

Confluent Kafka vs. Open Source Apache Kafka

IBM acquired Confluent in March, leading many Confluent customers to reconsider their reliance on Confluent Kafka. Here's how Confluent Kafka and Open Source Kafka (backed by OpenLogic support) stack up.

	Confluent Kafka	Open Source Kafka + OpenLogic
Kafka Core	Apache Kafka	Apache Kafka
Licensing	Subscription / open-core	100% Apache 2.0
Cost Model	Platform subscription + usage	Support & services only
Vendor Lock-In	High	None
Deployment Options	Primarily managed / opinionated	On-prem, cloud, hybrid, Kubernetes
Operational Control	Limited	Full control
Enterprise Support	Tiered, non-specialist support	24/7 SLA-backed support from OpenLogic

What You Get With Confluent Kafka

Confluent packages Kafka with additional proprietary tools and managed services.

Strengths

- Pre bundled management tooling
- Simplified day to day operations
- Faster time to first production

Tradeoffs

- Recent IBM acquisition leading to:
 - Increased total cost of ownership, lock-in
 - Slower MTTR due to tiered, non-specialist support

What You Get With Kafka + OpenLogic

Apache Kafka without proprietary licensing — backed by enterprise grade expertise.

What We Offer

- 24/7/365 SLA backed technical support
- Direct access to Kafka Enterprise Architects
- Support for any environment (on prem, cloud, hybrid, Kubernetes)
- Enterprise-proven migration services
- Kafka Long Term Support (LTS) beyond community EOL
- Optional Kafka Service Bundle for managed Kafka — without vendor lock in

Ready to Move to Open Source Kafka?

OpenLogic is ready to help get you there. Speak with your account representative today, or [contact us](#) to discuss your migration and support options.