,000 out of my pension account that first year just to make ends meet. It was tough.

Pat Flynn: Wow!

Cliff Ravenscraft: However, the second year wasn't as scary. The first half of it, it was a little scary. It was moderate. But the second half of the second year, and I'll tell you, I'm in the third year now, and – well, let's just put it this way. This year, I'm making more money than I've ever made in my life. And it is out of this world. I work less than what I – the thing is though is I put countless hours into those first two years, countless hours. I'm talking six days a week, 12 to 14-hour days kind of countless hours.

Pat Flynn: That's exactly what it takes to get to this point. I mean the same thing for me. And that's why the tagline of the show is putting in the hard work in now so you can reap the benefits later. That's what it's all about. And it's hard because during those first years or those first few months when you're on your own and you don't have income coming in, you're putting work in but nothing is coming to you, no money is coming your way for those first few moments. And it could be really scary. I know exactly how you felt.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Especially when you get into that mindset of scarcity and you start – I mean people can smell that and they don't want anything to do with it. And I'll tell you, it's a scary place but oh man ...

Pat Flynn: Do you think that it was because of that scarcity, because your back was up against the wall that you eventually broke through and became successful?

Cliff Ravenscraft: I think so. I know what your next question is if you want to ask it because it leads right into that.



Pat Flynn: Sure. And that question is, Cliff, knowing what you know now, if you could go back into time and do it all over again, would you take the same route?

Cliff Ravenscraft: I get this question asked of me a lot. And I'll be honest with you, I really have to say I don't want anything – I would not want to change anything. Now, would I change things? Absolutely. Absolutely because man, I'd be rich today. Oh my gosh! If I knew today what I knew then. But the thing is, I wouldn't know what I know today if I didn't go through all that crud in the beginning.

I made so many mistakes. I had so many different mindsets that were completely wrong that needed – I needed a major transformation. I needed – what do you call that? I need major paradigm shifts in the way that I thought about so many aspects of life and business and happiness and what success is. And I failed in so many different ways. But I needed all of that to make me who I am today.

And so, I would never want to rob myself of those experiences, as painful as many of them were, even – gosh, I gained so much weight. I've lost in the last – since I started PursuingaBalancedLife.com, I've lost 60 pounds and that's in the last year and a half.

Pat Flynn: Wow! Congratulations. That's awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Thank you. But I tell you what, even what I did to my – I learned so much about who I am. And to answer your original question, yes, it was all of that stuff that really forced me to succeed. I remember it was like three weeks before I was ready to leave the family agency, which by the way is run by my dad. My dad owns the agency.

And so, I went to my dad and said, "Dad, I'm looking at this. I'm getting a little nervous here. What do you think about me sticking this out? I'd like to work here for you for the next six months and I'll work here Monday, Wednesday and Friday and I'll build my business on Tuesday and Thursday and on the weekend and during the evenings?" And he says to me, "No." He says, "Listen, you either got to quit that podcasting stuff or you need to go for it because you can't serve two masters."

Pat Flynn: Wow!

Cliff Ravenscraft: And I'll tell you what, I literally thought, that was the most evil, mean thing I'd ever heard in my life but I'm so glad he told me that. I am so glad. And I will tell you, it was tough but he was so right. I think if I would have had – if for me



personally, if I wouldn't have had to make it or break it, I wouldn't – I don't think it would have driven me to the success that I'm at today.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. I feel the exact same way about my layoff. Like when it first happened, I was devastated. I didn't know where my life is going. I didn't know what to do. But looking back, it was probably the best thing to ever happen to me because it put me in that kind of mindset that I had to succeed, that I had to actually build the business online and make it work for my family and for my – just for my life.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It's like young married couples who say, "We can't have kids because we can't afford it. We can't do it." And when you get pregnant, all of a sudden guess what? It works.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. And often times, they can afford having kids and they love it and they wouldn't have taken it back.

It's true. The mistakes are important. And a lot of people are afraid to fail. They are afraid to make those mistakes. They want to be perfect. But you can't think like that because it's those mistakes that kind of educate you to perform better next time.

It's like – I like to use this analogy. It's like in the dating world. You date around and you explore the different characteristics of different people that you've been dating and you find out exactly what you like and what you don't like and what mistakes you made so that when you eventually find that right person, you can treat them like you should and life is beautiful.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely. The education from all of that stuff is invaluable.

Pat Flynn: Yeah. So lesson: Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Just go out and do something. And if it doesn't work, at least learn from those mistakes because if you don't learn from your mistakes then you're really, really making a mistake.

Awesome. That's really great stuff. Now, let's switch gears a bit and get into more about how you're actually generating an income from podcasting. Can you share with us the different methods that you earn an income from podcasting?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Sure. Well, I remember starting out with donations. It would actually happen within the first like four or five episodes. Our audio quality was so crappy that one lady says, "I really love your content but man, it's hard to listen to you."



Can I send you a couple of hundred dollars and you go out and get some nice mixer and a couple of things?"

Pat Flynn: Oh, that's awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: So I'm like, "Yeah, you could do that. That would be great." So we started out with some donations and we had some good success with some donations. But I certainly don't recommend that route at all to anybody for any reason whatsoever unless you're seriously just doing this as a hobby. And if you're doing it as a hobby, that's really – I don't think that's your target audience, Pat. So we're not going to concern ourselves with that. But I really suggest that you not go to donation route.

The next one that I did is I tried out some CPM advertising. This is cost per thousand so you get let's say, somewhere between \$20, \$40 for every thousand downloads that you get of your podcast. This is a total rip-off and it's so old media and it is I think – I mean I won't withhold my opinion here, it stinks. And I just think you're really getting the role end of the deal when you go to that thing. Unless you're like Leo Laporte who got 750,000 people downloading your show and you're charging \$80 per thousand then I think you're good. I think Leo Laporte by the way, podcasting full-time that of course, he still does the radio show but this weekend, he's had \$3 million in revenue. I mean come on, seriously? So ...

Pat Flynn: Yeah, I love Leo Laporte. My dad listens to him all the time. That's how I was introduced to him. That guy just knows his stuff. That's for sure.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Yeah, I love [Leo Laporte](#) myself. All right. So here's – I don't suggest CPM advertising or donations but this is where I found some really good success. One is sponsorships. So every now and then like if I go to – if you go to [VirtualAssistantPodcast.com](#), I felt – by the way, I always podcast about things that I'm totally seriously passionate about. And I became extremely passionate about having a virtual assistant and how it can help your business.

So after I heard virtual assistant, I was talking about it in [Pursuing a Balanced Life](#) and I'm like, "You know what? I could do a podcast just about this topic." And I got enough material and I'm going to be using my experience, I have access to people I could interview. So I went to the firm that I used to hire my virtual assistant and said – by the way, I'm only paying – I was paying \$380 a month for my virtual assistant. And I will just say that it's more than double that what they pay me for the sponsorship of my podcast to talk about virtual assistants for 30 minutes a week. So it's a good deal.



And by the way, I was able to work out that sponsorship with zero subscribers and I was able to do it in such a way that they signed up for a minimum of three-month commitment right up front, and they have renewed.

Pat Flynn: How did you end up – how did you manage getting that done?

Cliff Ravenscraft: I basically – what I did is I went to PodcastAnswerMan.com which is my primary podcast for my business and I told them, I say, “Hey, you guys like Podcast Answer Man where I answer all your questions about podcasting? If so, if you have any interest in what this thing is about having a virtual assistant, I’m going to do the same exact format, only, it’s going to be virtual assistant answer man. But it’s just going to be called a [Virtual Assistant Podcast](#). If you’re interested, do me a favor and call on the voicemail feedback hotline as if you’re leaving a question for that show.”

I had, I don’t know, 20, 30 different voicemails that came in. I got on the phone with the CEO of Contemporary VA and I played her the questions. I said, “These are the things people want to know and they are desperately waiting for me to answer them. And I have two options. One, I can make this premium content where people have to pay me to get it or you can be the responsible it for giving for free to everybody in the world.”

Pat Flynn: That’s awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: So she signed up. It only took me about 20 minutes to lock – to seal and deal that one.

Pat Flynn: So that would have never happened unless you had asked. Just ask.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Just ask. The other thing is I have a sponsorship with Mardel.com. Anyway, if anybody goes to [M-A-R-D-E-L.com/GSPN](#), it’s totally awesome. Check it out. It’s my branding on their corporate website. I’m not kidding you, so M-A-R-D-E-L.com/GSPN. They have been a sponsor of FamilyFromtheHeart.com for two and a half years and there is no doubt in my mind that this is an on-going sponsorship.

Also, I got that sponsorship with zero subscribers at the time. I launched the show for them. And not only that, but they actually sought me out. The person who approached me is one of my community members who listens to my podcasts. And they wanted to



sponsor [the Lost podcast](#) and I said, "It is just not the right fit but I have an idea for a new podcast if you want to talk about it." And that's where we worked it out.

So sponsorships, either one of those on their own would pay my mortgage every month and my mortgage is the only debt that I have. So my mortgage is covered twice just by doing two podcasts a week.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome. That's amazing.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Now, I have premium membership for the other podcasts. I produced about 7 to 10 episodes a week, sometimes as many as 15 episodes in a single week. We do this on a weekly basis. Most – all of our shows are weekly. And what we do is we give at least a minimum of one episode per month for free on the free feed and if you want every episode of every podcast on a weekly basis, it's only \$10 a month and that's a plus membership. And \$10 a month gets you access to all of our shows every week.

And several of our shows, every episode is available for free like PodcastAnswerMan.com, that's my business marketing about what I have to offer and me answering people's questions for free. So there are some shows I give away for free but premium membership by the way, I'm just two people away from 400,000 people who pay me \$10 a month.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome!

Cliff Ravenscraft: All right. So I do equipment sales. I have PodcastAnswerMan.com and I do equipment sales. Now, this is not affiliate. It is not affiliate at all. I'm an official reseller for a wholesale provider of professional audio equipment, all the radio stations and TV stations in the US.

Pat Flynn: OK. So you buy equipment kind of maybe like at discount price because it's wholesale and then you sell it for more.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It's even better than that. I talk with my clients. Get a list of all the things they want to buy.

Pat Flynn: OK.



Cliff Ravenscraft: I then charge them my rate for all of that equipment. I then call – put the order in to my supplier who then ships it out blind which means basically, they ship it directly from their warehouse to my client without any of their advertisements or shipping and anything on it. It's all as if it's coming from me.

Pat Flynn: So kind of like drop shipping.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It's drop – they drop ship it. And so, they drop ship it and basically, they charge me – you're right, the wholesale cost on it because I order so much. In the last two and a half years, I don't have it – well, you know what? It will only take me one second to load it. I will tell you how much I've sold in equipment which is out of this world. Equipment orders, one tab, \$131,000 in equipment.

Pat Flynn: Geez. That's awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: So that's how much in equipment sales that I've done. Again, not affiliate marketing. Now, I do also do some affiliate marketing. One day, I was watching GeekBrief.TV. Cali Lewis talked about the Kodak Zi8 camera, which by the way, you could find at PodcastAnswerMan.com/KodakZi8. Anyway ...

Pat Flynn: That's a small camera that has little USB port built into it, right?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Yeah. And it's an HD handy cam that actually has built audio input. So you can actually bring audio from your mixer and put it straight into the video instead of having that across the room sound. Totally awesome.

So I saw this on GeekBrief.TV. I went to BestBuy, immediately bought it. Within 30 minutes of actually seeing it on GeekBrief.TV, I went and bought it, came home. Within an hour of seeing it on GeekBrief.TV, I had recorded my own video review of it. Put it on YouTube. Created a blog post at PodcastAnswerMan.com/Zi8 and put a link to my affiliate with Amazon and I made like \$300 that first day that I put that blog post online.

Pat Flynn: That's really good because I know I do some affiliate stuff with Amazon too and they don't pay very much, maybe like 6-8%, if that. So getting \$300 from doing something like that within an hour is just freaking amazing.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It was within a couple of hours. But it only took me about an hour of my time to accomplish it all. But within the first couple of days, I made a couple of



\$100. Of course, sizable audience, and people were retweeting this thing like crazy on Twitter and Facebook and it was just – I mean it got pretty good. Now, if you do – I think if you do a search on Google for Kodak Zi8 review, I might even pull up pretty high up in the results. And people are still buying it today as a result of that. It's amazing. And that was months ago.

So, also I do one-on-one consulting and I get paid lots of money to do a consulting. I think you've hired me so you know. And I won't go into what my hourly rate is but if anybody wants to know, they can contact me and I'll tell them.

Pat Flynn: It's worth it.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Thank you. And then of course, I also do webinars, teleseminars and various digital products. And by the way, I had just become convinced of mailing lists back in October of this past year. I'm not kidding. I told you I made a lot of mistakes. I didn't know about the power of email marketing. And I still do it all wrong compared to what everybody says I should do. But I don't send out like newsletters. I just say, "Hey, if you want to sign up for my mailing list, please understand, the purpose of my mailing list is to tell you when I have something to sell you." And so basically, I only get people signed up for that list who are interested in finding out what I have to sell them.

Pat Flynn: Well, there's you highly targeted audience right there for sure.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Exactly. So from October through January of this year, 2010, I had only had just over a 100 people on my mailing list and I announced the 7-week Podcast Answer Man Bootcamp Webinar where I would do seven different two-hour sessions, training people how to do the things that people hire me the most to teach them how to do, Adobe Audition for podcasters, WordPress for podcasters, all of this different stuff. And 100 bucks a person for two hours and I limited the class size. I made \$10,000 in one week this month – in January of this year. \$10,000 with one email sent to that group of just over 100 people on my mailing list.

Pat Flynn: Wow!

Cliff Ravenscraft: And then of course, I do digital video training products. So I took that two-hour video webinar where people were on the telephone. I recorded everything in studio, high quality audio on my end. I used ScreenFlow to capture the video, the full screen video. But then I spent eight hours using ScreenFlow doing post



production, eight hours of zooming in and panning and putting text overlays and explaining things, eight hours into building this into digital audio products, which if you go to PodcastAnswerMan.com/products, you see – you can now purchase all of those for a 100 bucks apiece.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome. And that's kind of what I'm interested in. I've written a blog post about that kind of method before where you kind of teach a class or webinar or teleseminar or something and then you can package it into something digital that you can sell for a very long time after the fact. And ...

Cliff Ravenscraft: I have a virtual assistant who is transcribing word for word everything that was spoken in that digital training product and she is creating an e-book for me.

Pat Flynn: There you go. That's even more passive income right there. Now, a lot of the methods you mentioned, maybe not the sponsorships but equipment sales and some of the affiliate stuff you do and obviously the consulting, that takes up a lot of time. So what I want to know is what would you say from what you earn, the methods that you earn income, what would you say takes up the least amount of your time?

Cliff Ravenscraft: The least amount of my time overall but the most about of my time actually creating them is digital training products because it takes – I spend a lot of time creating them, thinking them out in advanced, marketing them for the live show and getting people to come and participate and then recording them and teaching them. And then post-production, I spend no less than eight hours of post-production on those things. But by golly, I would tell you this, I think I have eight digital training products on my site. I will say that anybody who has purchased one of them, eight out of ten of them have purchased three or more.

Pat Flynn: That's awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: So you buy one, people come back for more and it's because again, it's not just the content but by golly, I go way overboard on quality.

Pat Flynn: And that's what you have to do. I mean if you want to become successful and build a brand for yourself and have products that sell other products for you, you have to go overboard and that's something I really believe in. Just giving away content whether it's free, whether it's paid, just over delivering and leaving an impression on people, on your customers who then tell their friends or who are happy to pull out their



wallets and pay for something again because they know it's going to be top notch quality.

Now, OK, that's good. I'm glad we talked about those digital training products because I think that is probably the most passive form of income that you have even though you put in all those time and effort to put those things together, like I said, it's putting the work in now so you could reap the benefits later.

So we kind of had this conversation, I think it was like a week ago where you talked about how you set up your iPhone and using Boxcar to do something cool and your kids really enjoyed that. Can you walk us through really quick how that works because that's kind of cool?

Cliff Ravenscraft: It's great. I'm using [E-junkie](#) for my e-commerce. And so, somebody buys a digital product. It's all completely automated. I don't have to do a single thing. If you go to my site, you click and you add it to the cart. You process your payment through PayPal and you get immediate delivery. Then an email is sent to me saying, "Hey, you've just made a sale." Well, I have this iPhone application called Boxcar and it has the ability where you can send emails to a specific email address and it will send a push notification to your phone.

So, I went into Google and I said, "Hey, any time an email with this subject line from E-junkie comes in, I want you to immediately forward it to this Boxcar address." And then Boxcar gets that email and you can actually – it has various different ring sounds that it will alert you with and one of them is a cash register going, "Chi-chi-ching".

And so, every single time my site sells a new product without me doing anything, I love it. We were on vacation. We went on vacation. We went on a 4-day vacation and we were driving on our way to vacation, just having a great time as a family and we were listening to some music off the iPhone and all of a sudden, the music went dim for a second and we would hear, "chi-ching".

Pat Flynn: Nice. While on vacation, you're earning an income. That's awesome.

Cliff Ravenscraft: It is the coolest thing in the world. And the kids were like, "Hey dad, can we go see this movie?" I said, "I tell you what kids, if we make three product sales before tomorrow night, we will go – we'll just go out and we'll see a movie. We'll go see this movie." And it was a movie they wanted to see again. And so, they were



just waiting for the phone and every time the phone would go “chi-ching” they are like, “Yay!” It was totally awesome.

Pat Flynn: That’s so cool. Oh God, that’s – it’s literally one of the best feelings in the world. I mean to earn an income without having to put real time work into it because you’ve already done the work. And that happens to me when I was on my honeymoon actually in February of 2009 or actually, March of 2009. I was married on February 21st of 2009. We went on a honeymoon to Hawaii and that was my most profitable month ever. And I had made more in that one week than I had made in previous months of doing business online and I was on vacation too.

So if you set things up correctly and you understand how to implement modes of automation and whether it’s through software or even using real people like VAs, you can build a business for yourself that works on autopilot and it’s a wonderful, wonderful thing. So, thank you for sharing all of those techniques that you used to make money and your stories and stuff. I am sure the listeners just love hearing about that. It’s really inspiring and hopefully that will get people off their butts to actually put some hard work in now even though they might not see money from it right away but to just believe in their selves and crush it with their passion and eventually get to that point where they can be driving and hear their iPhone music dim and hear that “chi-ching”.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Absolutely, man.

Pat Flynn: So we’re coming up to the end here. Just one more thing I want to ask you or a couple of things. First, knowing what you know about internet business and how cash flows online now, I mean you’re obviously really successful, what are three tips that you’d like to share with anyone starting out with trying to make money doing what they love?

Cliff Ravenscraft: All right. Here’s – number one, give up on the myth of overnight success. It isn’t going to happen. People aren’t going to recognize you right away as a thought leader. You’re not going to immediately see sales. Honestly, be prepared to put a minimum of six to eight, even ten months of hard, hard work building yourself a brand and all of this other stuff before you really start to see any sort of significant return at all.

And I will be honest with you, I just share with people, listen, you think Cliff is successful. I would agree. I feel like I’m successful as well. But it really wasn’t until the second part of the second year of me doing this full time that I really started to see that



amount of success. And by the way, I did it for two and a half years as a hobby before I went and did this full time.

So certainly, I am not an overnight success. But today, I love getting up at 5:00, 4:00 in the morning and I can't wait to start my day. And I think creatively all day long about all the different things I can do for people and help them that make me money. And I now am able to spend a lot of time with my wife and with my kids. And I have more fun than I've ever had. I'm happier than I've ever been. But don't think it's going to happen overnight.

And seriously, I think you should read [Crush It!](#) because Gary Vaynerchuk was the first person I know that really said, "Listen, you're going to be bleeding out your eyeballs. If you want to be successful the way that we build it, you'll be bleeding out your eyeballs." And I was willing to do that.

The second one is only do things that you're seriously passionate about. Seriously, you hear it's like, "Oh my gosh! His 10-year-old daughter, when she was 8, started the Hannah Montana fan podcast. And because people were searching for Hannah Montana that was huge." But let me tell you something, my daughter was passionate about Hannah Montana. That's what kept an audience of 32,000 subscribers to her podcast. All right?

And in fact, when she actually kind of – she kind of got over Hannah Montana and Miley Cyrus, she completely hates her now, she actually – she didn't change the feed at all but she just rebranded the podcast, and that's The World According to Megan. And she still has about 20,000 to 30,000 subscribers that still listen to it. But now, she only talks about things she's passionate about. So again, only do things that you're really passionate about. Don't do things just to earn money.

And then the third thing that I will tell you is never accept – don't ever attempt to do anything unless there is always a win-win for everyone. So things – you're going to be able to do a lot of things that will make you money online. But the question is, will what is making you money, that person that's paying you that money, is it a guaranteed win at least if they were to take the initiative to do whatever they want to do with it? Is it a likelihood that they could experience a complete win that has value far beyond what they actually paid you for it? And if the answer to that question is no, don't get involved in it.



Pat Flynn: Yeah, I wholeheartedly agree with you on all three of those things. It's just making the internet a better place and everyone is a winner.

And lastly, the last question I'd like to ask you and I ask this to every guest here on the show, what's working for you? What's working for you right now? What's one thing that our listeners can take away from you and your advice and your knowledge that you're doing right now that they can apply to their online business, blog, podcast, or just life in general? What's one thing that's working for right now?

Cliff Ravenscraft: One thing that has worked for me from day one is giving away lots of free stuff all the time with zero strings attached. Give it all – I mean it sounds crazy but give it all away. I encourage anybody, go to PodcastAnswerMan.com. What is there? I think 169 hours of episodes where every week, I answer people's questions for free.

I understand a lot of people can't hire me one-on-one. So what do I do when they send me questions via email, which I get 40 to 100 plus a day, I send them an email back saying, "Thank you so much. Unfortunately, I can't do consulting via email. I'm available for one-on-one consulting. But if you can't – if that's not in your budget right now, here's the mechanism I used to answer people's questions for free. Please give me a call on my voicemail feedback hotline. I would love to answer that question for you as long as I can not only give that answer to you but I can give it to a couple; hundred other people or a couple of thousand other people as well."

Pat Flynn: Right, or who might be thinking the exact same thing.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Exactly. And so, I have made lots of valuable friendships and relationships with people who say, "Wow! This guy knows what he's doing." And in fact, I will tell you, in all the time – in the last two years that I've been doing this full time, not necessarily – the first six months, I spent a lot of time in that mindset of scarcity. So it was a hard time. I spent way too much time trying to convince people that I was worth my hourly rate. Not anymore.

But in the last two years, I've never had to actually even have the conversation. In fact, sometimes people email me and say, "Hey, I've heard that you're the person to talk to. Can you send me – can you convince me why I should hire you?" And I wrote him back and said, "Listen to Podcast Answer Man. And if you're not convinced after two or three episodes, then there's nothing I can say to convince you."



Pat Flynn: Right.

Cliff Ravenscraft: But I've had people who say, 'I found you on a Google result looking for a mixer mix-minus information. And you know what? I've listened to about 30 hours of your content and now, I'm now ready to hire you.'

Pat Flynn: Yeah, it takes some people a little bit more to convince them but because you're out there and you put all this free information out there, you can hit people who are – who need 30 hours to listen to you.

Cliff Ravenscraft: Yup, absolutely.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thank you so much, Cliff. I mean you are truly a genuine person. You know a lot about podcasting and online business and you're just again, the prime example of someone who is just cashing in on their passion.

If people want to know more about you, where can they find you? Where would you tell them to go?

Cliff Ravenscraft: I'd say based upon this interview and the content we've been discussing, I think the best place to start out is just to go to PodcastAnswerMan.com.

Pat Flynn: Very well. That's awesome. And do you have like a Twitter if people want to just say hi?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Sure. I would love to have folks follow me on Twitter. It's [Twitter.com/GSPN](https://twitter.com/GSPN). I couldn't get Podcast Answer Man because it was Podcast Answer Ma. They wouldn't let the N. And I couldn't get [Twitter.com/CliffRavenscraft](https://twitter.com/CliffRavenscraft) because it had to be Cliff Ravenscraf, no T. So Generally Speaking Production Network, GSPN, so [Twitter.com/GSPN](https://twitter.com/GSPN).

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thank you so much, Cliff. This is some valuable information that I know my listeners will just really, really take in and really feel inspired to do some awesome stuff. Cliff, thank you again so much and we'll talk soon, all right?

Cliff Ravenscraft: Thank you, man. This has been so much fun. We'll talk soon.

Pat Flynn: All right. Thanks, Cliff.



Everybody, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Cliff Ravenscraft from PodcastAnswerMan.com. As a reminder, you can always visit the blog at SmartPassiveIncome.com and check out the show notes for each episode that we have, that includes all the links that we talked about in every single episode. I know Cliff went over a lot of stuff today, and all those links are available on the blog.

And lastly before I let you go, please visit EBookstheSmartWay.com to get your free e-book, an e-book that I created. I spent over two months creating it to help you create your own e-book and how to crush it and make it automated and market it and everything about creating an e-book, which is exactly how I got started online and built my business and my brand. So check that out. Again, EbookstheSmartWay.com. And yeah, that's it. Thank you so much for listening in and I'll see you in the next session. Cheers!

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