STRUCTURED FINANCE ASSOCIATION

SFACADEMY'S

SFJOURNAL

Market Opinions

Written for Practitioners by Practitioners

Disclaimer:

This publication by the Structured Finance Association (SFA) is intended to foster discussion and the exchange of ideas among members and other contributors. The views, opinions, and conclusions expressed in articles published herein are solely those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views, positions, policies, or priorities of the SFA, its leadership, members, committees, sponsors, or affiliates. Publication of an article does not constitute endorsement, approval, or adoption of any opinion, analysis, recommendation, or conclusion by the SFA. The SFA may publish articles presenting a range of perspectives on issues of interest to its members, including viewpoints with which some members may disagree.

Private Credit as Borrower: The Lender Finance Market, 2012–2026

Evidence from 940 Publicly Announced Transactions

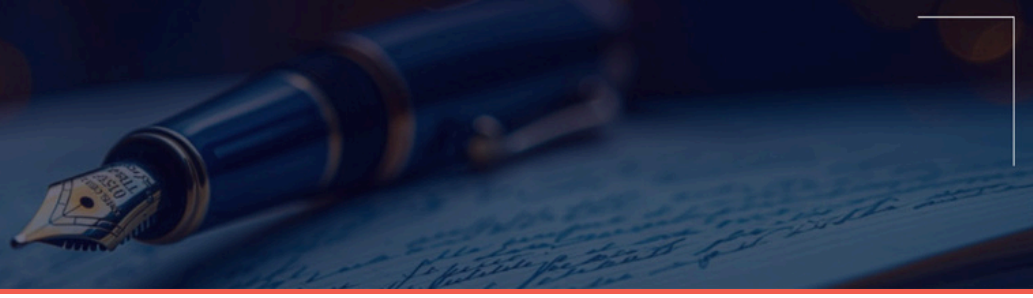
By: Arben Zibri, PhD, CFA

September 2026

Abstract:

A large and increasingly important financing market has developed behind private credit itself. Drawing on 940 publicly announced transactions totaling $186.5 billion, this paper examines how business development companies (BDCs), specialty finance companies, credit funds, and other non-bank lenders finance their own lending activities; and how that market has evolved over the past 15 years. BDCs are U.S. closed-end investment companies, regulated under the Investment Company Act of 1940, that must hold at least 70% of their assets in private or small public U.S. companies, mostly as loans to middle-market firms.

The findings reveal a financing ecosystem characterized by collateral-based lending and repeat borrowing relationships, alongside an evolving mix of borrowers and capital providers. The analysis also highlights the role of securitization as a potential funding takeout. While the dataset primarily captures publicly announced lender-finance transactions rather than the full universe of fund finance, it offers a perspective on the financing infrastructure supporting private credit.



1. Executive Summary

Private credit is not only a source of capital; lenders and investment vehicles themselves rely on financing to support their activities. This study examines that financing market, taking a broader view than traditional fund finance, which is generally associated with subscription lines and NAV facilities. The analysis includes credit extended to lenders and owners of financial assets, from warehouse and borrowing-base facilities to financing for credit funds and BDCs. Of the 9,544 transactions announced in the ABL Advisor deal database between October 2012 and August 2026, we identified the 940 in which the borrower is itself a lender or an investment vehicle, totaling $186.5 billion of announced commitments. Section 2 defines what the data captures and what it does not.

Volume growth is real; deal-count growth is partly an artifact. 2025 set the record at $19.6 billion of announced commitments (headline facility sizes, upsizes at their enlarged size), but 89 of its 163 deals were micro-placements from a single platform; the core market did 74 deals worth $19.3 billion. Dollars are the reliable measure.

The borrower base has rotated. BDCs still account for 36% of announced dollars, but growth since 2020 has come from specialty finance companies, credit funds, and factors.

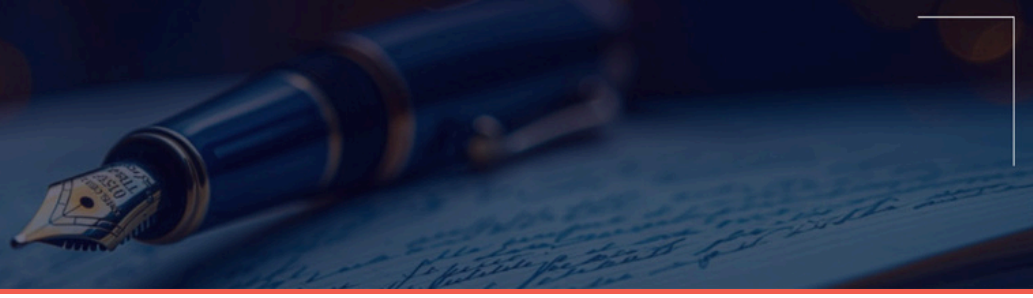
Banks still lead, but their share is eroding. From roughly 90% of lead roles in 2012-2014 (104 of 116 core deals, one lead lender each), the bank share fell to 54% in 2026 to date, with private credit funds taking roughly a third of new lead roles.

Structures have shifted toward collateral. Warehouse and borrowing-base facilities account for nearly two thirds of the 644 core deals whose structure can be identified, while subscription and NAV lines are nearly absent, because private funds and their lenders rarely announce them.

Facilities are steps on a ladder, not one-off events. One in three announced deals is an upsize; 118 repeat borrowers (a quarter of them BDCs, most of the rest non-bank lenders) account for 343 of the 761 deals with a named borrower; and the documented path runs from fixed-rate growth capital through warehouses to rated ABS take-outs.

2. What the Data Covers, and What it Does Not

ABL Advisor, a trade publication serving the asset-based lending community, records credit facilities that lenders, borrowers, or their advisers announce publicly; we gratefully acknowledge its deal tables as the source of record. Nine in ten of its 9,544 records are loans to operating companies and are excluded here. The 940 deals studied are those in which the borrower is itself a lender or an investment vehicle: 934 from ABL Advisor's Lender Finance, Investment Financing, and Investor Services categories, and six found by searching the other records for BDC, NAV, capital call, and subscription facilities. Nine in ten core deals with a known borrower headquarters are U.S.-based, most of the rest Canadian.



Three groups borrow. Non-bank lenders (specialty finance, small-business, consumer, fintech, equipment, and real estate lenders, and factors) account for 64% of core deals and 46% of dollars; they borrow against their loan and receivables books, mostly through warehouse and borrowing-base facilities, to fund origination. BDCs account for 19% of deals and 36% of dollars, borrowing at the parent level or through financing subsidiaries against middle-market loan portfolios. Credit funds and asset managers account for 11% of deals, for fund-level leverage or manager-level needs; financing vehicles and other financial firms make up the rest. Each core deal has one lead lender, the arranger, agent, or sole lender named first: a bank in 71% of deals, a private credit or fund manager in 18%, and a non-bank specialty lender in 9%.

Core deals exclude 141 small placements announced by the Percent platform (Section 3), leaving 799. Announced commitments are the headline facility size in each announcement; an upsize is recorded at its enlarged total, so dollar totals measure facilities announced, not net new lending. Classified deals are the 644 core deals whose structure (warehouse, borrowing-base or asset-backed revolver, corporate revolver, term loan, or other) could be identified from the announcement or follow-up research.

Classic fund finance is largely missing: subscription and NAV facilities appear in only 10 classified deals. They are negotiated privately with funds that have no public reporting obligation, and their lenders rarely announce them. BDCs, by contrast, disclose material credit agreements in their SEC filings, which helps explain their weight in announced dollars.

For the same reason, the data does not capture the fund-level structures now shaping fund finance: financing for secondaries and GP-led continuation vehicles, collateralized fund obligations (CFOs), rated feeder notes placed with insurers, and NAV lines used to meet liquidity needs as distributions slow. None of the 9,544 records mentions a CFO, a rated feeder, or a continuation vehicle. The findings therefore describe the lender-finance end of the market; announced levels are a floor for it, and trends a proxy.

Borrower types were classified into fifteen segments and deal terms parsed from announcement narratives. Each deal with a named borrower was researched in public sources, with a source link and confidence grade recorded, and extraction was checked against the live source and by independent re-extraction of random samples.

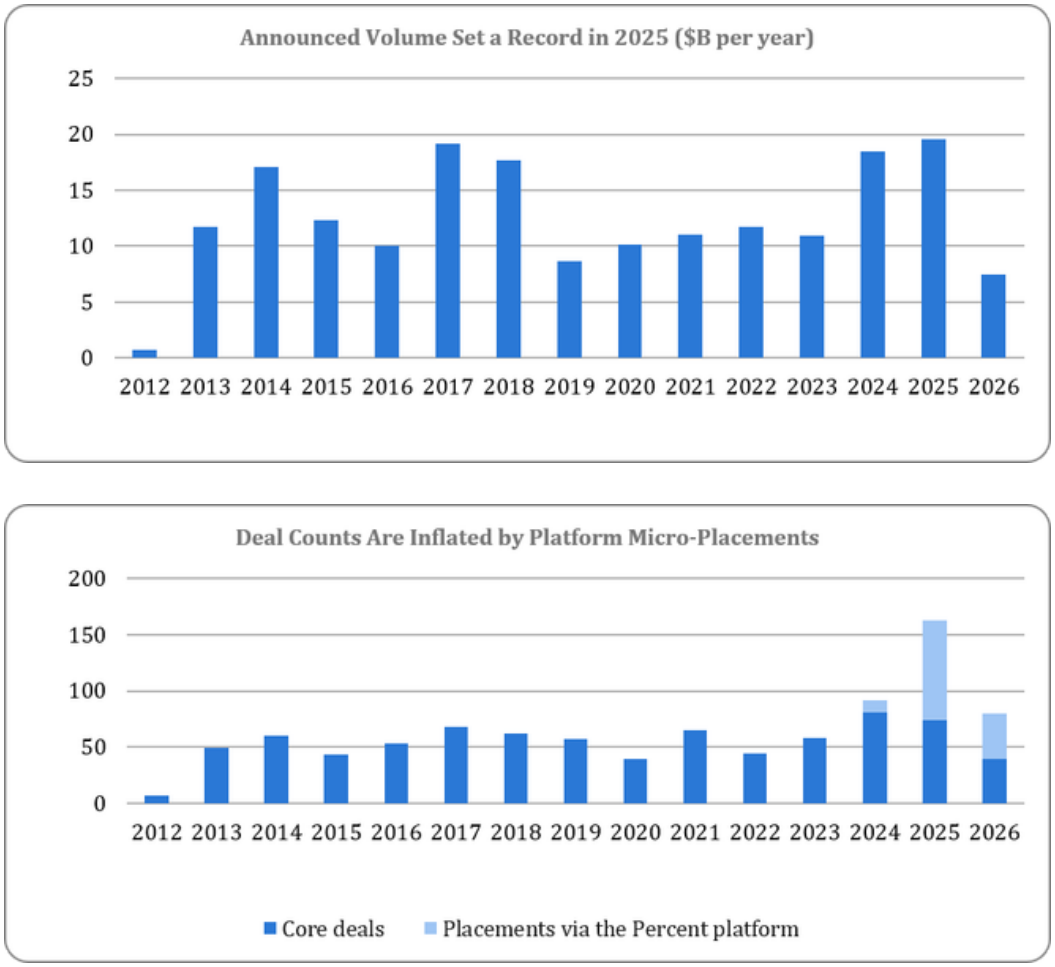
3. A Market Best Measured in Dollars

Fifteen years of announcements describe a market that grew in two phases. The first build-out peaked at $17-19 billion in 2014, 2017, and 2018, driven by BDC credit facilities and the institutionalization of specialty finance. Volume then fell from $17.7 billion in 2018 to $8.6 billion in 2019 and held between $8.5 billion and $12 billion for five years, pandemic included.

The second acceleration is current. 2024 produced $18.5 billion across 92 announced deals, and 2025 set the all-time record at $19.6 billion, $12.1 billion of it from 29 upsized facilities recorded at their enlarged size. 2026 is running behind: January through August produced $7.5 billion, against $12.7 billion in the same months of 2025 and $8.9 billion in 2024. Part of the gap may reflect seasonal factors, but 2026 is is running at a slower pace than previous years.

Counts and dollars tell different stories. Since 2024, Percent, a securitization marketplace that places small private credit deals with investors, has announced 141 placements with a median size of $2.1 million, together just $0.5 billion: 55% of the 2025 headline count but under 2% of its dollars. This study reads trends on the core market, showing these platform micro-placements separately; on that basis 2025 was a record by dollars, not by count. The median core announced facility is $100 million.

Figure 1. Announced lender and fund finance volume (top) and deal count (bottom), 2012-2026 YTD.



Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

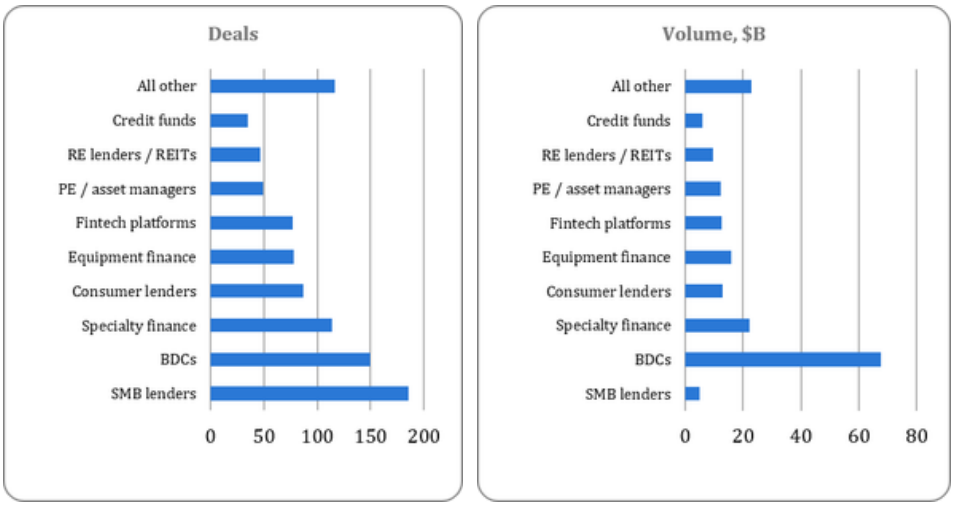
For lenders: Size the opportunity on dollars: deal counts overstate 2025 momentum by more than two times.

For borrowers: More announced facilities closed in 2024-25 than in any prior two-year window, the deepest precedent base on record.

4. Who Borrows, and Who Comes Back

The borrower base spans fifteen segments of the lending economy. By deal count, SMB lenders lead (186 deals, 135 of them platform micro-placements), followed by specialty finance companies, consumer lenders, equipment lessors, and fintech platforms. By dollars the picture inverts: BDCs account for $67.5 billion, 36% of the total, from 150 deals averaging $450 million.

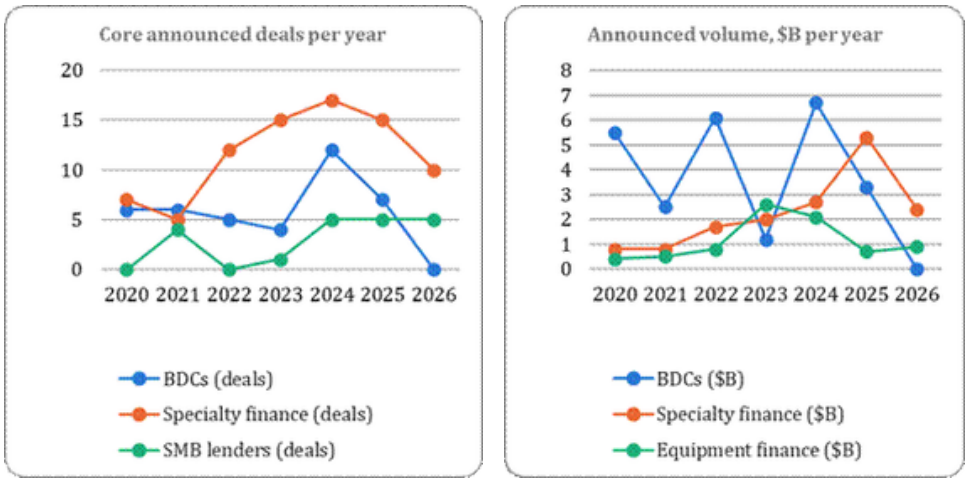
Figure 2. Announced deals (left) and volume (right) by borrower segment, 2012-2026.



Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

The mix has rotated across the sample's two halves. BDCs announced 110 facilities in 2012-2019 and only 40 since, while specialty finance went from 31 announced deals to 81, credit funds from 11 to 24, and factors from 7 to 20. Figure 3 shows specialty finance climbing from 7 core deals in 2020 to 15-17 a year in 2023-2025, while BDC activity stayed lumpy.

Figure 3. The largest borrower segments since the pandemic: core announced deals (left) and announced volume (right), 2020-2026 YTD.



Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

Repeat business defines the market. Among the 761 deals with a named borrower, 343, or 45%, belong to 118 repeat borrowers (those with two or more announced facilities). About a quarter of these borrowers are BDCs, which account for a third of repeat deals; the rest are mostly specialty finance, fintech, equipment, small-business, and consumer lenders. Their facilities divide roughly evenly among borrowing-base revolvers, corporate revolvers, and warehouses, and more than half of their deals are upsizes. Across all 940 deals, one in three is an upsize of an existing facility.

For lenders: Nearly half of named-borrower activity comes from repeat issuers, and the fastest growing segments (credit funds, factors, specialty finance) have more than doubled their announced deal flow since 2020.
For borrowers: Announcing and then upsizing builds a public financing track record that widens the bidder pool at each renewal.

5. Who Lends: League Tables and a Moving Map

The lending side is concentrated and, at the top, clearly a bank market. Wells Fargo has led 67 announced facilities worth $22.3 billion, the most facilities of any institution, followed by ING (42 deals), Bank of America (31), JPMorgan (30), and KeyBank (29). JPMorgan's book is the largest by dollars at $34 billion, reflecting its anchor role in the biggest BDC and asset manager facilities. Alongside these large banks sits a persistent specialist tier, led by Encina Lender Finance, Victory Park Capital, and East West Bank, competing on speed and collateral expertise rather than balance sheet.

Table 1. Lead-lender league tables, announced deals 2012-2026 (platform micro-placements excluded).

Most active (by deal count)			Largest (by announced volume)		
Lead lender	Deals	Volume ($B)	Lead lender	Deals	Volume ($B)
Wells Fargo	67	22.3	JPMorgan	30	34.0
ING	42	11.1	Wells Fargo	67	22.3
Bank of America	31	16.8	Bank of America	31	16.8
JPMorgan	30	34.0	ING	42	11.1
KeyBank	29	7.1	KeyBank	29	7.1
Encina Lender Finance	22	1.3	Truist (incl. SunTrust)	22	7.4
Deutsche Bank	21	4.0	BMO	15	6.0
Victory Park Capital	20	3.2	Citi	16	6.0

Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

Drawn only on 2024-2026, the same tables show the shift in motion: Wells Fargo remains the leader by a wide margin, specialists Encina Lender Finance and Haversine Funding rank among the most frequent lead lenders, and private credit names such as TPG appear in the top volume ranks for the first time.

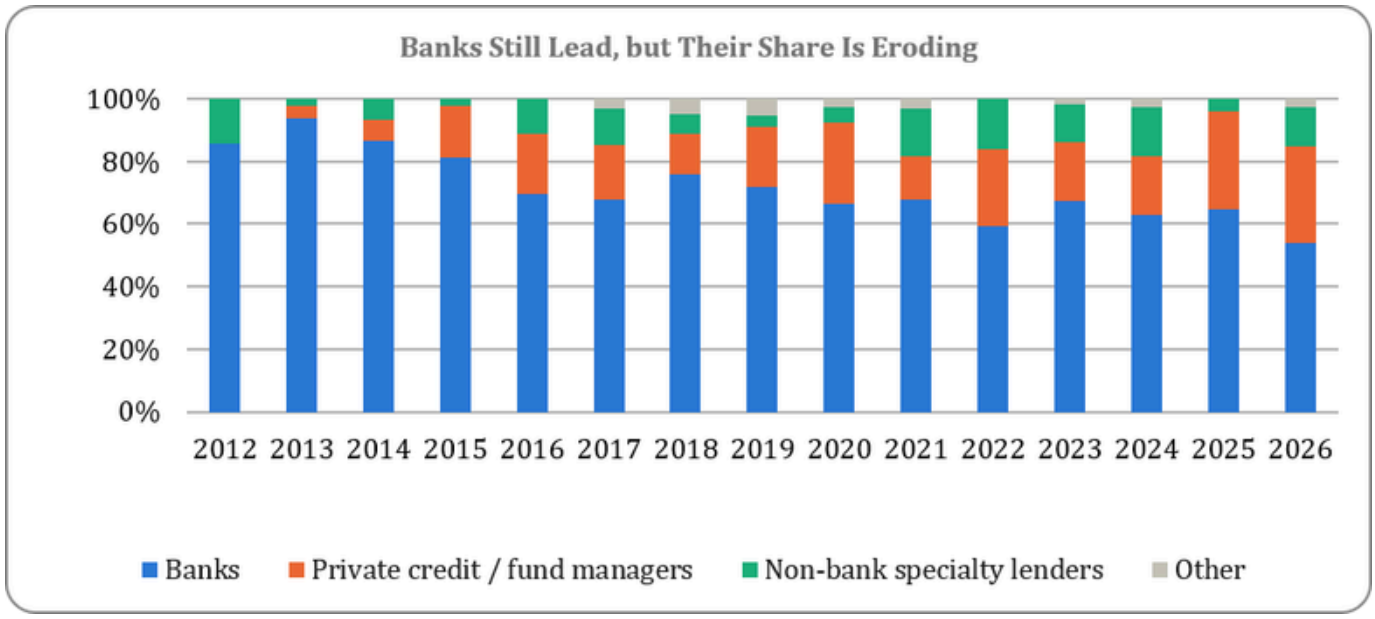
Table 2. Lead-lender league tables, announced deals 2024-2026 YTD[1]

Most active (by deal count)			Largest (by announced volume)		
Lead lender	Deals	Volume ($B)	Lead lender	Deals	Volume ($B)
Wells Fargo	17	8.1	Wells Fargo	17	8.1
KeyBank	9	3.7	JPMorgan	6	4.7
Encina Lender Finance	9	0.5	KeyBank	9	3.7
Haversine Funding	6	n/d	TPG	2	2.0
JPMorgan	6	4.7	Truist	3	1.9
Texas Capital Bank	5	0.5	Bank of America	4	1.6
Deutsche Bank	5	0.9	SMBC	3	1.4
Bank of America	4	1.6	Citi	3	1.2

Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

The composition of the lead-lender population is moving. Banks held 86-94% of lead roles (the arranger, agent, or sole lender named first on each core deal) in 2012-2014, about two thirds from 2020 through 2024, 65% in 2025, and 54% in 2026 to date, the lowest reading in the sample. Private credit funds and asset managers have taken that share, at 31% of lead roles in 2025 and 2026 to date, and their 2026 announced volume, $3.7 billion by August, already exceeds any prior full year. The failure of Silicon Valley Bank in March 2023 compressed this redistribution into a single episode: SVB's lending franchise re-emerged inside First Citizens, whose announced lead and agent roles jumped from 3 in 2022 to 30 in 2023.

Figure 4. Share of lead-lender roles by lender type, 2012-2026 YTD[2].



Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

[1]*Platform micro-placements excluded; n/d: amounts largely undisclosed*

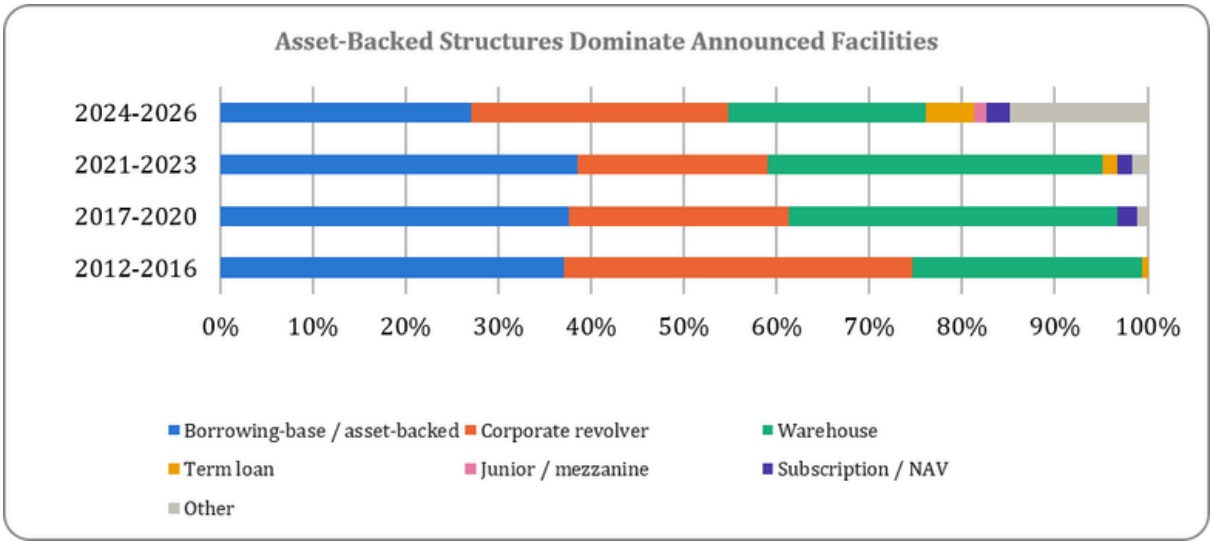
[2]*Platform micro-placements excluded*

For lenders: Bank share of lead roles has fallen from about two thirds in 2020-2024 to 54% in 2026, and the SVB episode shows how quickly share moves to whoever commits balance sheet and specialist teams.
For borrowers: Private credit now leads roughly a third of new facilities; a bank-only process ignores it.

6. The Funding Ladder and What Each Step Costs

Classified by structure (the 644 core deals whose facility type can be identified; see Section 2), the market is organized around collateral: borrowing-base and asset-backed revolvers sized to a formula of eligible assets, warehouse facilities that fund origination ahead of a take-out, and corporate revolvers at the parent level. Warehouses and borrowing-base or asset-backed revolvers together account for 414, or 64%, of classified deals. In 2012-2016, corporate revolvers, mostly BDC parent-level lines, led at 38%. As originator finance took over, warehouses rose from 25% of classified deals to 35-36% through 2023, and by the early 2020s roughly three in four facilities were secured by a specific pool of assets rather than by the borrower as a whole. Since 2024, term loans and junior tranches appear in meaningful numbers and corporate revolvers recover share. Subscription and NAV facilities never exceed 3% of classified deals (10 in all; see Section 2), and securitization-linked facilities are rare in announcements because securitization is the exit.

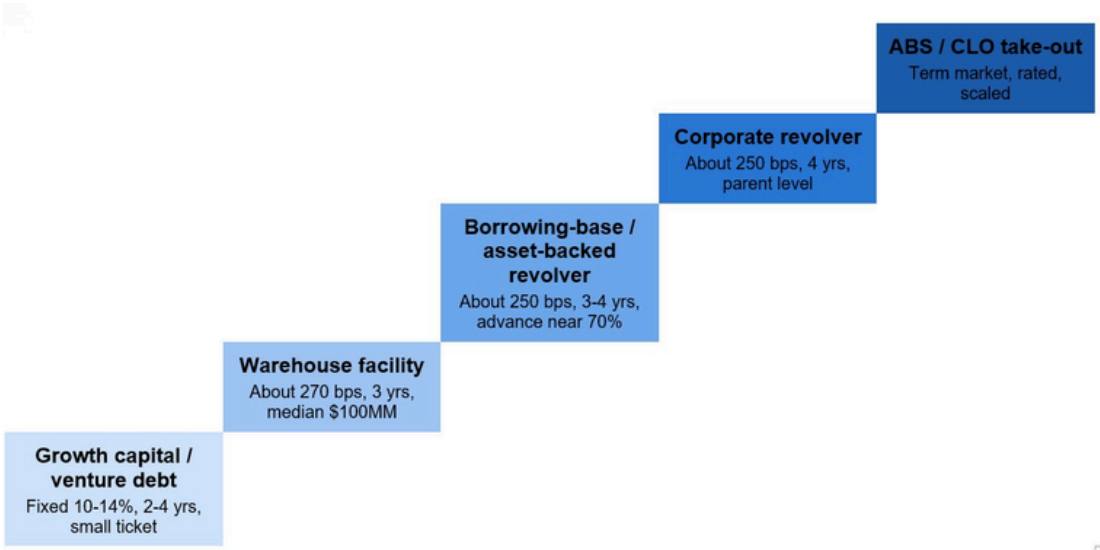
Figure 5. Facility sub-structure mix by era, classified deals.



Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

Followed through time, these structures line up as a funding ladder that specialty lenders climb as they scale (Figure 6): growth capital or venture debt, then a warehouse, then a borrowing-base revolver sized to eligible collateral at advance rates of 50% to 90%, then a parent-level corporate revolver with no asset-by-asset formula, and finally a rated ABS or CLO take-out that repays the warehouse and resets the cycle at larger size.

Figure 6. The specialty-finance funding ladder, with median announced terms at each step



Facility size and advance rates rise, while spreads and disclosure fall, as borrowers climb.
Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

The data supports the ladder as a pattern, not a law. Of the 118 repeat borrowers, 91 have at least two facilities that can be placed on a ladder step; 21 of those moved up at least one step, 83 of the full 118 grew their facility size between first and latest announcement, and eighteen documented securitization exits complete the picture. Imprint, the co-branded card issuer, closed a $500 million warehouse in March 2025 and printed a AAA-rated $300 million ABS seven months later. For a warehouse lender, the best client outcome and the loss of the asset are the same event.

Announced pricing (Table 3) varies less by facility type than by size: moving from below $100 million to above $300 million cuts the median spread from 285 bps to 207 bps. Since 2023 every benchmark-linked announcement has priced over SOFR, with Prime persisting in small-ticket consumer and SMB structures.

Table 3. Announced pricing by facility type and size, 2021-2026[3]

By facility type, 2021-2026	Deals with pricing	Median spread (bps)	Interquartile range (bps)	Median tenor (years)
Corporate revolver	27	250	175 - 300	3.0
Borrowing-base / asset-backed revolver	13	235	188 - 325	3.5
Warehouse	1	n/d	n/d	2.0
Term loan	4	n/d	n/d	4.2
By facility size, all types, 2021-2026				
Below $100 million	19	285	100 - 375	
$100 - 300 million	13	250	225 - 375	
Above $300 million	14	207	175 - 235	

Source: ABL Advisor deal tables; Cardo AI analysis.

For lenders: Price the step, not just the borrower: spreads compress with scale, and warehouse books carry built-in early repayment risk.
For borrowers: Each step cheapens funding and builds the collateral track record the next step requires.

Outlook

Three trajectories point to where the market goes next. The volume trend: 2024 and 2025 established a run-rate near $19 billion, and while 2026 is tracking below it, the structural drivers, a still-growing private credit ecosystem and the rotation of specialty finance funding toward announced facilities, remain intact. The lender mix: private credit's share of lead roles has roughly doubled from its 2010s average, and the boundary between banks and funds will keep moving. The structural mix: the market keeps shifting toward collateralized facilities whose natural exit is securitization. These trajectories describe the lender-finance end of the market; the fund-level end, where NAV lending, secondaries financing, CFOs, and rated feeders answer funds' liquidity and capital-raising needs, sits outside announced data and deserves separate study.

All three add to the market's operational burden: warehouses and borrowing-base revolvers run on eligibility criteria, concentration limits, advance rates, and monthly borrowing-base certificates. The winners will be lenders able to monitor more facilities with the same team and borrowers able to produce lender-grade collateral reporting as a byproduct of operations.

[3] *Deals with disclosed pricing; spreads over the floating benchmark*

Sources

ABL Advisor, Deal Tables, www.abladvisor.com/deal-tables. Deal records published October 2012 through August 2026, accessed and compiled August 2026. Used as source material with attribution.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, "First-Citizens Bank & Trust Company, Raleigh, NC, to Assume All Deposits and Loans of Silicon Valley Bridge Bank, N.A., From the FDIC," press release, March 27, 2023.

Fora Financial, "Fora Financial Announces New Senior Credit Facility; Borrowing Capacity Increases to up to $150 Million," PRWeb, April 2021.

Imprint, warehouse facility announcement with Mizuho, Truist, and HSBC, March 2025 (Pulse 2.0); Imprint Series C announcement, Business Wire, October 9, 2024.

PennantPark Floating Rate Capital Ltd., disclosures on PennantPark Senior Secured Loan Fund I LLC, SEC filings, 2018-2019. Golub Capital BDC, Inc., Form 8-K on the amendment of the Golub Capital BDC Funding LLC revolving credit facility, SEC EDGAR, June 2014.

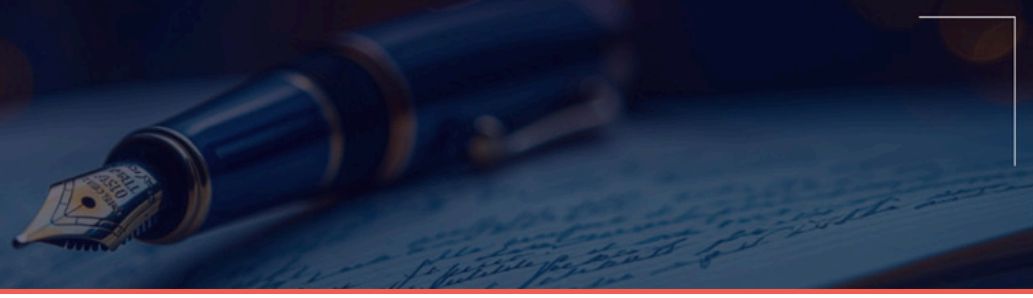
Company press releases, SEC filings, and trade press were consulted for each researched deal; a source link and confidence grade are recorded per deal in the accompanying dataset.

About the Author

ARBEN ZIBRI

AI PRODUCT MANAGER

Arben Zibri, PhD, CFA, is an AI Product Manager at Cardo AI, where he leads quantitative research on private credit and asset-based finance. His research focuses on portfolio construction, risk measurement, and benchmark design for private markets using regulatory filings. Previously, Zibri was Director of Model Control for Interest Rate and Credit Derivatives at Morgan Stanley. He holds a PhD in economics and is a CFA charterholder.



The Structured Finance Journal (SFJ) serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas among market participants, academics, policymakers, legal practitioners, and other industry stakeholders.

Consistent with SFA's mission to facilitate dialogue and promote engagement across the structured finance community, the SFJ may publish articles reflecting a variety of viewpoints, including viewpoints that are debated, contested, or not universally shared among SFA members or other stakeholders. The publication of such viewpoints is intended to encourage analysis and discussion and should not be interpreted as reflecting a consensus position within the industry or within SFA.

Editorial decisions are made based on the relevance, quality, and contribution of a submission to informed discussion of issues affecting the structured fixed-income market. Publication is not dependent upon whether a particular viewpoint aligns with the views of SFA, its leadership, committees, sponsors, members, affiliates, or other contributors.

Publication of an article does not constitute endorsement, approval, adoption, or sponsorship of any view, opinion, analysis, recommendation, or conclusion by SFA. To learn more about the SFJ and the submission guidelines, please visit the SFJ's information page. Please contact Elen Callahan at elen.callahan@structuredfinance.org with your questions and interest.

Structured Finance Journal Masthead

Managing Editor
Elen Callahan, *Head of Research and Education*, **SFA**

Editorial Board

Mark Adelson, *Independent Consultant*
William Black, *Founder and Principal,* **Black Analytics**
Nicole Byrns, *Founder and Principal*, **Dumar Capital**
Chun Lin, *Managing Director and Head of U.S. Residential Mortgage Modeling*, **Bank of America**
Phillip Millman, *Founder and Principal*, **Bell Blvd Consulting**
Tim O'Neil, *Managing Director and Head of Canadian Structured Finance*, **Morningstar DBRS**
David Reiss, *Clinical Professor of Law & Research Director of the Blassberg-Rice Center for Entrepreneurship Law,* **Cornell Law School & Cornell Tech**

Junior Editors

Caleb Adebayo, *Associate*, **Linklaters**
Ace Pawlikowski, *Managing Associate*, **Dentons Capital Markets**

Senior Advisor

Gary Zhu, *Senior Vice President and Deputy Chief Investment Officer of Insurance*, **Alliance Bernstein**

Special Advisory Council

Matt Bisanz, *Partner*, **Mayer Brown LLP**
Caroline Chen, *Senior Research Analyst*, **Allspring Global Investments**
Kayvan Darouian, *Director,* **Deutsche Bank Research**
Selma Hepp, *Senior Vice President and Chief Economist*, **Cotality**
Frank Vetrano, *CFA*
Vadim Verkhoglyad, *Chief Economist*, **dv01**
Joy Zhang, *Managing Director*, **MSCI**