

CAI International, Inc.
Form 424B5
October 23, 2017
Table of Contents

**Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-217915**

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To Prospectus Dated June 2, 2017)

Up to 2,000,000 Shares

CAI International, Inc.

Common Stock

We have entered into an Equity Distribution Sales Agreement (the "Sales Agreement") with Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated ("Merrill Lynch") and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC ("Wells Fargo") relating to shares of our common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share, offered by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. In accordance with the terms of the Sales Agreement, we may from time to time offer and sell up to 2,000,000 shares of our common stock through Merrill Lynch or Wells Fargo as our sales agents.

Sales of the shares of common stock, if any, may be made by means of transactions that are deemed to be "at-the-market" offerings, as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), including ordinary brokers' transactions on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale and in such other manner as agreed upon by us and the applicable sales agent. We will submit orders to only one sales agent relating to the sales of shares of our common stock on any given day. The sales agents will receive from us a commission of up to 2.0% based on the gross sales price per share for any shares sold through them as sales agents under the Sales Agreement.

Under the terms of the Sales Agreement, we also may sell shares of our common stock to a sales agent as principal for its own account at a price agreed upon at the time of sale. If we sell shares to a sales agent as principal, we will enter into a separate terms agreement with such sales agent, and we will describe this agreement in a separate prospectus supplement or pricing supplement. In connection with the sale of shares of our common stock on our behalf, the sales agents may be deemed to be "underwriters" within the meaning of the Securities Act, and the compensation paid to the sales agents may be deemed to be underwriting commissions or discounts.

The sales agents are not required to sell any specific number or dollar amount of shares of our common stock, but, subject to the terms and conditions of the Sales Agreement and unless otherwise agreed by us and the sales agents, the sales agents will use their commercially reasonable efforts to sell the shares offered as our sales agents. There is no arrangement for funds to be received in any escrow, trust or similar arrangement.

Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol CAI. The last reported sales price of our common stock on October 20, 2017 was \$37.26 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement and page 1 of the accompanying base prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the prospectus to which it relates is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

BofA Merrill Lynch

Wells Fargo Securities

The date of this prospectus supplement is October 23, 2017.

Table of Contents**Table of Contents****Prospectus Supplement**

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus Supplement</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | S-2 |
| <u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u> | S-3 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | S-5 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | S-9 |
| <u>U.S. Federal Tax Consequences for Non-U.S. Holders of Common Stock</u> | S-10 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest)</u> | S-14 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | S-16 |
| <u>Experts</u> | S-16 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | S-16 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u> | S-16 |

Prospectus

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | ii |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | 1 |
| <u>The Company</u> | 1 |
| <u>Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 1 |
| <u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u> | 2 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 2 |
| <u>Dividend Policy</u> | 2 |
| <u>Selling Stockholders</u> | 2 |
| <u>Description of Capital Stock</u> | 3 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 6 |
| <u>Description of Convertible Debt Securities</u> | 13 |
| <u>Use of Global Securities</u> | 21 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 23 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 24 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 25 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 27 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 27 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | 27 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u> | 27 |

Neither we nor the sales agents have authorized any other person to provide you with information different from that contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or in any free writing prospectus that we may provide to you. We and the sales agents take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give. We are offering to sell and are seeking offers to buy shares of our common stock only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted. The information contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying

prospectus is accurate only as of the date such information is presented regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any sale of common stock. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since such date.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering of shares of our common stock and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information. Generally, when we refer to this prospectus, we are referring to both parts of this document combined. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in the prospectus and this prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement; provided that if any statement in one of these documents is inconsistent with a statement in another document having a later date for example, a document incorporated by reference in the prospectus or this prospectus supplement the statement in the document having the later date modifies or supersedes the earlier statement.

As permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC, the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part includes additional information not contained in this prospectus supplement. You may read the registration statement and the other reports we file with the SEC at the SEC's website or at the SEC's offices described below under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information*.

You should read this prospectus supplement along with the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference carefully before you invest. These documents contain important information you should consider when making your investment decision. This prospectus supplement contains information about the shares of common stock offered in this offering and may add, update or change information in the accompanying prospectus.

Unless the context otherwise indicates, references in this prospectus to CAI, the Company, we, us and our are to CAI International, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries. The term you refers to a prospective investor.

Table of Contents

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain statements in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference, any free writing prospectus and our other public statements include forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. All statements in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference, any free writing prospectus or our other public statements, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements. Words such as may, might, should, estimate, project, plan, anticipate, expect, intend, outlook, believe and other are intended to identify forward-looking statements and information. Forward-looking statements include, without limitation, statements concerning the conditions in our industry, our operations, our economic performance and financial condition, our plans for capital investment, our business, operations and growth strategy, container and railcar prices, utilization trends, prospects and our ability to purchase and sell containers and/or rail assets at favorable prices. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides a safe harbor for certain forward-looking statements so long as such information is identified as forward-looking and is accompanied by meaningful cautionary statements identifying important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected in the information. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of their dates. These forward-looking statements are based on estimates and assumptions by our management that, although we believe to be reasonable, are inherently uncertain and subject to a number of risks and uncertainties, including:

weak market conditions due to a significant decline in steel prices, new container prices, used container prices and slower trade growth;

changes in demand for container leases, which could affect the utilization rate of our fleet;

changes in investor demand for purchasing portfolios of leased containers;

changes in the mix of short-term versus long-term leases;

changes in the per diem rates for leases;

changes in container production and pricing;

changes in the number of containers in our owned fleet;

defaults by container lessees;

economic disruptions, health scares, financial turmoil and political instability;

terrorism, or the threat of terrorism, violence or hostilities that affect the flow of world trade and the demand for containers;

the development of emerging economies in Asia and other parts of the world and the resulting change in trade patterns;

fluctuations in interest rates;

increased competition;

our ability to obtain additional debt financing at expected levels or at all; and

loss of key members of our senior management.

These risks and uncertainties include, without limitation, those identified under the caption "Risk Factors" in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, in the documents incorporated by reference herein and the accompanying prospectus, and in any of our other public filings, including our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as otherwise required by law.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

The following summary highlights selected information about us contained elsewhere or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. This summary does not contain all of the information you should consider before making a decision to invest in our common stock. You should review this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus carefully, including the risks of investing in our common stock described under the heading Risk Factors in this prospectus supplement, as well as our consolidated financial statements and notes thereto and other information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

Overview

Founded in 1989, we are one of the world's leading transportation finance and logistics companies. We purchase equipment, primarily intermodal shipping containers and railcars, which we lease to our customers. We also manage equipment for third-party investors. In operating our fleet, we lease, re-lease and dispose of equipment and contract for the repair, repositioning and storage of equipment. We also provide domestic and international logistics services.

We earn our container lease income from intermodal containers which are deployed by our customers in a wide variety of global trade routes. Virtually all of our containers are used internationally and no container is domiciled in one particular place for a prolonged period of time. As such, substantially all of our container assets are considered to be international with no single country of use. Our railcars are used by lessees on railroads in North America. Our logistics business provides both domestic and international logistics services, consisting of comprehensive logistics services including intermodal, truck brokerage, port drayage, warehousing, international ocean freight and freight forwarding, as well as the arrangement and coordination of international air freight services and customs brokerage.

Corporate Information

Our corporate headquarters and principal executive offices are located at Steuart Tower, 1 Market Plaza, Suite 900, San Francisco, CA 94105. Our telephone number is (415) 788-0100. We were founded in 1989 by our Chairman, Hiromitsu Ogawa, as a traditional container leasing company that leased containers owned by us to container shipping lines. We were originally incorporated under the name Container Applications International, Inc. in the State of Nevada in August 1989. In February 2007, we were reincorporated under our present name in the State of Delaware. Our website address is www.capps.com. Information contained on our website is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and you should not consider information contained on our website as part of this prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

The Offering

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Issuer | CAI International, Inc. |
| Common Stock Offered | Up to 2,000,000 shares of common stock |
| Manner of Offering | <p>At-the-market offering that may be made from time to time through our sales agents, Merrill Lynch and Wells Fargo.</p> <p>We may also sell shares of our common stock to Merrill Lynch or Wells Fargo, as principals for their own account, at a price per share agreed upon at the time of sale. If we sell shares to Merrill Lynch or Wells Fargo as principals, we will enter into separate terms agreement setting forth the terms of such transaction, and we will describe the agreement in a separate prospectus or pricing supplement.</p> <p>See Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest).</p> |
| Use of Proceeds | We expect to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include investments in containers and other assets, acquisitions or debt repayment. See Use of Proceeds. |
| NYSE Symbol | CAI |
| Risk Factors | Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement and the other information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus for a discussion of factors you should consider carefully before deciding to invest in our common stock. |
| Conflicts of Interest | Because certain affiliates of Merrill Lynch and Wells Fargo are lenders under our senior secured revolving credit facility, and may receive a portion of the net proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock if we use such proceeds to repay borrowings thereunder, they may be deemed to have a conflict of interest under FINRA Rule 5121. Therefore, the offering will be made in compliance with such rule. You should read the discussion under the heading Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of |

Interest).

S-4

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Prior to making a decision about investing in our common stock, you should carefully consider the following risks and uncertainties, as well as those discussed under the caption "Risk Factors" in the accompanying prospectus and in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016. If any of the risks described in this prospectus supplement or accompanying prospectus, or the risks described in any documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, actually occur, our business, prospects, financial condition or operating results could be harmed. In such case, the trading price of our common stock could decline, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

Risks Related to our Stock and the Offering

The common stock offered hereby may be sold in at-the market offerings, and investors who buy shares at different times will likely pay different prices.

Investors who purchase shares under this offering at different times will likely pay different prices, and so may experience different outcomes in their investment results. We will have discretion, subject to market demand, to vary the timing, prices, and numbers of shares sold, and there is no minimum or maximum sales price. Investors may experience declines in the value of their shares as a result of share sales made at prices lower than the prices they paid.

The market price of our common stock may be adversely affected by the future issuance and sale of additional shares of our common stock, including pursuant to the Sales Agreement, or by our announcement that such issuances and sales may occur.

We cannot predict the size of future issuances or sales of shares of our common stock, including those made pursuant to the Sales Agreement with our sales agents or in connection with future acquisitions or capital raising activities, or the effect, if any, that such issuances or sales may have on the market price of our common stock. In addition, the sales agents will not engage in any transactions that stabilize the price of our common stock. The issuance and sale of substantial amounts of shares of our common stock, including issuances and sales pursuant to the sales agreement, or announcement that such issuances and sales may occur, could adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

Our stock price has been volatile and may remain volatile.

The trading price of our common stock may be subject to wide fluctuations in response to quarter-to-quarter variations in operating results, new products or service introductions by us or our competitors, general conditions in the shipping industry, rail industry and the intermodal equipment sales and leasing markets, changes in earnings estimates by analysts, or other events or factors which may or may not be under our control. Broad market fluctuations may adversely affect the market price of our common stock. Since the initial public offering of our stock at \$15.00 per share on May 16, 2007, the market price of our stock has fluctuated significantly from a high of \$37.37 per share to a low of \$2.12 per share through October 20, 2017. Since the trading volume on our stock is modest on a daily basis, shareholders may experience difficulties in liquidating our stock. Factors affecting the trading price of our common stock may include:

variations in our financial results;

Edgar Filing: CAI International, Inc. - Form 424B5

changes in financial estimates or investment recommendations by any securities analysts following our business;

the public's response to our press releases, our other public announcements and our filings with the SEC;

our ability to successfully execute our business plan;

S-5

Table of Contents

changes in accounting standards, policies, guidance, interpretations or principles;

future sales of common stock by us or our directors, officers or significant stockholders or the perception such sales may occur;

our ability to achieve operating results consistent with securities analysts' projections;

the operating and stock price performance of other companies that investors may deem comparable to us;

macroeconomic factors, political conditions, changes in international trade agreements, natural disasters, and other external factors beyond our control;

the financial stability and creditworthiness of our customers, and consolidation and concentration in the container shipping industry;

recruitment or departure of key personnel;

our ability to timely address changing equipment lessee and third-party investor preferences;

equipment market and industry factors, including steel prices, new and used container prices and changes in international trade;

the size of our public float;

general stock market conditions; and

other events or factors, including those resulting from war, incidents of terrorism or responses to such events.

In addition, if the market for companies deemed similar to us or the stock market in general experiences loss of investor confidence, the trading price of our common stock could decline for reasons unrelated to our business or financial results. The trading price of our common stock might also decline in reaction to events that affect other companies in our industry even if these events do not directly affect us.

If you purchase the common stock sold in this offering, you may experience substantial dilution in your investment. You will experience further dilution if we issue additional equity securities in future fundraising transactions.

We have a significant number of stock options outstanding. To the extent that outstanding stock options may be exercised, investors purchasing our common stock in this offering may experience further dilution. In addition, we may choose to raise additional capital due to market conditions or strategic considerations even if we believe we have sufficient funds for our current or future operating plans. To the extent that additional capital is raised through the sale of equity or convertible debt securities, the issuance of these securities could result in further dilution to our stockholders or result in downward pressure on the price of our common stock.

We do not currently pay dividends to holders of our common stock, and we cannot assure you that we will pay dividends to holders of our common stock in the future.

Any determinations by us to pay cash dividends on our common stock in the future will be based primarily upon our financial condition, results of operations, business requirements, tax considerations and our board of directors continuing determination that the declaration of dividends under the dividend policy are in the best interests of our stockholders and are in compliance with all laws and agreements applicable to the dividend program. Consequently, investors may be required to rely on sales of their common stock as the only way to realize any future gains on their investment. The terms of our credit agreements contain provisions restricting the payment of cash dividends subject to certain exceptions.

Table of Contents

If securities analysts do not continue to publish research or reports about our business or if they change their financial estimates or investment recommendation, the price of our stock could decline.

The trading market for our common shares relies in part on the research and reports that industry or financial analysts publish about us or our business. We do not control or influence the decisions or opinions of these analysts and analysts may not cover us.

If any analyst who covers us changes his or her financial estimates or investment recommendation, the price of our stock could decline. If any analyst ceases coverage of our company, we could lose visibility in the market, which in turn could cause our stock price to decline.

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws and Delaware law contain provisions that could discourage a third party from acquiring us and consequently decrease the market value of an investment in our common stock.

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws and Delaware corporate law each contain provisions that could delay, defer or prevent a change in control of our company or changes in our management. Among other things, these provisions:

authorize us to issue preferred stock that can be created and issued by the board of directors without prior stockholder approval, with rights senior to those of our common stock;

permit removal of directors only for cause by the holders of a majority of the shares entitled to vote at the election of directors and allow only the directors to fill a vacancy on the board of directors;

prohibit stockholders from calling special meetings of stockholders;

prohibit stockholder action by written consent, thereby requiring all stockholder actions to be taken at a meeting of our stockholders;

require the affirmative vote of 66 2/3% of the shares entitled to vote to amend our bylaws and certain articles of our certificate of incorporation, including articles relating to the classified board, the size of the board, stockholder meetings and actions by written consent;

allow the authorized number of directors to be changed only by resolution of the board of directors;

establish advance notice requirements for submitting nominations for election to the board of directors and for proposing matters that can be acted upon by stockholders at a meeting;

classify our board of directors into three classes so that only a portion of our directors are elected each year;
and

allow our directors to amend our bylaws.

These provisions could discourage proxy contests and make it more difficult for our stockholders to elect directors and take other corporate actions, which may prevent a change of control or changes in our management that a stockholder might consider favorable. In addition, Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law may discourage, delay or prevent a change in control of us. Any delay or prevention of a change in control or change in management that stockholders might otherwise consider to be favorable could cause the market price of our common stock to decline.

The sales agents and their respective affiliates may receive benefits in connection with this offering.

The sales agents and their respective affiliates have engaged in, and may in the future engage in, investment banking and other commercial dealings in the ordinary course of business with us or our affiliates. An affiliate of Merrill Lynch is the lender under our senior secured revolving credit facility. To the extent that we use a portion

S-7

Table of Contents

of the net proceeds from this offering to repay amounts we borrowed, may borrow or re-borrow in the future under our revolving credit facility or other borrowings from the sales agents or their respective affiliates, the sales agents or their respective affiliates will receive their proportionate share of any amount of such borrowings that are repaid with the proceeds from this offering. These transactions create potential conflicts of interest because the sales agents have an interest in the successful completion of this offering beyond the sales commission it will receive.

Management will have broad discretion as to the use of the proceeds from this offering, and we may not use the proceeds effectively.

Our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds from this offering and could spend the proceeds in ways that do not improve our results of operations or enhance the value of our common stock. For example, management could invest the proceeds in assets that do not produce attractive returns or to make acquisitions of properties or businesses that do not prove to be attractive or otherwise are unsuccessful. Conversely, management may not be able to identify and complete investments or acquisitions. Our failure to apply these funds effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations and cause the price of our common stock to decline.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We expect to use the net proceeds from this offering, after deducting the sales agents' commission and our offering expenses, for general corporate purposes, which may include investments in containers and other assets or acquisitions or debt repayment. As of September 30, 2017, there was approximately \$407.0 million outstanding under our senior secured revolving credit facility and the average interest rate was 3.0% per annum. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, we cannot specify with certainty all of the particular uses for the net proceeds to us from this offering. Accordingly, our management will have broad discretion over the use of the net proceeds from this offering.

Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may temporarily invest the net proceeds in cash equivalents or short-term investments.

Affiliates of Merrill Lynch and Wells Fargo are lenders under our senior secured revolving credit facility and may receive a portion of the net proceeds of this offering if we use such proceeds to repay borrowings thereunder. See Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest) in this prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

U.S. FEDERAL TAX CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF COMMON STOCK

This section describes the material U.S. federal income and estate tax consequences to you of the ownership and disposition of shares of our common stock if you are a non-U.S. holder. When we refer to a non-U.S. holder, we mean a beneficial owner of our common stock that, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is other than a partnership or:

an individual citizen or resident alien of the United States;

a corporation (including for this purpose any other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any State thereof or the District of Columbia;

an estate the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

a trust that is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and to the control of one or more U.S. persons (within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code)), or that has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

An individual who is not a citizen of the United States may, subject to certain restrictions and limitations contained in any applicable income tax treaty, be deemed to be a resident of the United States by reason of being present in the United States for at least 31 days in the calendar year and an aggregate of at least 183 days during a three-year period ending in the current calendar year (counting for such purposes all of the days present in the current year, one-third of the days present in the immediate preceding calendar year and one-sixth of the days present in the second preceding calendar year).

If a partnership (including for this purpose any other entity, either organized within or without the United States, treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds shares of our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. In addition, foreign partnerships generally are subject to special U.S. tax documentation requirements. Accordingly, if you are treated as a partner of a partnership that holds our common stock you should consult your own tax advisor to determine the U.S. federal, state, local and other tax consequences that might be relevant to you.

Special rules may apply to certain non-U.S. holders, such as controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies, and corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax. Such entities should consult their own tax advisors to determine the U.S. federal, state, local and other tax consequences that may be relevant to them.

This section does not consider the specific facts and circumstances that may be relevant to a particular non-U.S. holder and does not address the potential application of the Medicare contribution tax or the treatment of a non-U.S. holder under the laws of any state, local or foreign taxing jurisdiction. This section is based on the federal tax laws of the United States, including the Code, existing and proposed regulations, and administrative and judicial interpretations, all as currently in effect. These laws are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis.

You should consult a tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal tax consequences of acquiring, holding and disposing of our common stock in your particular circumstances, as well as any tax consequences that may arise under the laws of any state, local or foreign taxing jurisdiction.

Dividends

Distributions of cash or other property will constitute dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. To the extent those distributions exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, they will

S-10

Table of Contents

constitute a return of capital, which will first reduce your basis in our common stock, but not below zero, and then will be treated as gain from the sale of our common stock, as described below under - Gain on Disposition of Common Stock.

Except as described below, any dividends paid to you are subject to withholding of U.S. federal income tax at a 30% rate or at a lower rate if you are eligible for the benefits of an income tax treaty that provides for a lower rate. Even if you are eligible for a lower income tax treaty rate, we generally will be required to withhold U.S. federal income tax at a 30% rate (rather than the lower income tax treaty rate) on dividend payments to you, unless you have furnished to us a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, your status as a non-U.S. person and your entitlement to the lower income tax treaty rate with respect to such payments. If you are eligible for a reduced rate of U.S. withholding tax under an income tax treaty, you may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld in excess of that rate by filing a refund claim with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

If dividends paid to you are effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business within the United States, and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the dividends are attributable to a permanent establishment that you maintain in the United States, we generally are not required to withhold tax from the dividends, provided that you have furnished to us a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8ECI or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, your status as a non-U.S. person and your entitlement to this exemption from withholding. In lieu of withholding, such dividends are taxed at rates applicable to U.S. citizens, resident aliens and domestic U.S. corporations. If you are a corporate non-U.S. holder, effectively connected dividends that you receive may, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate or at a lower rate if you are eligible for the benefits of an income tax treaty that provides for a lower rate.

Gain on Disposition of Common Stock

Subject to the discussion below regarding FATCA, if you are a non-U.S. holder, you generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on gain that you recognize on a disposition of our common stock unless:

you are an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of disposition and certain other conditions are met;

such gain is effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business within the United States and, if required by an applicable tax treaty, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment maintained by you;

you are subject to the Code provisions applicable to certain U.S. expatriates; or

we are or have been a U.S. real property holding corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes and either our common stock has ceased to be regularly traded on an established securities market prior to the beginning of the calendar year in which the disposition occurs or you have held, directly or constructively at any time during the five-year period ending on the date of disposition or such shorter period that you held such shares, more than 5% of our common stock. We have not been, are not and do not anticipate becoming a U.S. real property holding corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

If you recognize gain on a sale or other disposition of our common stock that is effectively connected with your conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by you in the United States), you generally will be taxed on such gain in the same manner as a U.S. person. You should consult your tax adviser with respect to other U.S. tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of our common stock, including the possible imposition of a branch profits tax at a rate of 30% (or a lower treaty rate) if you are a corporation.

S-11

Table of Contents

Federal Estate Taxes

If you hold our common stock at the time of death, such stock will be included in your gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes, unless an applicable estate tax treaty provides otherwise.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

If you are a non-U.S. holder, you generally are exempt from backup withholding and information reporting with respect to dividend payments and the payment of the proceeds from the sale of our common stock effected at a U.S. office of a broker, as long as:

the payor or broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a U.S. person; and

you have furnished to the payor or broker a valid Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, that you are a non-U.S. person, or other documentation upon which it may rely to treat the payments as made to a non-U.S. person in accordance with U.S. Treasury regulations (or you otherwise establish an exemption).

Payment of the proceeds from the sale of our common stock effected at a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, a sale of our common stock that is effected at a foreign office of a broker will be subject to information reporting and backup withholding if:

the proceeds are transferred to an account maintained by you in the United States;

the payment of proceeds or the confirmation of the sale is mailed to you at a U.S. address; or

the sale has some other specified connection with the United States as provided in U.S. Treasury regulations, unless the documentation requirements described above are met or you otherwise establish an exemption and the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a U.S. person.

In addition, a sale of our common stock will be subject to information reporting if it is effected at a foreign office of a broker that is:

a U.S. person;

a controlled foreign corporation for U.S. tax purposes;

Edgar Filing: CAI International, Inc. - Form 424B5

a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income is effectively connected with the conduct of a U.S. trade or business for a specified three-year period; or

a foreign partnership, if at any time during its tax year one or more of its partners are U.S. persons, as defined in U.S. Treasury regulations, who in the aggregate hold more than 50% of the income or capital interest in the partnership, or such foreign partnership is engaged in the conduct of a U.S. trade or business, unless the documentation requirements described above are met or you otherwise establish an exemption and the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a U.S. person. Backup withholding will apply if the sale is subject to information reporting and the broker has actual knowledge that you are a U.S. person.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. You generally may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules that exceed your income tax liability by filing a refund claim with the Internal Revenue Service.

S-12

Table of Contents

In addition to the foregoing, we must report annually to the Internal Revenue Service and to you on Internal Revenue Service Form 1042-S the entire amount of any distribution made with respect to our common stock. This information may also be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which you reside under the provisions of an applicable income tax treaty.

FATCA

Provisions of the Code commonly referred to as FATCA require withholding of 30% on payments of dividends on our common stock, as well as of gross proceeds from dispositions occurring after December 31, 2018 of our common stock, to foreign financial institutions (which is broadly defined for this purpose and in general includes investment vehicles) and certain other non-U.S. entities unless various U.S. information reporting and due diligence requirements (generally relating to ownership by U.S. persons of interests in or accounts with those entities) have been satisfied, or an exemption applies. An intergovernmental agreement between the United States and an applicable foreign country may modify these requirements. If FATCA withholding is imposed, a beneficial owner that is not a foreign financial institution generally may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld by filing a U.S. federal income tax return (which may entail significant administrative burden). You should consult your tax adviser regarding the effects of FATCA on your investment in our common stock.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION (CONFLICTS OF INTEREST)

We have entered into the Sales Agreement with Merrill Lynch and Wells Fargo as our sales agents, under which we may offer and sell up to 2,000,000 shares of our common stock from time to time. The sales, if any, of shares of our common stock made under the Sales Agreement may be made in sales deemed to be at-the-market offerings as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act, including by sales made directly on or through the NYSE or another market for our common stock, sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange or otherwise, in negotiated transactions at market prices prevailing at the time of sale or at negotiated prices, or as otherwise agreed with the applicable sales agent.

We will designate the maximum amount of shares of our common stock to be sold through the sales agents on a daily basis or otherwise as we and the sales agents agree and the minimum price per share at which such shares may be sold. We will submit orders to only one sales agent relating to the sales of shares of our common stock on any given day. Subject to the terms and conditions of the Sales Agreement, the sales agents will use their commercially reasonable efforts to sell on our behalf all of the designated shares. We may instruct the sales agents not to sell any shares if the sales cannot be effected at or above the price designated by us in any such instruction. We or the sales agents may suspend the offering of shares at any time and from time to time by notifying the other party. We cannot predict the number of shares that we may sell hereby or if any shares will be sold.

We will pay each sales agent a commission of up to 2.0% of the gross sales price per share sold through it as our agent under the Sales Agreement. We have agreed to pay or reimburse certain of the expenses of the sales agents.

The applicable sales agent will provide to us written confirmation following the close of trading on the NYSE each day in which shares are sold under the Sales Agreement. Each confirmation will include the number of shares sold on that day, the gross sales proceeds, the net proceeds to us (after deducting any expenses payable by us and any transaction fees, transfer taxes or similar taxes or fees imposed by any governmental entity or self-regulatory organization in respect of such sales) and the compensation payable by us to the sales agents. We will report in a prospectus supplement and/or our filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), at least quarterly the number of shares sold by or through the sales agents under the Sales Agreement, the net proceeds to us and the aggregate compensation of the sales agents in connection with the sales of the shares.

Settlement for sales of shares will occur in return for payment of the net proceeds to us in accordance with the standard settlement cycle provided in Rule 15c6-1(a) under the Exchange Act, unless the parties agree otherwise. There is no arrangement for funds to be received in an escrow, trust or similar arrangement.

Under the terms of the Sales Agreement, we also may sell shares of our common stock to a sales agent, as principal for its own account, at a price per share agreed upon at the time of sale. If we sell shares to a sales agent as principal, we will enter into a separate terms agreement with such sales agent and we will describe the agreement in a separate prospectus supplement or pricing supplement.

If we have reason to believe that shares of our common stock are no longer an actively-traded security as defined under Rule 101(c)(1) of Regulation M under the Exchange Act, we will promptly notify the other party and sales of shares pursuant to the Sales Agreement or any terms agreement will be suspended until in our collective judgment Rule 101(c)(1) or another exemptive provision has been satisfied.

The offering of shares pursuant to the Sales Agreement will terminate upon the earlier of (1) the sale of all shares subject to the Sales Agreement or (2) the termination of the Sales Agreement by us or by the sales agents.

In connection with the sale of shares of our common stock on our behalf, the sales agents may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act, and the compensation paid to the sales agents may be

S-14

Table of Contents

deemed to be underwriting commissions or discounts. We have agreed to provide indemnification and contribution to the sales agents against certain liabilities, including civil liabilities under the Securities Act.

We estimate that the total expenses of this offering payable by us, excluding commissions payable to the sales agents under the Sales Agreement, will be approximately \$450,000.

The sales agents and their respective affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include sales and trading, commercial and investment banking, advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, market making, brokerage and other financial and non-financial activities and services. The sales agents and their respective affiliates have provided, and may in the future provide, a variety of these services to us and to persons and entities with relationships with us, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses.

In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the sales agents and their respective affiliates, officers, directors and employees may purchase, sell or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade securities, derivatives, loans, commodities, currencies, credit default swaps and other financial instruments for their own account and for the accounts of their customers, and such investment and trading activities may involve or relate to our assets, securities and/or instruments (directly, as collateral securing other obligations or otherwise) and/or persons and entities with relationships with us. The sales agents and their respective affiliates may also communicate independent investment recommendations, market color or trading ideas and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such assets, securities or instruments and may at any time hold, or recommend to clients that they should acquire, long and/or short positions in such assets, securities and instruments.

Affiliates of Merrill Lynch and Wells Fargo are lenders under our senior secured revolving credit facility and may receive a portion of the net proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock if we use such proceeds to repay borrowings thereunder. Because of this relationship, they may be deemed to have a conflict of interest under FINRA Rule 5121. Therefore, the offering will be made in compliance with such rule. In accordance with that rule, no qualified independent underwriter is required, because a bona fide public market exists in the shares, as that term is defined in the rule.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of the common stock offered by us in this offering will be passed upon for us by Perkins Coie LLP, Palo Alto, California. Certain legal matters in connection with the offering will be passed upon for the underwriters by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, Menlo Park, California.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of CAI International, Inc. and our subsidiaries as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016, the related financial statement schedule II, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 have been incorporated by reference herein, in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus supplement is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the SEC. That registration statement contains more information than this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus regarding us and our securities, including certain exhibits and schedules. You can obtain a copy of the registration statement from the SEC at the address listed below or from the SEC's website.

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Such reports and other information can be read and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC also maintains a website at www.sec.gov that contains reports, registration statements, proxy and information statements and other information regarding registrants like us that file electronically with the SEC. Our filings with the SEC, as well as additional information about us, are also available to the public through our website at www.capps.com and are made available as soon as reasonably practicable after such material is filed with or furnished to the SEC. Information contained on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not incorporated into this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or our other securities filings and does not form a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and later information filed with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all documents subsequently filed with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to the termination of the offering under this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus (other than information deemed furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules, including Items 2.02 and 7.01 of Form 8-K):

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, filed on March 13, 2017;

Edgar Filing: CAI International, Inc. - Form 424B5

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2017, June 30, 2017 and September 30, 2017, filed on May 4, 2017, August 1, 2017 and October 20, 2017, respectively;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on May 26, 2017, June 7, 2017, June 19, 2017 (solely with respect to Item 8.01), June 22, 2017, July 11, 2017 and July 28, 2017;

S-16

Table of Contents

the portions of our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed with the SEC on April 18, 2017 in connection with the 2017 annual meeting of stockholders that are incorporated by reference in the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016; and

the description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on March 28, 2007, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description.

You may request a copy of these filings (other than an exhibit to a filing unless that exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference into that filing) at no cost, by writing to or telephoning us at the following address: CAI International, Inc., Steuart Tower, 1 Market Plaza, Suite 900, San Francisco, CA 94105, Attn: Investor Relations, telephone: (415) 788-0100.

S-17

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

CAI INTERNATIONAL, INC.

\$300,000,000

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Debt Securities

Convertible Debt Securities

Warrants

Units

3,000,000 Shares of Common Stock Offered by Selling Stockholders

We may, from time to time in one or more offerings, offer and sell up to \$300,000,000 in the aggregate of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities, warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or convertible debt securities, and units of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities or warrants, in any combination. In addition, the selling stockholders may offer and sell, from time to time, up to an aggregate of 3,000,000 shares of common stock under this prospectus. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

This prospectus provides a general description of the securities we may offer. We will provide the specific terms of the securities offered in one or more supplements to this prospectus. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you in connection with these offerings. You should read carefully this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, as well as any documents incorporated by reference before you invest in any of our securities. **This prospectus may not be used to offer or sell any securities unless accompanied by the applicable prospectus supplement.**

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CAI. On May 11, 2017, the last reported sales price of our common stock was \$20.29 per share. The applicable prospectus supplement will contain information, where applicable, as to any other listing on the New York Stock Exchange or any securities market or other exchange of the securities, if any, covered by the prospectus supplement.

The securities may be offered directly by us, or to or through underwriters, dealers or agents. For additional information on the method of sale, you should refer to the section entitled Plan of Distribution. The names of any underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the sale of any securities and the specific manner in which they may be offered, including any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement between or among them, will be set forth in the prospectus supplement covering the sale of those securities.

Investing in our securities involves risk. You should carefully review the risks and uncertainties described under the heading Risk Factors beginning on page 1 and in the documents which are incorporated by reference herein, and contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is June 2, 2017.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | ii |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | 1 |
| <u>The Company</u> | 1 |
| <u>Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 1 |
| <u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u> | 2 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 2 |
| <u>Dividend Policy</u> | 2 |
| <u>Selling Stockholders</u> | 2 |
| <u>Description of Capital Stock</u> | 3 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 6 |
| <u>Description of Convertible Debt Securities</u> | 13 |
| <u>Use of Global Securities</u> | 21 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 23 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 24 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 25 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 27 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 27 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | 27 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u> | 27 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may from time to time sell common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities, warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or convertible debt securities, and units of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities or warrants, in any combination, in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$300,000,000 and the selling stockholders may sell up to 3,000,000 shares of common stock in one or more offerings. We have provided to you in this prospectus a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we or the selling stockholders sell securities under this shelf registration, we will, to the extent required by law, provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you that may contain material information relating to these offerings. The prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in any documents that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus and the prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus, you should rely on the information in the prospectus supplement or the related free writing prospectus; provided that if any statement in one of these documents is inconsistent with a statement in another document having a later date—for example, a document incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus—the statement in the document having the later date modifies or supersedes the earlier statement.

Neither we nor the selling stockholders have authorized any dealer, agent or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or an accompanying prospectus supplement. This prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, if any, do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference (as our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date), even though this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

As permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC, the registration statement, of which this prospectus forms a part, includes additional information not contained in this prospectus. You may read the registration statement and the other reports we file with the SEC at the SEC's website or at the SEC's offices described below under the heading "Where You Can Find Additional Information."

Unless the context otherwise indicates, references in this prospectus to CAI, the Company, we, us and our are to CAI International, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries. The term you refers to a prospective investor.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves risks. You should carefully consider the risks described in the sections entitled "Risk Factors" in any prospectus supplement and those set forth in documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, as well as other information in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, before purchasing any of our securities. Each of the risks described in these sections and documents could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects, and could result in a loss of your investment. Additional risks and uncertainties not known to us or that we deem immaterial may also impair our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

THE COMPANY

We are one of the world's leading transportation finance and logistics companies. We purchase equipment, primarily intermodal shipping containers and railcars, which we lease to our customers. We also manage equipment for third-party investors. In operating our fleet, we lease, re-lease and dispose of equipment and contract for the repair, repositioning and storage of equipment. We also provide domestic and international logistics services.

We were founded in 1989 by our Chairman, Hiromitsu Ogawa, as a traditional container leasing company that leased containers owned by us to container shipping lines. We were originally incorporated under the name Container Applications International, Inc. in the State of Nevada in August 1989. In February 2007, we were reincorporated under our present name in the State of Delaware.

Our corporate headquarters and principal executive offices are located at Steuart Tower, 1 Market Plaza, Suite 900, San Francisco, California 94105. Our telephone number is (415) 788-0100. Our website address is www.capps.com. Information contained on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not incorporated into this prospectus or our other filings with the SEC, and does not form a part of this prospectus.

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain statements in this prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference or our other public statements include forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. All statements in this prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference or our other public statements, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements include, without limitation, statements concerning the conditions in our industry, our operations, our economic performance and financial condition, including, in particular, statements relating to our business, operations, and growth strategy and service development efforts. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides a "safe harbor" for certain forward-looking statements so long as such information is identified as forward-looking and is accompanied by meaningful cautionary statements identifying important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected in the information. Words such as *may*, *might*, *should*, *estimate*, *project*, *plan*, *anticipate*, *intend*, *outlook*, *believe* and other similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements and information. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of their dates. These forward-looking statements are based on estimates and assumptions by our management that, although we believe to be reasonable, are inherently uncertain and subject to a number of risks and uncertainties. These risks and uncertainties include, without limitation, those identified under the caption "Risk Factors" in this prospectus, in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus, in any prospectus supplement and in any of our other public filings, including our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as otherwise required by law.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

The following table sets forth consolidated ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the last five fiscal years and for the three months ended March 31, 2017. You should read this table in conjunction with the consolidated financial statements and notes incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

| | Year Ended December 31 | | | | | Three Months |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Ended March 31, 2017 |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges(1) | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.7 |

- (1) For purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings available for fixed charges consists of income from continuing operations before income taxes, extraordinary items, cumulative effect of accounting changes, equity in net income of affiliates and fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and capitalized interest and an estimate of interest expense within rental expense. No preferred stock dividends were paid during the periods presented.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of any securities offered by us under this prospectus for general corporate purposes, which may include repayment or refinancing of debt, acquisitions, working capital, capital expenditures, and repurchases or redemptions of securities. We will retain broad discretion over the allocation of net proceeds from the sale of any securities offered by us. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

DIVIDEND POLICY

We currently intend to retain earnings to reinvest for future operations and growth of our business and do not anticipate paying any cash dividends on our common stock. However, our board of directors, in its discretion, may decide to declare a dividend at an appropriate time in the future. A decision to pay a dividend would depend upon, among other factors, our results of operations, financial condition and cash requirements and the terms of our financing agreements at the time such a payment is considered.

SELLING STOCKHOLDERS

The selling stockholders, including their transferees, pledgees or donees or their successors, may from time to time offer and sell pursuant to this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement up to an aggregate of 3,000,000 shares of our common stock. All of such shares were issued to one selling stockholder from time to time since our inception in connection with founders' or compensatory transactions that were exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act).

Information about selling stockholders, where applicable, will be set forth in a prospectus supplement, in a post-effective amendment, or in filings we make with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), which are incorporated by reference.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

We may offer shares of our capital stock, including common stock and preferred stock. We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement a description of the preferred stock that may be offered under this prospectus. The terms of the offering of securities, the initial offering price, and the net proceeds to us will be contained in the prospectus supplement and other offering material, relating to such offering. A general description of our currently authorized shares of capital stock is set forth below.

General

Our authorized capital stock consists of 84,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.0001 par value per share, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.0001 par value per share. The following summary of some of the terms relating to our common stock, preferred stock, certificate of incorporation and bylaws is not complete and may not contain all the information you should consider before investing in our common stock. You should read carefully our certificate of incorporation and bylaws.

Common Stock

The holders of common stock are entitled to one vote per share on all matters to be voted on by the common stockholders. The holders of our common stock are not entitled to cumulative voting in the election of our directors, which means that the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of our common stock will be entitled to elect all of the directors standing for election. Subject to preferences of any outstanding shares of preferred stock, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably any dividends our board of directors may declare out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends. If we are liquidated, dissolved or wound up, the holders of common stock are entitled to share pro rata all assets remaining after payment of or provision for our liabilities and liquidation preferences of any outstanding shares of preferred stock. Holders of common stock have no preemptive rights or rights to convert their common stock into any other securities. There are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to the common stock. All outstanding shares of common stock are fully paid and nonassessable, and the shares of common stock to be issued in this offering will be fully paid and nonassessable.

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors has the authority, without further action by the stockholders, to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock from time to time in one or more series. The board of directors also has the authority to fix the designations, voting powers, preferences, privileges and relative rights and the limitations of any series of preferred stock, including dividend rights, conversion rights, voting rights, terms of redemption and liquidation preferences, any or all of which may be greater than the rights of the common stock. The board of directors, without stockholder approval, can issue preferred stock with voting, conversion or other rights that could adversely affect the voting power and other rights of the holders of common stock. Preferred stock could thus be issued quickly with terms that could delay or prevent a change of control of us or make removal of management more difficult. Additionally, the issuance of preferred stock may decrease the market price of the common stock and may adversely affect the voting, economic and other rights of the holders of common stock.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Certain Provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation, Bylaws and Delaware Law

Provisions of our certificate of incorporation, our bylaws and Delaware law could have the effect of delaying or preventing a third party from acquiring us, even if the acquisition would benefit our stockholders. These provisions may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer or takeover attempt of our company that a stockholder might consider in his

or her best interest, including those attempts that might result in a premium over the market price for the shares held by our stockholders. These provisions are intended to enhance the

Table of Contents

likelihood of continuity and stability in the composition of our board of directors and in the policies formulated by the board of directors and to discourage types of transactions that may involve our actual or threatened change of control. These provisions are designed to reduce our vulnerability to an unsolicited proposal for a takeover that does not contemplate the acquisition of all of our outstanding shares, or an unsolicited proposal for the restructuring or sale of all or part of us.

Authorized but Unissued Shares of Common Stock and Preferred Stock. Our authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock are available for our board of directors to issue without stockholder approval. As noted above, our board of directors, without stockholder approval, has the authority under our certificate of incorporation to issue preferred stock with rights superior to the rights of the holders of common stock. As a result, preferred stock could be issued quickly and easily, could adversely affect the rights of holders of common stock and could be issued with terms calculated to delay or prevent a change of control or make removal of management more difficult. We may use the additional authorized shares of common or preferred stock for a variety of corporate purposes, including future public offerings to raise additional capital, corporate acquisitions and employee benefit plans. The existence of our authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock could render more difficult or discourage an attempt to obtain control of our company by means of a proxy contest, tender offer, merger or other transaction.

Classified Board of Directors; Election and Removal of Directors. Our certificate of incorporation provides for the division of our board of directors into three classes, as nearly as equal in number as possible, with the directors in each class serving for three-year terms, and one class being elected each year by our stockholders. In addition, our directors are removable only for cause by the holders of not less than a majority of the shares entitled to vote at the election of directors. Furthermore, any vacancies on the board of directors may be filled only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the directors then in office and only the board of directors may increase the size of the board of directors. Because this system of electing, appointing and removing directors generally makes it more difficult for stockholders to replace a majority of the board of directors, it may discourage a third party from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to gain control of us and may maintain the incumbency of the board of directors.

Stockholder Action; Special Meetings of Stockholders. Our certificate of incorporation eliminates the ability of stockholders to act by written consent. Our bylaws provide that special meetings of our stockholders may be called only by the Chairman of the board of directors or by a majority of our board of directors.

Advance Notice Requirements for Stockholders Proposals and Director Nominations. Our bylaws provide that stockholders seeking to bring business before an annual meeting of stockholders, or to nominate candidates for election as directors at an annual meeting of stockholders, must provide us with timely written notice of their proposal. Our bylaws also specify requirements as to the form and content of a stockholder's notice. These provisions may preclude stockholders from bringing matters before an annual meeting of stockholders or from making nominations for directors at an annual meeting of stockholders.

Amendment of Bylaws. Our directors are expressly authorized to amend our bylaws.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Statute. We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, an anti-takeover law. Subject to exceptions, the statute prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person became an interested stockholder, unless:

prior to such date, the board of directors of the corporation approved either the business combination or the transaction which resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder;

upon consummation of the transaction which resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced, excluding for purposes of determining the number

Table of Contents

of shares outstanding, those shares owned: (1) by persons who are directors and also officers; and (2) by employee stock plans in which employee participants do not have the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer; or

on or after such date, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and authorized at an annual or special meeting of stockholders and not by written consent, by the affirmative vote of at least 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ % of the outstanding voting stock which is not owned by the interested stockholder.

For purposes of Section 203, a business combination includes a merger, asset sale or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder, with an interested stockholder being defined as a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or within three years prior to the date of determination whether the person is an interested stockholder, did own, 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock.

Registration Rights

We are a party to an Amended and Restated Registration Rights Agreement dated February 16, 2007, with Mr. Ogawa and DBJ Value Up Fund, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Development Bank of Japan Inc. (DBJ). Effective December 24, 2008, the 1,691,760 shares of Common Stock owned by DBJ Value Up Fund, were transferred to DBJ. As of the date of this prospectus, DBJ Value Up Fund does not own, directly or indirectly, shares of CAI International, Inc.

Pursuant to this Registration Rights Agreement, Mr. Ogawa and DBJ have certain demand registration rights with respect to shares of our common stock. Pursuant to the Registration Rights Agreement, each of Mr. Ogawa and DBJ may request, subject to certain exceptions, that we file a registration statement under the Securities Act covering their shares, if the anticipated aggregate offering price is at least \$5.0 million (net of underwriting discounts and commissions). Mr. Ogawa and DBJ will be entitled to request no more than three demand registrations.

Also pursuant to the Registration Rights Agreement, Mr. Ogawa and DBJ have certain piggyback registration rights with respect to shares of our common stock. Accordingly, if we propose to register any of our common stock under the Securities Act we are required to notify Mr. Ogawa and DBJ and to include in such registration all the shares of common stock requested to be included by them, subject to certain limitations. Under the terms of the Registration Rights Agreement, we are generally obligated to pay all the expenses associated with any demand or piggyback registrations.

Pre-emptive Rights

Under Delaware law, a stockholder is not entitled to pre-emptive rights to subscribe for additional issuances of common stock or any other class of series of common stock or any security convertible into such stock in proportion to the shares that are owned unless there is a provision to the contrary in the certificate of incorporation. Our certificate of incorporation does not provide that our stockholders are entitled to pre-emptive rights.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for the common stock is Computershare Trust Company, N.A.

New York Stock Exchange Listing

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CAI.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following summary of the terms of the debt securities describes general terms that apply to the debt securities. The debt securities offered pursuant to this prospectus will be either senior debt or subordinated debt. The particular terms of any debt securities will be described more specifically in each prospectus supplement relating to those debt securities. Where any provision in an accompanying prospectus supplement is inconsistent with any provision in this summary, the prospectus supplement will control.

Senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities will be issued under either of two debt indentures summarized below. Where we make no distinction in our summary between senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities, the applicable information refers to any debt securities. Since this is only a summary, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. A form of senior debt indenture relating to senior debt securities and a form of subordinated debt indenture relating to subordinated debt securities are exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We encourage you to read those documents.

General

The indentures do not limit the aggregate principal amount of debt securities we may issue and provide that we may issue debt securities thereunder from time to time in one or more series. The indentures do not limit the amount of other indebtedness or debt securities, other than certain secured indebtedness as described below, which we may issue. Under the indentures, the terms of the debt securities of any series may differ and we, without the consent of the holders of the debt securities of any series, may reopen a previous series of debt securities and issue additional debt securities of the series or establish additional terms of the series.

Unless otherwise provided in a prospectus supplement, the senior debt securities will be our unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and senior indebtedness, and the subordinated debt securities will be unsecured obligations of ours and, as set forth below under Subordinated Debt Securities, will be subordinated in right of payment to all of our senior indebtedness.

Because some of our assets are held in subsidiaries, our rights and the rights of our creditors (including the holders of debt securities) and stockholders to participate in any distribution of assets of any subsidiary upon the subsidiary's liquidation or reorganization or otherwise may be subject to the prior claims of the subsidiary's creditors, except to the extent that we may be a creditor with recognized claims against the subsidiary.

You should refer to the prospectus supplement that accompanies this prospectus for a description of the specific series of debt securities we are offering by that prospectus supplement. The terms may include:

the title and specific designation of the debt securities, including whether they are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities or the series of which they are a part;

whether the debt securities are to be issuable as registered securities, as bearer securities or alternatively as bearer securities and registered securities, and if as bearer securities, whether interest on any portion of a

bearer security in global form will be paid to any clearing organizations;

the date or dates on which we must pay principal;

the currency or currencies, or composite currencies, in which the debt securities will be denominated and in which we will make payments on the debt securities;

the rate or rates at which the debt securities will bear interest or the manner in which interest will be determined, if any interest is payable;

Table of Contents

the date or dates from which any interest will accrue, the date or dates on which we must pay interest and the record date for determining who is entitled to any interest payment;

the place or places where we must pay the debt securities and where any debt securities issued in registered form may be sent for transfer or exchange;

the terms and conditions on which we may, or may be required to, redeem the debt securities;

the terms and conditions of any sinking fund;

if other than denominations of \$1,000, the denominations in which we may issue the debt securities;

the amount we will pay if the maturity of the debt securities is accelerated;

whether we will issue the debt securities in the form of one or more global securities and, if so, the identity of the depository for the global security or securities;

any addition to or changes in the events of default or covenants that apply to the debt securities;

whether the debt securities will be defeasible; and

any other terms of the debt securities and any other deletions from or modifications or additions to the applicable indenture in respect of the debt securities, including those relating to the subordination of any debt securities.

Unless the accompanying prospectus supplement specifies otherwise, the debt securities will not be listed on any securities exchange.

Unless the accompanying prospectus supplement specifies otherwise, we will issue the debt securities in fully registered form without coupons. If we issue debt securities of any series in bearer form, the accompanying prospectus supplement will describe the special restrictions and considerations, including special offering restrictions and special federal income tax considerations, applicable to those debt securities and to payment on and transfer and exchange of those debt securities. Debt securities issued in bearer form will be transferable by delivery.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, we will pay principal, premium, interest and additional amounts, if any, on the debt securities at the office or agency we maintain for that purpose (initially the corporate trust office of the trustee). We may pay interest on debt securities issued in registered form by check mailed to the address of the persons entitled to the payments or we may pay by transfer to their U.S. bank accounts. Interest on debt securities issued in registered form will be payable on any interest payment date to the registered owners of the debt securities at the close of business on the regular record date for the interest payment. We will name in the prospectus

supplement all paying agents we initially designate for the debt securities. We may designate additional paying agents, rescind the designation of any paying agent or approve a change in the office through which any paying agent acts, but we must maintain a paying agent in each place where payments on the debt securities are payable.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, the debt securities may be presented for transfer (duly endorsed or accompanied by a written instrument of transfer, if we or the security registrar so requires) or exchanged for other debt securities of the same series (containing identical terms and provisions, in any authorized denominations, and in the same aggregate principal amount) at the office or agency we maintain for that purpose (initially the corporate trust office of the trustee). There will be no service charge for any transfer or exchange, but we may require payment sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge or expenses payable in connection with the transfer or exchange. We will not be required to:

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange, debt securities during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any such debt securities and ending at the close of business on the day of such mailing; or

Table of Contents

register the transfer of or exchange any debt security selected for redemption in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt security being redeemed in part.

We shall appoint the trustee as security registrar. Any transfer agent (in addition to the security registrar) we initially designate for any debt securities will be named in the related prospectus supplement. We may designate additional transfer agents, rescind the designation of any transfer agent or approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts, but we must maintain a transfer agent in each place where any payments on the debt securities are payable.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, we will issue the debt securities only in fully registered form, without coupons, in minimum denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000. The debt securities may be represented in whole or in part by one or more global debt securities. Each global security will be registered in the name of a depository or its nominee and the global security will bear a legend regarding the restrictions on exchanges and registration of transfer. Interests in a global security will be shown on records maintained by the depository and its participants, and transfers of those interests will be made as described below. Provisions relating to the use of global securities are more fully described below in the section entitled **Use of Global Securities**.

We may issue the debt securities as original issue discount securities (bearing no interest or bearing interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates) to be sold at a substantial discount below their principal amount. We will describe certain special U.S. federal income tax and other considerations applicable to any debt securities that are issued as original issue discount securities in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

If the purchase price of any debt securities is payable in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, or if any debt securities are denominated in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, or if any payments on the debt securities are payable in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, we will describe the restrictions, elections, certain U.S. federal income tax considerations, specific terms and other information about the debt securities and the foreign currency or currency units in the prospectus supplement.

We will comply with Section 14(e) under the Exchange Act, and any other tender offer rules under the Exchange Act that may then be applicable, in connection with any obligation to purchase debt securities at the option of the holders. Any such obligation applicable to a series of debt securities will be described in the related prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise described in a prospectus supplement relating to any debt securities, the indentures do not limit our ability to incur debt or give holders of debt securities protection in the event of a sudden and significant decline in our credit quality or a takeover, recapitalization or highly leveraged or similar transaction involving us. Accordingly, we could in the future enter into transactions that could increase the amount of indebtedness outstanding at that time or otherwise affect our capital structure or credit rating. You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of debt securities for information regarding any changes in the events of default described below or covenants contained in the indentures, including any addition of a covenant or other provisions providing event risk or similar protection.

Subordinated Debt Securities

Unless otherwise provided in the accompanying prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply for subordinated debt securities.

Before we pay the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on, the subordinated debt securities, we must be current and not in default on payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness. Senior indebtedness includes all of our indebtedness as described below, except for:

obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property;

Table of Contents

conditional sale obligations;

obligations arising under any title retention agreements;

indebtedness relating to the applicable subordinated debt securities;

indebtedness owed to one of our subsidiaries; and

indebtedness that, by its terms, is subordinate in right of payment to or equal with the applicable subordinated debt securities.

Generally indebtedness means:

the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on indebtedness for money borrowed;

the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on indebtedness evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments;

obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all conditional sale obligations and all obligations arising under any title retention agreements;

obligations for the reimbursement of any obligor on any letter of credit, banker's acceptance or similar credit transaction (other than obligations with respect to certain letters of credit securing obligations entered into in the ordinary course of business);

obligations of the type referred to in the bullet points above assumed for another party and dividends of another party for the payment of which, in either case, one is responsible or liable as obligor, guarantor or otherwise; and

obligations assumed of the types referred to in the bullet points above for another party secured by any lien on any of one's property or assets.

Indebtedness does not include amounts owed pursuant to trade accounts arising in the ordinary course of business.

Generally, we may not pay the principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the subordinated debt securities if, at the time of payment (or immediately after giving effect to such payment):

there exists under any senior indebtedness, or any agreement under which any senior indebtedness is issued, any default, which default results in the full amount of the senior indebtedness being declared due and payable; or

the trustee has received written notice from a holder of senior indebtedness stating that there exists under the senior indebtedness, or any agreement under which the senior indebtedness is issued, a default, which default permits the holders of the senior indebtedness to declare the full amount of the senior indebtedness due and payable;

unless, among other things, in either case:

the default has been cured or waived; or

full payment of amounts then due for principal and interest and of all other obligations then due on all senior indebtedness has been made or duly provided for under the terms of any instrument governing senior indebtedness.

Limited subordination periods apply in the event of non-payment defaults relating to senior indebtedness in situations where there has not been an acceleration of senior indebtedness.

A failure to make any payment on the subordinated debt securities as a result of the foregoing provisions will not affect our obligations to the holders of the subordinated debt securities to pay the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities as and when such payment obligations become due.

Table of Contents

The holders of senior indebtedness will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on senior indebtedness, or provisions will be made for such payment, before the holders of the subordinated debt securities are entitled to receive any payment or distribution of any kind relating to the subordinated debt securities or on account of any purchase or other acquisition of the subordinated debt securities by us or any of our subsidiaries, in the event of:

insolvency or bankruptcy case or proceeding, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar case, relating to us or our assets;

any liquidation, dissolution or other winding up of the Company, whether voluntary or involuntary and whether or not involving insolvency or bankruptcy; or

any assignment for the benefit of our creditors or any other marshalling of our assets and liabilities.

In addition, the rights of the holders of the subordinated debt securities will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of senior indebtedness to receive payments and distributions of cash, property and securities applicable to the senior indebtedness until the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities are paid in full.

Because of these subordination provisions, our creditors who hold senior indebtedness or other unsubordinated indebtedness may recover a greater percentage of the debt owed to them than the holders of the subordinated debt securities.

The indenture covering subordinated debt securities will not limit the aggregate amount of senior indebtedness that we may issue. If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with the offering of a series of subordinated debt securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference will set forth the approximate amount of senior debt outstanding as of a recent date.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We may not consolidate with or merge into any other person or convey or transfer or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person unless:

if we consolidate with or merge into another corporation or convey or transfer our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, the successor is organized under the laws of the United States, or any state, and assumes our obligations under the debt securities;

immediately after the transaction, no event of default occurs and continues; and

we meet certain other conditions specified in the indentures.

Modification and Waiver

We and the trustee may modify and amend the indentures without the consent of the holders of the outstanding debt securities of each affected series, in order to, among other things:

evidence the succession of another corporation to us and the assumption of all of our obligations under the debt securities, any related coupons and our covenants by a successor;

add to our covenants for the benefit of holders of debt securities or surrender any of our rights or powers;

add additional events of default for any series;

add, change or eliminate any provision affecting debt securities that are not yet issued;

secure certain debt securities;

Table of Contents

establish the form or terms of debt securities not yet issued;

make provisions with respect to conversion or exchange rights of holders of debt securities;

evidence and provide for successor trustees; or

correct or supplement any inconsistent provisions, cure any ambiguity or mistake, or add any other provisions, on the condition that this action does not adversely affect the interests of any holder of debt securities of any series issued under the indentures in any material respect.

In addition, we and the trustee may modify and amend the indentures with the consent of the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each affected series. However, without the consent of each holder, we cannot modify or amend the indentures in a way that would:

change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal or interest on, any debt security;

reduce the principal or interest on any debt security;

change the place or currency of payment of principal or interest on any debt security;

impair the right to sue to enforce any payment on any debt security after it is due; or

reduce the percentage in principal amount of outstanding debt securities necessary to modify or amend the indentures, to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indentures or to waive certain defaults.

The holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities may waive our compliance with certain restrictive covenants of the indentures. The holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may waive any past default under the indentures with respect to outstanding debt securities of that series, which will be binding on all holders of debt securities of that series, except a default in the payment of principal or interest on any debt security of that series or in respect of a provision of the indentures that cannot be modified or amended without each holder's consent.

Events of Default

Each of the following will be an event of default:

default for 30 days in the payment of any interest;

default in the payment of principal;

default in the deposit of any sinking fund payment;

default in the performance of any other covenant in the indentures for 90 days after written notice; and

certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

We are required to furnish the trustee annually a statement as to our fulfillment of our obligations under the indentures. The trustee may withhold notice of any default to the holders of debt securities of any series (except for a default on principal or interest payments on debt securities of that series) if it considers it in the interest of the holders to do so.

If an event of default occurs and continues, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series in default may declare the principal amount immediately due and payable by written notice to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders). Upon any such declaration, the principal amount will become immediately due and payable. However, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, under certain circumstances, rescind and annul the acceleration.

Table of Contents

Except for certain duties in case of an event of default, the trustee is not required to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request or direction of any of the holders, unless the holders offer the trustee reasonable security or indemnity. If the holders provide this security or indemnity, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, or exercising any trust or powers conferred on the trustee with respect to the debt securities of that series.

No holder of a debt security may bring any lawsuit or other proceeding with respect to the indentures or for any remedy under the indentures, unless:

the holder first gives the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series in default give the trustee a written request to bring the proceeding and offer the trustee reasonable security or indemnity; and

the trustee fails to institute the proceeding within 60 days of the written request and has not received from holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series in default a direction inconsistent with that request.

However, the holder of any debt security has the absolute right to receive payment of the principal of and any interest on the debt security on or after the stated due dates and to take any action to enforce any such payment.

Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

We may discharge certain obligations to holders of any series of debt securities that have not already been delivered to the trustee for cancellation and that either have become due and payable or will become due and payable within one year (or scheduled for redemption within one year) by depositing with the trustee, in trust, funds in U.S. dollars or in the foreign currency in which such debt securities are payable in an amount sufficient to pay the principal and any premium, interest and additional amounts on such debt securities to the date of deposit (if the debt securities have become due and payable) or to the maturity date, as the case may be.

Unless a prospectus supplement states that the following provisions do not apply to the debt securities of that series, we may elect either:

to defease and be discharged from any and all obligations with respect to such debt securities (except for, among other things, the obligation to pay additional amounts, if any, upon the occurrence of certain events of taxation, assessment or governmental charge with respect to payments on the debt securities and other obligations to register the transfer or exchange of such debt securities, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities, to maintain an office or agency with respect to such debt securities and to hold moneys for payment in trust), such an action a defeasance ; or

to be released from our obligations under the applicable indenture as may be further described in any prospectus supplement, and our failure to comply with these obligations will not constitute an event of default with respect to such debt securities, such an action a covenant defeasance.

Defeasance or covenant defeasance is conditioned on our irrevocable deposit with the trustee, in trust, of an amount in cash or government securities, or both, sufficient to pay the principal of, any premium and interest on, and any additional amounts with respect to, the debt securities on the scheduled due dates. Additional conditions to defeasance or covenant defeasance require that:

the applicable defeasance or covenant defeasance does not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, the applicable indenture or any other material agreement or instrument to which we are a party or by which we are bound;

Table of Contents

no event of default has occurred and continues on the date the trust is established and, with respect to defeasance only, at any time during the period ending on the 123rd day after that date; and

we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of such debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax for the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the defeasance or covenant defeasance had not occurred. This opinion, in the case of defeasance, must refer to and be based upon a letter ruling we have received from the Internal Revenue Service, a Revenue Ruling published by the Internal Revenue Service, or a change in applicable U.S. federal income tax law occurring after the date of the indenture.

If we accomplish covenant defeasance on debt securities of certain holders, those holders can still look to us for repayment of their debt securities in the event of any shortfall in the trust deposit. If one of the remaining events of default occurred, such as our bankruptcy, and the debt securities became immediately due and payable, there may be a shortfall. Depending on the event causing the default, such holders may not be able to obtain payment of the shortfall.

In the case of subordinated debt securities, the subordination provisions described under Subordinated Debt Securities above are made subject to the provisions for defeasance and covenant defeasance. In other words, if we accomplish defeasance or covenant defeasance on any subordinated debt securities, such securities would cease to be so subordinated.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by and interpreted under the laws of the State of New York.

DESCRIPTION OF CONVERTIBLE DEBT SECURITIES

The following summary of the terms of the convertible debt securities describes general terms that apply to the convertible debt securities. The convertible debt securities offered pursuant to this prospectus will be either convertible senior debt or convertible subordinated debt. The particular terms of any convertible debt securities will be described more specifically in each prospectus supplement relating to those convertible debt securities. Where any provision in an accompanying prospectus supplement is inconsistent with any provision in this summary, the prospectus supplement will control.

Convertible senior debt securities and convertible subordinated debt securities will be issued under either of two debt indentures summarized below. The indentures are the same as the indentures described above under Description of Debt Securities. Where we make no distinction in our summary between convertible senior debt securities and convertible subordinated debt securities, the applicable information refers to any convertible debt securities. Since this is only a summary, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. We may issue convertible debt securities under our senior debt indenture and our subordinated debt indenture, and forms of each of these indentures are exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We encourage you to read those documents.

General

The indentures do not limit the aggregate principal amount of convertible debt securities we may issue and provides that we may issue convertible debt securities thereunder from time to time in one or more series. The indentures do not limit the amount of other indebtedness or convertible debt securities, other than certain secured

Table of Contents

indebtedness as described below, which we or our subsidiaries may issue. Under the indentures, the terms of the convertible debt securities of any series may differ and we, without the consent of the holders of the convertible debt securities of any series, may reopen a previous series of convertible debt securities and issue additional convertible debt securities of the series or establish additional terms of the series.

Unless otherwise provided in a prospectus supplement, the convertible senior debt securities will be our unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and senior indebtedness, and the convertible subordinated debt securities will be unsecured obligations of ours and, as set forth below under **Convertible Subordinated Debt Securities**, will be subordinated in right of payment to all of our senior indebtedness.

Because some of our assets are held in subsidiaries, our rights and the rights of our creditors (including the holders of convertible debt securities) and stockholders to participate in any distribution of assets of any subsidiary upon the subsidiary's liquidation or reorganization or otherwise may be subject to the prior claims of the subsidiary's creditors, except to the extent that we may be a creditor with recognized claims against the subsidiary.

You should refer to the prospectus supplement that accompanies this prospectus for a description of the specific series of convertible debt securities we are offering by that prospectus supplement. The terms may include:

the title and specific designation of the convertible debt securities, including whether they are convertible senior debt securities or convertible subordinated debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the convertible debt securities or the series of which they are a part;

whether the convertible debt securities are to be issuable as registered securities, as bearer securities or alternatively as bearer securities and registered securities, and if as bearer securities, whether interest on any portion of a bearer security in global form will be paid to any clearing organizations;

the currency or currencies, or composite currencies, in which the convertible debt securities will be denominated and in which we will make payments on the convertible debt securities;

the date or dates on which we must pay principal;

the rate or rates at which the convertible debt securities will bear interest or the manner in which interest will be determined, if any interest is payable;

the date or dates from which any interest will accrue, the date or dates on which we must pay interest and the record date for determining who is entitled to any interest payment;

the place or places where we must pay the convertible debt securities and where any convertible debt securities issued in registered form may be sent for transfer, conversion or exchange;

the terms and conditions on which we may, or may be required to, redeem the convertible debt securities;

the terms and conditions of any sinking fund;

if other than denominations of \$1,000, the denominations in which we may issue the convertible debt securities;

the terms and conditions upon which conversion of the convertible debt securities may be effected, including the conversion price, the conversion period and other conversion provisions;

the amount we will pay if the maturity of the convertible debt securities is accelerated;

whether we will issue the convertible debt securities in the form of one or more global securities and, if so, the identity of the depositary for the global security or securities;

Table of Contents

any addition to or changes in the events of default or covenants that apply to the convertible debt securities;

whether the convertible debt securities will be defeasible; and

any other terms of the convertible debt securities and any other deletions from or modifications or additions to the applicable indenture in respect of the convertible debt securities, including those relating to the subordination of any convertible debt securities.

Unless the accompanying prospectus supplement specifies otherwise, the convertible debt securities will not be listed on any securities exchange.

Unless the accompanying prospectus supplement specifies otherwise, we will issue the convertible debt securities in fully registered form without coupons. If we issue convertible debt securities of any series in bearer form, the accompanying prospectus supplement will describe the special restrictions and considerations, including special offering restrictions and special federal income tax considerations, applicable to those convertible debt securities and to payment on and transfer and exchange of those convertible debt securities. Convertible debt securities issued in bearer form will be transferable by delivery.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, we will pay principal, premium, interest and additional amounts, if any, on the convertible debt securities at the office or agency we maintain for that purpose (initially the corporate trust office of the trustee). We may pay interest on convertible debt securities issued in registered form by check mailed to the address of the persons entitled to the payments or we may pay by transfer to their U.S. bank accounts. Interest on convertible debt securities issued in registered form will be payable on any interest payment date to the registered owners of the convertible debt securities at the close of business on the regular record date for the interest payment. We will name in the prospectus supplement all paying agents we initially designate for the convertible debt securities. We may designate additional paying agents, rescind the designation of any paying agent or approve a change in the office through which any paying agent acts, but we must maintain a paying agent in each place where payments on the convertible debt securities are payable.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, the convertible debt securities may be presented for transfer (duly endorsed or accompanied by a written instrument of transfer, if we or the security registrar so requires) or exchanged for other convertible debt securities of the same series (containing identical terms and provisions, in any authorized denominations, and in the same aggregate principal amount) at the office or agency we maintain for that purpose (initially the corporate trust office of the trustee). There will be no service charge for any transfer or exchange, but we may require payment sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge or expenses payable in connection with the transfer or exchange. We will not be required to:

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange, convertible debt securities during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any such convertible debt securities and ending at the close of business on the day of such mailing; or

register the transfer of or exchange any debt security selected for redemption in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt security being redeemed in part.

We shall appoint the trustee as security registrar. Any transfer agent (in addition to the security registrar) we initially designate for any convertible debt securities will be named in the related prospectus supplement. We may designate additional transfer agents, rescind the designation of any transfer agent or approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts, but we must maintain a transfer agent in each place where any payments on the convertible debt securities are payable.

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, we will issue the convertible debt securities only in fully registered form, without coupons, in minimum denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000. The convertible debt securities may be represented in whole or in part by one or more global debt securities.

Table of Contents

Each global security will be registered in the name of a depositary or its nominee and the global security will bear a legend regarding the restrictions on exchanges and registration of transfer. Interests in a global security will be shown on records maintained by the depositary and its participants, and transfers of those interests will be made as described below. Provisions relating to the use of global securities are more fully described below in the section entitled "Use of Global Securities."

We may issue the convertible debt securities as original issue discount securities (bearing no interest or bearing interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates) to be sold at a substantial discount below their principal amount. We will describe certain special U.S. federal income tax and other considerations applicable to any convertible debt securities that are issued as original issue discount securities in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

If the purchase price of any convertible debt securities is payable in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, or if any convertible debt securities are denominated in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, or if any payments on the convertible debt securities are payable in one or more foreign currencies or currency units, we will describe the restrictions, elections, certain U.S. federal income tax considerations, specific terms and other information about the convertible debt securities and the foreign currency or currency units in the prospectus supplement.

We will comply with Section 14(e) under the Exchange Act, and any other tender offer rules under the Exchange Act that may then be applicable, in connection with any obligation to purchase convertible debt securities at the option of the holders. Any such obligation applicable to a series of convertible debt securities will be described in the related prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise described in a prospectus supplement relating to any convertible debt securities, the indentures do not limit our ability to incur debt or give holders of convertible debt securities protection in the event of a sudden and significant decline in our credit quality or a takeover, recapitalization or highly leveraged or similar transaction involving us. Accordingly, we could in the future enter into transactions that could increase the amount of indebtedness outstanding at that time or otherwise affect our capital structure or credit rating. You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of convertible debt securities for information regarding any changes in the events of default described below or covenants contained in the indentures, including any addition of a covenant or other provisions providing event risk or similar protection.

Conversion Rights

An accompanying prospectus supplement will set forth the terms on which the convertible debt securities of any series are convertible into common stock or other securities. Those terms will address whether conversion is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. The terms may also provide that the number of shares or interests of our common stock or other securities, as the case may be, to be received by the holders of the convertible debt securities will be calculated according to the market price of our common stock or other securities, as the case may be, as of a time stated in the prospectus supplement or otherwise.

Convertible Subordinated Debt Securities

Unless otherwise provided in the accompanying prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply for convertible subordinated debt securities.

Before we pay the principal of, premium, if any and interest on, the convertible subordinated debt securities, we must be current and not in default on payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness. Senior indebtedness includes all of our indebtedness as described below, except for:

obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property;

Table of Contents

conditional sale obligations;

obligations arising under any title retention agreements;

indebtedness relating to the applicable convertible subordinated debt securities;

indebtedness owed to one of our subsidiaries; and

indebtedness that, by its terms, is subordinate in right of payment to or equal with the applicable convertible subordinated debt securities.

Generally indebtedness means:

the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on indebtedness for money borrowed;

the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on indebtedness evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments;

obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all conditional sale obligations and all obligations arising under any title retention agreements;

obligations for the reimbursement of any obligor on any letter of credit, banker's acceptance or similar credit transaction (other than obligations with respect to certain letters of credit securing obligations entered into in the ordinary course of business);

obligations of the type referred to in the bullet points above assumed for another party and dividends of another party for the payment of which, in either case, one is responsible or liable as obligor, guarantor or otherwise; and

obligations assumed of the types referred to in the bullet points above for another party secured by any lien on any of one's property or assets.

Indebtedness does not include amounts owed pursuant to trade accounts arising in the ordinary course of business.

Generally, we may not pay the principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the convertible subordinated debt securities if, at the time of payment (or immediately after giving effect to such payment):

there exists under any senior indebtedness, or any agreement under which any senior indebtedness is issued, any default, which default results in the full amount of the senior indebtedness being declared due and payable; or

the trustee has received written notice from a holder of senior indebtedness stating that there exists under the senior indebtedness, or any agreement under which the senior indebtedness is issued, a default, which default permits the holders of the senior indebtedness to declare the full amount of the senior indebtedness due and payable;

unless, among other things, in either case:

the default has been cured or waived; or

full payment of amounts then due for principal and interest and of all other obligations then due on all senior indebtedness has been made or duly provided for under the terms of any instrument governing senior indebtedness.

Limited subordination periods apply in the event of non-payment defaults relating to senior indebtedness in situations where there has not been an acceleration of senior indebtedness.

Table of Contents

A failure to make any payment on the convertible subordinated debt securities as a result of the foregoing provisions will not affect our obligations to the holders of the convertible subordinated debt securities to pay the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the convertible subordinated debt securities as and when such payment obligations become due.

The holders of senior indebtedness will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on senior indebtedness, or provisions will be made for such payment, before the holders of the convertible subordinated debt securities are entitled to receive any payment or distribution of any kind relating to the convertible subordinated debt securities or on account of any purchase or other acquisition of the convertible subordinated debt securities by us or any of our subsidiaries, in the event of:

insolvency or bankruptcy case or proceeding, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar case, relating to us or our assets;

any liquidation, dissolution or other winding up of the Company, whether voluntary or involuntary and whether or not involving insolvency or bankruptcy; or

any assignment for the benefit of our creditors or any other marshalling of our assets and liabilities.

In addition, the rights of the holders of the convertible subordinated debt securities will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of senior indebtedness to receive payments and distributions of cash, property and securities applicable to the senior indebtedness until the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the convertible subordinated debt securities are paid in full.

Because of these subordination provisions, our creditors who hold senior indebtedness or other unsubordinated indebtedness may recover a greater percentage of the debt owed to them than the holders of the convertible subordinated debt securities.

The convertible indenture covering convertible subordinated debt securities will not limit the aggregate amount of senior indebtedness that we may issue. If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with the offering of a series of convertible subordinated debt securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference will set forth the approximate amount of senior debt outstanding as of a recent date.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We may not consolidate with or merge into any other person or convey or transfer or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person unless:

if we consolidate with or merge into another corporation or convey or transfer our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, the successor is organized under the laws of the United States, or any state, and assumes our obligations under the convertible debt securities;

immediately after the transaction, no event of default occurs and continues; and

we meet certain other conditions specified in the indentures.

Modification and Waiver

We and the trustee may modify and amend the indentures without the consent of the holders of the outstanding convertible debt securities of each affected series, in order to, among other things:

evidence the succession of another corporation to us and the assumption of all of our obligations under the convertible debt securities, any related coupons and our covenants by a successor;

add to our covenants for the benefit of holders of convertible debt securities or surrender any of our rights or powers;

Table of Contents

add additional events of default for any series;

add, change or eliminate any provision affecting convertible debt securities that are not yet issued;

secure certain convertible debt securities;

establish the form or terms of convertible debt securities not yet issued;

make provisions with respect to conversion or exchange rights of holders of convertible debt securities;

evidence and provide for successor trustees;

permit payment in respect of convertible debt securities in bearer form in the United States, if allowed without penalty under applicable laws and regulations; or

correct or supplement any inconsistent provisions, cure any ambiguity or mistake, or add any other provisions, on the condition that this action does not adversely affect the interests of any holder of convertible debt securities of any series issued under the indentures in any material respect.

In addition, we and the trustee may modify and amend the indentures with the consent of the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of each affected series. However, without the consent of each holder, we cannot modify or amend the indentures in a way that would:

change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal or interest on, any debt security;

reduce the principal or interest on any debt security;

change the place or currency of payment of principal or interest on any debt security;

impair the right to sue to enforce any payment on any debt security after it is due; or

reduce the percentage in principal amount of outstanding convertible debt securities necessary to modify or amend the indentures, to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indentures or to waive certain defaults.

The holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of outstanding convertible debt securities may waive our compliance with certain restrictive covenants of the indentures. The holders of at least a majority in principal

amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of any series may waive any past default under the indentures with respect to outstanding convertible debt securities of that series, which will be binding on all holders of convertible debt securities of that series, except a default in the payment of principal or interest on any debt security of that series or in respect of a provision of the indentures that cannot be modified or amended without each holder's consent.

Events of Default

Each of the following will be an event of default:

default for 30 days in the payment of any interest;

default in the payment of principal;

default in the deposit of any sinking fund payment;

default in the performance of any other covenant in the indentures for 90 days after written notice; and

certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

We are required to furnish the trustee annually a statement as to our fulfillment of our obligations under the indentures. The trustee may withhold notice of any default to the holders of convertible debt securities of any series (except for a default on principal or interest payments on convertible debt securities of that series) if it considers it in the interest of the holders to do so.

Table of Contents

If an event of default occurs and continues, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of the series in default may declare the principal amount immediately due and payable by written notice to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders). Upon any such declaration, the principal amount will become immediately due and payable. However, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of that series may, under certain circumstances, rescind and annul the acceleration.

Except for certain duties in case of an event of default, the trustee is not required to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request or direction of any of the holders, unless the holders offer the trustee reasonable security or indemnity. If the holders provide this security or indemnity, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of a series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, or exercising any trust or powers conferred on the trustee with respect to the convertible debt securities of that series.

No holder of a convertible debt security may bring any lawsuit or other proceeding with respect to the indentures or for any remedy under the indentures, unless:

the holder first gives the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of the series in default give the trustee a written request to bring the proceeding and offer the trustee reasonable security or indemnity; and

the trustee fails to institute the proceeding within 60 days of the written request and has not received from holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding convertible debt securities of the series in default a direction inconsistent with that request.

However, the holder of any convertible debt security has the absolute right to receive payment of the principal of and any interest on the convertible debt security on or after the stated due dates and to take any action to enforce any such payment.

Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

We may discharge certain obligations to holders of any series of convertible debt securities that have not already been delivered to the trustee for cancellation and that either have become due and payable or will become due and payable within one year (or scheduled for redemption within one year) by depositing with the trustee, in trust, funds in U.S. dollars or in the foreign currency in which such convertible debt securities are payable in an amount sufficient to pay the principal and any premium, interest and additional amounts on such convertible debt securities to the date of deposit (if the convertible debt securities have become due and payable) or to the maturity date, as the case may be.

Unless a prospectus supplement states that the following provisions do not apply to the convertible debt securities of that series, we may elect either:

to defease and be discharged from any and all obligations with respect to such convertible debt securities (except for, among other things, the obligation to pay additional amounts, if any, upon the occurrence of certain events of taxation, assessment or governmental charge with respect to payments on the convertible debt securities and other obligations to provide for the conversion rights of the holders of such convertible debt securities, to register the transfer or exchange of such convertible debt securities, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen convertible debt securities, to maintain an office or agency with respect to such convertible debt securities and to hold moneys for payment in trust), such an action a defeasance ; or

to be released from our obligations under the applicable indenture as may be further described in any prospectus supplement, and our failure to comply with these obligations will not constitute an event of default with respect to such convertible debt securities, such an action a covenant defeasance.

Table of Contents

Defeasance or covenant defeasance is conditioned on our irrevocable deposit with the trustee, in trust, of an amount in cash or government securities, or both, sufficient to pay the principal of, any premium and interest on, and any additional amounts with respect to, the convertible debt securities on the scheduled due dates. Additional conditions to defeasance or covenant defeasance require that:

the applicable defeasance or covenant defeasance does not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, the applicable indenture or any other material agreement or instrument to which we are a party or by which we are bound;

no event of default has occurred and continues on the date the trust is established and, with respect to defeasance only, at any time during the period ending on the 123rd day after that date; and

we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of such convertible debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax for the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the defeasance or covenant defeasance had not occurred. This opinion, in the case of defeasance, must refer to and be based upon a letter ruling we have received from the Internal Revenue Service, a Revenue Ruling published by the Internal Revenue Service, or a change in applicable U.S. federal income tax law occurring after the date of the indenture.

If we accomplish covenant defeasance on convertible debt securities of certain holders, those holders can still look to us for repayment of their convertible debt securities in the event of any shortfall in the trust deposit. If one of the remaining events of default occurred, such as our bankruptcy, and the convertible debt securities became immediately due and payable, there may be a shortfall. Depending on the event causing the default, such holders may not be able to obtain payment of the shortfall.

In the case of convertible subordinated debt securities, the subordination provisions described under **Convertible Subordinated Debt Securities** above are made subject to the provisions for defeasance and covenant defeasance. In other words, if we accomplish defeasance or covenant defeasance on any convertible subordinated debt securities, such securities would cease to be so subordinated.

Governing Law

The indentures and the convertible debt securities will be governed by and interpreted under the laws of the State of New York.

USE OF GLOBAL SECURITIES

The debt securities of any series may be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global debt securities that will be deposited with a depository or its nominee identified in the series prospectus supplement.

The specific terms of the depository arrangement covering debt securities will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series. We anticipate that the following provisions or similar provisions will apply to depository arrangements relating to debt securities, although to the extent the terms of any arrangement differs from those described in this section, the terms of the arrangement shall supersede those in this section as ultimately

described in the applicable indenture and related documents.

Upon the issuance of a global security, the depository for the global security or its nominee will credit, to accounts in its book-entry registration and transfer system, the principal amounts of the debt securities represented by the global security. These accounts will be designated by the underwriters or agents with respect to such debt securities or by us if such debt securities are offered and sold directly by us. Only institutions that

Table of Contents

have accounts with the depositary or its nominee, and persons who hold beneficial interests through those participants, may own beneficial interests in a global security. Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be shown only on, and the transfer of those ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the depositary, its nominee or any such participants. The laws of some states require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. These laws may prevent you from transferring your beneficial interest in a global security.

As long as the depositary or its nominee is the registered owner of a global security, the depositary or nominee will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the global security. Except as described below, owners of beneficial interests in a global security will not be entitled to have debt securities registered in their names and will not be entitled to receive physical delivery of the debt securities in definitive form.

We will make all payments of principal of, any premium and interest on, and any additional amounts with respect to, debt securities issued as global securities to the depositary or its nominee. Neither we nor the trustee, any paying agent or the security registrar assumes any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the depositary's or any participant's records relating to, or for payments made on account of, beneficial interests in a global security.

We expect that the depositary for a series of debt securities or its nominee, upon receipt of any payment with respect to such debt securities, will credit immediately participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interest in the principal amount of the global security for such debt securities as shown on the records of such depositary or its nominee. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in such global security held through such participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of such participants.

Our indentures provide that if:

the depositary notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depositary for a series of debt securities, or if the depositary is no longer legally qualified to serve in that capacity, and we have not appointed a successor depositary within 90 days of written notice;

we determine that a series of debt securities will no longer be represented by global securities and we execute and deliver an order to that effect to the trustee; or

an event of default with respect to a series of debt securities occurs and continues; the global securities for that series will be exchanged for registered debt securities in definitive form. The definitive debt securities will be registered in the name or names the depositary instructs the trustee. We expect that these instructions may be based upon directions the depositary receives from participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in global securities.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

The following is a general description of the terms of the warrants we may issue from time to time. Particular terms of any warrants we offer will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to such warrants.

General

We may issue warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock and debt securities or any combination thereof. Such warrants may be issued independently or together with any such securities and may be attached or separate from such securities. We will issue each series of warrants under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a warrant agent. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency for or with holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

A prospectus supplement will describe the particular terms of any series of warrants we may issue, including the following:

the title of such warrants;

the aggregate number of such warrants;

the price at which such warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies, including composite currencies, in which the price of such warrants may be payable;

the designation and terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of such warrants and the number of such securities issuable upon exercise of such warrants;

the price at which and the currency or currencies, including composite currencies, in which the securities purchasable upon exercise of such warrants may be purchased;

the date on which the right to exercise such warrants shall commence and the date on which such right will expire;

whether such warrants will be issued in registered form or bearer form;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of such warrants which may be exercised at any one time;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which such warrants are issued and the number of such warrants issued with each such security;

if applicable, the date on and after which such warrants and the related securities will be separately transferable;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

if applicable, a discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations; and

any other terms of such warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of such warrants.

Amendments and Supplements to Warrant Agreement

We and the warrant agent may amend or supplement the warrant agreement for a series of warrants without the consent of the holders of the warrants issued thereunder to effect changes that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the warrants and that do not materially and adversely affect the interests of the holders of the warrants.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units composed of any combination of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities or warrants. We will issue each unit so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. As a result, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately at any time or at any time before a specified date.

The following description is a summary of selected provisions relating to units that we may offer. The summary is not complete. When units are offered in the future, a prospectus supplement will describe the particular terms of those securities and the extent to which these general provisions may apply. The specific terms of the units as described in a prospectus supplement will supplement and, if applicable, may modify or replace the general terms described in this section.

This summary and any description of units in the applicable prospectus supplement, information incorporated by reference or free writing prospectus is subject to and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the unit agreement, collateral arrangements and depositary arrangements, if applicable. We will file these documents with the SEC for incorporation by reference into this prospectus, as applicable. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and [Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference](#) for information on how to obtain a copy of a document when it is filed.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe:

the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;

any provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer, or exchange of the units or of the securities composing the units;

whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form; and

any other terms of the units.

The applicable provisions described in this section, as well as those described under [Description of Capital Stock](#), [Description of Debt Securities](#), [Description of Convertible Debt Securities](#) and [Description of Warrants](#), will apply to each unit and to each security included in each unit, respectively.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We or the selling stockholders may sell the securities being offered hereby:

directly to purchasers;

through agents;

through dealers;

through underwriters;

through a combination of any of the above methods of sale; or

through any other methods described in a prospectus supplement.

We or the selling stockholders will identify the specific plan of distribution, including any direct purchasers, agents, dealers, underwriters and, if applicable, their compensation, the purchase price, the net proceeds to us, the public offering price, and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers, in a prospectus supplement.

The distribution of securities may be effected, from time to time, in one or more transactions, including block transactions and transactions on the New York Stock Exchange or any other organized market where the securities may be traded. The securities may be sold at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, or at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices relating to the prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. The consideration may be cash or another form negotiated by the parties. Agents, underwriters or broker-dealers may be paid compensation for offering and selling the securities. That compensation may be in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions to be received from us, the selling stockholders or from the purchasers of the securities.

Offers to purchase the securities may be solicited directly by us or by agents designated by us or the selling stockholders from time to time. We will, in the prospectus supplement relating to an offering, name any agent that could be viewed as an underwriter under the Securities Act and describe any commissions we must pay. Any such agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment or, if indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, on a firm commitment basis.

If a dealer is utilized in the sale of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered, we will sell the securities to the dealer, as principal. The dealer, which may be deemed to be an underwriter as that term is defined in the Securities Act, may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by the dealer at the time of resale. Dealer trading may take place in certain of the securities, including securities not listed on any securities exchange.

If an underwriter or underwriters are utilized in the sale, we and the selling stockholders will execute an underwriting agreement with the underwriters at the time of sale to them and the names of the underwriters will be set forth in the

applicable prospectus supplement, which will be used by the underwriters to make resales of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered to the public. The obligations of underwriters to purchase securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the securities of a series if any are purchased.

We may directly solicit offers to purchase the securities and we may make sales of securities directly to institutional investors or others. These persons may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any resale of the securities. To the extent required, the prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any such sales, including the terms of any bidding or auction process, if used.

Underwriters, dealers, agents and other persons may be entitled, under agreements that may be entered into with us or the selling stockholders, to indemnification against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under

Table of Contents

the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments that they may be required to make in respect thereof. Underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, us or the selling stockholders in the ordinary course of business.

Any person participating in the distribution of common stock registered under the registration statement that includes this prospectus will be subject to applicable provisions of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), and the applicable SEC rules and regulations, including, among others, Regulation M, which may limit the timing of purchases and sales of our common stock by any such person. Furthermore, Regulation M may restrict the ability of any person engaged in the distribution of our common stock to engage in market-making activities with respect to our common stock. These restrictions may affect the marketability of our common stock and the ability of any person or entity to engage in market-making activities with respect to our common stock.

In order to facilitate the offering of the securities, any underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities or any other securities the prices of which may be used to determine payments on such securities. Specifically, any underwriters may overallocate in connection with the offering, creating a short position for their own accounts. In addition, to cover overallocations or to stabilize the price of the securities or of any such other securities, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, the securities or any such other securities in the open market. Finally, in any offering of the securities through a syndicate of underwriters, the underwriting syndicate may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an underwriter or a dealer for distributing the securities in the offering if the syndicate repurchases previously distributed securities in transactions to cover syndicate short positions, in stabilization transactions or otherwise. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities above independent market levels. Any such underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise stated in an accompanying prospectus supplement, the validity of the securities being offered by this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Perkins Coie LLP, Palo Alto, California. Counsel representing any underwriters, dealers or agents will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of CAI International, Inc. and our subsidiaries as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016, the related financial statement schedule II, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 have been incorporated by reference herein, in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Such reports and other information can be read and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC also maintains a website at *www.sec.gov* that contains reports, registration statements, proxy and information statements and other information regarding registrants like us that file electronically with the SEC. Our filings with the SEC, as well as additional information about us, are also available to the public through our website at *www.capps.com* and are made available as soon as reasonably practicable after such material is filed with or furnished to the SEC. Information contained on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not incorporated into this prospectus or our other securities filings and does not form a part of this prospectus.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement, and later information filed with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all documents subsequently filed with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to the termination of the offering under this prospectus and any prospectus supplement (other than information deemed furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules, including Items 2.02 and 7.01 of Form 8-K):

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, filed on March 13, 2017;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2017, filed on May 4, 2017; and

the description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on March 28, 2007, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such

description.

You may request a copy of these filings (other than an exhibit to a filing unless that exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference into that filing) at no cost, by writing to or telephoning us at the following address: CAI International, Inc., Steuart Tower, 1 Market Plaza, Suite 900, San Francisco, CA 94105, Attn: Investor Relations, telephone: (415) 788-0100.

Table of Contents

Up to 2,000,000 Shares

CAI International, Inc.

Common Stock

Prospectus Supplement

BofA Merrill Lynch

Wells Fargo Securities

October 23, 2017