Where the control plane runs is the difference you will notice first

G8 beside the three names most evaluations start with, on the rows that decide an on-premises purchase. Each cell comes from the vendor's own documentation, checked on 2026-10-13; the sources, and the same comparison for Tyk, Gravitee, AWS API Gateway and IBM API Connect, are at g8.dev/compare. There are honest reasons to choose each of them; they are in the last row.

	G8	KONG	APIGEE	AZURE API MANAGEMENT
Control plane	In your network: the console, its API and its database beside the gateway clusters. No hosted part.	Konnect, a control plane hosted by Kong; or self-managed Kong Gateway with Kong Manager.	Apigee X hosted on Google Cloud; Apigee hybrid keeps the management plane at Google over a runtime you run; only Edge for Private Cloud is wholly on-premises.	The API Management instance in Azure; only the self-hosted gateway runs in your infrastructure.
Without internet access	Yes, by design: images from your registry, a signed license file checked locally, never calls home.	Self-managed: the license is a file and needs no network; no dedicated air-gapped guide.	X and hybrid: no. Edge for Private Cloud installs from local mirrors.	No: the self-hosted gateway needs outbound port 443 to Azure; during an outage it keeps serving its last configuration.
Refused changes in the audit log	Yes: a Denied record when the role forbids it, a Failed record with the engine's reason when the engine refuses it.	Not stated by vendor.	Not stated by vendor.	Not stated by vendor.
Console roles from your directory	Microsoft Active Directory groups mapped to built-in or custom roles, per Environment.	LDAP Authentication Advanced or OpenID Connect groups mapped to roles per Workspace.	Google Cloud IAM roles per project or environment; OIDC or SAML identity providers through Google Cloud.	Azure role-based access control with Microsoft Entra ID accounts and groups.
AI gateway and MCP	Plugins on the same Route as the API: providers with fallback, token budgets, prompt rules, OpenAPI to MCP. In every edition, Community included.	AI Model entity and AI Policies in Kong AI Gateway; the AI MCP Proxy plugin turns OpenAPI paths into tools (Kong Gateway 3.12 and later).	AI policies with Model Armor and Vertex AI; an MCP Discovery Proxy exposes OpenAPI operations as tools.	AI gateway policies; a REST API exposed as an MCP server in every tier except Consumption.
Choose them when	Your console must stay in your network, offline too, with Active Directory roles and a record of refused changes.	You want an open-source gateway under the Apache License 2.0, its plugin ecosystem, or a managed control plane.	You build on Google Cloud and want its IAM, logging, API hub and Model Armor around your APIs.	Your teams, identities and backends are in Azure with Entra ID, and you want a public price list by tier.

Not stated by vendor means the vendor's documentation we read does not say; it does not mean the product cannot do it. A custom Kong plugin does not run on the G8 engine, and G8 is not open source.

NEXT STEP

Bring the gateway you use today; we show the same configuration on G8. Request a demo at g8.dev/request-a-demo or write to hello@g8.dev. Read next: Why G8 (1 page), at g8.dev/downloads.

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