

Institutional Investor

FinTech Finance 35

“Steve personifies the combination of talent, vision, energy and experience that add up to an unprecedented level of leadership and influence in FinTech.”

-Feature Editor, Jeff Kutler

#4 Steve McLaughlin, Founder and CEO, FT Partners

Some 200 companies signed on as sponsors of the fourth annual Money20/20 convention, which lured thousands of financial industry executives, entrepreneurs,



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**Steven
McLaughlin**

Managing Partner

**Financial Technology
Partners**

cryptocurrency enthusiasts and myriad technologists to Las Vegas in late October. The brands that paid up for the most-prominent positions included Discover, MasterCard, PayPal and Visa — and the decidedly non-household name Financial Technology Partners. The last is a San Francisco-based firm that since its founding in 2002 by former Goldman, Sachs & Co. partner Steven McLaughlin has billed itself as the only investment bank “focused exclusively on the financial technology sector.” It was the only one participating at Money20/20 from the beginning (though other firms with Wall Street pedigrees have since established presences there), and it hosts a dinner that is reputedly one of the event’s networking highlights, for those lucky enough to be invited. “We are essential to the ecosystem,” boasts McLaughlin, 46. He likens FT Partners to “an exchange, or hub, for buyers and sellers.” Money20/20 represents only part of FT Partners’ territory: The firm’s 60-plus bankers range across all of fintech’s nooks and crannies, from consumer and wholesale payments to capital markets to insurance, on a global scale. “You have to do it a long time to know all these spaces,” McLaughlin says. Evidence of the firm’s accumulated intellectual capital is in its FinTech Transaction Database and monthly market analyses. FT Partners advised alternative lender GreenSky Trade Credit on a \$300 million minority investment, business-to-business payments specialist AvidXchange on a \$225 million Series E financing and Currencies Direct on its \$310 million sale to private equity buyers. “We don’t just represent sellers,” the founder notes. “BlackRock came to us” for assistance with its August purchase of digital wealth management platform FutureAdvisor.