

CAI International, Inc.
Form S-3
April 15, 2011
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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 15, 2011

Registration No.

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

CAI INTERNATIONAL, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

94-3109229
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification Number)

Steuart Tower
1 Market Plaza, Suite 900
San Francisco, California 94105

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(415) 788-0100

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Masaaki (John) Nishibori

President and Chief Executive Officer

CAI International, Inc.

Steuart Tower

1 Market Plaza, Suite 900

San Francisco, California 94105

(415) 788-0100

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copies to:

Edward J. Wes, Jr.

Sonny Allison

Perkins Coie LLP

3150 Porter Drive

Palo Alto, California 94304

(650) 838-4300

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective as determined by market conditions and other factors.

If the only securities being registered on this form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. "

If any of the securities being registered on this form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box. x

If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

If this form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act of 1933, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. "

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If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act of 1933, check the following box. "

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, check the following box. "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer " Accelerated filer
 Non-accelerated filer " (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Smaller reporting company

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to Be Registered (3)	Amount to Be Registered (2)	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit (2)	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price (2)	Amount of Registration Fee
Primary Offering (1)				
Common stock, par value \$0.0001				
Preferred stock, par value \$0.0001				
Debt securities				
Convertible debt securities				
Warrants				
Primary Offering Total			\$250,000,000	\$29,025(1)
Secondary Offering (4)				
Common stock, par value \$0.0001	2,500,000	\$25.55(5)	\$63,875,000(5)	\$7,416(5)
Total			\$313,875,000	\$36,441

- (1) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act.
- (2) With respect to the primary offering, there are being registered under this registration statement such indeterminate number of shares of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, convertible debt securities and/or warrants of the Registrant as shall have an aggregate initial offering price not to exceed \$250,000,000. Any securities registered under this registration statement may be sold separately or together with other securities registered under this registration statement. The proposed maximum initial offering prices per security will be determined, from time to time, by the Registrant in connection with the issuance by the Registrant of the securities registered under this registration statement. The securities registered also include such indeterminate amounts and numbers of common stock as may be issued upon conversion of or exchange for preferred stock or debt securities that provide for such conversion or exchange. No separate consideration for the preferred share purchase rights will be received. The amount of each class of securities being registered under this registration statement is not specified pursuant to General Instruction II.D. of Form S-3 under the Securities Act.
- (3) With respect to the primary offering, pursuant to Rule 416 under the Securities Act, an indeterminate number of additional securities are registered hereunder that may be issued to prevent dilution in connection with a stock split, stock dividend, recapitalization, or similar event or adjustment. In addition, an indeterminate number of shares of common stock are registered hereunder that may be issued upon conversion of or exchange for any convertible preferred stock or debt securities.
- (4) With respect to the secondary offering, this registration statement also relates to an indeterminate number of shares of common stock that may be issued upon stock splits, stock dividends or similar transactions in accordance with Rule 416 under the Securities Act. The Registrant will not receive any proceeds from the sale of its common stock by the selling stockholders.
- (5) Pursuant to Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act, the offering price and registration fee are computed based on the average of the high and low prices reported for our common stock traded on the New York Stock Exchange on April 12, 2011.

The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or until the registration statement shall become effective on such

date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

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The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. Neither we nor the selling stockholders may sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED APRIL 15, 2011

PROSPECTUS

\$250,000,000

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Debt Securities

Convertible Debt Securities

Warrants

2,500,000 Shares of Common Stock Offered by Selling Stockholders

CAI INTERNATIONAL, INC.

We may, from time to time in one or more offerings, offer and sell up to \$250,000,000 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, or any combination of the foregoing. In addition, the selling stockholders may offer and sell, from time to time, up to an aggregate of 2,500,000 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.**

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Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CAP. On April 12, 2011, the last reported sales price of our common stock was \$24.75 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.

Investing in our securities involves risk. You should carefully review the risks and uncertainties described under the heading Risk Factors beginning on page 6 and in the documents which are incorporated by reference herein, and contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus.

We will sell these securities directly to investors, through agents designated from time to time or to or through underwriters or dealers. For additional information on the methods of sale, you should refer to the section entitled Plan of Distribution in this prospectus. If any underwriters are involved in the sale of any securities with respect to which this prospectus is being delivered, the names of such underwriters and any applicable commissions or discounts will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. The price to the public of such securities and the net proceeds we expect to receive from such sale will also be set forth in a prospectus supplement.

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

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or 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 or warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or convertible debt securities, or any combination of the foregoing, in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$250,000,000 and the selling stockholders may sell up to 2,500,000 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 either of 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 either of 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."

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SUMMARY

This summary highlights selected information from this prospectus and does not contain all of the information that you need to consider in making your investment decision. You should carefully read the entire prospectus, including the risks of investing discussed under "Risk Factors" and in the documents which are incorporated by reference herein, and contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, the information incorporated by reference, including our financial statements, and the exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. When used in this prospectus, the terms "CAI," "we," "our," "us" or the "Company" refer to CAI International, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless otherwise indicated or as the context otherwise requires.

About CAI International, Inc.

We are one of the world's leading container leasing and management companies. We operate our business through two segments: container leasing and container management. We purchase new containers, lease them primarily to container shipping lines, freight forwarders and other transportation companies and either retain them as part of our owned fleet or sell them to container investors for whom we then provide management services. In operating our fleet, we lease, re-lease and dispose of containers and contract for the repair, repositioning and storage of containers. As of December 31, 2010, our fleet comprised approximately 827,000 TEUs, 57.9% of which represented our managed fleet and 42.1% of which represented our owned fleet.

We lease our containers to lessees under long-term leases, short-term leases and finance leases. Long-term leases cover a specified number of containers that will be on lease for a fixed period of time. Short-term leases provide lessees with the ability to lease containers either for a fixed term of less than one year or without a fixed term on an as-needed basis, with flexible pick-up and drop-off of containers at depots worldwide. Finance leases are long-term lease contracts that grant the lessee the right to purchase the container at the end of the term for a nominal amount. As of December 31, 2010, 98.0% of our fleet, as measured in TEUs, was on lease, with 75.8% of these containers on long-term leases, 21.7% on short-term leases and 2.5% on finance leases.

We manage containers under management agreements that cover portfolios of containers. Our management agreements typically have terms of 10 years and provide that we receive a management fee based upon the actual rental revenue for each container less the actual operating expenses directly attributable to that container. We also receive fees for selling used containers on behalf of container investors.

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 on August 3, 1989. On February 2, 2007, we were reincorporated under our present name in the state of Delaware. We transact business directly and through our subsidiaries unless otherwise indicated.

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 U.S. branch offices are located in Charleston, South Carolina and Florham Park, New Jersey. We operate our business in 12 offices in 10 countries including the United States, and have agents in Asia, Europe, South Africa, Australia and South America. Our wholly owned international subsidiaries are located in the United Kingdom, Japan, Malaysia, Sweden, Germany and Barbados. We also own 80% of CAIJ Ltd. in Japan.

We maintain a website at www.capps.com where our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and all amendments to those reports are available without charge, as soon as reasonably practicable following the time they are filed with or furnished to the SEC. You may read and

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copy any materials we file with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0300. The SEC also maintains an electronic Internet site that contains our reports, proxy and information statements, and other information at <http://www.sec.gov>.

The Securities We May Offer

We may offer shares of our common stock and preferred stock, various series of debt securities and warrants to purchase any of such securities, with a total value of up to \$250,000,000 from time to time under this prospectus, together with any applicable prospectus supplement and related free writing prospectus, at prices and on terms to be determined by market conditions at the time of offering. If we issue any debt securities at a discount from their original stated principal amount, then, for purposes of calculating the total dollar amount of all securities issued under this prospectus, we will treat the initial offering price of the debt securities as the total original principal amount of the debt securities. Each time we offer securities under this prospectus, we will provide offerees with a prospectus supplement that will describe the specific amounts, prices and other important terms of the securities being offered, including, to the extent applicable:

designation or classification;

aggregate principal amount or aggregate offering price;

maturity, if applicable;

original issue discount, if any;

rates and times of payment of interest or dividends, if any;

redemption, conversion, exchange or sinking fund terms, if any;

conversion or exchange prices or rates, if any, and, if applicable, any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the conversion or exchange prices or rates and in the securities or other property receivable upon conversion or exchange;

ranking;

restrictive covenants, if any;

voting or other rights, if any; and

important United States federal income tax considerations.

A 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 documents we have incorporated by reference. However, no prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus will offer a security that is not registered and described in this prospectus at the time of the effectiveness of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

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We may sell the securities to or through underwriters, dealers or agents or directly to purchasers. We, as well as any agents acting on our behalf, reserve the sole right to accept and to reject in whole or in part any proposed purchase of securities. Each prospectus supplement will set forth the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the sale of securities described in that prospectus supplement and any applicable fee, commission or discount arrangements with them, details regarding any over-allotment option granted to them, and net proceeds to us. The following is a summary of the securities we may offer with this prospectus.

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Common Stock

We currently have authorized 84,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share. We may offer shares of our common stock either alone or underlying other registered securities convertible into or exercisable for our common stock. Holders of our common stock are entitled to such dividends as our board of directors may declare from time to time out of legally available funds, subject to the preferential rights of the holders of any shares of our preferred stock that are outstanding or that we may issue in the future. Currently, we do not pay any dividends. Each holder of our common stock is entitled to one vote per share. In this prospectus, we provide a general description of, among other things, the rights and restrictions that apply to holders of our common stock.

Preferred Stock

We currently have authorized 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.0001 per share. Under our certificate of incorporation, our board of directors has the authority to issue shares of our preferred stock in one or more series and to fix or alter the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions granted to or imposed upon any series of preferred stock. The particular terms of each class or series of preferred stock, including redemption privileges, liquidation preferences, voting rights, dividend rights and/or conversion rights, will be more fully described in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the preferred stock offered thereby.

The rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions granted to or imposed upon any series of preferred stock that we offer and sell under this prospectus and applicable prospectus supplements will be set forth in a certificate of designation relating to the series. We will incorporate by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part the form of any certificate of designation that describes the terms of the series of preferred stock we are offering before the issuance of shares of that series of preferred stock. You should read to read any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you related to the series of preferred stock being offered, as well as the complete certificate of designation that contains the terms of the applicable series of preferred stock.

Debt Securities

We may offer general debt obligations, which may be secured or unsecured, senior or subordinated and convertible into shares of our common stock. In this prospectus, we refer to the senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities together as the debt securities. We may issue debt securities under a note purchase agreement or under an indenture to be entered between us and a trustee. Forms of indentures have been filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and supplemental indentures and forms of debt securities containing the terms of debt securities being offered will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from reports we file with the SEC. The indentures do not limit the amount of securities that may be issued under it and provides that debt securities may be issued in one or more series. The senior debt securities will have the same rank as all of our other indebtedness that is not subordinated. The subordinated debt securities will be subordinated to our senior debt on terms set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In addition, the subordinated debt securities will be effectively subordinated to creditors and preferred stockholders of our subsidiaries. Our board of directors will determine the terms of each series of debt securities being offered. This prospectus contains only general terms and provisions of the debt securities. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the particular terms of the debt securities offered thereby. You should read any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you related to the series of debt securities being offered, as well as the complete note agreements and/or indentures that contain the terms of the debt securities.

Table of Contents**Warrants**

We may offer warrants for the purchase of shares of our common stock or preferred stock or of debt securities. We may issue the warrants by themselves or together with preferred stock, common stock or debt securities, and the warrants may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and the investors or a warrant agent. Our board of directors will determine the terms of the warrants. This prospectus contains only general terms and provisions of the warrants. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the particular terms of the warrants being offered thereby. You should read any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you related to the series of warrants being offered, as well as the complete warrant agreements that contain the terms of the warrants. Specific warrant agreements will contain additional important terms and provisions and will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part from reports we file with the SEC.

THIS PROSPECTUS MAY NOT BE USED BY US TO OFFER OR SELL ANY SECURITIES UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY A PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT.

FINANCIAL RATIOS

The following table sets forth our ratio of earnings to fixed charges and the ratio of our earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for each of the periods presented. Earnings consist 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. Combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends consist of fixed charges, as defined above, and the amount of pre-tax earnings required to pay the dividends on our preferred stock.

	Predecessor* Nine Months Ended September 30, 2006	Three Months Ended December 31, 2006		Successor* Year Ended December 31, 2007		
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	4.4	3.1	3.7	4.6	4.7	6.6
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends	4.3	3.1	3.7	4.6	4.7	6.6

* Note: On October 1, 2006, we repurchased 10,584,000 shares, or 50.0% of our then-outstanding common stock held by Interpool. In connection with this transaction we applied pushdown accounting in accordance with Staff Accounting Bulletin (SAB) No. 54 and accounted for the purchase as a step acquisition in accordance with Statement of Financial Accounting Standard (SFAS) No. 141, Business Combinations, issued by Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). Due to the application of pushdown accounting and step acquisition accounting in our financial statements, our financial condition and results of operations after September 30, 2006 are not comparable in some respects to our financial condition and results of operations reflected in our historical financial statements as of dates or for periods prior to October 1, 2006. The data prior to October 1, 2006 as presented above, refer to the Predecessor company and this period is referred to as the Predecessor period which relates to the period prior to our repurchase of our common stock held by Interpool. The data on and subsequent to October 1, 2006 refer to the Successor company and the period is referred to as the Successor period which relates to the period after we repurchased our common stock held by Interpool.

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RISK FACTORS

Except for the historical information contained in this prospectus or incorporated by reference, this prospectus (and the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus) contains forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Our actual results could differ materially from those discussed here or incorporated by reference. Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to, those discussed below and in the section entitled **Risk Factors** contained in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC, as well as any amendments thereto reflected in subsequent filings with the SEC, which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety (the **CAI Risk Factors**).

Investment in our securities involves risks. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should consider carefully the **CAI Risk Factors**, together with all of the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, including any additional specific risks described in any prospectus supplement. Each of these risk factors could adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition, which may result in the loss of all or part of your investment.

Keep these risk factors in mind when you read forward-looking statements contained elsewhere or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. These statements relate to our expectations about future events. Discussions containing forward-looking statements may be found, among other places, in **Business and Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations** incorporated by reference from our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, as well as any amendments thereto reflected in subsequent filings with the SEC. These forward-looking statements are based largely on our expectations and projections about future events and future trends affecting our business, and so are subject to risks and uncertainties, including the risks and uncertainties described below under **Forward-Looking Information**, that could cause actual results to differ materially from those anticipated in the forward-looking statements.

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SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Our disclosure and analysis in this prospectus, in any prospectus supplement, in the documents incorporated by reference and in some of our other public statements contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. This Act provides a safe harbor for forward-looking statements to encourage companies to provide prospective information about themselves so long as they identify these statements as forward-looking and provide meaningful cautionary statements identifying important factors that could cause actual results to differ from the projected results. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as anticipate, believe, continue, could, estimate, expect, intend, may, might, plan, potential, predict, negative of those terms, or comparable terminology.

Any or all of our forward-looking statements in this prospectus, in any prospectus supplement, in the documents incorporated by reference and in any other public statements we make may turn out to be inaccurate. Forward-looking statements reflect our current expectations or forecasts of future events or results and are inherently uncertain. Inaccurate assumptions we might make and known or unknown risks and uncertainties can affect the accuracy of our forward-looking statements. Accordingly, no forward-looking statement can be guaranteed and future events and actual or suggested results may differ materially.

We undertake no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. You are advised, however, to consult any further disclosures we make in our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and current reports on Form 8-K, as well as in any prospectus supplement relating to this prospectus and other public filings with the SEC.

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USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as described in any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus in connection with a specific offering, we currently intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered under this prospectus for general corporate purposes, including working capital. We may also use the net proceeds to repay any debts and/or invest in or acquire complementary businesses, products or technologies, although we have no current commitments or agreements with respect to any such investments or acquisitions as of the date of this prospectus. We have not determined the amount of net proceeds to be used specifically for the foregoing purposes. As a result, our management will have broad discretion in the allocation of the net proceeds and investors will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding the application of the proceeds of any sale of the securities. Pending use of the net proceeds, we intend to invest the proceeds in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing instruments. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

When we offer a particular series of securities, we will describe the intended use of the net proceeds from that offering in a prospectus supplement. The actual amount of net proceeds we spend on a particular use will depend on many factors, including, our future capital expenditures, the amount of cash required by our operations, and our future revenue growth, if any. Therefore, we will retain broad discretion in the use of the net proceeds.

DILUTION

If you invest in an offering of common stock by us, your interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the public offering price per share in an offering under this prospectus and the net tangible book value per share after the offering, except to the extent proceeds are applied to the repayment of debt. We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus the following information regarding any material dilution of the equity interests of investors purchasing shares in an offering by us under this prospectus:

the net tangible book value per share of our equity securities before and after the offering;

the amount of the increase in such net tangible book value per share attributable to the cash payments made by investors purchasing shares in the offering; and

the amount of the immediate dilution from the public offering price to such investors.

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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 2,500,000 shares of our common stock. 2,030,620 of such shares were issued to two selling stockholders 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. 469,380 of such shares were acquired by a selling stockholder from our founder prior to our initial public offering in 2007 in a transaction that was exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

We will identify the selling stockholders in a prospectus supplement filed pursuant to Securities Act Rule 424(b)(7), as permitted by Rule 430B(b)(2).

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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 likelihood of continuity and stability in the composition of our board of directors and in the policies formulated

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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 of shares outstanding, those shares owned: (1) by persons who are directors and also officers; and (2) by

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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 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, par value \$0.0001 per share, representing 9.44% of the shares of CAI International, Inc. 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 Shareholder Services, Inc. Its address is 250 Royall Street, Canton, Massachusetts 02021.

New York Stock Exchange Listing

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

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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;

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