

payment cards. In addition, violations of the network rules or any failure to maintain good relationships with the payment card networks could impact our ability to receive incentives from them, could increase our costs, or could otherwise harm our business. If we were unable to accept payment cards or were limited in our ability to do so, our business would be materially and adversely affected.

We are required to pay interchange fees and assessments to the payment card networks, as well as fees to our acquiring processors, to process transactions. From time to time, payment card networks have increased, and may increase in the future, the interchange fees and assessments that they charge for each transaction processed using their networks. In addition, our acquiring processors may refuse to renew our agreements with them on commercially reasonable terms. Interchange fees or assessments are also subject to change from time to time due to government regulation. Because we generally charge our sellers a flat rate for our payments services, rather than passing through interchange fees and assessments to our sellers directly, any increase or decrease in interchange fees or assessments or in the fees we pay to our acquiring processors could make our pricing look less competitive, lead us to change our pricing model, or adversely affect our margins.

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We could be, and in the past have been, subject to penalties from payment card networks if we fail to detect that sellers are engaging in activities that are illegal, contrary to the payment card network operating rules, or considered "high risk." We must either prevent high-risk sellers from using our products and services or register such sellers with the payment card networks and conduct additional monitoring with respect to such sellers. Although the amount of these penalties has not been material to date, any additional penalties in the future could become material and could result in termination of our ability to accept payment cards or could require changes in our process for registering new sellers. This could materially and adversely affect our business.

Our quarterly results of operations and operating metrics fluctuate significantly and are unpredictable and subject to seasonality, which could result in the trading price of our Class A common stock being unpredictable or declining.

Our quarterly results of operations may vary significantly and are not necessarily an indication of future performance. These fluctuations may be due to a variety of factors, some of which are outside of our control and may not fully reflect the underlying performance of our business. Our limited operating history combined with the rapidly evolving markets in which also contributes to these fluctuations. Fluctuations in quarterly results may materially and adversely affect the predictability of our business and the price of our Class A common stock.

Factors that may cause fluctuations in our quarterly financial results include our ability to attract and retain new customers; the timing, effectiveness, and costs of expansion and upgrades of our systems and infrastructure, as well as the success of those expansions and upgrades; the outcomes of legal proceedings and claims; our ability to maintain or increase revenue, gross margins, and operating margins; our ability to continue introducing new services and to continue convincing customers to adopt additional offerings; increases in and timing of expenses that we may incur to grow and expand our operations and to remain competitive; period-to-period volatility related to fraud and risk losses; system failures resulting in the inaccessibility of our products and services; changes in the regulatory environment, including with respect to security, privacy, or enforcement of laws and regulations by regulators, including fines, orders, or consent decrees; changes in global business or macroeconomic conditions; unusual weather conditions; general retail buying patterns; and the other risks described in this prospectus.

We depend on key management, as well as our experienced and capable employees, and any failure to attract, motivate, and retain our employees could harm our ability to maintain and grow our business.

Our future success is significantly dependent upon the continued service of our executives and other key employees. If we lose the services of any member of management or any key personnel, we may not be able to locate a suitable or qualified replacement, and we may incur additional expenses to recruit and train a replacement, which could severely disrupt our business and growth. Jack Dorsey, our co-founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer, also serves as Chief Executive Officer of Twitter. This may at times adversely affect his ability to devote time, attention, and effort to Square.

To maintain and grow our business, we will need to identify, hire, develop, motivate, and retain highly skilled employees. Identifying, recruiting, training, integrating, and retaining qualified individuals requires significant time, expense, and attention. In addition, from time to time, there may be changes in our management team that may be disruptive to our business. If our management team, including any new hires that we make, fails to work together effectively and to execute our plans and strategies on a timely basis, our business could be harmed. Competition for highly skilled personnel is