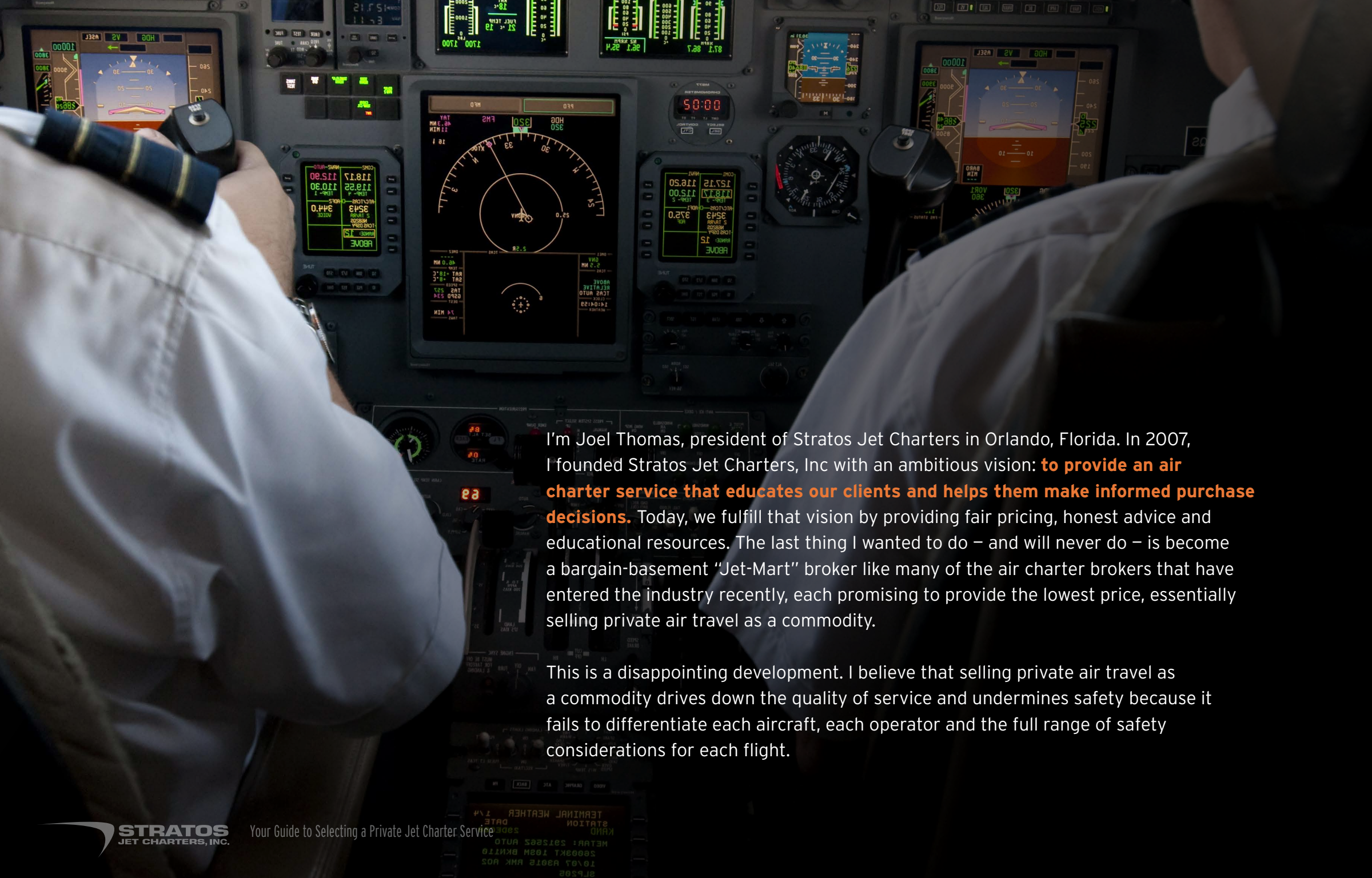




STRATOS
JET CHARTERS, INC.

Stratos Safety

Professional. Proactive. Profoundly personal.



I'm Joel Thomas, president of Stratos Jet Charters in Orlando, Florida. In 2007, I founded Stratos Jet Charters, Inc with an ambitious vision: **to provide an air charter service that educates our clients and helps them make informed purchase decisions.** Today, we fulfill that vision by providing fair pricing, honest advice and educational resources. The last thing I wanted to do – and will never do – is become a bargain-basement “Jet-Mart” broker like many of the air charter brokers that have entered the industry recently, each promising to provide the lowest price, essentially selling private air travel as a commodity.

This is a disappointing development. I believe that selling private air travel as a commodity drives down the quality of service and undermines safety because it fails to differentiate each aircraft, each operator and the full range of safety considerations for each flight.

Maximizing safety with every decision.

Here's a quick example of how we live and breathe safety at Stratos and how that collides with the growing commoditization of private air travel. Over a recent Presidents Day weekend, we received a call from a man in Ocala who wanted to fly his son and his son's family down to Florida that afternoon from Evansville Regional Airport because their commercial flight was cancelled due to a major snow storm. When we presented him with some considered, safe alternatives, he told me that he received a much lower price from another broker. He told me that the other company quoted him on a Piper Saratoga, and he would be booking that option.

That day, an AIRMET ZULU – an icy weather advisory from the National Weather Service – had been issued in the region around Atlanta. Icing conditions existed from 12,000 feet at Mean Sea Level to Flight Level 20. Knowing this information, I told him that he'd be better off waiting for the storm to pass than to put his family on that particular plane during that particular snow storm flying that particular route. I explained to him how icing affects an aircraft's ability to generate lift and it was a very dangerous and unnecessary risk to be taking. In the end, he booked a Citation CJ3 with us and his family arrived safely.

While the Saratoga could have safely flown this flight between 8,000 and 10,000 MSL, I considered it to be an unnecessary risk. I felt that way because – and this is key – **there is much more to aviation safety than a given absence of accidents; ideal safety is the maximum, reasonable reduction of risk.** There will always be some risk, but a dogged determination to reduce risk as much as reasonably possible is what distinguishes safety-conscious brokers from the "Jet-Marts."





When **quality and safety** are opposed to profits, we will always make the right choice.

Here's another example of **risk reduction and differentiating beyond price**. Seven passengers were flying a round trip into Aspen. Under consideration were two equally rated ARGUS air carriers and aircraft, both operated by highly qualified crews. The least expensive option was an LR35, but the safer option for that particular flight was a Citation Ultra. Why?

While both aircraft seat seven passengers, the Citation Ultra is designed for short-field, high-altitude airports – the exact conditions at Aspen. This simple difference dramatically reduces the risk of operations from this airport, and that risk reduction – that extra margin of safety – **is exactly the kind of safety advantage we relentlessly pursue at Stratos.**

Will your jet-charter service make the **right choice** for you?

When safety and profits are opposed, will your charter service make the right choice, or are they in it for short-term gains?

My experience in this business has taught me that the best way to mitigate risk is by **educating the consumer**. That's why we want our clients to be as informed as if they were communicating directly with the pilot. At Stratos Jet Charters, we endeavor to mitigate risk by:

- ▶ *Establishing good communication with and between the client and the carrier*
- ▶ *Presenting appropriate solutions for each travel mission*
- ▶ *Ensuring that the passengers, the aircraft and the operator are a good match*
- ▶ *Possessing an in-depth knowledge of the aircraft operator and its safety program*
- ▶ *Understanding what information the operator needs to fly the trip safely*
- ▶ *Setting the client's expectation of what the aircraft can and can not do*
- ▶ *Discussing weather concerns, alternate airports and handling preparations on the ground in the event of a diversion*

When our company books a flight, we try to format all trip-related information to the operator as if they were speaking directly with you. The only way to truly understand a client's needs is through up-front, two-way communication, booking the flight from both the operator's and the client's perspectives.

We believe that while it is our job as the agent of the customer to help the operator plan a safe flight, it is ultimately the operator's job to develop and execute the flight plan. For us to provide a good customer experience, we rely on our operators for operational information, and it is their responsibility to mitigate risk and execute their plan. We rely on them to tell us what can and can't be accomplished safely, then we communicate this back to the client.





We **set our own** higher safety standards.

We don't think that subscribing to a third-party safety audit service is a full commitment to safe trip planning. So in an effort to aid our agents in selecting safe air carriers, our company developed its own air-carrier due-diligence program that we call our Approved Vendor Program.

Most private-jet brokerages wait for a flight to be booked before they run a safety audit on a given carrier. At Stratos Jet Charters, we pre-screen all our air carriers through our Approved Vendor Program, and our Flight Planning Department constantly monitors our Approved Vendor database to ensure we employ only the highest-quality carriers available. This proactive approach enables our agents to select from multiple pre-qualified carriers with established records of excellence, reliability and dependability in a timely manner – before they present aircraft options to our clients.

- ▶ *All of the air carriers in our Approved Vendor Program have demonstrated a pro-active commitment to safety.*
- ▶ *Many of our approved vendors are members of the ACSF.*
- ▶ *Many of our approved vendors have implemented a robust SMS program.*
- ▶ *Most of our approved vendors have adopted IS-BAO best practices and guidelines, and all take part in third-party safety auditing programs such as WYVERN and ARGUS.*

We want to compel the jet charter industry to **soar higher.**

We believe that by restricting our selection of operators to only those that meet strict criteria, we can encourage other air carriers to adopt industry best practices and thereby help to elevate the standards for safety and professionalism.

I would like to see the air charter brokerage industry shift towards an agency approach in which the broker understands they have a **fiduciary responsibility to the consumer.** That's why I wanted to be in this business; that's why I started Stratos Jet Charters, and that's why we've been successful, even in this hopefully passing era of pop-up "Jet-Marts."

Be safer. Soar higher.

Joel A. Thomas

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Five things **you should know** about air charter safety

There's no such thing as elite travel without **elite safety**.

Truly safety-conscious brokers wouldn't, themselves, take the flights that **bargain hunters** think are great deals.

When you charter a plane through a broker agency, that agency is obligated to do everything in its power to maximize your safety by reducing risk at every reasonable opportunity, **but many do not**.

If you charter a plane through a bargain broker based on price, then you may be cheating yourself out of the **degree of safety** we think you deserve.

If your broker agency is not literally **obsessed with safety**, you should find one that is.



Be Safer. Soar Higher.™

