



## FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS AWARDED BOUTIQUE INVESTMENT BANKING FIRM OF THE YEAR

### FT Partners Also Receives Awards for “Product of the Year” and “Deal of the Year”

**San Francisco, CA – December 13, 2006** – Financial Technology Partners LP and FTP Securities LLC (collectively “FT Partners”), is pleased to announce that we received top honors in three separate award categories by the nationally recognized publisher *The M&A Advisor*. The firm received one of the event’s premier awards of the evening as the **“Boutique Investment Banking Firm of the Year”**. It was also recognized for **“Product of the Year”** for its “IPO Advisory” offering as well as the **“Consumer Services Deal of the Year”** for its representation of VeriFone in its acquisition of Trintech’s Payment Systems Business. This marks the second time in three years that FT Partners has won an award for Investment Banking Firm of the Year, having previously received this honor in 2004. FT Partners is the only investment bank focused exclusively on the financial technology sector and was launched in mid-2002 by Steve McLaughlin, its Founder and Managing Partner.

“2006 has proven to be another landmark year for FT Partners, and we are extremely proud and honored to be recognized by *The M&A Advisor*”, said Mr. McLaughlin. The winners of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual M&A Advisor Awards were announced at a black-tie dinner held on December 11, 2006 at The New York Athletic Club in conjunction with *The M&A Advisor's* annual New York Conference. “These awards demonstrate the commitment and diligence the entire FT Partners team puts forth on each and every assignment.”

FT Partners was selected as a finalist receiving twelve nominations in nine different award categories including:

- Boutique Investment Banking Firm of the Year (**Award Winner**)
- M&A Product of the Year (**Award Winner**)
- Consumer Services Deal of the Year (**Award Winner**)
- Middle Market Deal of the Year
- U.S. Middle Market Deal Maker of the Year
- International / Cross Border Deal of the Year
- Corporate / Strategic Acquiror of the Year
- Retailing Deal of the Year

This is the third consecutive year *The M&A Advisor* has recognized FT Partners with more than 25 award nominations across multiple different award categories. Previous awards won by FT Partners include Steve McLaughlin’s recognition as “2006 Financing Professional of The Year”, “Deal of the Year” in 2005 for the Firm’s role as IPO Advisor to VeriFone and “Investment Banking Firm of the Year” in 2004 for its leadership in the investment banking arena. Steve McLaughlin was also named in 2006 to *Investment Dealers’ Digest* “40 Under 40” ranking of most influential leaders in online finance.

***About M&A Advisor and Awards***

The M&A Advisor is an information provider and networking organization delivering services that provide executives, M&A professionals, and others about the intricate world of financing, buying and selling middle market companies. The award nominations were limited to firms or individuals specializing in middle-market transactions ranging from \$10 million to \$1 billion, and winners were selected by a panel of industry judges from business schools and the financial press.

***About Financial Technology Partners LP and FTP Securities LLC***

FT Partners is the only investment banking firm focused exclusively on providing strategic and financial advisory services to CEOs in the dynamic financial services and technology sector. Mr. McLaughlin formerly was a senior investment banker in Goldman, Sachs & Co.'s Financial Technology Group and was the senior investment banker in the Financial Institutions Group in San Francisco before leaving the firm to form FT Partners. FT Partners is comprised of a team of experienced investment bankers formerly with the financial technology, M&A and investment banking groups of Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse First Boston, and J.P. Morgan. FT Partners was recognized by *The M&A Advisor* as "Investment Banking Firm of the Year" in 2004 and again in 2006 for "Boutique Investment Banking Firm of the Year." Steve McLaughlin was also named in 2006 to *Investment Dealers' Digest* "40 Under 40" ranking of most influential leaders in online finance. The firm offers CEO-level services, including mergers and acquisitions advisory, IPO advisory, refinancing, recapitalization and private capital raising. FT Partners was founded by Mr. McLaughlin in late 2001 and is based in San Francisco. Steven J. McLaughlin is a registered representative of FTP Securities LLC, an NASD broker-dealer and a wholly owned subsidiary of Financial Technology Partners LP. Any securities related transactions contemplated by or acted upon hereunder are conducted solely by Mr. McLaughlin in this capacity. For additional information, visit <http://www.ftpartners.com>.

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