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# California Powerhouse: Fenwick

By **Craig Clough**

*Law360 (September 21, 2026, 4:00 PM EDT)* -- Fenwick & West LLP proved last year why it has long been a go-to firm for technology companies, as it guided several clients through blockbuster IPOs, secured a precedential appellate win confirming nonfungible tokens are "goods" under the Lanham Act and scored dismissal of a securities class action against Docusign.

In 1972, four years before Apple Inc. was founded nearby, Fenwick got its start in Silicon Valley after a handful of New York attorneys left their firm with the goal of creating a tech-focused law firm.

"While that seems like a perfectly logical thing when you sit here in 2026, when tech has swallowed the world, in 1972, that was quite an interesting thing," Fenwick partner Douglas Cogen told Law360.

Needless to say, it worked out, and Fenwick now has California offices in San Francisco, Mountain View and Santa Monica that house over 250 attorneys, as well as offices in Washington, D.C.; Seattle; Boston; and New York.

For decades, Fenwick has also had a reputation as a top law firm for technology and life sciences companies, with its latest work earning it a spot among Law360's 2026 California Powerhouses.

Cogen said Fenwick is often compared to Cooley LLP, which also specializes in representing technology and life sciences companies, but he said Cooley "started as a San Francisco law firm and then went down into the valley when they sort of saw what was going on. But Fenwick really had this concept right from the beginning to be focused on tech."

In 2026, Fenwick scored courtroom wins and helped advance the business agendas of household-name technology companies, cutting-edge firms and startups hoping to become the next big thing.

One area of significant success was initial public offerings, including that of design platform Figma Inc., which Fenwick guided to a $1.2 billion IPO debut on the New York Stock Exchange on July 31. Figma offered 36.9 million shares at $33 each, exceeding its marketed range of $30 to $32, and the shares soared 250% on the first day of trading, setting a record for the largest first-day pop for a billion-dollar IPO before closing at $115.50.

Fenwick parter Michael Brown said "it doesn't get much better than" the Figma IPO because Fenwick had represented the company since 2012, guiding it through multiple rounds of funding before he and some other attorneys from the firm stood on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as Figma co-founder and CEO Dylan Field rang the opening bell.

"You're watching trading, and everybody's excited. And so, it's the culmination of years of work, right?" Brown said. "The IPO process itself might be, you know, four, five or six months, but the years of work to getting to a public company-ready entity, it is long and hard. And so, it is truly a pretty special moment to be with a client when they're ringing the bell, watch them jump on the platform, have a toast with them afterwards."

Another key IPO for Fenwick in the last year was for another long-term client, Wealthfront Corp., which Fenwick has represented since 2007. It guided the company to its public debut on the Nasdaq in December 2025, raising $485 million in its IPO.

As with Figma, Brown said that "hundreds of Fenwick timekeepers have worked" with Wealthfront over the years. "I was focusing on corporate matters, but litigation has supported both of those clients. Tax has supported both of those clients. [Intellectual property] group, patent, trademark, right?"

"And so, they're both really great examples of Fenwick, kind of at its best, which is, we start with a client when it's founders — two folks and a dog and a garage — and then as the company grows, we grow with it. And we help them through all of their needs. And then ultimately, when they make the decision to go public, we help them on that journey, and then we continue to represent both of these companies now that they are public."

Fenwick also helped guide BitGo Holdings Inc. through its January IPO, which valued the company at $2.08 billion with shares priced at $18. BitGo shares began trading on the New York Stock Exchange after the digital asset infrastructure priced its offering of 11.8 million shares above its previously announced range of $15 to $17. BitGo raised more than $212.7 million though the IPO.

Brown said BitGo, a Palo Alto-based digital asset infrastructure company, called upon Fenwick to help guide it through the IPO because the firm had guided Coinbase through its 2021 IPO.

"They engaged us for the offering because of our skill set," Brown said. "And so, while we're very proud of our longtime clients like Figma and Wealthfront, who we've represented for decades, you know, along every stage of the path, for every one of those companies, there's a company like BitGo that calls upon us because of our deep experience taking companies public, and so, we're brought in to help them with that, and then we advise them throughout."

Fenwick also advised obesity-focused drug developer BioAge Labs Inc. on its upsized underwritten public offering, generating gross proceeds of approximately $115 million, which came after the firm also helped guide the company through its public debut in September 2024.

The firm also represented the underwriters in Navan Inc.'s $923 million IPO.

In the courtroom, Fenwick scored a precedential Ninth Circuit win in July for Yuga Labs Inc. when the court held that nonfungible tokens are trademark-protectable "goods" under the Lanham Act. The ruling came after Yuga Labs accused two artists of ripping off its intellectual property by creating their own NFT collection using the same digital images as Yuga Labs' Bored Ape Yacht Club NFTs, but with different Ethereum blockchain entries.

Although the panel also undid Yuga Labs' $8 million summary judgment win and ruled that a jury must decide whether the rival NFTs confuse consumers, the parties stipulated to a dismissal with prejudice in April. The Ninth Circuit's ruling, however, reaches beyond the Bored Ape case and NFTs, as it is seen by many legal experts as strengthening the rights of digital creators in virtual marketplaces.

Jedediah Wakefield, a Fenwick partner who chairs the firm's litigation group, said Yuga was an existing client when the litigation sprang up.

"So, this is a great example of this life cycle where, you know, the two people in the garage with the dog that Michael mentioned come to us for their first formation issues, and then as they grow, and often really quickly grow, we have the resources to meet their needs as they expand and face these new issues," Wakefield said. "So our trademark litigators who are very comfortable explaining complex new technologies to courts and making it all understandable, we were ready to jump in on this one."

Fenwick also scored a key victory for DocuSign when a California federal judge tossed a shareholder lawsuit accusing the company and its top brass of misleading investors about the software company's post-pandemic growth prospects. The dismissal came despite a class already being certified and discovery being ordered.

Wakefield said the plaintiffs were able to proceed to discovery by relying heavily on a few confidential witness statements, after which the class was certified. At that stage, many cases proceed to settlement, but Wakefield said Fenwick's team was convinced there was "something wrong" with those confidential witness statements, and they "managed to find confidential witnesses who, let's just say, set the record straight."

The result was the plaintiffs filing an amended complaint that removed the references to those confidential witness statements and trying to build the case on discovery documents. But U.S. District Judge Vince Chhabria found the plaintiffs' characterization of the documents was misleading and tossed the case, saying the complaint was "written in a way that makes it difficult to link the public statements to allegations about what was happening internally that would allow a reader to conclude that the statements were false."

Wakefield said, "It's a great story about the tenacity of our litigation team who would not give up and really believed in the client's case. This is also another example of a client that's been a long-term Fenwick client with a strong corporate relationship, IP relationship, you know, dating back many years, and another example of having a real destination, full-service practice ready to jump in and help these clients wherever their needs arise."

Fenwick also served as lead transaction counsel for the security platform Wiz Inc. when it was acquired by Google in March for $32 billion in cash, which Fenwick said was Google's largest acquisition.

"So just a terrific deal, calling on all parts of the firm, getting it done real fast, which is something you really have to have, an M&A squad that knows how to execute," Cogen said. "And just, you know, a superlative deal by any metric, and I think Google's very happy that they've done this. They continue to perform very well for them."

--Additional reporting by Grace Dixon, Dorothy Atkins, Rae Ann Varona. Editing by Kristen Becker.