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FT PARTNERS FINTECH INDUSTRY RESEARCH

FinTech CEO Interview:



Andres Klaric
Co-Founder & Co-CEO

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San Francisco • New York • London

Fuse Overview



Company Overview



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| Co-Founders: | Andres Klaric & Marc Escapa |
| Headquarters: | New York, NY |
| Founded: | 2020 |

- Fuse is a next gen AI-powered loan origination system (LOS) for banks, credit unions, and finance companies
 - Fuse low/no-code customization platform, combined with seamless API connections and proprietary AI agents, enables institutions to optimize efficiency, enhance the borrower experience, and scale without compromising security
- Fuse is built to service an array of different loan types, including asset-backed loans, consumer unsecured loans, and commercial loans
- Fuse is constructed for enterprise scale, incorporating key characteristics such as SOC 2 Type II, high availability SLAs, full audit traceability, and professional services

Key Metrics

\$600 billion+
Assets Held by Clients

\$25 million+
Capital Raised

200+
Integration Partners

2.5x
Increase in Loan
Conversions

78%
Reduction in Variable
Operations

3x
Profitability Margin for
Users

Main Benefits for Financial Institutions



100% Automation & AI Capabilities

Leverage our no/low-code AI platform to automate all decision rules and seamlessly connect to 200+ pre-built integrations or build custom integrations using our low-code API connector



3x faster manual processes

Intuitive and high-performing agent portals designed to maximize productivity, with self-service features that make it easy for agents to collaborate with customers and manage workflows efficiently



Self-automate 2x faster

Use our no-code AI platform to empower your business teams to automate common rules and leverage AI-recommendations for advanced improvements



Go live in weeks with <1 FTE

Leverage AI-powered migration tools to reduce implementation time with minimal client effort, backed by hands-on support from the Fuse team

Fuse CEO Interview



Andres Klaric
Co-Founder & Co-CEO

What is your background and what was the inspiration behind founding Fuse?

I cut my teeth selling cars, which taught me exactly how slow and clunky consumer lending can be when you are on the showroom floor. After that, I spent nearly a decade on Wall Street, backing technology and business-services companies.

The idea for Fuse came from seeing how archaic loan origination systems are. Traditional LOS platforms need constant manual babysitting and cannot adapt to today's market speed. My co-founder (Marc Escapa) and I met at Harvard and saw the opportunity: build a low/no-code, API-native platform that lets financial institutions progressively automate their lending operations without the traditional pain.

As we started working with these institutions, we saw how AI could transform lending through real-time decisioning, smarter workflows, and personalized borrower experiences. Our AI does not just automate – it extracts data from unstructured documents, predicts application quality, and can handle straightforward underwriting end-to-end. The system gets smarter with each transaction eliminating the technical debt that has held back innovation in lending for decades.

What are the market dynamics for loan origination systems and how are you bucking the trends? What is Fuse's key value proposition?

Loan origination software is broken. It is built on legacy platforms that are rigid, expensive to modify, and disconnected from modern technology stacks. When costs exceed benefits so dramatically, it is a sign the market is ready for disruption.

At Fuse, we are building the antidote: an API-native, low-code platform that completely reverses the traditional approach. Financial institutions can progressively automate lending operations without massive engineering teams or system overhauls.

Business users can modify decisioning rules through an intuitive interface while more complex needs are handled through flexible low-code tools. Our platform connects to 200+ pre-built integrations and includes an API connector to easily incorporate new data sources.

The hidden cost of legacy loan systems is staggering – for every dollar spent on the software itself, institutions waste approximately seven more on manual processes and inefficient workflows. Fuse addresses this challenge by embedding AI throughout the entire lending lifecycle to drive automation, efficiency, and scalability.

Our AI agents take on high-impact tasks that typically require manual effort. The AI Loan Officer engages applicants via voice, email, and text to boost conversion rates. The AI Underwriter provides auto-recommendations and adapts based on past decisions. The AI Verifier automates most document checks, catching fraud and updating loan terms instantly. The AI Configurator refines decision rules over time by learning from human overrides.

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Fuse CEO Interview (cont.)

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Together, these AI capabilities allow lenders to reduce operating expenses, deliver faster decisions, and scale their operations without a proportional increase in headcount. All while improving the borrower experience and reducing reliance on technical teams.

"Loan origination software is broken. It is built on legacy platforms that are rigid, expensive to modify, and disconnected from modern technology stacks...At Fuse, we are building the antidote: an API-native, low-code platform that completely reverses the traditional approach."

How do you size the market opportunity for Fuse?

We see a significant opportunity in the \$21B loan origination software (LOS) market, which includes systems used by over 44K financial institutions to process and decision loans. This segment continues to grow as lenders seek to modernize outdated infrastructure and respond to rising expectations for speed, flexibility, and automation.

But the software market is just the beginning. Beneath it lies a much larger direct cost: FIs spend >\$145B/Year in lending operations, driven by manual underwriting, document handling, and compliance work that most LOS platforms still fail to automate. This operational burden represents an enormous efficiency gap and a core driver of our product roadmap.

Fuse addresses both layers: we provide the core LOS platform, and we are building the agentic AI infrastructure to automate the human workflows surrounding it — positioning us to transform not just the software category, but the full economic stack behind loan origination.

What is the breadth of loan types and breadth of customers you are serving today?

Fuse is designed to support a wide range of loan types and institution profiles. Today, we work with banks, credit unions, and specialty lenders supporting their consumer and commercial operations.

On the consumer side, we enable unsecured products like personal loans and credit cards, as well as secured loans including auto, powersports, marine, RV, and more. We have also extended the platform to support real estate-secured loans like HELOCs and home equity products.

On the commercial side, we support small business loans, business credit cards, equipment financing, and commercial real estate. We designed the system to adapt to the complexity and customization these products require, while still delivering fast time to value.

Our clients range from \$150M AUM credit unions to multi-billion-dollar financial institutions, and our flexible architecture allows us to meet each one where they are in terms of automation, scale, and product mix.

How do you go to market and what does the implementation process look like?

We go to market through multiple channels: outbound outreach, targeted events, and inbound marketing. Our sales motion focuses on early pain identification and ROI demonstration, which drives engagement. As our customer base grows, referrals have become significant, with prospects reaching out after hearing from peers.

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Fuse CEO Interview (cont.)



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Implementation is where we shine. While traditional LOS deployments take 12+ months, we go live in 3-4 months. Our AI-powered data extraction and mapping tools cut implementation time dramatically by automating the most tedious parts of migration. We have built internal tooling and templates that reduce delivery effort by more than half.

Clients handle most changes through our no-code interface, with low-code tools for advanced needs. Fuse becomes the system of record from day one — no dual systems or partial rollouts. It is a clean, fast transition that sets customers up for long-term scalability.

You appear to be an AI-first company. Is that an accurate statement? How are you leveraging AI use cases in the lending process?

Yes, that is an accurate statement. Fuse is being built with an AI-native foundation, which we refer to as our agentic layer, to enable true end-to-end automation in the lending process. We are deploying AI Agents to replace manual work across the entire loan lifecycle. For example, our Loan Officer Agent guides borrowers through the application using email, voice, and text to improve engagement and conversion. The Underwriter Agent produces automated credit recommendations and refines decision rules over time based on historical outcomes. The Verifier Agent handles fraud detection, document verification, and dynamic loan adjustments based on validated data. Finally, the Configurator Agent reviews exceptions, learns from human overrides, and suggests new decision rules to optimize performance.

Unlike legacy LOS platforms that treat AI as an add-on, Fuse embeds it deeply into the core workflow. This allows our clients to move from partial automation to full autonomy, significantly reducing operational costs, increasing processing speed, and improving the borrower experience.

“Fuse is being built with an AI-native foundation, which we refer to as our agentic layer, to enable true end-to-end automation in the lending process. We are deploying AI Agents to replace manual work across the entire loan lifecycle.”

Talk to us about your capital raising strategy. You just closed your Series A, how did you go about choosing investors?

For us, this round was not just about raising capital. It was about bringing on partners who shared our belief that there is an opportunity to build the default operating system that financial institutions use to serve their customers.

We looked for investors with deep experience in vertical SaaS and enterprise infrastructure, and a clear understanding of how automation and AI will reshape financial services over the next decade. Most importantly, we wanted people who were aligned with the pace, ambition, and product-first culture we are building at Fuse.

We ended up with a group of partners who not only bring that perspective but are fully committed to helping us scale the platform, expand into new lending verticals, and accelerate our AI roadmap.

FT Partners – Focused Exclusively on FinTech

Proven Track Record of Success Across the Banking / Lending Tech Sector



FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to Lumin Digital on its Financing

Overview of Transaction

- On December 2, 2024, Lumin Digital, a leading cloud-based digital banking software provider, announced it has raised over \$200 million in a growth equity financing led by Partners Group, NewView Capital, and Light Street Capital
- Founded in 2016 by Jeff Chambers, Lumin enables credit unions and banks to deliver a differentiated user experience that accelerates user growth and increases customer loyalty
- The Company provides a complete set of digital banking applications through microservices built on a cloud-native, single-tenant architecture
- Prior to the transaction, Velera, a premier payments credit union service organization and integrated financial technology solutions provider, was the sole investor of Lumin Digital

Significance of Transaction

- The capital raised will be used accelerate the Company's strategic growth initiatives, focusing on innovation and driving greater value for financial institutions, their members, and shareholders

FT Partners' Role

- FT Partners served as the exclusive financial and strategic advisor to Lumin Digital on this equity financing
- This transaction highlights FT Partners' deep domain expertise in the Banking Technology space as well as its successful track record generating highly favorable outcomes for leading FinTech companies globally

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on its growth equity financing led by



for a total amount of

\$200,000,000+



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FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to Blend on its \$150 million PIPE

Overview of Transaction

- On April 29, 2024, Blend Labs, Inc. (NYSE: BLND) (“Blend”) a leading provider of cloud banking services, announced a \$150 million investment from Haveli
 - The investment is in the form of Series A convertible 0% coupon preferred stock with an initial conversion price of \$3.25 per share, representing a 44% premium to the closing share price on 4/29/2024 ⁽¹⁾
 - The agreement includes Class A common stock warrants issued at \$4.50 per share exercisable for 24 months, representing a 100% premium to the closing share price on 4/29/2024 ⁽¹⁾
- Based in San Francisco, Blend is the infrastructure powering the future of banking
 - Financial providers from large banks, FinTechs, and credit unions to community and independent mortgage banks use Blend’s platform to transform banking experiences for their customers

Significance of Transaction

- Blend will use approximately \$145 million of the proceeds to repay all borrowings and other amounts payable under its existing credit agreement, with the remainder for general corporate purposes
 - The investment strengthens Blend’s financial position and capitalizes the Company’s balance sheet for long-term value
- As part of the transaction, Brian Sheth, Founder and Chief Investment Officer at Haveli Investments, will join Blend’s Board of Directors
 - Prior to founding Haveli, Brian served as President of Vista Equity Partners and has spent 25 years investing in winning companies and entrepreneurs; the investment reflects confidence in Blend’s growth strategy, continued success and long-term value creation

FT Partners’ Role

- FT Partners served as the exclusive financial and strategic advisor to Blend on this transaction
- This transaction highlights FT Partners’ domain expertise in the banking technology space, along with its successful track record generating highly favorable outcomes for high-growth FinTech companies

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(NYSE: BLND)

on its financing from



for a total amount of

\$150,000,000

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FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to Nymbus on its \$70 million Series D Financing

Overview of Transaction

- On May 25, 2023, Nymbus announced the completion of its \$70 million Series D financing round from new and repeat investors
 - This round was led by global software investor Insight Partners and bolstered by additional investments from Nymbus clients ConnectOne Bank and PeoplesBank, alongside other FinTech investors, The Banc Funds Company and Mendon Venture Partners
- The announcement follows a previous announcement of strategic investments from Curql Collective, a Credit Union Service Organization (CUSO) driving FinTech innovation for credit unions, via its flagship Curql Fund and Reseda Group, a wholly owned CUSO of MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU), a Nymbus client
- Nymbus has disrupted the financial services market as an alternative to legacy business models
 - With Nymbus, any size financial institution can quickly launch a full-service digital bank or migrate to its award-winning core
 - Nymbus buys back decades of lost time to engage and support the entire digital customer journey

Significance of Transaction

- The capital infusion will empower Nymbus to expedite the expansion and advancement of its modern core system and diverse product portfolio
- The proceeds of this financing round will be put toward investing in scaling various products and services, particularly its core transaction processing engine and platform for commercial banking

FT Partners' Role

- FT Partners served as exclusive financial and strategic advisor to Nymbus.
- This transaction highlights FT Partners' deep domain expertise in the Banking Tech sector, and its successful track record generating highly favorable outcomes for high-growth FinTech companies globally

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on its Series D financing led by

INSIGHT
PARTNERS

with participation from



for a total amount of

\$70,000,000

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FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to Deserve on its Sale to Intuit

Overview of Transaction

- On April 14, 2025, Intuit Inc. (NASDAQ: INTU) announced that it has signed an agreement to acquire key technology and welcome talented team members from Deserve, a mobile-first FinTech company
- Founded in 2013, Deserve is a leading mobile-first FinTech company, built on a cloud native, API-enabled architecture
 - Deserve's core processor technology has unlocked innovation for banks, FinTech companies, and brands by providing real-time data, a hierarchical ledger, cloud-native architecture, and digital-first capabilities
- Intuit is the global financial technology company with approximately 100 million customers that makes TurboTax, Credit Karma, QuickBooks and Mailchimp

Significance of Transaction

- This transaction reflects Intuit's strategic focus on further investing in and expanding its money offerings to support its goal of addressing the critical challenges businesses face: managing cash flow and gaining real-time financial visibility
- With over 80% of business failures linked to cash flow issues, Deserve's sophisticated tech stack will enhance Intuit's fintech infrastructure, including financial network processing capabilities and a flexible architecture, that will allow enhanced money capabilities to SMB customers

FT Partners' Role

- FT Partners served as the exclusive financial and strategic advisor to Deserve
- This transaction underscores FT Partners' position as the leading advisor to next-gen payments infrastructure companies and its successful track record generating highly favorable outcomes for high growth FinTech companies

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deserve 

on its sale to

INTUIT

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FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to interface.ai on its Financing

Overview of Transaction

- On October 22, 2024, interface.ai announced it raised a total of \$30 million to become the most valuable agentic AI company in banking
- interface.ai's AI-driven tools — spanning voice, chat, and co-pilot interactions — are transforming the ways financial institutions support their customers; Serving as the first line of support, these AI agents manage inbound member and customer inquiries, successfully handling over 60% of interactions directly
- Bootstrapped since inception, the Company has achieved significant milestones, including serving around 100 financial institutions and hundreds of millions of consumers
- The Company's voice and chat solutions have been a catalyst for progress for their customers, equipping them with the tools to deliver sophisticated and modern consumer experiences that bridge the gap against larger financial institutions
- With this new capital, interface.ai plans to expand its team to enhance product offerings, strengthen customer success and services, and accelerate go-to-market initiatives

FT Partners' Role

- FT Partners served as the exclusive strategic and financial advisor to interface.ai
- The transaction highlights FT Partners' domain expertise in the intersection of AI and FinTech, and the banking technology space, as well as our continued track record of generating highly favorable outcomes for FinTech companies

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FT Partners Served as Financial Advisor to TCI on its Sale to MeridianLink

Overview of Transaction

- On November 2, 2020, Teledata Communications Incorporated (TCI) announced its sale to MeridianLink, a portfolio company of Thoma Bravo
- Founded in 1982 and based in Islandia, NY, TCI is a leading SaaS-based loan origination platform, helping credit unions, community banks, and finance companies originate and approve consumer loans
- TCI offers a highly flexible, configurable platform providing Loan Origination Software (LOS), online account opening, digital branch, and online sales enablement
- TCI provides DecisionLender, a SaaS loan origination solution that was first released in 1998
- DecisionLender is an industry-trusted LOS that serves more than 300 banks, credit unions, and finance companies nationwide

Significance of Transaction

- TCI's combination with MeridianLink strengthens one of the leading providers in the consumer automotive lending space
- TCI and MeridianLink have highly complementary solutions and, combined, will help accelerate innovation in the LOS space

FT Partners' Role

- FT Partners served as the exclusive financial and strategic advisor to TCI
- The success of this transaction highlights FT Partners' role as the leading advisor to companies in the Banking and Lending Technology sector while also building on the Firm's breadth of knowledge and experience across the greater FinTech landscape

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on its sale to



a portfolio company of



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Client Testimonials



“We hired FT Partners back in 2009, and our Board feels that hiring FT Partners **was one of the most strategic decisions we could have made along this journey.** They have been tremendous partners for us, and we are delighted with them on every level.”

Michael Praeger, Co-Founder & CEO



“From the time we began having external conversations right up to the moment we signed a definitive deal, FT Partners were invaluable partners. They brought **not only strategic advice but also worked tirelessly helping execute all the way to closing.** I can’t imagine trying to navigate this process without them.”

Haroon Mokhtarzada, Co-Founder & CEO



“Wherever a board or a management team has **steered away from hiring FT Partners it always seems to end up in tears.** Here’s to you and everything you do.”

Nigel Morris, Managing Partner



“FT Partners was a great teammate throughout this transaction. **Their deep industry knowledge, strategic insight, and attention to detail were pivotal in navigating the complexities of the process and achieving a successful outcome.** FT Partners felt like an extension to our internal finance team and their dedication to understanding our vision and delivering tailored solutions was invaluable. I would highly recommend them to any founder / CEO.”

Zuben Mathews, Co-Founder & CEO



“FT Partners were simply immense. **Their reputation as the leading investment bank in the FinTech space understates the leadership and direction provided by Steve McLaughlin, and doesn’t do justice to the magnificent, unwavering effort, skill, expertise & support provided by the FT team.** Their tireless guidance and resilience was core to us achieving a successful outcome in this complex deal process. On top of that, their camaraderie and patience provided a steadying influence throughout.”

John Myers, Co-Founder & CEO



“At interface.ai, being customer-obsessed is our guiding star. We set a high standard for how we care for our customers and naturally expect the same dedication from our partners. **It’s rare to find partners who deliver at this level, but FT Partners is an exception.** FT Partners has truly impressed us with their hard work, commitment, and relentless customer focus... We pioneered an outcome-based pricing model that many AI companies are now adopting—similar to how SaaS transformed pricing models decades ago, creating new metrics in business and finance. With AI, we’re seeing a similar shift today, so we needed a partner who could apply first-principles thinking, not just follow a playbook. **FT Partners not only met this challenge but exceeded it, bringing an unmatched network, first-principles thinking, and industry-leading FP&A insights to our finance and strategic planning.** They were instrumental in finding the right investors and supporting us every step of the way.”

Srinivas Njay, Founder & CEO



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