

UNVARNISHED REVIEWS

Fivetran vs. Airbyte vs. Matillion: Three Pricing Meters, No Common Unit

Unvarnished Reviews Research

Market Position: The Meter Is the Product

Data integration is the plumbing between business systems and a data warehouse, and the three products here sit at different points in it. Fivetran is the managed incumbent, with more than 700 fully managed connectors and a closed codebase. Airbyte is the open-source challenger, with more than 700 built-in connectors and a self-hosted option. Matillion is a transformation and orchestration platform that also ships connectors, and it runs its work inside the customer's warehouse.

Two events changed the buying picture. Fivetran and dbt Labs announced on June 1, 2026 that their all-stock merger, first announced October 13, 2025, is complete; the combined company says it serves more than 100,000 data teams and is led by Fivetran's George Fraser. Airbyte announced Airbyte 2.0 on September 24, 2025, with an Enterprise Flex plan that keeps data in the customer's environment, and renamed its plans Core, Standard, Pro and Enterprise Flex.

The finding that should change how any of the three gets budgeted: the three vendors charge in units that do not convert. Fivetran charges per monthly active row on each connection separately. Airbyte charges credits on its Standard and Plus plans and reserved capacity, called Data Workers, on Pro and Flex. Matillion charges credits consumed by pipeline task hours and by developer users beyond those a plan includes. A competitor-published analysis says a 2025 change to per-connection billing raised Fivetran bills by 40%-70% for many teams; that figure is a competitor's estimate and is not confirmed by Fivetran, but the structure it describes matches Fivetran's page, where each connection has a separate cost curve.

What Each Platform Does

All three move data from business systems into a warehouse such as Snowflake, Databricks, BigQuery or Redshift. They differ in the job they emphasize. Fivetran and Airbyte are mainly extract-and-load tools, built around source connectors. Matillion is mainly a transformation and orchestration platform that runs SQL, Python or dbt in the warehouse and also offers connectors. The descriptions below come from the vendors' pages, so they show what the vendors say, not what independent testing found.

Fivetran

Fivetran is a managed data pipeline service. It offers more than 700 fully managed source connectors and more than 200 activation destinations, which send warehouse data back into tools such as Salesforce and HubSpot. Standard includes unlimited users, 15-minute syncs, dbt Core integration, role-based access control, a REST API and SSH tunnels. Enterprise adds 1-minute syncs, enterprise database connectors, custom roles, SCIM, a choice of cloud provider and hybrid deployment. Business Critical adds customer-managed encryption keys, PCI DSS Level 1 certification and private networking.

Fivetran's Trust Center lists SOC 1, SOC 2, ISO 27001, ISO 27701, HITRUST, PCI DSS v4.0.1, GDPR and CCPA, with detailed reports behind an access request. The Free plan includes 500,000 MAR for connections, 3,500 MAR for activations and 5,000 monthly transformation model runs, with no time limit. Since June 2026 Fivetran also includes dbt Labs, whose dbt Core v2.0 alpha open sources the Fusion engine runtime under an Apache 2.0 license.

Airbyte

Airbyte is a data movement platform whose code is public. It lists more than 700 built-in connectors, plus a Connector Builder and an AI-assisted builder for custom ones, and claims more than 35,000 community connectors. Airbyte Core is free and self-run. Standard is a managed cloud plan, Pro adds role-based access control, SSO and audit logs on capacity-based pricing, and Enterprise Flex separates a cloud-hosted control plane from a data plane that can run in the customer's environment.

Airbyte lists SOC 2, ISO 27001, GDPR and a HIPAA conduit, and says it does not store customer data in the Flex model. Its code is licensed under the Elastic License 2.0, with the Airbyte Protocol under MIT. Airbyte Cloud, Enterprise and Agents require a commercial license, and the Elastic License bars hosting Airbyte to sell it as a competing ELT service.

Matillion

Matillion is a data integration platform built around a visual low-code canvas, with SQL, Python and dbt available for custom steps, plus orchestration, monitoring and Git-based version control. It uses pushdown ELT, meaning it generates SQL that runs inside Snowflake, Databricks or AWS so the warehouse does the processing. It claims more than 150 pre-built connectors plus custom connectors through a REST API, and offers Maia, an AI assistant that builds transformations from plain-language prompts.

Matillion lists SOC 1 Type II, SOC 2 Type II, SOC 3 and ISO 27001. The Developer plan includes one developer user, Teams and Scale include five, and all plans include unlimited admin users. Scale adds custom SSO, hybrid cloud deployment, lineage, streaming change data capture and a PrivateLink add-on. Matillion cites a Forrester study it commissioned showing up to 271% return on investment, and says Gartner placed it as a Challenger in its 2025 Magic Quadrant for Data Integration Tools; both are the vendor's statements.

How the Three Differ

Dimension	Fivetran	Airbyte	Matillion
Core job	Managed extract and load, plus activation back into business tools	Extract and load, self-run or managed	Transformation and orchestration in the warehouse, plus connectors
Connectors	700+ managed sources; 200+ activation destinations	700+ built-in; 35,000+ community connectors claimed	150+ pre-built; custom connectors through a REST API
Deployment	Managed service; hybrid deployment on Enterprise	Self-hosted Core, managed Standard, Pro, hybrid Enterprise Flex, self-managed Enterprise	Managed; hybrid cloud on Scale
Transformations	dbt Core integration; billed per successful model run	Not described on the pages reviewed	SQL, Python or dbt on a visual canvas, run in the warehouse
Billing unit	Monthly active rows, priced per connection	Credits (Standard, Plus) or Data Workers capacity (Pro, Flex)	Credits for task hours and extra developer users, sold as annual packages
Free option	Free plan: 500,000 MAR, no time limit	Core is free to self-run; 14-day cloud trial with 400 credits	Free trial on each plan; Maia trial
Security listed	SOC 1, SOC 2, ISO 27001, ISO 27701, HITRUST, PCI DSS, GDPR, CCPA	SOC 2, ISO 27001, GDPR, HIPAA conduit	SOC 1, SOC 2, SOC 3, ISO 27001
Support terms	Email support, listed 24/7 on Free; other plan terms not stated	Standard: portal, no SLA. Plus: 24-hour response. Pro and Flex: 12-hour critical	Developer: community. Teams and Scale: standard support, SLA with annual subscription
Published pricing	Examples only; no plan price list	Standard from \$20 a month; Plus from \$189 a month; Pro and Flex by quote	None on the vendor pricing page

The practical differences are four. Fivetran is the managed option, where the vendor runs the connectors and the buyer pays for rows. Airbyte is the option where code and deployment are visible and can be run in-house, with the buyer carrying more operational responsibility. Matillion does a different job from the other two. It is where a team builds and orchestrates transformations, and a team that needs hundreds of SaaS connectors will likely pair it with an ingestion tool. Fivetran now also owns dbt, which makes it a competitor to Matillion on the transformation side as well.

Price does not line up across them, because each prices a different unit. The sections that follow show what is published, what is reported, and what a single scenario costs.

Fivetran: The Upside

Users describe it as easy to run. The most-cited pros are ease of integration and maintenance (187 mentions), easy setup (74), easy integration with existing apps (73) and responsive support (62). Fivetran scores 9.0 on ease of setup and 8.8 on ease of administration, ahead of Matillion's 8.4 and 8.3.

It publishes the widest security list and a free tier. Fivetran lists more certifications than the other two, including HITRUST and PCI DSS, and its Free plan has no time limit. Annual contracts earn discounts from 5% up to 22% on its examples.

Fivetran: The Downside

The bill depends on a curve no page shows. Fivetran's pricing page gives no per-plan dollar price. Its worked examples, all on the Standard plan for a company of 1-200 employees, imply about \$0.50 per 1,000 MAR plus a \$5 base charge per connection at low volume, with the rate falling as a connection's volume rises. Each connection has a separate curve, so adding sources adds a base charge and another curve for each.

Cost and reliability are the top complaints. The most-cited cons are sync issues and unpredictable failures (60 mentions), high pricing that limits wider use (36), integration issues including schema ownership and changing connections (28), a steep learning curve (27) and pricing that reduces flexibility (24). The Vendr median for Fivetran is \$48,384 a year with an average discount of 17%, but the page's purchase count is inconsistent (770 purchases in one place and 463 deals in another), so treat the median as directional.

Airbyte: The Upside

It publishes entry prices and shows the code. Standard starts at \$20 a month with 5 credits included and extra credits at \$5 each. Plus starts at \$189 a month for 40 credits, with packages up to 2,000 credits at \$4,999 a month. Core is free to run, and the code is public, so a team can inspect or self-host it.

Users rate it well and praise its range. Ease of use (43 mentions), connector variety (26), a clean interface (15) and quick setup (12) lead the pros. The vendor says its 2.0 release raised MySQL-to-S3 throughput from 23 MB/s to 110 MB/s, a figure from Airbyte that was not independently tested.

Airbyte: The Downside

The cheapest plan has no service commitment. Standard support is a portal with no SLA, syncs run at most hourly, and the 15-minute interval and a 24-hour response begin at Plus. Pro and Flex are capacity-priced by quote, and the price of a Data Worker is not published.

Reviewers flag documentation and connector maturity. The top cons are poor documentation (8 mentions), difficult setup that often needs the data team (7), unclear error reporting (6), expense for small companies with large volumes (5) and limited connectors, some still in alpha (5). The review base is small, about 79 reviews, so the patterns are thin evidence. The Elastic License is described by Airbyte as open source; it restricts hosting Airbyte as a competing service, so confirm the license fits your use.

Matillion: The Upside

It does the transformation work inside your warehouse. Pushdown ELT means the warehouse does the processing, and a team can build in a visual canvas or write SQL, Python or dbt. All plans include unlimited admin users, and billing counts task hours only when a pipeline runs, not during validation or sampling.

Users rate it highly on a modest base. The Maia listing shows 4.5 of 5 across 134 reviews. Users cite ease of use (9 mentions), automation (4), an intuitive interface (4) and a simple design (4).

Matillion: The Downside

No public price and the smallest connector set. The vendor's pricing page lists three plans and no dollar amounts, and buyers go to sales. It claims about 150 pre-built connectors against more than 700 for the other two, so SaaS ingestion usually needs a second tool.

Reviewers cite limits and growing cost. The top cons are feature limitations (9 mentions), performance limitations including Jython-related slowdowns and single-thread constraints (4), cloud dependency with added cost at scale (3), cost that grows quickly with data volume (3) and limited API options for exporting raw data (2). The listing shows implementation of about 3 months.

Platform Ratings at a Glance

Platform	G2 Rating	Reviews (G2)	Trustpilot	Note
Fivetran	4.3 / 5	851	Not independently confirmed at time of publication	Largest review base; ease of setup scores 9.0
Airbyte	4.4 / 5	79	Not independently confirmed at time of publication	Small base; listing shows about 2 months to implement
Matillion (Maia)	4.5 / 5	134	Not independently confirmed at time of publication	Highest rating of the three; listing shows about 3 months to implement

All three rate within 0.2 points of each other, so the ratings do not separate them. Fivetran's 851 reviews make its 4.3 the most reliable figure, while Airbyte's 79 and Matillion's 134 are small samples. Review counts differ by a few reviews between G2 pages, so the figures are approximate.

Pricing (October 2026)

Fivetran and Airbyte publish rates for some plans; Fivetran gives examples rather than a plan price list, and Airbyte's Pro and Enterprise Flex are quote-only. Matillion's pricing page lists no dollar amounts, so every Matillion figure below is reported by third parties and unconfirmed by Matillion.

Platform	Entry Tier	Mid Tier	Top Tier	Pricing Model
Fivetran	Free: 500,000 MAR for connections, no time limit	Standard: about \$0.50 per 1,000 MAR plus a \$5 base per connection at low volume (implied by examples)	Enterprise and Business Critical: quote; Enterprise License Agreements offer a fixed annual price	Monthly active rows, each connection on a separate curve; transformations \$0.01-\$0.002 per successful model run above 5,000; annual contracts save 5%-22%
Airbyte	Core: free, self-run. Standard: from \$20 a month, 5 credits included	Plus: \$189 a month for 40 credits, up to \$4,999 for 2,000; extra credits \$5	Pro and Enterprise Flex: custom, capacity-based (Data Workers)	Credits (Standard, Plus) or reserved capacity; 14-day trial with 400 credits
Matillion	Developer: reported about \$1,000 a month	Teams: reported about \$2,000 a month	Scale: reported to start around \$100,000 a year	Credits for task hours and extra developer users, sold in annual packages; reported \$2-\$4.40 per credit

Vendr data puts the median Fivetran contract at \$48,384 a year and the median Matillion contract at \$139,000 a year across 31 purchases, a sample the source calls directional. Matillion's per-credit rate is not published; the reported \$2-\$4.40 range comes from forum posts and review sites. Ask each vendor to state the unit, the rate and what happens when you exceed the commitment.

TCO Comparison: 12 Sources, About 6 Million Changed Rows a Month, One Year

The scenario is a company with 12 source connections averaging 500,000 changed rows each, or 6 million a month, and 40,000 transformation model runs a month. It excludes warehouse compute and engineer time, which every option adds.

Line item	Fivetran Standard	Airbyte Plus	Matillion
Connections	12 x (\$5 + 500 x \$0.495) = about \$3,030 a month, \$36,360 a year	Included in credits	Not modeled
Transformations	40,000 runs: 25,000 x \$0.01 + 10,000 x \$0.007 = \$320 a month, \$3,840 a year	Not described on the pages reviewed	Included in task-hour credits
Platform or credits	None	40 credits at \$189 a month, \$2,268 a year (vendor's calculator example for 6.64 million rows and 10 GB)	Reported \$12,000-\$24,000 a year for Developer or Teams
Annual list total	About \$40,200	About \$2,268	\$12,000-\$24,000 reported; Vendr median across 31 purchases \$139,000
After annual-contract discount	About \$38,200 at the 5% floor	None stated	Not stated
Multiple of the Airbyte price	About 17.7x	1.0x	5.3x-10.6x at the reported entry plans

The totals are not a ranking. Fivetran counts only rows that changed in a month, while Airbyte's example counts rows synced, and the credit conversion depends on the source type. Matillion's figure is a license cost for a transformation

platform that also needs a source of raw data. Fivetran's transformation tier is read as marginal; if the page's rates apply to all runs in a tier, the monthly charge is \$280. The point is that the same workload can produce quotes an order of magnitude apart, so a buyer should price the actual row counts, connections and run counts before comparing.

The same pattern at 5, 12 and 40 connections

Connections (500,000 MAR each)	Fivetran Standard, connections only	Airbyte, credits scaled from the vendor example	Matillion
5 (2.5 million rows a month)	\$1,262.50 a month, \$15,150 a year	Standard: about 15 credits, \$70 a month, \$840 a year	Reported \$12,000-\$24,000 a year
12 (6 million rows a month)	\$3,030 a month, \$36,360 a year	Plus: 40 credits, \$189 a month, \$2,268 a year	Reported \$12,000-\$24,000 a year; median \$139,000
40 (20 million rows a month)	\$10,100 a month, \$121,200 a year	Plus: 100 credits at \$449 plus 20 overage credits at \$5, \$549 a month, \$6,588 a year	Reported to start around \$100,000 a year on Scale

Fivetran's cost grows in line with connections because each carries a base charge and a separate curve. Airbyte's column assumes credits scale linearly with rows from the vendor's one example, which is an assumption, not a published conversion. Fivetran's rate falls as a connection's volume rises, so heavy connections cost less per row than these figures, and a Fivetran quote for 40 connections should come in below \$121,200 if volumes are concentrated in a few of them.

Costs the Pricing Table Misses

- **Per-connection base charges.** Each Fivetran connection carries a \$5 base charge on 1 to 1 million MAR, and a competitor's analysis says each small connection starts at the highest per-row tier. Fifteen small connections carry fifteen base charges, where one large connection carries one.
- **Transformation run charges.** Fivetran charges \$0.01 per successful model run between 5,001 and 30,000 and \$0.007 between 30,001 and 100,000, so a team that adds hourly dbt models pays for each run.
- **The Free plan freezes on a second overage.** Exceeding 5,000 model runs once continues into the next cycle; a second time freezes connections, transformations and the account until the team upgrades.
- **Overage credits.** Airbyte Plus overage credits cost \$5 each, and the credit-to-volume conversion depends on source type, so a heavy month can exceed the package.
- **Self-hosting labor.** Airbyte Core has no license fee, but the team runs the servers, upgrades and connector fixes. At \$189 a month, Plus costs about 1% of a \$200,000 engineer-year, so a small amount of maintenance time can exceed the cloud price.
- **Warehouse compute under Matillion.** Pushdown ELT runs inside Snowflake, Databricks or AWS, so the transformation work is billed by the warehouse vendor on top of Matillion's credits. No source quantifies this reliably, so ask for a pilot measurement.
- **Developer seats beyond the plan.** Matillion Developer includes one developer user and Teams and Scale include five; additional developer users consume credits.
- **Professional services and migration.** Fivetran suggests bundling onboarding and migration support into Enterprise and Business Critical contracts, because they are not free by default.

Exit and Switching Costs

- **Fivetran: the data stays, the pipeline does not.** Loaded data remains in your warehouse, but connector settings, sync history and schemas must be rebuilt. Reviewers cite schema ownership and changing connections as a pain point (28 mentions), so downstream dbt models and reports that depend on Fivetran's table layout break when a replacement writes different names. A new tool's initial load of every table is also new work; Fivetran's initial bulk load does not count toward MAR, but another vendor's may count toward its credits.
- **Airbyte: the lowest lock-in, with a license caveat.** The code is public and Core can be self-run, so a team can leave Airbyte Cloud without leaving Airbyte. The Elastic License restricts hosting it as a competing service, and connectors marked alpha may not move cleanly.
- **Matillion: pipelines live in its canvas.** Jobs are built in Matillion's environment, and reviewers want better options for exporting raw data (2 mentions). Ask whether jobs export as portable SQL or code, whether unused credits roll over, and what the notice period is before an annual package renews.
- **Contract terms matter at every vendor.** Discounts at Fivetran rise with term, up to 22%, so leaving early forfeits the discount. Get renewal caps and notice periods in writing from all three.

Complexity Comparison

Dimension	Fivetran	Airbyte	Matillion
Implementation time	Not stated on the listing; setup scores 9.0 of 10	About 2 months on the listing	About 3 months on the listing
Ease of use	Ease of integration and maintenance is the top pro (187 mentions)	Ease of use is the top pro (43 mentions)	Ease of use is the top pro (9 mentions)
Reliability	Sync issues and unpredictable failures are the top con (60 mentions)	Unclear error reporting (6) and alpha connectors (5)	Jython slowdowns and single-thread limits (4)
Learning curve for advanced use	Steep learning curve requiring technical knowledge (27 mentions)	Difficult setup that often needs the data team (7)	Feature limitations make template reuse harder (9)
Staffing	Managed; no connector servers to run	Core is self-run; cloud plans are managed	Requires people who write SQL, Python or dbt for custom steps
Documentation and support	Responsive support is a top pro (62 mentions)	Poor documentation is the top con (8 mentions); Standard has no SLA	Community support on Developer; standard support and SLA on Teams with annual subscription
Connector coverage	700+ managed; new-connector requests are a vendor decision	700+ built-in plus builders; some connectors in alpha	150+ pre-built; custom connectors through a REST API

Red Flags

Each finding below is sourced and material enough to influence a purchasing decision.

Fivetran	Airbyte	Matillion
• The meter makes bills hard to forecast. Each connection is priced on a separate curve with a \$5 base charge, and a competitor estimates the per-connection change raised bills by 40%-70% for many teams. That estimate is unconfirmed, but pricing complaints account for 60 mentions (36 high pricing, 24 pricing issues). Model each connection's rows before signing.	• Support is thin on the entry plan. Standard has portal support with no SLA and hourly syncs; the 24-hour response begins at Plus. Do not run revenue-critical pipelines on Standard without that agreed.	• No public price. The pricing page lists no dollar amounts, and the reported \$1,000, \$2,000 and \$2-\$4.40 figures come from forums and aggregators. Get the credit rate, the package size and the overage terms in writing.
• Reliability is the largest user complaint. Sync issues and unpredictable failures are the top con with 60 mentions. Ask for the failure and alerting terms and run a pilot on your busiest sources.	• Connector quality varies. Reviewers cite alpha connectors (5 mentions), poor documentation (8) and unclear error reporting (6). Check the status of each connector you need.	• Costs grow with volume. Reviewers cite cost that rises quickly with data volume and added cost at scale, and the warehouse bill sits on top. Measure warehouse compute in a pilot.
• No plan price list. The vendor page gives examples, not rates by plan. Get the per-connection rate curve and the overage multiplier in writing.	• Evidence is thin. About 79 reviews support a 4.4 rating. Ask for references with workloads like yours.	• Smaller connector set. About 150 pre-built connectors against more than 700 for the others means a second ingestion tool is likely.

The Decision Framework

Choose Fivetran if:

- You want managed connectors with the least operational work and the widest security list, and you have modeled each connection's rows.
- You have a written rate curve, an overage multiplier, and renewal and notice terms, and you have run a pilot on your busiest sources.
- You have budgeted for transformation runs and for the dbt relationship after the merger.

Choose Airbyte if:

- You want published entry prices, public code and the option to self-host, and your team can run upgrades and connector fixes.
- You have confirmed that every connector you need is production-grade and that the support plan matches your SLA needs.
- You have confirmed that the Elastic License fits your use.

Choose Matillion if:

- You want to build and orchestrate transformations in your warehouse and have people who write SQL, Python or dbt.
- You have a written credit rate, package size, rollover and overage terms, and a measured pilot of warehouse compute.
- You have a plan for ingesting SaaS sources the 150-connector set does not cover.

Key Decision Factors

The job decides what you are buying. Fivetran is managed ingestion, now with dbt. Airbyte is open ingestion you can run yourself. Matillion is transformation and orchestration in your warehouse. A team may need two of them.

Audience decides which one fits. Fivetran suits teams that want managed, low-maintenance ingestion and can model a per-connection bill. Airbyte suits teams that want published entry prices, open code and the option to self-host, and can accept thinner reliability evidence. Matillion suits teams that build and orchestrate transformations in their warehouse and will buy credits by quote.

The meter decides the bill, and the Red Flags decide what to ask. The same 12-source, 6-million-row scenario models to about \$40,200 a year on Fivetran Standard and about \$2,268 on Airbyte Plus, while Matillion's reported entry plans run \$12,000-\$24,000. The units differ, so price your rows, connections and runs, and treat every blog figure as unconfirmed. Fivetran's top complaint is sync failures, Airbyte's is documentation and connector maturity, and Matillion's is limits and growing cost, so get the rate curve, support terms and exit rights in writing and run a paid pilot on your busiest sources. No product here is perfect: Fivetran trades cost predictability for convenience, Airbyte trades convenience for control, and Matillion trades published pricing for in-warehouse transformation.

The Bottom Line

- A team that wants managed, low-maintenance ingestion should choose Fivetran and model every connection's rows and the transformation runs before signing.
- A team that wants published prices, open code and control should choose Airbyte and confirm connector maturity and support terms.
- A team that wants to build transformations in its warehouse should choose Matillion and get the credit rate and overage terms in writing before a pilot.