



## Taking Financial Literacy To The Next Level

by [Steve Brown](#) Topics: [business customers](#), [performance](#)

**Summary:** Banks are starting to take financial literacy efforts to the next level. Is this something your bank should do?

A survey by comScore found the apps smartphone users aged 18 to 34Ys old say they cannot go without in order are: Amazon (35%), Gmail (30%), Facebook (29%), Messenger (18%), YouTube (16%), Google Maps (14%), Google Search (11%), Apple App Store (11%), WhatsApp (11%) and Instagram (11%).

Bankers would love to have those percentages for their own apps, but alas it does not appear to be so. Perhaps energies instead could be spent in the area of boosting financial literacy efforts to the next level.

To do so, consider perhaps making your offerings part of the bank's "university". You could offer a full gamut of financial literacy classes both in your branches and online, as well as in other community meeting places. Simply increasing your public exposure is almost always good and giving back is even better.

You may want to go even further and offer "lifestyle" classes to help both individuals and business owners in other parts of their lives as you expand your influence and become their "go-to" bank.

One CT community bank is doing just that with its own "university" of financial literacy and lifestyle classes. The bank's financial education classes include "Banking Basics," such as how to open a checking account and how the bank's FDIC insurance protects people from losing their money.

The bank also shows people how they can protect themselves from identity theft, how to budget and save, how to prevent elder financial abuse, and it also educates on reverse mortgages, among others.

Moreover, there's a host of classes for entrepreneurs contemplating hanging out their shingle and seminars for small businesses. Topics include: "Protecting Your Business in a Digital Age: Leveraging Online Banking Entitlement" and "Accelerate Funding and Improve Cash Flow with Remote Deposit Capture" as well as developing a business plan and office budget.

Then there are the "lifestyle" classes, including public speaking and learning how to avoid credit scams and other potential financial mishaps. For December, the bank features classes centered around the busy, often hectic holiday season, including topics such as "Budgeting for the Holidays" and "How to Avoid Holiday Financial Stress."

The bank even offers crafts for kids, and held several classes in making ornaments, decorating trees and how to make a snowman that really stands out.

Some of the benefits of this extra effort for community banks include such things as: 1) Keeping customers constantly engaged allows you to know their needs at any point in time, making it easier to fulfill them. 2) Connecting more deeply with the community expands your area of influence and could bring in customers that would not have necessarily come to you. 3) Connecting employees more to your customers so they can more easily develop a solid relationship given these increased interactions.

There are a bunch of things you and your team can do to expand customer relationships this year but we hope some of these might be worth trying perhaps. Enjoy it and good luck along the way with both employees and customers.

# ECONOMY & RATES

Rates As Of: 01/29/2019 12:05PM (PST)

Treasury	Yields	MTD Chg	YTD Chg
3M	2.41	0.06	0.06
6M	2.51	0.03	0.03
1Y	2.58	-0.01	-0.01
2Y	2.57	0.08	0.08
5Y	2.55	0.03	0.03
10Y	2.71	0.03	0.03
30Y	3.04	0.03	0.03
FF Market	FF Target	Fed Disc	
2.40	2.50	3.00	
SOFR	Prime	Unemp	
2.39	5.50	3.90	

[More Market Rates](#)

## BANK NEWS

### M&A Activity

1) In a merger of equals Chemical Bank (\$21.5B, MI) will combine with TCF Bank (\$23.7B, SD) to create a much larger bank of \$45B in assets. 2) Central Florida Educators FCU (\$1.9B, FL) will acquire Fidelity Bank of Florida (\$175mm, FL) for an undisclosed sum. 3) Citizens Community Federal (\$975mm, WI) will acquire Farmers & Merchants Bank (\$195mm, WI) for about \$21.6mm in cash (85%) and stock (15%) or about 1.02x tangible book. 4) Greenwood's State Bank (\$178mm, WI) will acquire Fox River State Bank (\$95mm, WI) for an undisclosed sum. 5) SchoolsFirst FCU (\$14.9B, CA) will acquire Schools Financial (\$2.0B, CA) for an undisclosed sum. This is one of the largest credit union mergers in history. 6) SJN Bank of Kansas (\$147mm, KS) will acquire Nekoma State Bank (\$44mm, KS) for an undisclosed sum. 7) Community Bank (\$10.5B, NY) will acquire The National Union Bank of Kinderhook (\$637mm, NY) for \$93.4mm in cash (100%) or 1.93x tangible book. 8) Bank First National (\$1.8B, WI) will acquire Partnership Bank (\$307mm, WI) for \$41mm in cash (35%) and stock (65%).

### Global Predictions

The OECD expects the global economy will cool down this year, as the US and Germany show "tentative signs of easing growth momentum."

### Satisfied Customers

90% of Americans are very satisfied or satisfied with their bank and 94% rate the customer service of their bank as excellent, very good or good.

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