



## Coastal World: The 3D Experience That's Changing Digital Banking

technology industry update fintechs digital banking neobanks

**Summary:** Coastal Community Bank, a leading BaaS provider that works with Greenwood, Bluevine and Walmart's ONE, has introduced its own take on an interactive 3D financial world where consumers can play and sample fintech and neobank offerings.

When “Schoolhouse Rock!” debuted in the 1970s, the goal was to take subjects that kids had little enthusiasm for and inject some excitement into them through songs. Subjects ranged from grammar to history to science, and everything in between. The catchy tunes were used for decades in classrooms to help kids enjoy learning.

In the same spirit, one Washington-based community financial institution (CFI) has made searching for the right fintech or neobank partner into an interactive, metaverse-based experience. They’ve built an entire interactive financial world where customers can meet helpful in-world characters, play games, earn points, and sample fintech and neobank products. The site, called [Coastal World](#), is the brainchild of Coastal Community Bank, a \$3.45B-asset CFI with deep roots in banking-as-a-service (BaaS).

The immersive game environment, Coastal World, had a soft launch in October 2022 and an official launch in June 2023. It promotes Coastal Community Bank’s staggering 15 fintech and neobank partners. At the beginning of its Q4 2022 soft launch, Coastal World attracted about 600-800 daily visits, lasting an average of 7 minutes. Now that Coastal Community Bank has begun promoting the platform, those numbers will likely increase as word spreads. There’s a chance for a new trend to emerge, with CFIs turning toward gamification to help promote their digital banking offerings. Here’s how the concept of Coast World works.

### The Coastal World Experience

Visitors to the digital world are welcomed aboard a boat by a skipper who asks them about their financial needs, then drops them on one of Coastal World’s four islands. There, the visitor’s avatar explores the landscape and interacts with the island’s inhabitants. Some of the residents help the visitors play games within Coastal World, pointing out chests that contain gold coins that players can trade toward equipment or special clothing. They might invite a player to compete against the clock in a bicycle, car, or boat race, or offer special tools that help visitors complete missions. These might be a watering can that helps saplings turn into trees, a stethoscope that heals sick game characters, or a hammer that lets the visitor fix island houses that need repairs. But Coastal World doesn’t miss out on the opportunity to use these activities to promote their partners — the games in Coastal World are presented by fintechs.

Other characters in Coastal World are there to tell visitors about what Coastal Community Bank’s fintech partners offer. These figures ask the player if they would like to hear more about a particular fintech; a “yes” response brings forth a popup with information about the fintech, sometimes including a short video that explains the company’s mission and offerings. Visitors can navigate a virtual map of Coastal World, summoning a boat or taxi to transport them to the locations they choose. The game keeps track of gold coins earned and missions completed, as well as showing a list of all the participating fintechs, their links, and a short description of each one.

Customer Response to Coastal World

Coastal World offers those who are new to digital banking a fun, interactive platform that lets their customers educate themselves about fintech and neobank companies while also promoting their partnerships with those companies. Laura Byers, Coast Community Bank’s EVP, Chief Digital Banking Officer provided some insight into the CFI’s journey with Coastal World and what spurred them to develop the 3D banking experience. “Marketers, specifically financial service marketers, must compete with unprecedented amounts of noise and distractions when trying to capture the attention of a new customer. We knew we had to try something novel to entice consumers and drive engagement in a traditionally “boring” sector.” This is what led the Coastal Community Bank team to explore an option that incorporated entertainment.

Although Coastal World is just beginning, Coastal Community Bank has its sights set on even more innovation in gamification. “Showcasing our BaaS fintech partners in an immersive, 3D online environment through fun games and quests is just the beginning to help consumers learn and become comfortable with digital banking products and services,” Byers said. “We see opportunities to attract an established audience, already comfortable with digital offerings (we call them the “digital evolver”) to fintech banking.”

Benefits of Gamifying Your Digital Banking

Having an interactive, virtual layout for customers to explore all of your partnerships at once is a unique way to increase engagement with your customer base. It’s also a very effective method of gaining brand recognition outside of your current market. The virtual world can be used as an alternative to a landing page or gated content that prompts users to enter contact info to access webinars, videos, and articles. If users are required to create an account to save their progress and in-game rewards, like they are in Coastal World, the decision might be easier to make if they’re enjoying the content they’re trading their contact info for. This process can help you and your partners collect leads for new customers.

Online games and 3D worlds are nascent concepts in the financial sector, but they may represent a significant opportunity for CFIs and their fintech partners to broaden their reach and serve many more customers.

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ECONOMY & RATES

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Treasury	Yields	MTD Chg	YTD Chg
3M	5.49	0.06	1.07
6M	5.51	0.04	0.75
1Y	5.29	-0.10	0.59
2Y	4.72	-0.17	0.29
5Y	3.98	-0.18	-0.02
10Y	3.78	-0.06	-0.10
30Y	3.89	0.03	-0.08
FF Market	FF Disc	IORR	

5.08	5.25	5.15
<b>SOFR</b>	<b>Prime</b>	<b>QBER</b>
5.06	8.25	5.07

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