Kenny Dichter first revolutionized the private aviation industry 15 years ago, when he and his partners introduced the first ever 25-hour jet card. More than a decade later, Dichter believed that existing programs (fractional, card, charter, etc.) were not addressing today’s consumer needs. He was not done blue-skying some novel concepts about private jet travel.

In 2013, he and Bill Allard founded Wheels Up, a membership-based private aviation solution that is leveraging a unique fleet of aircraft, unsurpassed service, and technology, and in the process, democratizing the industry.

For a one-time membership fee of $17,500 and very reasonable annual dues, Wheels Up members gain access to a fleet of more than 60 aircraft, which consists of the 8-passenger Beechcraft King Air 350i and 8-passenger Citation Excel/XLS aircraft, on which they can fly for $3,950/hour and $6,950/hour, respectively, with up to 24 hours’ notice.

“THERE ARE UNTOLED NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM PRIVATE AVIATION, BUT THE EXISTING SOLUTIONS—LARGE-SCALE AIRCRAFT, FRACTIONAL PRODUCTS THAT REQUIRE A BIG CAPITAL OUTLAY, ON-DEMAND CHARTERS, OR BUYING YOUR OWN AIRCRAFT—JUST AREN’T RIGHT FOR THEM,” Dichter explains. “WE CAME UP WITH THE CONCEPT OF ASSEMBLING AN EXCLUSIVE FLEET OF AIRCRAFT IDEALLY SUITED TO THEIR NEEDS, MADE AVAILABLE AT A FRACTION OF THE COST OF TRADITIONAL FRACTIONAL OR JET CARD PROGRAMS.”

Wheels Up has tried to simplify private travel and offer the most enjoyable member experience possible. Joining the club and getting started is easy. “MEMBERS DON’T HAVE TO COMMIT TO ANY LEVEL OF FLIGHT TIME OR MINIMUM SPEND. THEY PAY THEIR MEMBERSHIP FEE, AND THEN THEY CAN FLY AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE AS THEY LIKE, PAYING ONLY FOR THE ACTUAL TIME THEY ARE ON THE AIRCRAFT,” Dichter says. “WE BELIEVE OUR PRICING MODEL AND MIX OF AIRCRAFT MAKE WHEELS UP THE MOST INTELLIGENT SOLUTION IN PRIVATE AVIATION.”

To further enhance its value proposition, Wheels Up continues to roll out new features and programs accessible through its proprietary members-only mobile app. A Ride Share program, for example, allows members to reduce the cost of flying private by sharing flights with other members when they have empty seats on a flight. The app will post all relevant flight information and send out an alert to other members. “NOT ONLY DOES THIS APPROACH LOWER THE COST OF FLYING PRIVATELY, BUT IT ALSO PROMOTES THE CONCEPT OF ‘SOCIAL AVIATION,’ MAKING IT EASY FOR MEMBERS TO FLY WITH OTHER MEMBERS AND MEET LIKE-MINDED NEW PEOPLE,” Dichter says.

And then there is the Wheels Up “Hot Flights” program, which gives members the opportunity to book empty-leg flights on Wheels Up and partner aircraft, including larger-cabin aircraft and helicopters. Dozens of available flights are posted daily on the Wheels Up app, updated in real time, and are available for purchase for as low as $320 (including taxes and fees) for the entire aircraft.

Wheels Up recently launched their Shuttle program, which allows members to book seats on private Wheels Up Shuttles (operated by Gama Aviation) going to and from popular destinations and events. The program kicked off with flights servicing popular vacation destinations in the Northeast, such as Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard, from New York City and Boston. Further expansion is planned for additional East and West Coast destinations and around popular sporting events.