Air Onion Offer

Elements that go into booking a flight

expedia group
Academy

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Elements of booking a flight

When a customer books a flight, they think of it as a single ticket for their journey. They know their journey might involve more than one plane to reach their destination. However, there is much more to it than knowing the flight number and destination. The best way to understand the various elements that go into booking a flight is to peel it back like the layers of an onion. We define these layers as offer, product, origin-destination, fare component, segment and legs.

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Offer

Combined price with booking fee

The Offer

An offer is the outer-most representation of a flight

Offers are what appear in search results and eventually become what the customer books. An offer can consist of one or more products.

Offer

Combined price with booking fee

Product

Base price, taxes and fees

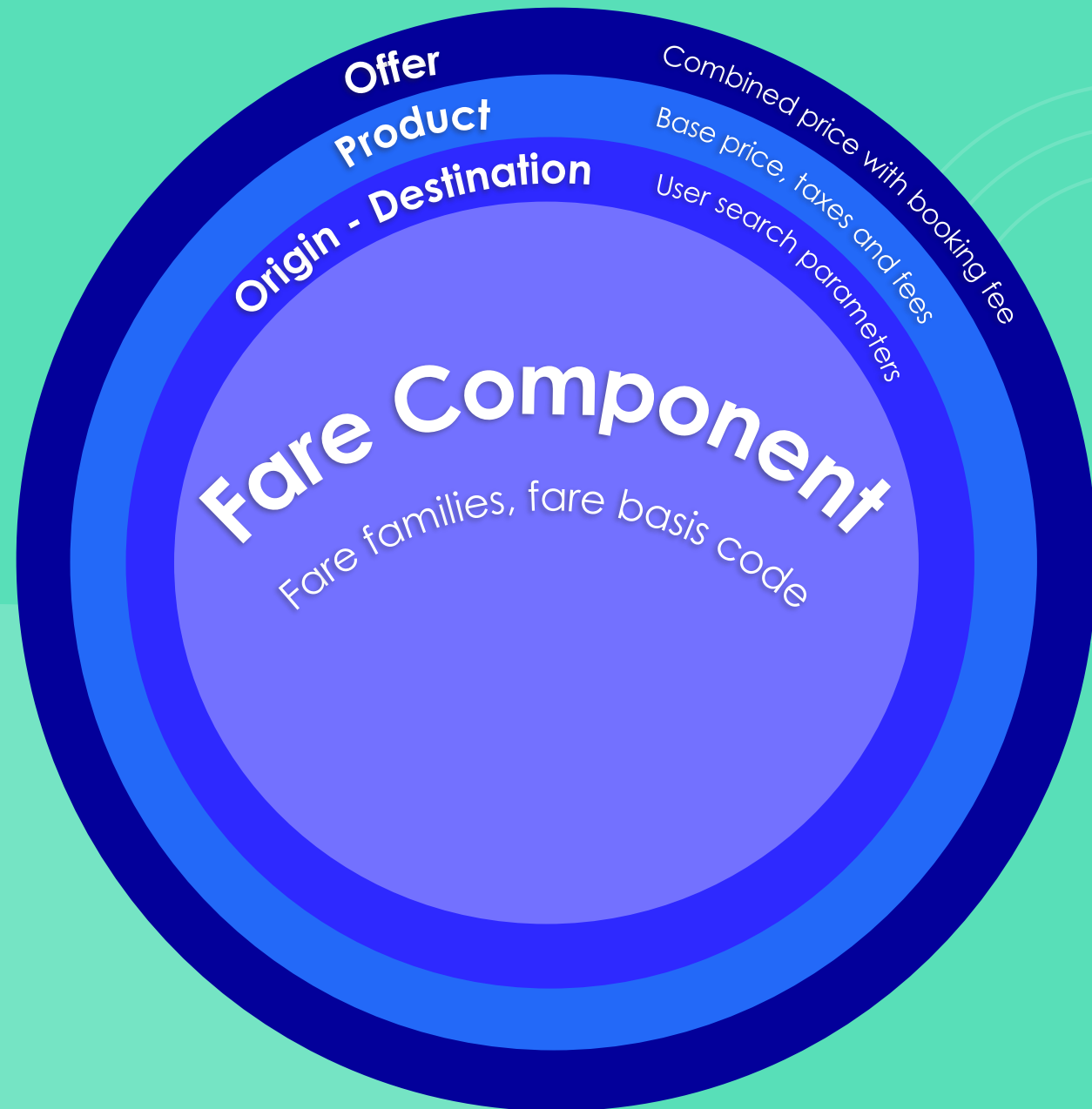# Product

A product is the item sold by the airline

The base price for the airfare as well as the taxes and fees applied by governments and airlines live in the product. A product can contain one or more origin-destinations. A one-way product has one origin-destination, a roundtrip product has two, and a multi-destination has between two and five. A single ticket represented by a single passenger name record (PNR) is issued for each product. The customer sees the PNR as a "confirmation code" (the six-character alphanumeric code that you need to check in to your flight).

Origin Destination

The origin-destination, or bound, is the to and from that a customer places in their search criteria
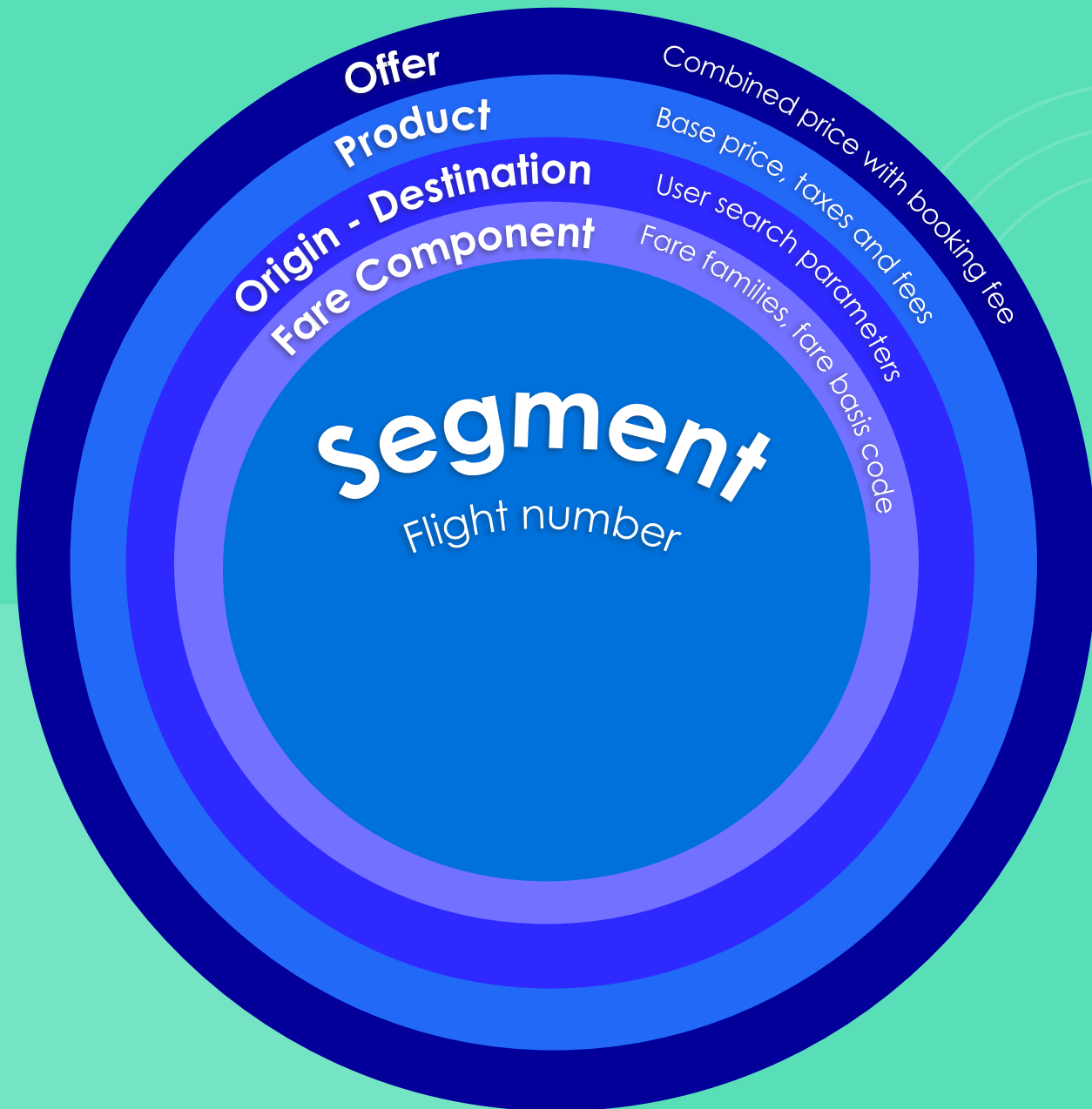
An origin-destination includes all flights and layovers that a customer needs to go through to get to where they want to go. This is known as a "Leg", which are further down in the onion. An origin-destination contains one or more segments. Imagine you've purchased a roundtrip flight from Chicago to San Francisco. In this instance, there are two origin-destinations: Chicago to San Francisco then San Francisco to Chicago.

Offer — Combined price with booking fee
Product — Base price, taxes and fees
Origin - Destination — User search parameters
Fare Component — Fare families, fare basis code

Fare Component

Fare components live in between origin-destinations and segments

These are not represented by a layer of objects in the model, but they are important to understand how fares for a flight are constructed. A fare component describes one piece of how the airline is selling a ticket. They contain a fare basis code to identify the fare filed by the airline. This is also where variances in fare families are described (basic economy, traditional economy, economy flex). Fare components can also dictate different baggage policies. Fare components can represent multiple segments, but that means that all segments represented by the same fare component have the same fare basis code and fare family.

Offer — Combined price with booking fee
Product — Base price, taxes and fees
Origin - Destination — User search parameters
Fare Component — Fare families, fare basis code
Segment — Flight number

Segment

A segment is a piece of an origin-destination that represents a single flight that the customer will travel on
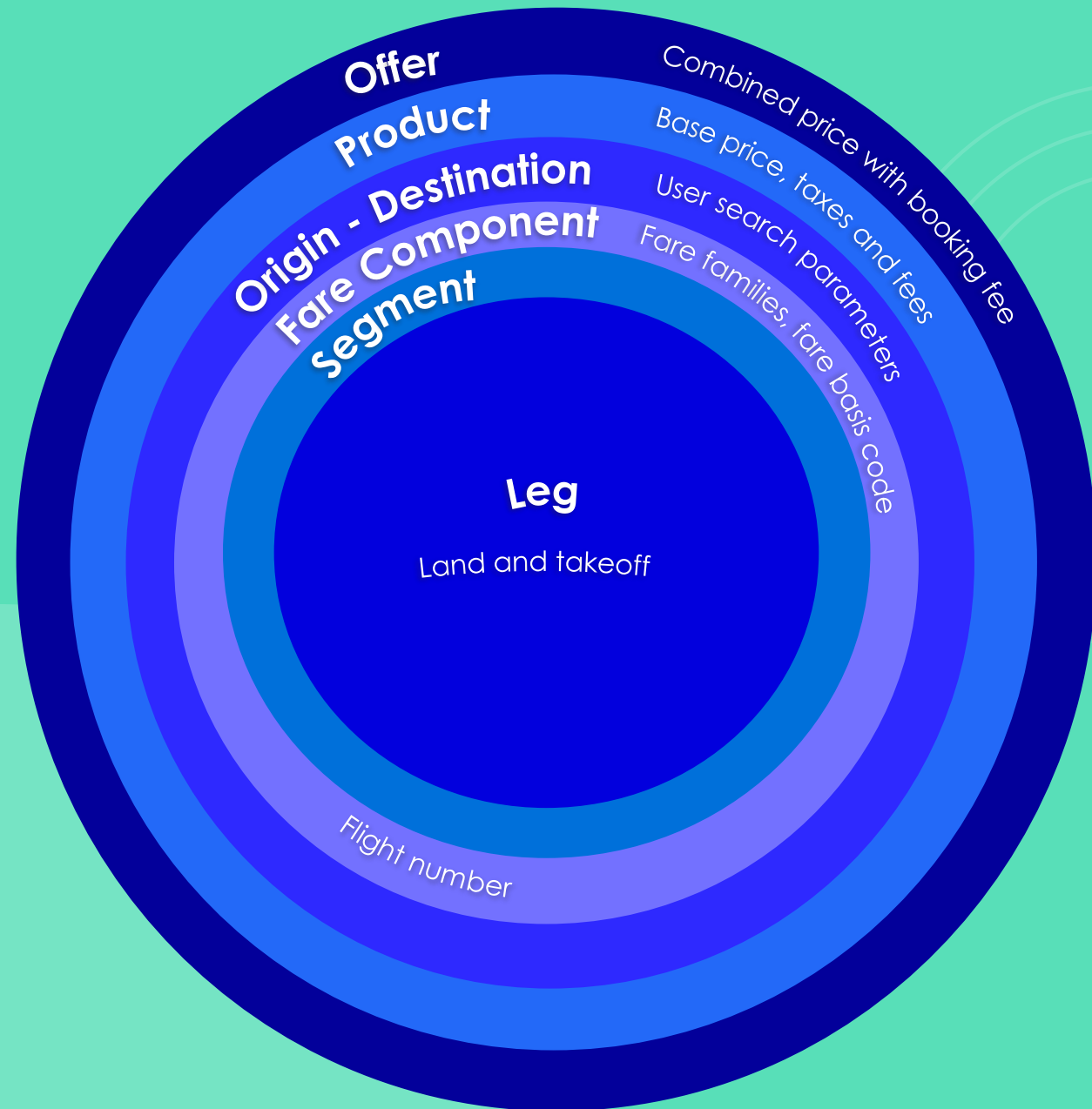
Segments have a single flight number that does not change within its legs. Two segments always have a layover in between and a customer always deplanes at the end of a segment. Most segments have only a single leg, but that it is not a strict 1:1 relationship. A segment with multiple legs stops at intermediate airports on their way to their destination. Customers can board and deplane at any of these intermediate stops, but a full deplaning may not occur.

Offer — Combined price with booking fee
Product — Base price, taxes and fees
Origin - Destination — User search parameters
Fare Component — Fare families, fare basis code
Segment

Leg
Land and takeoff

Legs

Legs are the lowest level of flights

At the beginning of a leg an airplane takes off and at the end of a leg an airplane lands. There are no stops on a single leg. On the day of travel, this is the main unit that a customer is familiar with. Time between two legs of the same segment can sometimes be called a "stopover".

Offer — Combined price with booking fee
Product — Base price, taxes and fees
Origin - Destination — User search parameters
Fare Component — Fare families, fare basis code
Segment

Leg

Land and takeoff

Flight number

In Summary

If your friend says, "I just got a great deal flying round-trip from Chicago to Vegas with stops in Omaha and Reno"

All you know is that their trip has two origin-destinations and six legs. If they booked two one way tickets separately, they'd have two offers. If they booked one round-trip, they may have two products if they booked a split ticket or one product if they booked a single ticket. They may have up to six segments or as few as two depending on whether the stops are layovers, stopovers, or a mix. And finally they may have as few as two fare components and at most six.