

LendingTree, Inc.  
Form S-3ASR  
November 02, 2015  
Table of Contents

Registration No. 333-

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 2, 2015

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

**FORM S-3**  
**REGISTRATION STATEMENT**  
***UNDER***  
***THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933***

**LendingTree, Inc.**  
**(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)**

**Delaware**  
**(State or other jurisdiction of**  
**incorporation or organization)**

**26-2414818**  
**(I.R.S. Employer**  
**Identification Number)**

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

**11115 Rushmore Drive**

**Charlotte, North Carolina 28277**

**(704) 541-5351**

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

**Katharine Pierce**

**General Counsel**

**LendingTree, Inc.**

**11115 Rushmore Drive**

**Charlotte, North Carolina 28277**

**(704) 541-5351**

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

*With a copy to:*

**John D. Tishler, Esq.**

**Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP**

**12275 El Camino Real, Suite 200**

**San Diego, California 92130**

**Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:** From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement.

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

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.

**Table of Contents**

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, 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, 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 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, 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, 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. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/> (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company <input type="checkbox"/>

**CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE**

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Proposed Maximum Amount to be Registered (1)	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit (1)	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price (1)	Amount of Registration Fee (1)(2)
Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share				
Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share				
Debt Securities				
Warrants				
Subscription Rights				
Units				

- (1) An indeterminate aggregate initial offering price and amount or number of securities is being registered as may from time to time be offered at indeterminate prices.
- (2) In accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act, the registrant is deferring payment of all of the registration fees.

**Table of Contents**

**PROSPECTUS**

**LendingTree, Inc.**

**Common Stock**

**Preferred Stock**

**Debt Securities**

**Warrants**

**Subscription Rights**

**Units**

We may from time to time offer and sell any of the securities described in this prospectus, either individually or in combination. In addition, any selling stockholders identified in this prospectus, or any of their transferees, donees, pledgees or other successors, may offer and sell from time to time shares of common stock.

This prospectus provides a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we or any selling stockholders sell securities under this prospectus, we will provide specific terms related to such sales 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.

The prospectus supplement, and any documents incorporated by reference, may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Before you invest, you should carefully read this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement, any documents incorporated by reference and any related free writing prospectus before buying any of the securities being offered. This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless accompanied by the applicable prospectus supplement.

We or any selling stockholders may sell these securities directly, through underwriters, dealers or agents as designated from time to time, or through a combination of these methods. If any underwriters, dealers or agents are involved in the sale of these securities, the applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the names of the agents, dealers or underwriters and any applicable fees, commissions or discounts. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of common stock by the selling stockholders.

Our common stock is currently quoted on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol TREE. The applicable prospectus supplement will contain information, where applicable, as to any other listing of the securities covered by the applicable prospectus supplement. On October 30, 2015, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on the NASDAQ Global Select Market was \$121.36.

**An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. See the section entitled Risk Factors commencing on page 3 of this prospectus and the discussion of these risks in the sections entitled Risk Factors in our most recent annual report on Form 10-K and in the quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, in each case, incorporated by reference in this prospectus, as well as in any applicable prospectus supplement.**

**We may amend or supplement this prospectus from time to time by filing amendments or supplements as required. We urge you to read the entire prospectus, any amendments or supplements, any free writing prospectuses, and any documents incorporated by reference carefully before you make your investment decision.**

**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 November 2, 2015.

**Table of Contents**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b><u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u></b>	1
<b><u>PROSPECTUS SUMMARY</u></b>	2
<b><u>RISK FACTORS</u></b>	3
<b><u>CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u></b>	3
<b><u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u></b>	3
<b><u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u></b>	4
<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u></b>	4
<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u></b>	9
<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u></b>	17
<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS</u></b>	20
<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u></b>	20
<b><u>LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES</u></b>	21
<b><u>SELLING STOCKHOLDERS</u></b>	24
<b><u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u></b>	24
<b><u>LEGAL MATTERS</u></b>	27
<b><u>EXPERTS</u></b>	27
<b><u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u></b>	28
<b><u>INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE</u></b>	28



Table of Contents

**ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 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 offer and sell, either individually or in combination, in one or more offerings, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus. Each time we offer securities under this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain more 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 any of the information contained in this prospectus or in the documents that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

In addition, selling stockholders may use this shelf registration statement to sell shares of our common stock from time to time. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares by any selling stockholders. The selling stockholders may deliver a supplement with this prospectus, if required, to update the information contained in this prospectus. The selling stockholders may sell their shares of common stock through any means described in the section entitled *Plan of Distribution* or described in any accompanying prospectus supplement. As used herein, the term *selling stockholders* includes the selling stockholders and any of their transferees, donees, pledgees or other successors.

You should read this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectuses we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering together with additional information described under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information*, *Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements* and *Information Incorporated by Reference* below before investing in any of the securities being offered. The information appearing in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus is accurate only as of the date of such document and any information we have incorporated by reference is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or any related free writing prospectus, or any sale of a security. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information contained in that prospectus supplement. **This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.**

You should rely only on the information we have provided or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

This prospectus contains summaries of certain provisions of documents. All of the summaries are qualified in their entirety by the actual documents. Copies of some of these documents have been filed, will be filed or will be incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and you may obtain copies of those documents as described below under the section entitled *Where You Can Find More Information*.

We further note that the representations, warranties and covenants made by us in any agreement that is filed as an exhibit to any document that is incorporated by reference in this prospectus were made solely for the benefit of the parties to such agreement, including, in some cases, for the purposes of allocating risk among the parties to such agreements, and should not be deemed to be a representation, warranty or covenant to you. Moreover, such

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

representations, warranties and covenants should not be relied on as accurately representing the current state of our affairs.

In this prospectus, unless otherwise indicated, our company, we, us, LendingTree, or our refer to LendingTree, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its consolidated subsidiaries.

**Table of Contents**

**PROSPECTUS SUMMARY**

*This prospectus summary highlights certain information about our company and other information contained elsewhere in this prospectus or in documents incorporated by reference. This summary does not contain all of the information that you should consider before making an investment decision. You should carefully read the entire prospectus, any prospectus supplement, including the section entitled Risk Factors, and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus, before making an investment decision.*

**OUR BUSINESS**

LendingTree, Inc., formerly known as Tree.com, Inc., is the parent of LendingTree, LLC and several companies owned by LendingTree, LLC.

We operate what we believe to be the leading online loan marketplace for consumers seeking loans and other credit-based offerings. Our online marketplace provides consumers with access to product offerings from over 400 active lenders (which we refer to as marketplace lenders), including mortgage loans, home equity, reverse mortgage, auto loans, credit cards, personal loans, student loans and small business loans and other related offerings. In addition, we offer tools and resources, including free credit scores, that facilitate comparison shopping for these loan and other credit-based offerings. We seek to match consumers with multiple lenders, who can provide them with competing quotes for the product they are seeking. By providing consumers access to a broad array of credit-based offerings directly from multiple lenders, rather than just multiple quotes from the same lender or indirectly through intermediaries, we believe our marketplace is differentiated from other providers operating loan comparison-shopping marketplaces.

**CORPORATE INFORMATION**

Our executive offices are located at 11115 Rushmore Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina 28277 and our telephone number at that address is (704) 541-5351. Our corporate website is [www.lendingtree.com](http://www.lendingtree.com) and we maintain an investor relations website at [investor-relations.tree.com](http://investor-relations.tree.com). Information contained on any of our websites or that can be accessed through our websites are not incorporated by reference in, and do not constitute a part of, this prospectus.

**THE OFFERING**

We may offer and sell, from time to time, common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, warrants, subscription rights or units, in one or more offerings and in any combination thereof. In addition, the selling stockholders may sell shares of our common stock. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer and the selling stockholders may offer. Except in the case of certain offers and sales by the selling stockholders in circumstances described under Plan of Distribution, this prospectus may not be used to offer or sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of common stock by the selling stockholders.

**LISTING**

Our common stock is currently quoted on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, under the symbol TREE.



**Table of Contents**

**RISK FACTORS**

An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. Before you make a decision to invest in our securities, you should consider carefully the risks described in the section entitled "Risk Factors" contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and in our most recent annual report on Form 10-K and quarterly reports on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC, as well as any amendment or update thereto reflected in subsequent filings with the SEC or in any current report on Form 8-K and in the other documents that we file with the SEC from time to time. The risks and uncertainties described in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference herein are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties that we do not presently know about or that we currently believe are not material may also adversely affect our business. Our business, results of operations or financial condition could be seriously harmed, and the trading price of our securities may decline, due to any of these or other risks.

**CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, which we refer to as the Securities Act, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, which we refer to as the Exchange Act. Forward-looking statements reflect current views about future events and are based on our currently available financial, economic and competitive data and on current business plans. Actual events or results may differ materially depending on risks and uncertainties that may affect our operations, markets, services and other factors.

Statements in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus concerning our anticipated financial performance, business prospects and strategy; anticipated trends and prospects in the various industries in which our businesses operate; new products, services and related strategies; and other similar matters are forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as "may," "will," "should," "expect," "intend," "plan," "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "predict," "potential," "continue," or "as" of these terms or other comparable terminology.

Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Before deciding to purchase our securities, you should carefully consider such risks, including those factors listed in "Risk Factors" set forth herein and elsewhere in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in other documents that we file with the SEC from time to time.

We do not undertake any responsibility to release publicly any revisions to these forward-looking statements to take into account events or circumstances that occur after the date of this prospectus. Additionally, we do not undertake any responsibility to update you on the occurrence of any unanticipated events which may cause actual results to differ from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus unless required by applicable law.

**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Except as described in any applicable prospectus supplement, we currently intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered hereunder, if any, for general corporate purposes, which may include working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions, repurchases of our common stock and refinancing or repayment of indebtedness.

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

When specific securities are offered, the prospectus supplement relating thereto will set forth our intended use of the net proceeds that we receive from the sale of such securities. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we may invest the proceeds in marketable securities and short-term investments.

We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of common stock by the selling stockholders pursuant to this prospectus.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES(1)**

The following table sets forth our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the periods presented:

	Fiscal Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended September 30, 2015
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
	<i>(in thousands, except ratios)</i>					
<b>Ratio of earnings to fixed charges</b>	*	*	*	*	*	48.4
<b>Additional earnings required to have a one-to-one ratio of earnings to fixed charges</b>	\$ 33,545	\$ 61,477	\$ 3,732	\$ 1,126	\$ 971	

(1) We do not calculate a ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends at this time because no shares of our preferred stock are issued and outstanding. If we offer shares of preferred stock under this prospectus we will, at that time, provide a ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends in the applicable prospectus supplement.

\* Ratio of earnings to fixed charges was less than one-to-one for this period.

**DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK**

The following description of our common stock and preferred stock, together with the additional information we include in any prospectus supplement, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the common stock and preferred stock that we or any selling stockholders may offer pursuant to this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will apply generally to any future common stock or preferred stock that we may offer, we will describe the particular terms of any class or series of these securities in more detail in the particular prospectus supplement. For the complete terms of our common stock and preferred stock, please refer to our current certificate of incorporation, as amended to date, and our by-laws, which have been filed with the SEC and are incorporated herein by reference. The terms of these securities may also be affected by the Delaware General Corporation Law, which we refer to as the DGCL. The summary below and any update which may be contained in any prospectus supplement is qualified in its entirety by reference to our certificate of incorporation, as amended to date, and our by-laws, as either may be amended from time to time after the date of this prospectus, but before the date of any such prospectus supplement.

Our authorized capital stock consists of 50,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of October 28, 2015, we had 11,541,850 shares of common stock outstanding, excluding treasury shares, and no shares of preferred stock outstanding.

**Common Stock**

**Dividends.** Subject to prior dividend rights of the holders of any preferred shares, holders of shares of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends when, as and if declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available for that purpose.

**Voting Rights.** Each share of common stock is entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders, except that holders of common stock are not entitled to vote on any amendment to our certificate of incorporation that relates solely to the terms of one or more outstanding series of preferred stock if the holders of such affected series are entitled, either separately or together as a class with the holders of one or more other such series, to vote thereon pursuant to our certificate of incorporation. Holders of shares of common stock do not have cumulative voting rights. In other words, a holder of a single share of our common stock cannot cast more than one vote for each position to be filled on our board of directors.

**Other Rights.** In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, after the satisfaction in full of the liquidation preferences of holders of any preferred shares, holders of shares of our common stock are entitled to ratable distribution of the remaining assets available for distribution to stockholders. Shares of common stock are not subject to redemption by operation of a sinking fund or otherwise. Holders of shares of common stock are not currently entitled to preemptive rights.



## **Table of Contents**

**Fully Paid.** The issued and outstanding shares of our common stock are fully paid and non-assessable. This means the full purchase price for the outstanding shares of common stock has been paid and the holders of such shares will not be assessed any additional amounts for such shares. Any additional shares of common stock that we may issue in the future will also be fully paid and non-assessable.

## **Preferred Stock**

We are authorized to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. Our board of directors, without further action by the holders of our common stock, may issue shares of preferred stock. The board of directors is vested with the authority to fix the designations, preferences and relative, participating, optional or other special rights, and such qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof, including, without limitation, redemption rights, dividend rights, liquidation preferences and conversion or exchange rights of any class or series of preferred stock, and to fix the number of classes or series of preferred stock, the number of shares constituting any such class or series and the voting powers for each class or series.

The authority possessed by our board of directors to issue preferred stock could potentially be used to discourage attempts by third parties to obtain control of the company through a merger, tender offer, proxy contest or otherwise by making such attempts more difficult or more costly. Our board of directors may issue preferred stock with voting rights or conversion rights that, if exercised, could adversely affect the voting power of the holders of our common stock.

A prospectus supplement relating to a series of preferred stock will describe terms of that series of preferred stock, including:

the designation and stated value of that series;

the number of shares of preferred stock we are offering;

the initial public offering price at which the shares of preferred stock will be sold;

the dividend rate of that series, the conditions and dates upon which those dividends will be payable, whether those dividends will be cumulative or noncumulative, and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends will accumulate;

the process for any auction and remarketing, if any;

the relative ranking and preferences of that series as to dividend rights and rights upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of our company;

any redemption, repurchase or sinking fund provisions;

any conversion or exchange rights of the holder or us;

any voting rights;

any preemptive rights;

any restrictions on transfer, sale or other assignment;

any restrictions on further issuances;

whether interests in the preferred stock will be represented by depositary shares;

a discussion of any material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock;

any application for listing of that series on any securities exchange or market;

any limitations on the issuance of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, that series of preferred stock.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Restrictions on Payment of Dividends**

We are incorporated in Delaware and governed by Delaware law. Delaware law allows a corporation to pay dividends only:

out of surplus, as determined under Delaware law; or

in case there is no such surplus, out of the corporation's net profits for the fiscal year in which the dividend is declared and/or the preceding fiscal year.

The revolving credit facility we entered into on October 22, 2015, which is described more fully in the documents incorporated herein by reference, also contains contractual restrictions on our ability to pay dividends.

### **Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law**

Section 203 of the DGCL, which we refer to as Section 203, prohibits certain transactions between a Delaware corporation and an interested stockholder. Generally, an interested stockholder for this purpose is a stockholder who is directly or indirectly a beneficial owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting power of a Delaware corporation. This provision, if applicable, prohibits certain business combinations between an interested stockholder and a corporation for a period of three years after the date on which the stockholder became an interested stockholder, unless: (1) the transaction which resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder is approved by the corporation's board of directors before the stockholder became an interested stockholder; (2) the interested stockholder acquired at least 85% of the voting power (as calculated pursuant to Section 203) of the corporation in the transaction in which the stockholder became an interested stockholder; or (3) the business combination is approved by a majority of the board of directors and the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock not owned by the interested stockholder at or subsequent to the time that the stockholder became an interested stockholder. These restrictions do not apply in certain circumstances, including if the corporation's certificate of incorporation contains a provision expressly electing not to be governed by Section 203. If such a provision is adopted by an amendment to the corporation's certificate of incorporation, the amendment will be effective immediately if, among other requirements, the corporation has never had a class of voting stock listed on a national securities exchange or held of record by more than 2,000 stockholders. If this and other requirements are not satisfied, the amendment will not be effective until 12 months after its adoption and will not apply to any business combination between the corporation and any person who became an interested stockholder on or prior to such adoption.

LendingTree's certificate of incorporation contains a provision expressly electing not to be governed by Section 203. Therefore, in accordance with Section 203, the restrictions on certain business combinations in Section 203 do not currently apply in respect of LendingTree.

### **Anti-takeover Effects of our Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws and Delaware Law**

Some provisions of our certificate of incorporation and by-laws and certain provisions of Delaware law could make the following more difficult:

an acquisition of LendingTree by means of a tender offer;

an acquisition of LendingTree by means of a proxy contest or otherwise; or

the removal of our incumbent officers and directors.

***Size of Board and Vacancies***

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws provide that, subject to the rights of the holders of any series of preferred stock to elect additional directors under specified circumstances, the number of directors on our board of directors will be fixed exclusively by the board of directors. Newly created directorships resulting from any increase in the authorized number of directors or any vacancies in the board of directors resulting from death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, removal from office or other cause will be filled generally by the majority vote of the directors then in office, though less than a quorum.

***Elimination of Stockholder Action by Written Consent***

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws expressly eliminate the right of stockholders to act by written consent. Stockholder action must take place at the annual or a special meeting of our stockholders.

## **Table of Contents**

### ***Stockholder Meetings***

Under our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, stockholders are not entitled to call special meetings of stockholders. Only a majority of our board of directors or specified individuals may call such meetings.

### ***Requirements for Advance Notification of Stockholder Nominations and Proposals***

Our by-laws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and nomination of candidates for election as directors other than nominations made by or at the direction of the board of directors or a committee of the board of directors. In particular, stockholders must notify the corporate secretary in writing prior to the meeting at which the matters are to be acted upon or directors are to be elected. The notice must contain the information specified in our by-laws. To be timely, the notice must be received at our principal executive office not later than 60 or more than 90 days prior to the first anniversary of the date for the preceding year's annual meeting of stockholders. However, if the date of the annual meeting is advanced more than 30 days prior to or delayed by more than 30 days after the anniversary of the preceding year's annual meeting, or if no annual meeting was held during the preceding year, notice by the stockholder, to be timely, must be delivered no later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to such annual meeting or the 10th day following the day on which public announcement of the date of such meeting is first made. Moreover, in the event that the number of directors to be elected to the board of directors is increased and we make no public announcement naming all of the nominees for director or specifying the size of the increased board of directors at least 55 days prior to the first anniversary of the date for the preceding year's annual meeting of stockholders, the stockholder's notice will be considered timely, but only with respect to nominees for any new positions created by such increase, if it is delivered to the corporate secretary at our principal executive offices not later than the close of business on the 10th day following the day on which we first made such public announcement.

### ***Undesignated Preferred Stock***

The authorization in our certificate of incorporation with respect to the issuance of undesignated preferred stock makes it possible for our board of directors to issue preferred stock with voting or other rights or preferences that could impede the success of any attempt to change control of the company. The provision in our certificate of incorporation authorizing such preferred stock may have the effect of deferring hostile takeovers or delaying changes of control of our management.

### ***Indemnification Provisions***

The following provisions of Delaware law and our certificate of incorporation and by-laws govern the indemnification of our directors and officers.

Section 145 of the DGCL provides that a corporation may indemnify directors and officers as well as other employees and individuals against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, in which such person is made a party by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation in a derivative action), if such person acted in good faith and in a manner such person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe such person's conduct was unlawful. A similar standard is applicable in the case of derivative actions, except that indemnification only extends to expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred in connection with the defense or settlement of such action, and the statute requires court approval before there can be

any indemnification where the person seeking indemnification has been found liable to the corporation. The statute provides that it is not exclusive of other indemnification that may be granted by a corporation's by-laws, disinterested director vote, stockholder vote, agreement or otherwise.

**Table of Contents**

Our certificate of incorporation provides that no director shall be liable to us or our stockholders for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except to the extent such exemption from liability or limitation on liability is not permitted under the DGCL, as now in effect or as amended. Currently, Section 102(b)(7) of the DGCL prohibits provisions in a Delaware corporation's certificate of incorporation that eliminate the liability of a director for the following:

any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to us or our stockholders;

acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;

unlawful payments of dividends or unlawful stock purchases or redemptions as provided in Section 174 of the DGCL; and

any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

Our by-laws provide that, to the fullest extent authorized by the DGCL, as now in effect or as amended, we will indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to or is otherwise involved in any action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that such person, or a person of whom he or she is the legal representative, is or was a director or officer of our company, or by reason of the fact that such person, or a person of whom he or she is the legal representative, is or was serving, at our request, as a director, officer or trustee of another corporation or of a partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, including service with respect to employee benefit plans maintained or sponsored by us. To the extent authorized by the DGCL, we will indemnify such persons against all expenses, liability and loss (including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, ERISA excise taxes or penalties and amounts paid or to be paid in settlement) reasonably incurred or suffered by such persons in connection with such service. Any amendment of these provisions will not reduce our indemnification obligations relating to actions taken before such amendment.

We maintain a directors' and officers' liability insurance policy insuring our directors and officers against certain liabilities and expenses incurred by them in their capacities as such and insuring us, under certain circumstances, in the event that indemnification payments are made by us to such directors and officers.

**Transfer Agent and Registrar**

Computershare has been appointed as the transfer agent and registrar for our common stock.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES**

We may issue senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities (any of which may be convertible or not convertible). We use the term debt securities in this prospectus to refer to both senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities. No debt securities will be secured by any of our property or assets or the property or assets of any of our subsidiaries. No debt securities will be guaranteed by any of our subsidiaries or any other person or entity. Thus, by owning a debt security, you will be an unsecured creditor of LendingTree.

The senior debt securities will be issued under our senior debt indenture described below and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated debt. The subordinated debt securities will be issued under our subordinated debt indenture described below and will be subordinate in right of payment to all of our senior debt, as defined in the subordinated debt indenture, and will rank equally with all of our other general obligations. We use the term indentures in this prospectus to refer to both the senior debt indenture and the subordinated debt indenture. Neither indenture limits our ability to incur additional unsecured indebtedness, unless otherwise described in the prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities. The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by New York law, unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement applicable to a series of debt securities.

We have summarized some of the material provisions of the indentures on the following pages. The summary does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, all provisions of the indentures, including definitions of various terms contained in the indentures. Copies of the entire indentures are exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and are incorporated herein by reference. We encourage you to read the full text of the indentures, which you can obtain as described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** elsewhere in this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will apply generally to any future debt securities we may offer under this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus will describe the specific terms of any debt securities offered through that prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus. The terms of any debt securities we offer under a prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may differ from the terms we describe below.

LendingTree is a holding company and a legal entity separate and distinct from its subsidiaries, through which LendingTree conducts most of its operations and which generate all of LendingTree's operating income and cash flow. As a result, LendingTree's only source of funds to meet its obligations to make payments under any debt securities as well as its other payment obligations is distributions or advances from LendingTree's subsidiaries. Contractual provisions, laws or regulations may limit the ability of LendingTree to obtain the necessary funds from its subsidiaries to satisfy its obligations. LendingTree's rights to participate in the distribution of assets of its subsidiaries are effectively subordinate to the claims of creditors, including trade creditors, of those subsidiaries, except to the extent that LendingTree itself may be a creditor of a particular subsidiary with recognized claims. Accordingly, except to the extent that LendingTree itself may be a creditor of a subsidiary with recognized claims, LendingTree's obligations under its debt securities will be effectively subordinated to all existing and future indebtedness and liabilities of its subsidiaries.

**The Indentures**

The senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities are each governed by an agreement called an indenture the senior debt indenture, in the case of the senior debt securities, and the subordinated debt indenture, in the case of the subordinated debt securities. Each indenture is a contract between us and the trustee under the indenture. The indentures are substantially identical, except for the provisions relating to subordination, which are included only in the subordinated debt indenture.



LendingTree has appointed Wilmington Trust, National Association, as trustee under each of the indentures. If a different trustee is appointed in the future, we will identify such trustee in the prospectus supplement relating to the offering of the applicable debt securities.

## **Table of Contents**

The trustee under each indenture has two principal roles:

The trustee can enforce the rights of the holders against us if we default on our obligations under the terms of the indenture or the debt securities. There are some limitations on the extent to which the trustee acts on behalf of the holders, described below under the heading Events of Default.

The trustee performs administrative duties for us, such as sending interest payments and notices to holders, and transferring a holder's debt securities to a new buyer if a holder sells such debt securities.

Reference to the indenture or the trustee with respect to any debt securities means the indenture under which those debt securities are issued and the trustee under that indenture.

## **Conversion or Exchange Rights**

We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus the terms on which a series of debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, our preferred stock or other securities (including securities of a third party). We will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. We may include provisions pursuant to which the number of shares of our common stock, our preferred stock or other securities (including securities of a third party) that the holders of the series of debt securities receive would be subject to adjustment.

## **Terms**

We may issue as many distinct series of debt securities under either indenture as we wish. The provisions of each indenture allow us not only to issue debt securities with terms different from those previously issued under that indenture, but also to reopen a previous issue of a series of debt securities and issue additional debt securities of that series. We may issue debt securities in amounts that exceed the total amount specified on the cover of the prospectus supplement related to debt securities you hold at any time without your consent and without notifying you.

This section summarizes the material terms of the debt securities that are common to all series, although the prospectus supplement which describes the terms of each series of debt securities may also describe differences from the material terms summarized here.

Because this section is a summary, it does not describe every aspect of the debt securities. This summary is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to all the provisions of the applicable indenture, including definitions of certain terms used in the indenture. In this summary, we describe the meaning of only some of the more important terms. Whenever we refer to particular sections or defined terms of the indenture in this prospectus or in the prospectus supplement, such sections or defined terms are incorporated by reference here or in the prospectus supplement. You must look to the indenture for the most complete description of what we describe in summary form in this prospectus.

This summary also is subject to and qualified by reference to the description of the particular terms of any series described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Those terms may vary from the terms described in this prospectus. The prospectus supplement relating to each series of debt securities will be attached to the front of this prospectus. There may also be a further prospectus supplement, known as a pricing supplement or free writing prospectus, which contains the precise terms of debt securities we may offer.

We may issue the debt securities as original issue discount securities, which will be offered and sold at a substantial discount below their stated principal amount. The prospectus supplement relating to the original issue discount securities will describe federal income tax consequences and other special considerations applicable to them. The debt securities may also be issued as indexed securities or securities denominated in foreign currencies or currency units, as described in more detail in the prospectus supplement relating to any of the particular debt securities.

**Table of Contents**

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of debt securities will describe the following terms of the series:

the title of the series of debt securities;

whether they are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the series of debt securities;

the person to whom interest on a debt security is payable, if other than the holder on the regular record date;

the stated maturity;

the specified currency, currencies or currency units for principal and interest, if not U.S. dollars;

the rate or rates, which may be fixed or variable, per annum at which the series of debt securities will bear interest, if any, and the date or dates from which that interest, if any, will accrue;

the place or places where the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities will be payable;

the denominations in which the debt securities will be issuable, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple of \$1,000;

any mandatory or optional sinking funds or similar provisions or provisions for redemption at the option of the issuer;

the date, if any, after which and the price or prices at which the series of debt securities may, in accordance with any option or mandatory redemption provisions, be redeemed and the other detailed terms and provisions of those optional or mandatory redemption provisions, if any;

any index or formula used to determine the amount of payments of principal of and any premium and interest on the debt securities;

if the debt securities may be converted into or exchanged for our common stock, preferred stock or other securities, the terms on which conversion or exchange may occur, including whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option, the period during which conversion or exchange may occur, the initial conversion or exchange rate and the circumstance or manner in which the amount of common or preferred stock issuable upon conversion or exchange may be adjusted or calculated according to the market price of our common stock or preferred stock or such other securities;

if the debt securities are original issue discount debt securities, the yield to maturity;

the applicability of any provisions described under the heading **Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance** below;

any event of default under the series of debt securities if different from those described under the heading **Event of Default** below;

the names and duties of any co-trustees, authenticating agents, paying agents, transfer agents or registrars for the debt securities;

if the series of debt securities will be issuable only in the form of a global security, the depository or its nominee with respect to the series of debt securities and the circumstances under which the global security may be registered for transfer or exchange in the name of a person other than depository or the nominee; and

any other terms of the debt securities, which could be different from or in addition to those described in this prospectus.

**Table of Contents**

**Form, Exchange and Transfer**

Unless we indicate otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be issued:

only in fully registered form; and

in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

Holders may exchange their debt securities for debt securities of the same series in any authorized denominations, as long as the total principal amount is not changed.

Holders may exchange or transfer their debt securities at the office of the trustee. They may also replace lost, stolen or mutilated debt securities at that office. The trustee acts as our agent for registering debt securities in the names of the holders and transferring debt securities.

Holders will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange their debt securities, but they may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the registration, exchange or transfer. The transfer or exchange, and any replacement, will be made only if our transfer agent is satisfied with the holder's proof of legal ownership. The transfer agent may require an indemnity before replacing any debt securities.

If a debt security is issued as a global debt security, only the depositary will be entitled to transfer and exchange the debt security as described in this subsection, since the depositary will be the sole holder of the debt security.

If a debt security is issued as a registered global debt security, only the depositary—such as DTC, Euroclear and Clearstream, each as defined in the section **Legal Ownership of Securities** below—will be entitled to transfer and exchange the debt security as described in this subsection, since the depositary will be the sole holder of the debt security. Those who own beneficial interests in a global security do so through participants in the depositary's securities clearance system, and the rights of these indirect owners will be governed solely by the applicable procedures of the depositary and its participants. We describe book-entry procedures in the section **Legal Ownership of Securities** below.

We will not deposit money on a regular basis into any separate custodial account to repay the debt securities. In addition, we will not be entitled to redeem a debt security before its stated maturity unless the prospectus supplement specifies a redemption commencement date. You will not be entitled to require us to buy a debt security from you before its stated maturity unless your prospectus supplement specifies one or more repayment dates.

If the debt securities are redeemable and we redeem less than all of the debt securities of a particular series, we may block the transfer or exchange of debt securities during the period beginning 15 days before the day we mail the notice of redemption and ending on the day of that mailing, in order to freeze the list of holders to prepare the mailing. We may also refuse to register transfers or exchanges of debt securities selected for redemption, except that we will continue to permit transfers and exchanges of the unredeemed portion of any debt security being partially redeemed.

The rules for exchange described above apply to an exchange of debt securities for other debt securities of the same series and kind. If a debt security is convertible, or exchangeable into or for a different kind of security, the terms governing that type of conversion or exchange will be described in the prospectus supplement.

**Payment and Paying Agents**

If interest is due on a debt security on an interest payment date, we will pay the interest to the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date relating to the interest payment date as will be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. If interest is due at maturity but on a day that is not an interest payment date, we will pay the interest to the person entitled to receive the principal of

## **Table of Contents**

the debt security. If principal or another amount besides interest is due on a debt security at the stated maturity, we will pay the amount to the holder of the debt security against surrender of the debt security at a proper place of payment or, in the case of a global debt security, in accordance with the applicable policies of the depositary.

We will make payments on a global security in accordance with the applicable policies of the depositary as in effect from time to time. Under those policies, we will make payments directly to the depositary, or its nominee, and not to any indirect owners who own beneficial interests in the global security.

Book-entry and other indirect holders should consult their banks, brokers or other financial institutions for information on how they will receive payments.

We will make payments on a debt security in non-global, registered form as follows. We will pay interest that is due on an interest payment date by check mailed on the interest payment date to the holder at his or her address shown on the trustee's records as of the close of business on the regular record date. We will make all other payments by check to the paying agent against surrender of the debt security.

All payments will be made in U.S. dollars unless the prospectus supplement provides otherwise. If payments are to be made in currency other than U.S. dollars, such payments for debt security in non-global, registered form will be made by wire transfer of immediately available funds to any account that is maintained in the applicable specified currency at a bank designated by the holder and which is acceptable to us and the trustee. To designate an account for wire payment, the holder must give the paying agent appropriate wire instructions at least five business days before the requested wire payment is due. If we are obligated to make a payment in a specified currency other than U.S. dollars, and the specified currency or any successor currency is not available to us due to circumstances beyond our control we will be entitled to satisfy our obligation to make the payment by making the payment in U.S. dollars, on the basis of the exchange rate determined by the designated exchange agent, in its discretion.

We may appoint one or more financial institutions to act as our paying agents, at whose designated offices debt securities in non-global entry form may be surrendered for payment at their maturity. We call each of those offices a paying agent. We may add, replace or terminate paying agents from time to time. We may also choose to act as our own paying agent. Initially, the appointed trustee will act as the paying agent.

Regardless of who acts as paying agent, all money paid by us to a paying agent that remains unclaimed at the end of two years after the amount is due to a holder will be repaid to us. After that two-year period, the holder may, as an unsecured general creditor, look only to us for payment and not to the trustee, any other paying agent or anyone else.

## **Notices**

Notices to be given to holders of a global debt security will be given only to the depositary, in accordance with its applicable policies as in effect from time to time. Notices to be given to holders of debt securities not in global form will be sent by mail to the respective addresses of the holders as they appear in the trustee's records. Neither the failure to give any notice to a particular holder, nor any defect in a notice given to a particular holder, will affect the sufficiency of any notice given to another holder.

## **Mergers and Similar Transactions**

Under the terms of the applicable indenture, we will generally be permitted to merge or consolidate with another entity. We will also generally be permitted to sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another entity. With regard to any series of debt securities, however, unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may



not take any of these actions unless all of the following conditions are met:

If the successor entity in the transaction is not us, the successor entity must be a corporation, partnership, limited liability company or trust organized under the laws of the United States, any state

## **Table of Contents**

in the United States or the District of Columbia and must expressly assume our obligations under the debt securities of that series and the indenture with respect to that series.

Immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no default under the debt securities of that series has occurred and is continuing. For this purpose, default under the debt securities of that series means an event of default with respect to that series or any event that would be an event of default with respect to that series if the requirements for giving us a default notice and for our default having to continue for a specific period of time were disregarded.

We have delivered to the trustee an officers certificate and opinion of counsel, each stating that the transaction complies in all respects with the indenture.

If the conditions described above are satisfied with respect to the debt securities of any series, we will not need to obtain the approval of the holders of those debt securities in order to merge or consolidate or to sell our assets. Also, these conditions will apply only if we wish to merge or consolidate with another entity or sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another entity. We will not need to satisfy these conditions if we enter into other types of transactions, including any transaction in which we acquire stock or assets of another entity, any transaction that involves a change of control of us but in which we do not merge or consolidate and any transaction in which we sell less than substantially all of our assets.

## **Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance**

Any series of issued debt securities may be subject to the defeasance and discharge provisions of the applicable indenture. Under those provisions, the debt securities of any series may authorize us to elect to:

defeasance and to discharge us from any and all obligations with respect to those debt securities, except for the rights of holders of those debt securities to receive payments on the securities solely from the trust fund established pursuant to the applicable indenture and the obligations to exchange or register the transfer of the securities, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen securities, to maintain an office or agency with respect to the securities and to hold moneys for payment in trust, which we refer to as a defeasance; or

to be released from our obligations with respect to those debt securities to comply with the restrictive covenants which are subject to covenant defeasance, and the occurrence of certain events of default with respect to those restrictive covenants shall no longer be an event of default, which we refer to as a covenant defeasance.

To invoke defeasance or covenant defeasance with respect to any series of debt securities, we must irrevocably deposit with a trustee, in trust, money or U.S. government obligations, or both, which will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay all sums due on that series.

As a condition to defeasance or covenant defeasance, we must deliver to the applicable indenture trustee an officers certificate and an opinion of counsel stating that holders of the applicable debt securities will not recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of the defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if we did not

elect the defeasance or covenant defeasance. We may exercise our defeasance option with respect to the securities notwithstanding our prior exercise of our covenant defeasance option. If we exercise our defeasance option, payment of the securities may not be accelerated by the reference to restrictive covenants which are subject to covenant defeasance. If we do not comply with our remaining obligations after exercising our covenant defeasance option and the debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any event of default, the amount of money and U.S. government obligations on deposit in the defeasance trust may be insufficient to pay amounts due on the securities at the time of the acceleration. However, we will remain liable for those payments.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Modification and Waiver of the Debt Securities**

We may change or modify either of the indentures without the consent of the holders of the debt securities so long as such changes are limited to clarifications and/or changes that would not adversely affect the debt securities of that series in any material respect. We may also make changes that may affect the debt securities that have yet to be issued under the applicable indentures without the approval of any holders.

If the proposed change will affect the debt securities of a particular series then we must obtain approval of the holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of that series. If the proposed change will affect the debt securities of more than one series of debt securities issued under the applicable indenture then we must obtain approval of the holders of a majority in principal amount of each series affected by the change.

We may not amend the subordinated debt indenture to alter the subordination of any outstanding subordinated debt securities without the written consent of each holder of senior debt then outstanding who would be adversely affected. In addition, we may not modify the subordination provisions of the subordinated debt indenture in a manner that would adversely affect the outstanding subordinated debt securities of any one or more series in any material respect, without the approval of the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of all affected series, voting together as one class.

In each case, the required approval must be given by written consent.

Book-entry and other indirect holders should consult their banks, brokers or other financial institutions for information on how approval may be granted or denied if we seek to change or modify either indenture or the debt securities or request a waiver.

### **Subordination Provisions**

Holders of subordinated debt securities should recognize that contractual provisions in the subordinated debt indenture may prohibit us from making payments on those securities. Subordinated debt securities are subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent and in the manner stated in the subordinated debt indenture, to all of our senior debt, as defined in the subordinated debt indenture, as it may be supplemented from time to time, including all debt securities we have issued and will issue under the senior debt indenture.

The subordinated debt indenture defines **senior debt** as the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest (including interest accruing on or after the filing of any petition in bankruptcy or for reorganization relating to us) on all of our indebtedness (including indebtedness of others guaranteed by us), other than the subordinated debt securities, whether outstanding on the date of the indenture or thereafter created, incurred or assumed, which is (i) for money borrowed, (ii) evidenced by a note or similar instrument given in connection with the acquisition of any businesses, properties or assets of any kind or (iii) obligations of ours as lessee under leases required to be capitalized on the balance sheet of the lessee under generally accepted accounting principles or leases of property or assets made as part of any sale and lease-back transaction to which we are a party, including amendments, renewals, extensions, modifications and refundings of any such indebtedness or obligation, unless in any case in the instrument creating or evidencing any such indebtedness or obligation or pursuant to which the same is outstanding it is provided that such indebtedness or obligation is not superior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities.

The subordinated debt indenture provides that, unless all principal of and any premium or interest on the senior debt has been paid in full, no payment or other distribution may be made in respect of any subordinated debt securities in the following circumstances:

in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar proceeding involving us or our assets;

(a) in the event and during the continuation of any default in the payment of principal, premium or interest on any senior debt beyond any applicable grace period or if any event of default with

## **Table of Contents**

respect to any senior debt of ours has occurred and is continuing, permitting the holders of that senior debt of ours or a trustee to accelerate the maturity of that senior debt, unless the event of default has been cured or waived or ceased to exist and any related acceleration has been rescinded, or (b) if any judicial proceeding is pending with respect to a payment default or an event of default described in clause (a); or

in the event that any subordinated debt securities have been declared due and payable before their stated maturity.

If the trustee under the subordinated debt indenture or any holders of the subordinated debt securities receive any payment or distribution that they know is prohibited under the subordination provisions, then the trustee or the holders will have to repay that money to the holders of the senior debt.

Even if the subordination provisions prevent us from making any payment when due on the subordinated debt securities of any series, we will be in default on our obligations under that series if we do not make the payment when due. This means that the trustee under the subordinated debt indenture and the holders of that series can take action against us, but they will not receive any money until the claims of the holders of senior debt have been fully satisfied.

## **Events of Default**

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement provides otherwise, when we refer to an event of default with respect to any series of debt securities, we mean any of the following:

failure to pay interest on any debt security of that series within 30 days after its due date;

failure to pay the principal of or any premium on any debt security of that series on the due date;

failure to deposit a sinking fund payment with regard to any debt security of that series on the due date, but only if the payment is required under the applicable prospectus supplement;

we remain in breach of any covenant we make in the indenture for the benefit of the relevant series for 90 days after we receive a written notice of default stating that we are in breach and requiring us to remedy the breach. The notice must be sent by the trustee or the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the relevant series of debt securities; or

the occurrence of specified bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization events.

An event of default for one series of debt securities does not necessarily constitute an event of default for any other series. The trustee may withhold notice to the debt securities holders of any default, except a payment default, if it considers such action to be in the holders' interests.

If the specified bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization events occur, the entire principal of all the debt securities of that series will be due and payable immediately. If any other event of default occurs and continues, the trustee, or the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series, may

declare the entire principal of all the debt securities of that series to be due and payable immediately. If this happens, and the issuer cures the event of default in the manner specified in the applicable indenture, the holders of a majority of the aggregate outstanding principal amount of the debt securities of that series can void the acceleration of payment.

The indentures provide that the trustee has no obligation to exercise any of its rights at the direction of any holders, unless the holders offer the trustee reasonable indemnity. If they provide this indemnification, the holders of a majority in principal amount of any series of debt securities have the right to direct any proceeding, remedy or power available to the trustee with respect to that series.

Book-entry and other indirect holders should consult their banks, brokers or other financial institutions for information on how to give notice or direction to or make a request of the trustee and to make or cancel a declaration of acceleration.

## **Table of Contents**

We will provide the trustee every year with a written statement of certain of our officers certifying that to their knowledge we are in compliance with the applicable indenture and the debt securities issued under it, or else specifying any default.

### **The Trustee**

If we offer a series of debt securities, we will identify the banking or financial institution which will act as trustee under the applicable indenture in the prospectus supplement for that offering. If a single banking or financial institution acts as trustee with respect to both the indentures, and a default occurs with respect to any series of debt securities, the banking or financial institution would generally be required to resign as trustee under one of the indentures within 90 days of the default, unless the default were cured, duly waived or otherwise eliminated. The Company has initially designated Wilmington Trust, National Association, as the trustee with respect to each of the indentures.

### **Governing Law**

New York law will govern the indentures and the debt securities.

## **DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS**

We may issue warrants for the purchase of shares of common stock, preferred stock or debt securities in one or more series. We may issue warrants independently or together with shares of common stock, preferred stock and/or debt securities, and the warrants may be attached to or separate from these securities. While the terms summarized below will apply generally to any warrants that we may sell, we will describe the particular terms of any series of warrants in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any warrants offered under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms described below.

We will file as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, or will incorporate by reference from reports that we file with the SEC, the form of warrant agreement, including a form of warrant certificate, that describes the terms of the particular series of warrants we are offering before the issuance of the related series of warrants. The following summaries of material provisions of the warrants and the warrant agreements are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the warrant agreement and warrant certificate applicable to the particular series of warrants that we may offer under this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement. We urge you to read the applicable prospectus supplements related to the particular series of warrants that we may offer under this prospectus, as well as any related free writing prospectuses, and the complete warrant agreements and warrant certificates that contain the terms of the warrants.

### **General**

You should review the applicable prospectus supplement for the specific terms of any warrants that may be offered, including the following:

the title of the warrants;

the aggregate number of the warrants;



the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;

the designation, aggregate principal amount, denominations and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of a warrant to purchase debt securities and the price at which the debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;

in the case of warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock, the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock, as the case may be, purchasable upon the exercise of one warrant and the price at which these shares may be purchased upon such exercise;

**Table of Contents**

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

the effect of any merger, consolidation, sale or other disposition of our business on the warrant agreements and the warrants;

the terms of any rights to redeem or call the warrants;

any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the exercise price or number of securities issuable upon exercise of the warrants;

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

if applicable, the minimum or maximum number of warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

the manner in which the warrant agreements and warrants may be modified;

information relating to book-entry procedures, if any;

if applicable, a discussion of material U.S. federal income tax considerations of holding or exercising the warrants; and

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

Before exercising their warrants, holders of warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the securities purchasable upon such exercise, including:

in the case of warrants to purchase debt securities, the right to receive payments of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on, the debt securities purchasable upon exercise or to enforce covenants in the applicable indenture; or

in the case of warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock, the right to receive dividends, if any, or, payments upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up or to exercise voting rights, if any.

**Exercise of Warrants**

Each warrant will entitle the holder to purchase for cash such principal amount of securities or shares of stock at such exercise price as shall in each case be set forth in, or be determinable as set forth in, the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

The warrants may be exercised as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered. Upon receipt of payment and the warrant certificate properly completed and duly executed at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the securities purchasable upon such exercise. If less than all of the warrants represented by such warrant certificate are exercised, a new warrant certificate will be issued for the remaining warrants.

#### **Enforceability of Rights By Holders of Warrants**

Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between a warrant agent and us. Each warrant agent will act solely as our agent under the applicable warrant agreement and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust with any holder of any warrant. A single bank or trust company may act as warrant agent for more than one issue of warrants. A warrant agent will have no duty or responsibility in case of any default by us under the applicable warrant agreement or warrant, including any duty or responsibility to initiate any proceedings at law or otherwise, or to make any demand upon us. Any holder of a warrant may, without the consent of the related warrant agent or the holder of any other warrant, enforce by appropriate legal action its right to exercise, and receive the securities purchasable upon exercise of, its warrants.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Amendments and Supplements to the Warrant Agreements**

We may amend or supplement a warrant agreement without the consent of the holders of the applicable warrants to cure ambiguities in the warrant agreement, to cure or correct a defective provision in the warrant agreement, or to provide for other matters under the warrant agreement that we and the warrant agent deem necessary or desirable, so long as, in each case, such amendments or supplements do not materially adversely affect the interests of the holders of the warrants.

### **Warrant Adjustments**

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement states otherwise, the exercise price of, and the number of securities covered by, a warrant to purchase shares of common stock or preferred stock will be adjusted proportionately if we subdivide or combine common stock or preferred stock, as applicable. In addition, unless the prospectus supplement states otherwise, if we, without payment:

issue capital stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for preferred stock or common stock, or any rights to subscribe for, purchase or otherwise acquire either class of capital stock, as a dividend or distribution to holders of our preferred stock or common stock;

pay any cash to holders of our preferred stock or common stock other than a cash dividend paid out of our current or retained earnings or other than in accordance with the terms of the preferred stock;

issue any evidence of our indebtedness or rights to subscribe for or purchase our indebtedness to holders of our preferred stock or common stock; or

issue preferred stock or common stock or additional stock or other securities or property to holders of our preferred stock or common stock by way of spinoff, split-up, reclassification, combination of shares or similar corporate rearrangement,

then the holders of warrants will be entitled to receive upon exercise of the warrants, in addition to the securities otherwise receivable upon exercise of the warrants and without paying any additional consideration, the amount of stock and other securities and property those holders would have been entitled to receive had they held the preferred stock or common stock, as applicable, issuable under the warrants on the dates on which holders of those securities received or became entitled to receive the additional stock and other securities and property.

Except as stated above, the exercise price and number of securities covered by a preferred stock or common stock warrant, and the amounts of other securities or property to be received, if any, upon exercise of those warrants, will not be adjusted or provided for if we issue those securities or any securities convertible into or exchangeable for those securities, or securities carrying the right to purchase those securities or securities convertible into or exchangeable for those securities.

Holders of preferred stock or common stock warrants may have additional rights under the following circumstances:

certain reclassifications, capital reorganizations or changes of the preferred stock or common stock, as applicable;

certain share exchanges, mergers, or similar transactions involving our company and which result in changes of preferred stock or common stock, as applicable; or

certain sales or dispositions to another entity of all or substantially all of our property and assets.

If one of the above transactions occurs and holders of our preferred stock or common stock are entitled to receive capital stock, securities or other property with respect to or in exchange for their securities, the holders of the preferred stock or common stock warrants then outstanding, as applicable, will be entitled to receive upon exercise of their warrants the kind and amount of shares of capital stock and other securities or property that they would have received upon the applicable transaction if they had exercised their warrants immediately before the transaction.

**Table of Contents**

**DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS**

The following is a general description of the terms of the subscription rights we may issue from time to time. Particular terms of any subscription rights we offer will be described in the prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus relating to such subscription rights, and may differ from the terms described herein.

We may issue subscription rights to purchase our securities. These subscription rights may be issued independently or together with any other security offered hereby and may or may not be transferable by the stockholder receiving the subscription rights in such offering. In connection with any offering of subscription rights, we may enter into a standby arrangement with one or more underwriters or other purchasers pursuant to which the underwriters or other purchasers may be required to purchase any securities remaining unsubscribed for after such offering.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of any offering of subscription rights for which this prospectus is being delivered, including the following:

whether common stock, preferred stock or warrants for those securities will be offered under the stockholder subscription rights;

the price, if any, for the subscription rights;

the exercise price payable for each security upon the exercise of the subscription rights;

the number of subscription rights issued to each stockholder;

the number and terms of the securities which may be purchased per each subscription right;

the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;

any other terms of the subscription rights, including the terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;

the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights shall commence, and the date on which the subscription rights shall expire;

the extent to which the subscription rights may include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities;

if appropriate, a discussion of material U.S. federal income tax considerations; and

if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting or purchase arrangement entered into by us in connection with the offering of subscription rights.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any subscription rights we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable subscription rights certificate or subscription rights agreement, which will be filed with the SEC if we offer subscription rights.

### **DESCRIPTION OF UNITS**

This section outlines some of the provisions of the units and the unit agreements. This information may not be complete in all respects and is qualified entirely by reference to the unit agreement with respect to the units of any particular series. The specific terms of any series of units will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus. If so described in a particular prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, the specific terms of any series of units may differ from the general description of terms presented below.

As specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue units consisting of one or more shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, debt securities, warrants, subscription rights or any combination of such securities.

## **Table of Contents**

The applicable prospectus supplement will specify the following terms of any units in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered:

the terms of the units and of any of the shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, debt securities, warrants or subscription rights comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances the securities comprising the units may be traded separately;

a description of the terms of any unit agreement governing the units;

if appropriate, a discussion of material U.S. federal income tax considerations; and

a description of the provisions for the payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units.

### **LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

We can issue securities in registered form or in the form of one or more global securities. We describe global securities in greater detail below. We refer to those persons who have securities registered in their own names on the books that we or any applicable trustee, depository or warrant agent maintain for this purpose as the holders of those securities. These persons are the legal holders of the securities. We refer to those persons who, indirectly through others, own beneficial interests in securities that are not registered in their own names as indirect holders of those securities. As we discuss below, indirect holders are not legal holders and investors in securities issued in book-entry form or in street name will be indirect holders.

#### **Book-Entry Holders**

We may issue securities in book-entry form only, as we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement. This means securities may be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depository on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system. These participating institutions, which are referred to as participants, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

Only the person in whose name a security is registered is recognized as the holder of that security. Securities issued in global form will be registered in the name of the depository or its participants. Consequently, for securities issued in global form, we will recognize only the depository as the holder of the securities, and we will make all payments on the securities to the depository. The depository passes along the payments it receives to its participants, which in turn pass the payments along to their customers who are the beneficial owners. The depository and its participants do so under agreements they have made with one another or with their customers; they are not obligated to do so under the terms of the securities.

As a result, investors in a book-entry security will not own securities directly. Instead, they will own beneficial interests in a global security, through a bank, broker or other financial institution that participates in the depository's book-entry system or holds an interest through a participant. As long as the securities are issued in global form, investors will be indirect holders, and not holders, of the securities.



**Street Name Holders**

We may terminate a global security or issue securities in non-global form. In these cases, investors may choose to hold their securities in their own names or in street name. Securities held by an investor in street name would be registered in the name of a bank, broker or other financial institution that the investor chooses, and the investor would hold only a beneficial interest in those securities through an account he or she maintains at that institution.

For securities held in street name, we will recognize only the intermediary banks, brokers and other financial institutions in whose names the securities are registered as the holders of those securities, and we will make all payments on those securities to them. These institutions pass along the payments they receive to their customers

## **Table of Contents**

who are the beneficial owners, but only because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they are legally required to do so. Investors who hold securities in street name will be indirect holders, not holders, of those securities.

### **Legal Holders**

Our obligations, as well as the obligations of any applicable trustee and of any third parties employed by us or a trustee, run only to the legal holders of the securities. We do not have obligations to investors who hold beneficial interests in global securities, in street name or by any other indirect means. This will be the case whether an investor chooses to be an indirect holder of a security or has no choice because we are issuing the securities only in global form.

For example, once we make a payment or give a notice to the holder, we have no further responsibility for the payment or notice even if that holder is required, under agreements with depository participants or customers or by law, to pass it along to the indirect holders but does not do so. Similarly, we may want to obtain the approval of the holders to amend an indenture, to relieve us of the consequences of a default or of our obligation to comply with a particular provision of the indenture or for other purposes. In such an event, we would seek approval only from the holders, and not the indirect holders, of the securities. Whether and how the holders contact the indirect holders is up to the holders.

### **Special Considerations for Indirect Holders**

If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form or in street name, you should check with your own institution to find out:

how it handles securities payment and notices;

whether it imposes fees or charges;

how it would handle a request for the holders' consents, if ever required;

whether and how you can instruct it to send your securities registered in your own name so you can be a registered holder;

how it would exercise rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests; and

if the securities are in book-entry form, how the depository's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

### **Global Securities**

A global security is a security that represents one or any other number of individual securities held by a depositary. Generally, all securities represented by the same global securities will have the same terms.

Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we deposit with and register in the name of a financial institution or its nominee that we select. The financial institution that we select for this purpose is called the depositary. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, which we refer to as DTC, will be the depositary for all securities issued in book-entry form.

A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depositary, its nominee or a successor depositary, unless special termination situations arise. We describe those situations below under **Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated**. As a result of these arrangements, the depositary, or its nominee, will be the sole registered owner and holder of all securities represented by a global

## **Table of Contents**

security, and investors will be permitted to own only beneficial interests in a global security. Beneficial interests must be held by means of an account with a broker, bank or other financial institution that in turn has an account with the depositary or with another institution that does. Thus, an investor whose security is represented by a global security will not be a holder of the security, but only an indirect holder of a beneficial interest in the global security.

If the prospectus supplement for a particular security indicates that the security will be issued in global form only, then the security will be represented by a global security at all times unless and until the global security is terminated. If termination occurs, we may issue the securities through another book-entry clearing system or decide that the securities may no longer be held through any book-entry clearing system.

### **Special Considerations for Global Securities**

As an indirect holder, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the investor's financial institution and of the depositary, as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize an indirect holder as a holder of securities and instead deal only with the depositary that holds the global security.

If securities are issued only in the form of a global security, an investor should be aware of the following:

an investor cannot cause the securities to be registered in his or her name, and cannot obtain non-global certificates for his or her interest in the securities, except in the special situations we describe below;

an investor will be an indirect holder and must look to his or her own bank or broker for payments on the securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the securities, as we describe above;

an investor may not be able to sell interests in the securities to some insurance companies and to other institutions that are required by law to own their securities in non-book-entry form;

an investor may not be able to pledge his or her interest in a global security in circumstances where certificates representing the securities must be delivered to the lender or other beneficiary of the pledge in order for the pledge to be effective;

the depositary's policies, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in a global security. We and any applicable trustee have no responsibility for any aspect of the depositary's actions or for its records of ownership interests in a global security. We and the trustee also do not supervise the depositary in any way;

the depositary may, and we understand that DTC will, require that those who purchase and sell interests in a global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds, and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well; and

financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system, and through which an investor holds its interest in a global security, may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the securities.

There may be more than one financial intermediary in the chain of ownership for an investor. We do not monitor and are not responsible for the actions of any of those intermediaries.

### **Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated**

In a few special situations described below, the global security will terminate and interests in it will be exchanged for physical certificates representing those interests. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold securities directly or in street name will be up to the investor. Investors must consult their own banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in securities transferred to their own name, so that they will be direct holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above.

**Table of Contents**

A global security will terminate when the following special situations occur:

if the depositary notifies us that it is unwilling, unable or no longer qualified to continue as depositary for that global security and we do not appoint another institution to act as depositary within 90 days;

if we notify any applicable trustee that we wish to terminate that global security; or

if an event of default has occurred with regard to securities represented by that global security and has not been cured or waived.

The applicable prospectus supplement may also list additional situations for terminating a global security that would apply only to the particular series of securities covered by the prospectus supplement. When a global security terminates, the depositary, and not we or any applicable trustee, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions that will be the initial direct holders.

**SELLING STOCKHOLDERS**

This prospectus also relates to the possible sale from time to time of shares of our common stock by certain of our stockholders, who we refer to in this prospectus as the selling stockholders.

Information about the selling stockholders will be set forth in an applicable prospectus supplement. The selling stockholders may from time to time offer and sell such securities pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement.

The selling stockholders shall not sell any shares of our common stock pursuant to this prospectus until we have identified such selling stockholders and the shares of our common stock which may be offered for resale by such selling stockholders in a subsequent prospectus supplement. However, the selling stockholders may sell or transfer all or a portion of their shares of our common stock pursuant to any available exemption from the registration requirements of the Securities Act.

**PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

We or any selling stockholders may sell our securities in any one or more of the following ways:

to or through underwriters, brokers or dealers (acting as agent or principal);

directly to one or more other purchasers;

upon the exercise of rights distributed or issued to our security holders;

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

through a block trade in which the broker or dealer engaged to handle the block trade will attempt to sell the securities as agent, but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction;

in at the market offerings within the meaning of Rule 415(a)(4) under the Securities Act or through a market maker or into an existing market, on an exchange, or otherwise;

directly to purchasers, through a specific bidding or auction process, on a negotiated basis or otherwise;

through agents on a best-efforts basis;

through any other method permitted pursuant to applicable law; or

otherwise through a combination of any of the above methods of sale.

Sales of securities may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions:

at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

**Table of Contents**

at prices related to prevailing market prices;

at varying prices determined at the time of sale; or

at negotiated prices.

In addition, we or any selling stockholders may enter into option, share lending or other types of transactions that require us or any such selling stockholders, as applicable, to deliver shares of common stock to an underwriter, broker or dealer, who will then resell or transfer the shares of common stock under this prospectus. We or any selling stockholders may also enter into hedging transactions with respect to our securities or the securities of any such selling stockholders, as applicable. For example, we or the selling stockholders may enter into option or other types of transactions that require us or any selling stockholders, as applicable, to deliver shares of common stock to an underwriter, broker or dealer, who will then resell or transfer the shares of common stock under this prospectus; or loan or pledge the shares of common stock to an underwriter, broker or dealer, who may sell the loaned shares or, in the event of default, sell the pledged shares.

Any selling stockholder will act independently of us in making decisions with respect to the timing, manner and size of each sale of shares of common stock covered by this prospectus.

We or any selling stockholders may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement so indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or any such selling stockholders, as applicable, or borrowed from us, any such selling stockholders or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us or any selling stockholders in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and, if not identified in this prospectus, will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part). In addition, we or any selling stockholders may otherwise loan or pledge securities to a financial institution or other third party that in turn may sell the securities short using this prospectus. Such financial institution or other third party may transfer its economic short position to investors in our securities or the securities of any such selling stockholders, as applicable, or in connection with a concurrent offering of other securities.

Shares of common stock may also be exchanged for satisfaction of any selling stockholders' obligations or other liabilities to their creditors. Such transactions may or may not involve brokers or dealers.

If we or any selling stockholders use any underwriter, the prospectus supplement will name any underwriter involved in the offer and sale of the securities. If underwriters or dealers are used in the sale, the securities will be acquired by the underwriters or dealers for their own account. The prospectus supplement will also set forth the terms of the offering, including:

the purchase price of the securities and the proceeds we or any selling stockholders, as applicable, will receive from the sale of the securities;



any underwriting discounts and other items constituting underwriters' compensation;

any public offering or purchase price and any discounts or commissions allowed or re-allowed or paid to dealers;

any commissions allowed or paid to agents;

any securities exchanges on which the securities may be listed;

the method of distribution of the securities;

**Table of Contents**

the terms of any agreement, arrangement or understanding entered into with the underwriters, brokers or dealers; and

any other information we think is important.

The securities may be offered to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more of such firms. Unless otherwise set forth in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of underwriters or dealers to purchase the securities offered will be subject to certain conditions precedent and the underwriters or dealers will be obligated to purchase all of the offered securities if any are purchased. Any public offering price and any discount or concession allowed or reallocated or paid by underwriters or dealers to other dealers may be changed from time to time.

Any shares of common stock owned by any selling stockholders and covered by this prospectus may be sold pursuant to Rule 144 under the Securities Act rather than pursuant to this prospectus, to the extent such stock may be sold under Rule 144.

The securities may be sold directly by us or any selling stockholders or through agents designated by us or any such selling stockholders, as applicable, from time to time. Any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered will be named, and any commissions payable by us or any such selling stockholders, as applicable, to such agent will be set forth in, the prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, any such agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

Offers to purchase the securities offered by this prospectus may be solicited, and sales of the securities may be made by us or by any selling stockholders, directly to institutional investors or others, who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any resale of the securities. The terms of any offer made in this manner will be included in the prospectus supplement relating to the offer. If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, underwriters, dealers or agents will be authorized to solicit offers by certain institutional investors to purchase securities from us pursuant to contracts providing for payment and delivery at a future date on the terms set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Selling stockholders and broker-dealers or agents involved in an arrangement to sell any of the offered securities may, under certain circumstances, be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act. Any profit on such sales and any discount, commission, concession or other compensation received by any such underwriter, broker-dealer or agent may be deemed an underwriting discount and commission under the Exchange Act. Except as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, any selling stockholders and/or purchasers will pay all discounts, concessions, commissions and similar selling expenses, if any, that can be attributed to the sale of the shares of such common stock.

Some of the underwriters, dealers or agents used by us or any selling stockholders in any offering of securities under this prospectus may be customers of, engage in transactions with, and perform services for us or any such selling stockholders, as applicable, or affiliates of ours or theirs, as applicable, in the ordinary course of business. Underwriters, dealers, agents and other persons may be entitled under agreements which may be entered into with us or any selling stockholders to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to be reimbursed by us or any such selling stockholders for certain expenses.

Any securities initially sold outside the U.S. may be resold in the U.S. through underwriters, dealers or otherwise.

The anticipated date of delivery of the securities offered by this prospectus will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the offering.

## **Table of Contents**

In compliance with the guidelines of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA, the aggregate maximum discount, commission, agency fees or other items constituting underwriting compensation to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker-dealer will not exceed such amounts as is determined to be unfair or unreasonable under applicable FINRA rules.

No FINRA member may participate in any offering of securities made under this prospectus if such member has a conflict of interest under FINRA Rule 5121 unless a qualified independent underwriter has participated in the offering or the offering otherwise complies with FINRA Rule 5121.

To comply with the securities laws of some states, if applicable, the securities that may be offered pursuant to this prospectus may be sold in these jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in some states the securities may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale or an exemption from registration or qualification requirements is available and is complied with.

All securities we may offer pursuant to this prospectus, other than common stock, will be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters may make a market in these securities, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. We cannot guarantee the liquidity of the trading markets for any securities.

Any underwriter may engage in over-allotment, stabilizing transactions, short-covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum price. Syndicate-covering or other short-covering transactions involve purchases of the securities, either through exercise of the over-allotment option or in the open market after the distribution is completed, to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a stabilizing or covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

Any underwriters or agents that are qualified market makers may engage in passive market making transactions in the common stock in accordance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act, during the business day prior to the pricing of the offering, before the commencement of offers or sales of our common stock. Passive market makers must comply with applicable volume and price limitations and must be identified as passive market makers. In general, a passive market maker must display its bid at a price not in excess of the highest independent bid for such security; if all independent bids are lowered below the passive market maker's bid, however, the passive market maker's bid must then be lowered when certain purchase limits are exceeded. Passive market making may stabilize the market price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market and, if commenced, may be discontinued at any time.

## **LEGAL MATTERS**

The validity of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP, San Diego, California. Additional legal matters may be passed upon for us or any underwriters, dealers or agents by counsel that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement.

## **EXPERTS**

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

**Table of Contents**

**WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

This prospectus is part of the registration statement on Form S-3 we filed with the SEC under the Securities Act and does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. Whenever a reference is made in this prospectus to any of our contracts, agreements or other documents, the reference may not be complete and you should refer to the exhibits that are a part of the registration statement or the exhibits to the reports or other documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus for a copy of such contract, agreement or other document. Because we are subject to the information and reporting requirements of the Exchange Act, we file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room.

**INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information from other documents that we file with it, 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. Information in this prospectus supersedes information incorporated by reference that we filed with the SEC prior to the date of this prospectus, while information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference into this prospectus and the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part the information or documents listed below that we have filed with the SEC (Commission File No. 001-34063):

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, filed with the SEC on March 16, 2015;

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2015, June 30, 2015 and September 30, 2015 filed with the SEC on April 30, 2015, August 5, 2015 and October 26, 2015;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 5, 2015, June 11, 2015 (other than Item 7.01 of such report) and August 3, 2015 (other than Item 2.02 of such report);

Portions of our Proxy Statement, as filed with the SEC on April 30, 2015, for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders held on June 10, 2015 that have been incorporated by reference in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014; and

the description of our common stock in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on August 5, 2008, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description. We also incorporate by reference any future filings (other than Current Reports on Form 8-K furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K and exhibits filed on such form that are related to such items unless such Form 8-K expressly provides to the contrary) made with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, until we file a post-effective amendment that indicates the termination of the offering of the securities

made by this prospectus and will become a part of this prospectus from the date that such documents are filed with the SEC. Information in such future filings updates and supplements the information provided in this prospectus. Any statements in any such future filings will automatically be deemed to modify and supersede any information in any document we previously filed with the SEC that is incorporated or deemed to be incorporated herein by reference to the extent that statements in the later filed document modify or replace such earlier statements.

**Table of Contents**

We will furnish without charge to you (and any beneficial owner), on written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents. You should direct any requests for documents to:

LendingTree, Inc.

11115 Rushmore Drive

Charlotte, North Carolina 28277

Attn: Corporate Secretary

(704) 541-5351



**Table of Contents**

**PART II**

**INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS**

**Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.**

The following table sets forth the estimated fees and expenses, other than underwriting discounts and commissions, expected to be incurred in connection with the offering or offerings described in this registration statement.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Securities and Exchange Commission registration fee	*
Legal fees and expenses	**
Accounting fees and expenses	**
Transfer agent and registrar fees and expenses	**
Printing fees and expenses	**
Miscellaneous	**
<b>Total</b>	<b>**</b>

\* To be deferred pursuant to Rule 456(b) under the Securities Act and calculated in connection with the offering of securities under this registration statement pursuant to Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act, except for the registration fees applied in accordance with Rule 457(p) under the Securities Act.

\*\* Estimated expenses are not presently known. An estimate of the aggregate expenses in connection with the sale and distribution of the securities being offered will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement.

**Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.**

Section 145 of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware (the "DGCL") provides that a corporation may indemnify directors and officers as well as other employees and individuals against expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, in which such person is made a party by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation (other than an action by or in the right of the corporation a derivative action), if such person acted in good faith and in a manner such person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe such person's conduct was unlawful. A similar standard is applicable in the case of derivative actions, except that indemnification only extends to expenses (including attorneys fees) incurred in connection with the defense or settlement of such action, and the statute requires court approval before there can be any indemnification where the person seeking indemnification has been found liable to the corporation. The statute provides that it is not exclusive of other indemnification that may be granted by a corporation's by-laws, disinterested director vote, stockholder vote, agreement or otherwise.

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

The Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation of LendingTree, Inc. (the Company ) provides that no director shall be liable to the Company or its stockholders for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except to the extent such exemption from liability or limitation on liability is not permitted under the DGCL, as now in effect or as amended. Currently, Section 102(b)(7) of the DGCL requires that liability be imposed for the following:

any breach of the director s duty of loyalty to the Company or its stockholders;

acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;

**Table of Contents**

unlawful payments of dividends or unlawful stock purchases or redemptions as provided in Section 174 of the DGCL; and

any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

The Company's Amended and Restated By-Laws provide that, to the fullest extent authorized by the DGCL, as now in effect or as amended, the Company will indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to or is otherwise involved in any action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that such person, or a person of whom he or she is the legal representative, is or was a director or officer of the Company, or by reason of the fact that such person, or a person of whom he or she is the legal representative, is or was serving, at the Company's request, as a director, officer or trustee of another corporation or of a partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, including service with respect to employee benefit plans maintained or sponsored by the Company. To the extent authorized by the DGCL, the Company will indemnify such persons against all expenses, liability and loss (including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, ERISA excise taxes or penalties and amounts paid or to be paid in settlement) reasonably incurred or suffered by such persons in connection with such service. Any amendment of these provisions will not reduce the indemnification obligations of the Company relating to actions taken before such amendment.

The Company maintains a directors' and officers' liability insurance policy insuring its directors and officers against certain liabilities and expenses incurred by them in their capacities as such and insuring the Company, under certain circumstances, in the event that indemnification payments are made by the Company to such directors and officers.

**Item 16. Exhibits.**

See Exhibit Index immediately following the signature page of this registration statement.

**Item 17. Undertakings.**

- a. The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:
  1. To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:
    - i. To include any prospectus required by section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;
    - ii. To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the SEC pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

in volume and price represent no more than 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement.

- iii. To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided however, that paragraphs (a)(1)(i), (a)(1)(ii) and (a)(1)(iii) of this section do not apply if the registration statement is on Form S-3, Form SF-3 or Form F-3 and the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Securities and Exchange Commission by the registrant pursuant to section 13 or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

**Table of Contents**

2. That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
3. To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.
4. That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:
  - i. Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and
  - ii. Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof. *Provided, however,* that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.
5. That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:
  - i. Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

- ii. Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
  - iii. The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
  - iv. Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.
- b. The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to section 13(a) or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

**Table of Contents**

- c. If and when applicable, the undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to supplement the prospectus, after the expiration of the subscription period, to set forth the results of the subscription offer, the transactions by the underwriters during the subscription period, the amount of unsubscribed securities to be purchased by the underwriters, and the terms of any subsequent reoffering thereof. If any public offering by the underwriters is to be made on terms differing from those set forth on the cover page of the prospectus, a post-effective amendment will be filed to set forth the terms of such offering.
  
- d. Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

Table of Contents

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Charlotte, State of North Carolina, on November 2, 2015.

LendingTree, Inc.

By: /s/ Gabriel Dalporto  
Gabriel Dalporto  
Chief Financial Officer



**Table of Contents****POWER OF ATTORNEY**

Each person whose signature appears below hereby constitutes and appoints Gabriel Dalporto and Katharine Pierce, or either of them, as his or her true and lawful attorney-in-fact and agent, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him or her in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments to this registration statement, including post-effective amendments or any abbreviated registration statement and any amendments thereto filed pursuant to Rule 462(b) and Rule 462(e) and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto and other documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorney-in-fact and agent, with full power to act alone, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in connection therewith, as fully for all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorney-in-fact and agent, or his or her or their substitute or substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, this registration statement has been signed by the following persons in their capacities and on the date indicated.

<b>Signature</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
/s/ Douglas R. Lebda Douglas R. Lebda	Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	November 2, 2015
/s/ Gabriel Dalporto Gabriel Dalporto	Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial Officer)	November 2, 2015
/s/ Carla Shumate Carla Shumate	Chief Accounting Officer (Principal Accounting Officer)	November 2, 2015
/s/ Neal Dermer Neal Dermer	Director	November 2, 2015
/s/ Robin Henderson Robin Henderson	Director	November 2, 2015
/s/ Peter Horan Peter Horan	Director	November 2, 2015
/s/ Steven Ozonian Steven Ozonian	Director	November 2, 2015

Edgar Filing: LendingTree, Inc. - Form S-3ASR

/s/ Saras Sarasvathy

Director

November 2, 2015

Saras Sarasvathy

/s/ Craig Troyer

Director

November 2, 2015

Craig Troyer

**Table of Contents****EXHIBIT INDEX**

<b>Exhibit No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Filed Herewith</b>	<b>Incorporated by Reference to</b>
1	Form of Underwriting Agreement (Equity)	*	
2	Form of Underwriting Agreement (Debt Securities)	*	
1	Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation		Exhibit 3.1 to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on August 25, 2008
2	Certificate of Amendment of Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation		Exhibit 3.1 to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on December 31, 2014
3	Third Amended and Restated By-Laws of LendingTree, Inc.		Exhibit 3.2 to the Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on December 31, 2014
1	Specimen Common Stock Certificate	×	
2	Form of Senior Debt Indenture	×	
3	Form of Senior Debt Security	*	
4	Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture	×	
5	Form of Subordinated Debt Security	*	
6	Form of Capital Stock Warrant Agreement	*	
7	Form of Capital Stock Warrant Certificate	*	
8	Form of Debt Securities Warrant Agreement	*	
9	Form of Debt Securities Warrant Certificate	*	
10	Form of Subscription Right	*	
	Table of Contents		

11	Form of Unit Agreement	*
12	Form of Unit Certificate	*
1	Legal Opinion of Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP	×
2.1	Computation of Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges	×
3.1	Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP	×
3.2	Consent of Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1)	×
4.1	Power of Attorney (included on signature page)	×
5.1	Statement of Eligibility and Qualification on Form T-1 of the trustee under the Senior Indenture	×
5.2	Statement of Eligibility and Qualification on Form T-1 of the trustee under the Subordinated Indenture	×

\* To be filed by amendment hereto or as an exhibit to a report filed pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and incorporated herein by reference, if applicable.