

Introducing Apache Airflow® 3

The Next Evolution in Orchestration





Airflow 3 Overview

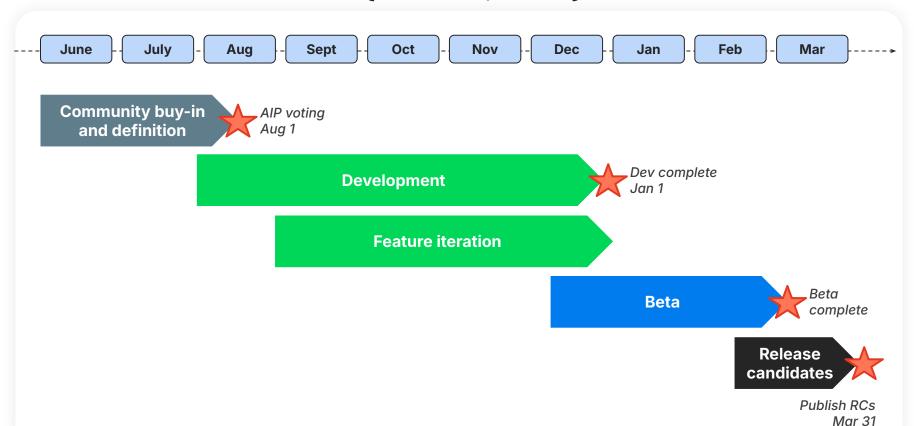
Vikram Koka

Chief Strategy Officer
Astronomer



Airflow 3.0 timeline (dated Sep 2024)





Airflow 3.0 released April 22nd, 2025!



330+ developers worldwide, 500+ commits / month

13 AIPs (Airflow Improvement Proposals)

Already, the third most downloaded Airflow version!

What does this mean for you?





Better user experience

- Dag Versioning, New UI, Backfills



Improved security posture

- Task Isolation, Updated Architecture



Run tasks anywhere, at any time and in any language

Data Assets, Event driven

Airflow 3.1 released Sept 25, 2025!



1400+ commits into 3.1 (after 3.0)

163 developers

Accelerated development on the 3.0 foundation!

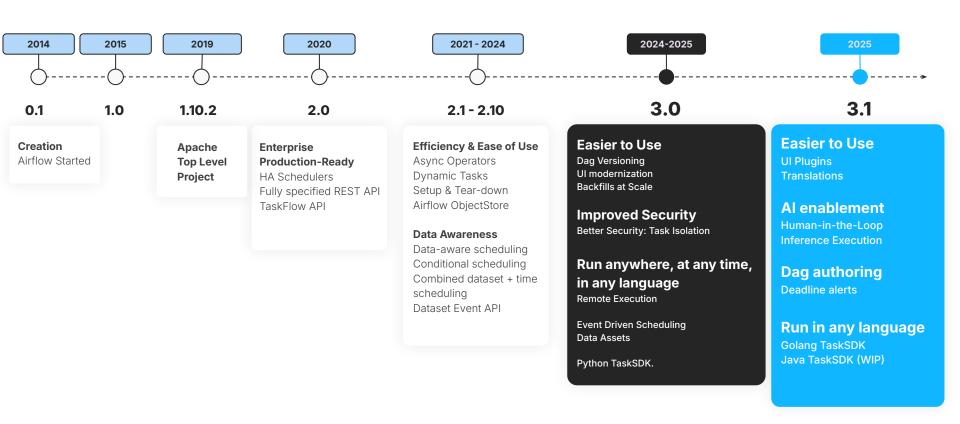
What does Airflow 3.1 bring?



- Improved User Experience
 - UI plugins, Translations (17 so far)
- Expanded Event Driven Scheduling
 - Supports: SQS, Apache Kafka, Redis, Azure (WIP)
- Improved authoring
 - Deadline Alerts
- Al enablement
 - Inference Execution
 - Human-in-the-loop!

Airflow release timeline



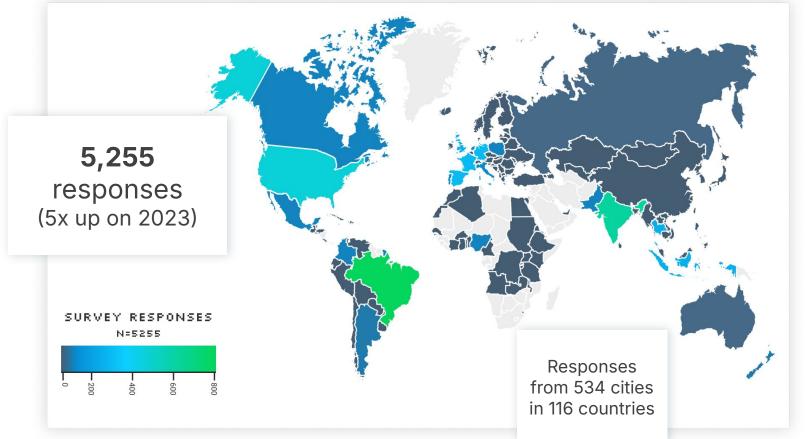




Airflow expanding personas

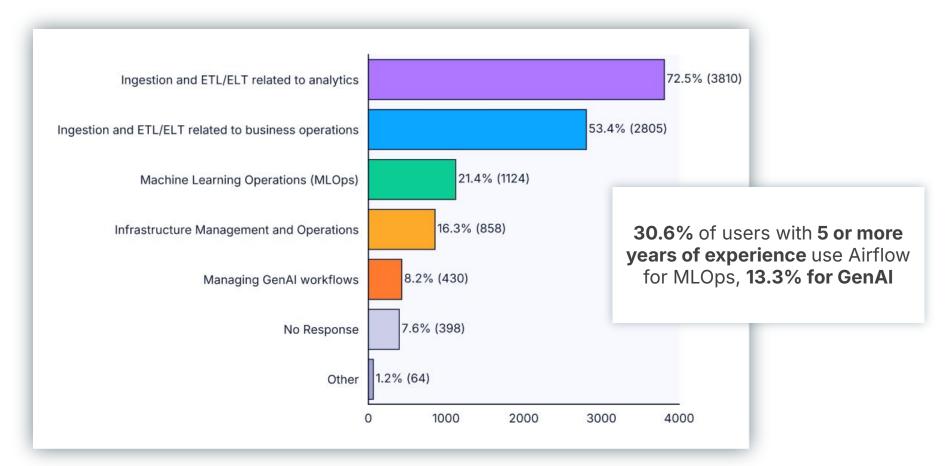
Key Community Insights from the Apache Airflow Survey





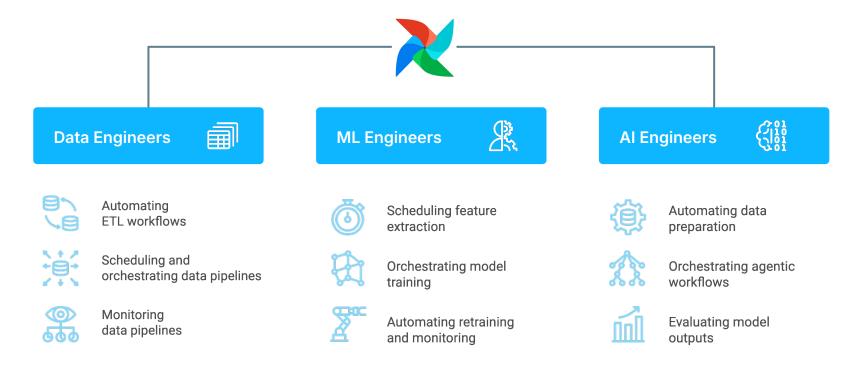
Use Cases Insight from the State of Airflow survey





Airflow is a "core technology" to a growing range of engineers and personas





Summit sessions reflect this





Around a third of use Case sessions about Al





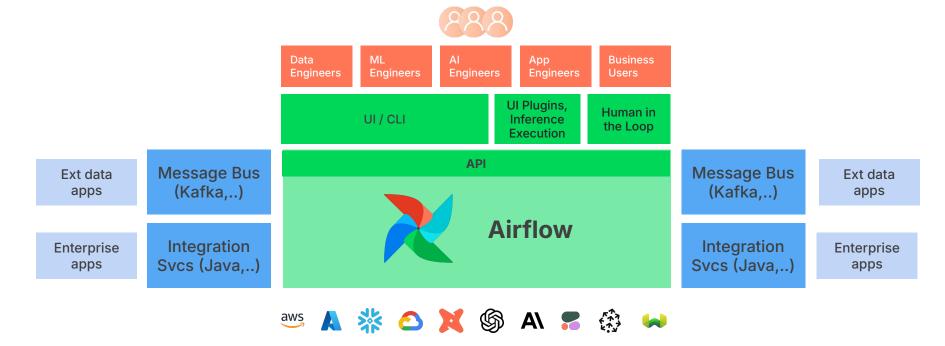
Enterprise	Financial	Healthcare	Consumer	Tech	Gov
IBM / Red Hat	Financial Times	Kaiser Permanente	Pinterest	King / Microsoft	INTRVL (voting)
SAP	Weav	iKang	Duolingo		

Note: Only a representative selection show above

Airflow ecosystem

Expanded with Airflow 3







UX features

Jed Cunningham

Daniel Standish

Brent Bovenzi

Pierre Jeambrun





UX features

Slides intro

Slide on API + React being a foundation - (Pierre - 3 mins)

UX features via demo (Brent - 10 mins)

Demo new features Released since Airflow 3.0 in 3.1:

Internationalization, Gantt, Calendar (Brent - 2 mins) and Plugins (Pierre - 5 mins)

Dag Versioning - Jed Cunningham

Backfills - Daniel Standish



Whole New Stack

The entire API and UI were rebuilt for Airflow 3. FastAPI & React

Thanks to our amazing community!

Pierre Jeambrun

Staff Software Engineer
Astronomer

FastAPI Backend



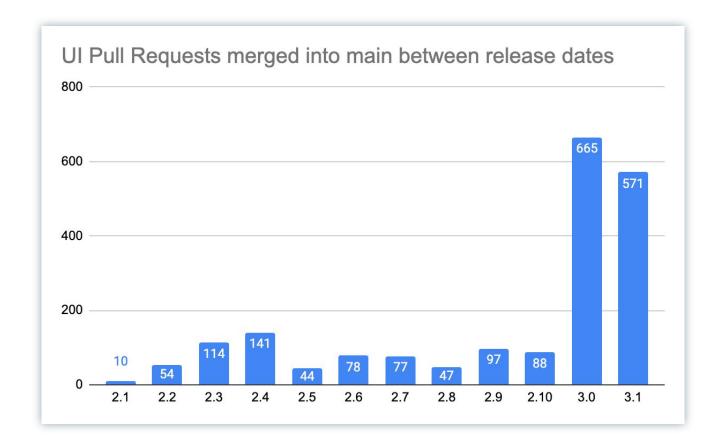
- Reliable, modern, easy to maintain
- Remove dependencies (Flask AppBuilder, Connexion)
- Code first API design
- Inherit FastAPI features (automatic documentation, data validation, native async and more)

React UI



- Single Page Application, responsive
- Great React ecosystem (community, tools and packages)
- Flexible Deployment
- Opening opportunities for internationalization and more complex features



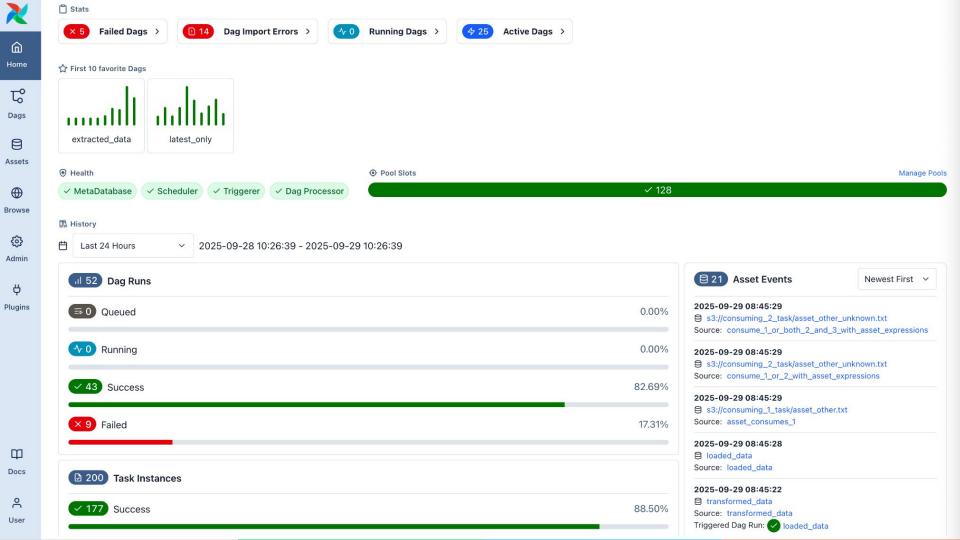




New Dashboard

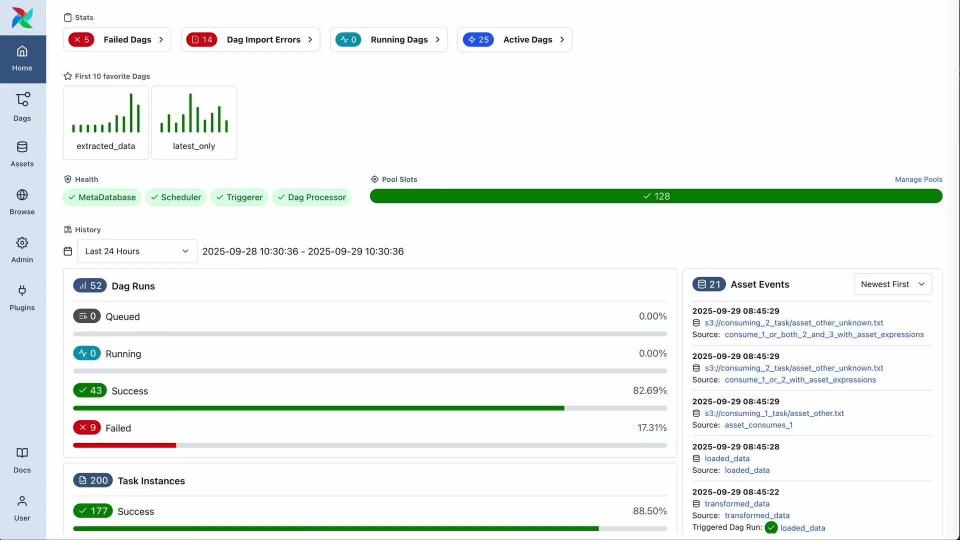
Brent Bovenzi

Engineer Astronomer



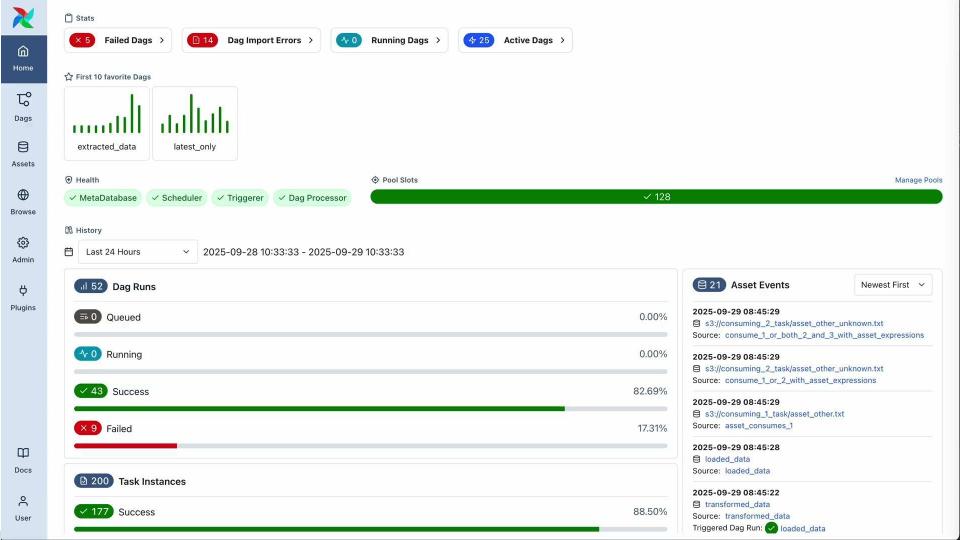


Updated Dag Page



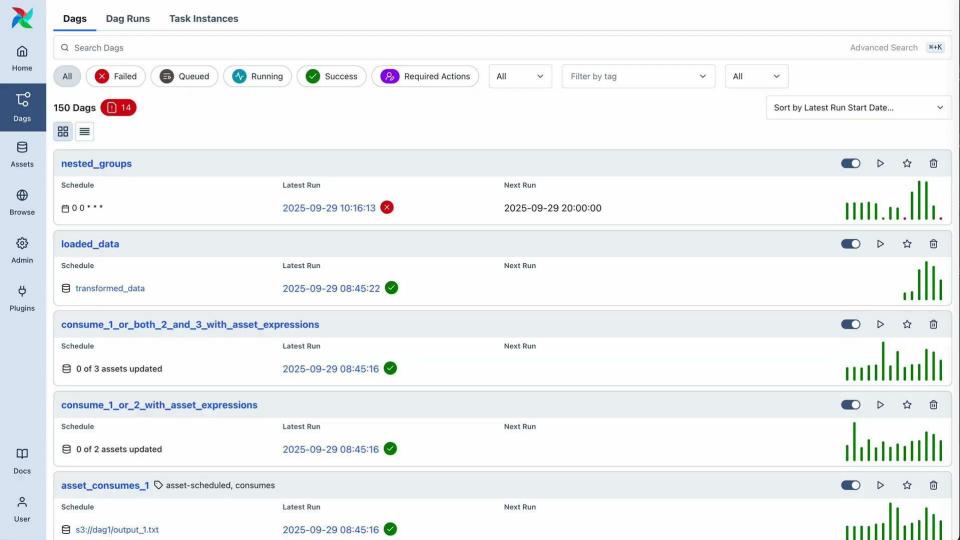


Dag <> Asset Graphs



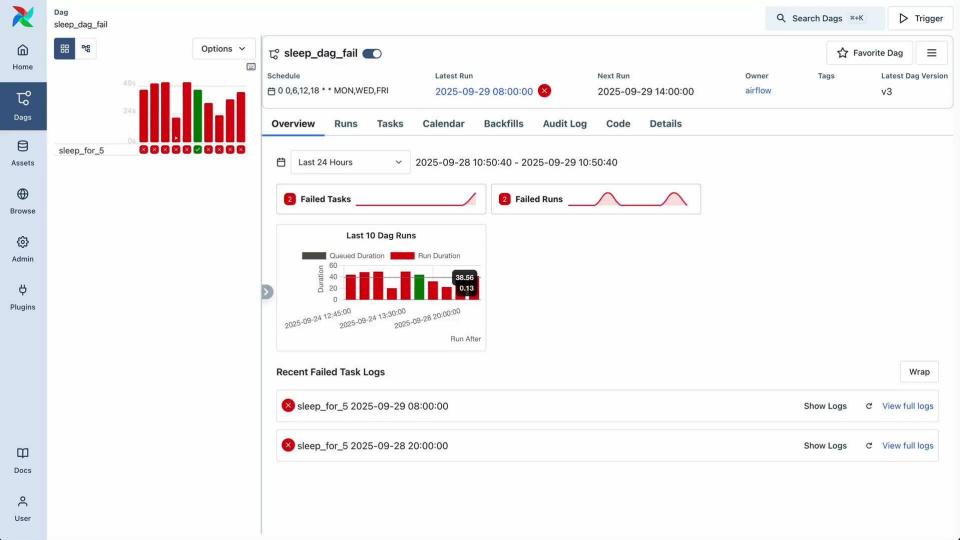


Support for 17 Languages



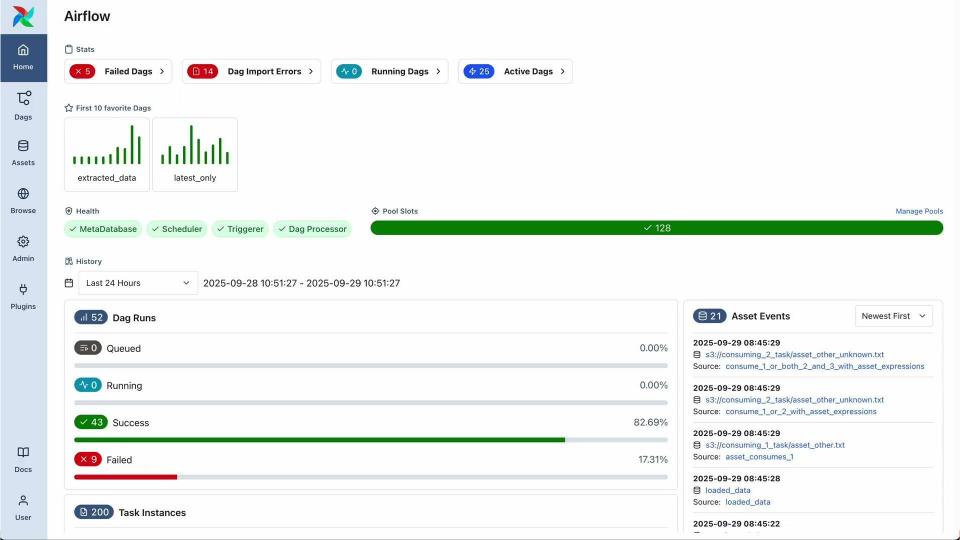


Calendar View





New Ways to Filter



Plugins

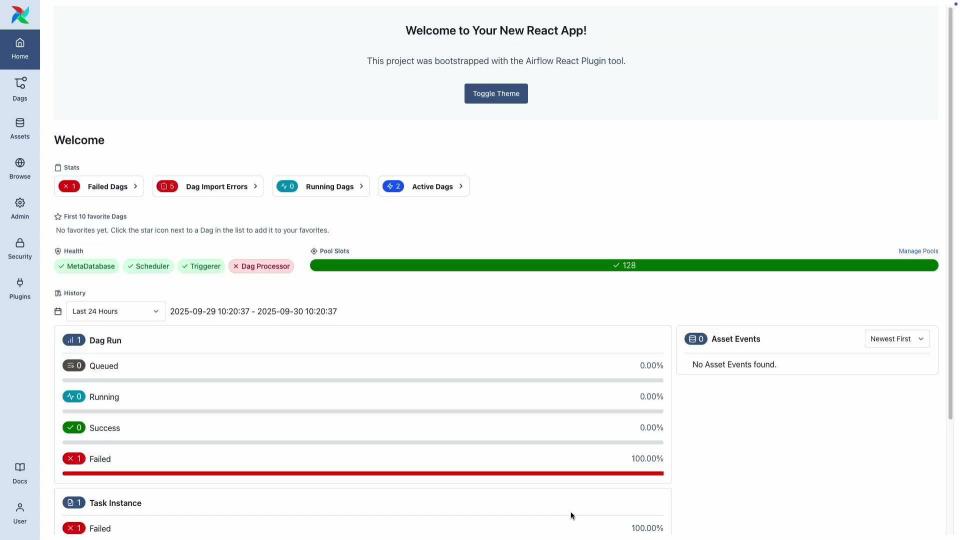


- Backward compatibility layer for Airflow 2 plugins in Airflow 3 (requires fab provider)
- Have access to the powerful FastAPI interface via sub applications and middlewares
- Extend the UI through External Views and React Applications registration

Pierre Jeambrun
Staff Software Engineer
Astronomer

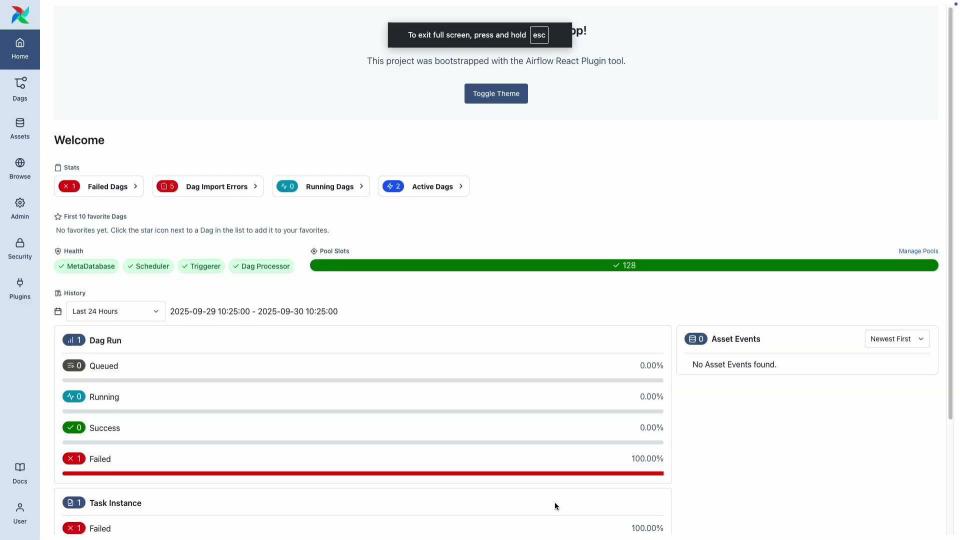


IFrames



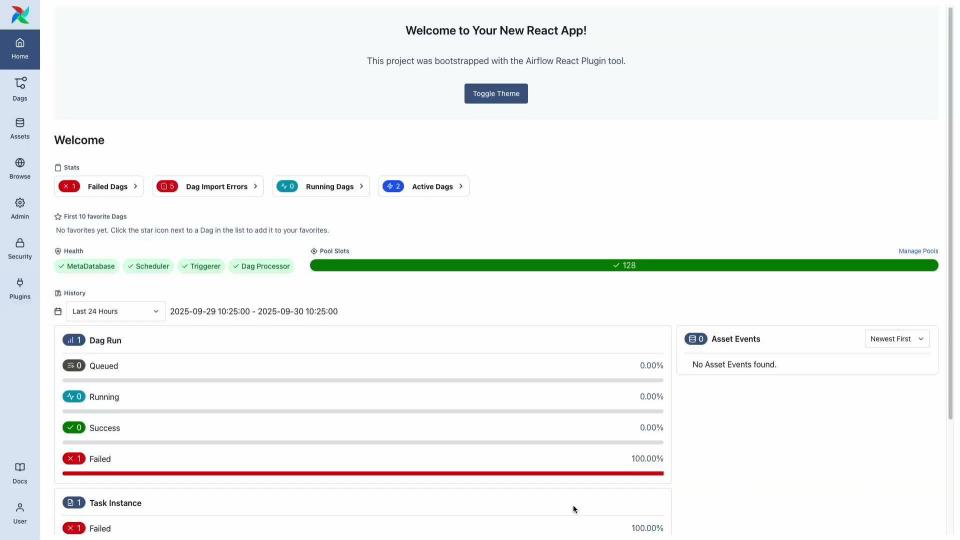


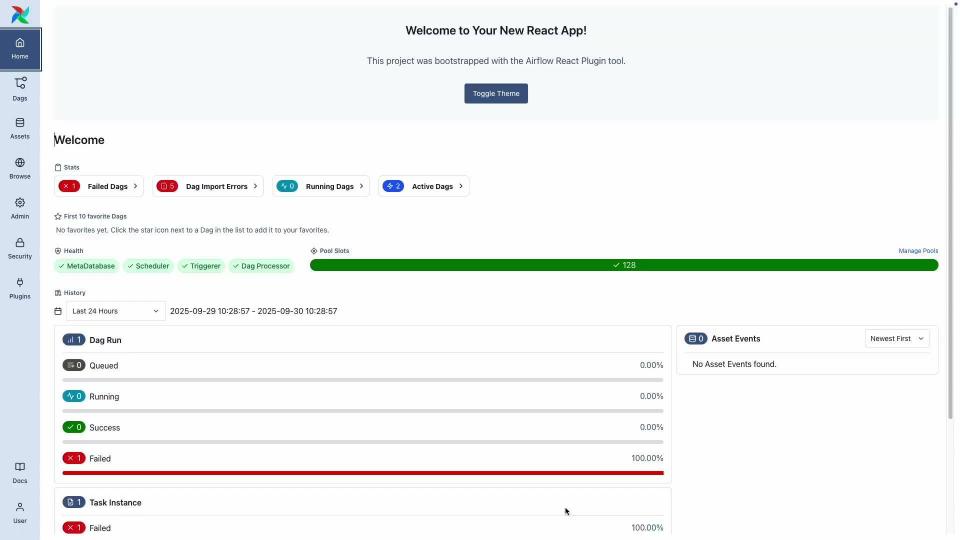
External Link





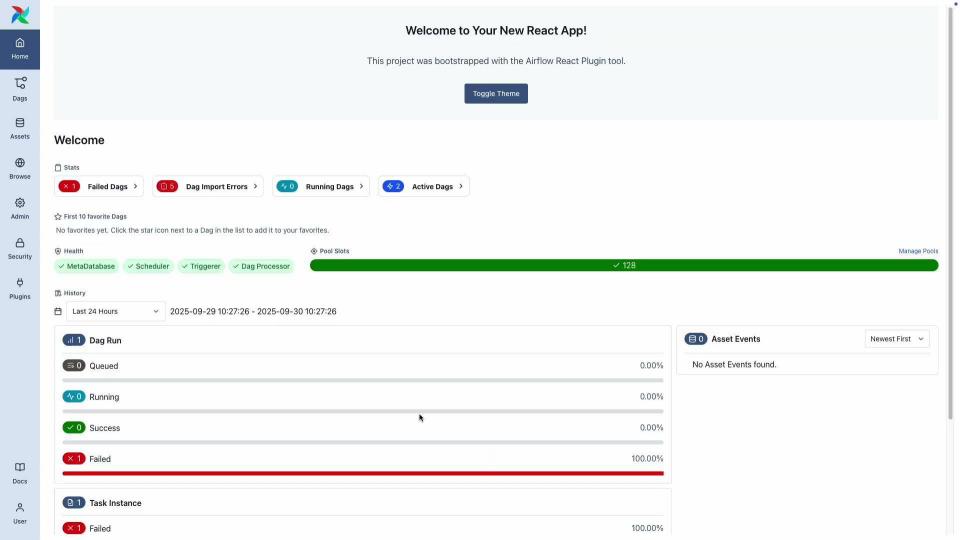
React App





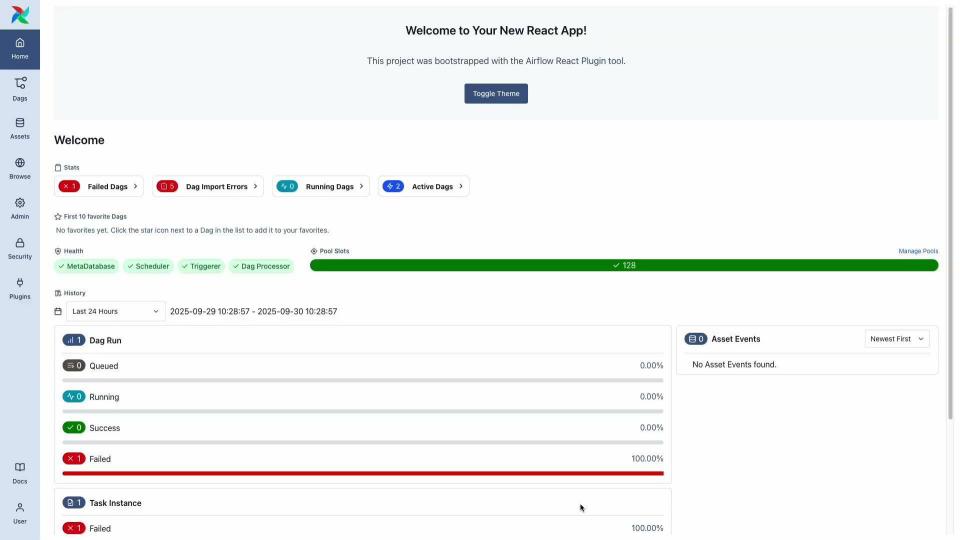


Navbar Categories





Destinations





React App Placement

Plugins Takeaways



- Airflow 2 plugins are still supported, not a blocker to upgrade to Airflow 3
- Flexible Interface
- Can't wait to see what the community builds!

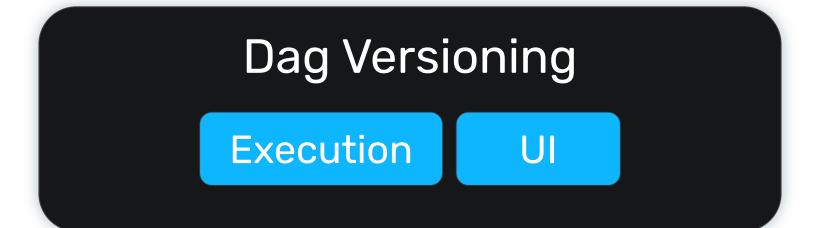


Dag Versioning

Jed Cunningham

Principal Software Engineer
Astronomer







Dag Bundle

collection of Dags and other files



Types of Dag Bundles

Versioned vs not



Run task using a specific version of Dag code



Dag code from many sources



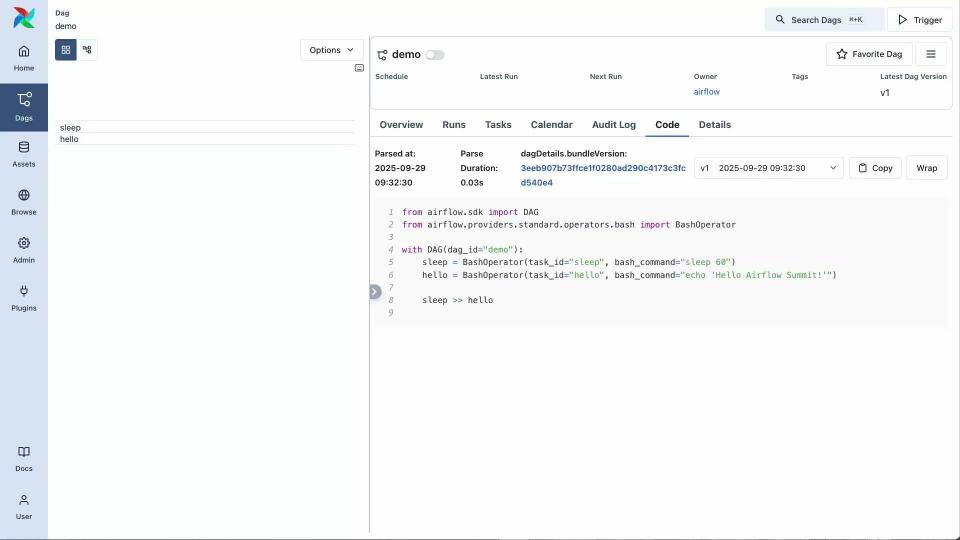
"Code" vs Dag

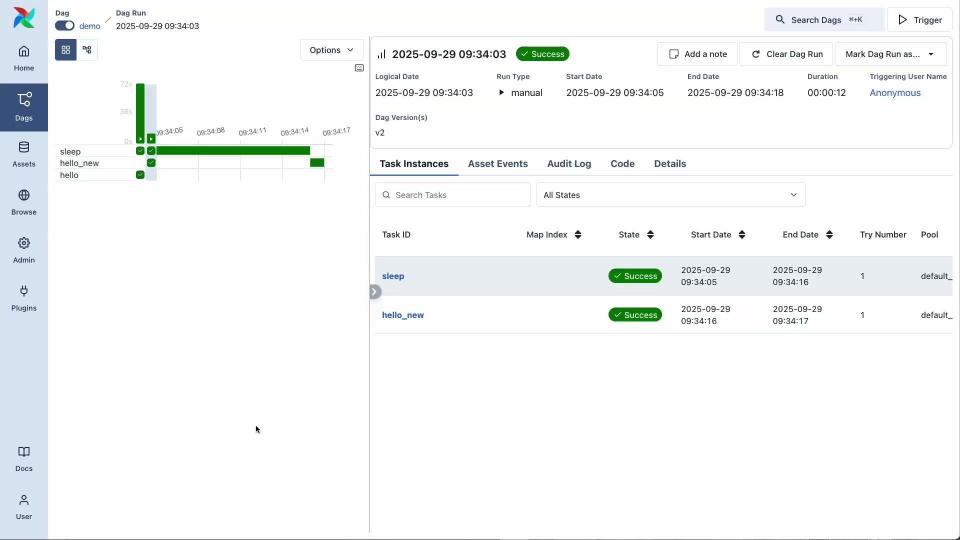
Bundle Versions + DagRuns

V1 Bundle

V2 Bundle









Backfills

Daniel Standish

Staff Software Engineer
Astronomer



What is backfill in Airflow?



Re-run tasks over dates Why:

- data correction
- new pipelines
- large data migrations



Backfills in Airflow 2



CLI only → less accessible, less reliable

Goals for Airflow 3

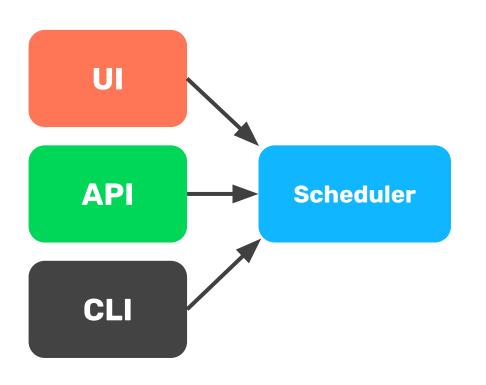


Make backfills easier to run and observe

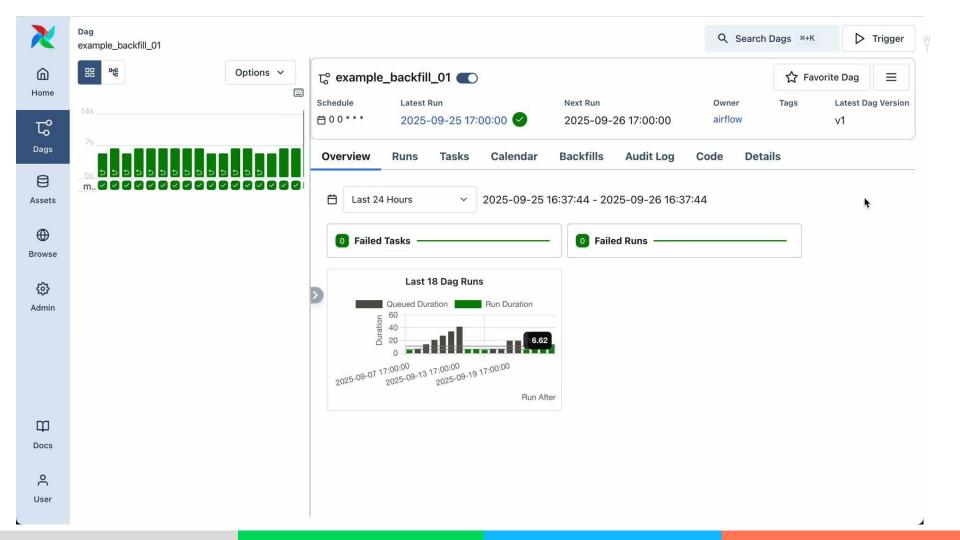
Give users more control over how they are run



Backfills in Airflow 3



- Runs managed by core scheduler
- Feature parity across all interfaces



Backfills in Airflow 3: wrap up



- Backfills are easier to use
- More control over execution
- Feature parity across UI / API / CLI



Run Tasks Anywhere

Kaxil Naik Amogh Desai Jens Scheffler Buğra Öztürk





Run Tasks Anywhere:

Task Isolation

Kaxil Naik

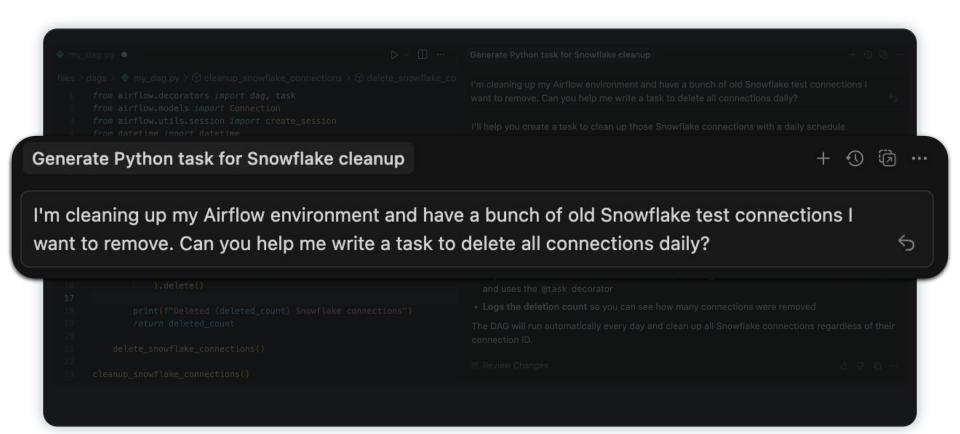
Sr Director of Engineering @ Astronomer Airflow Committer & PMC Member

Amogh Desai

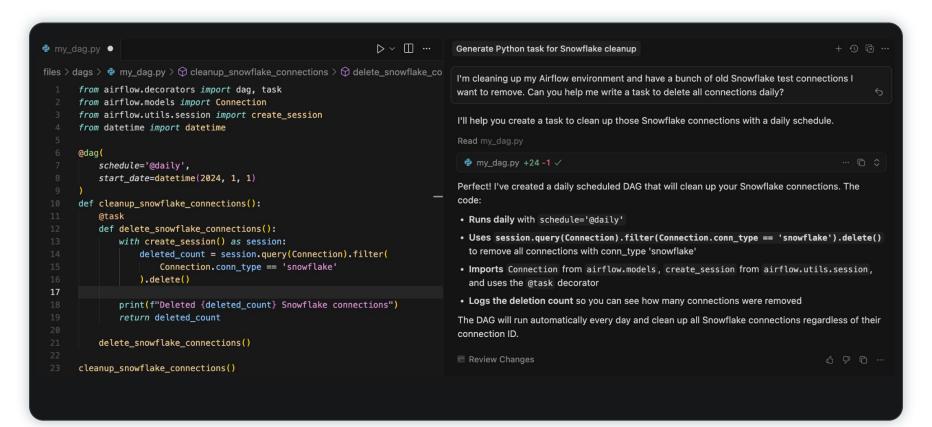
Sr Software Engineer @ Astronomer Airflow Committer & PMC Member







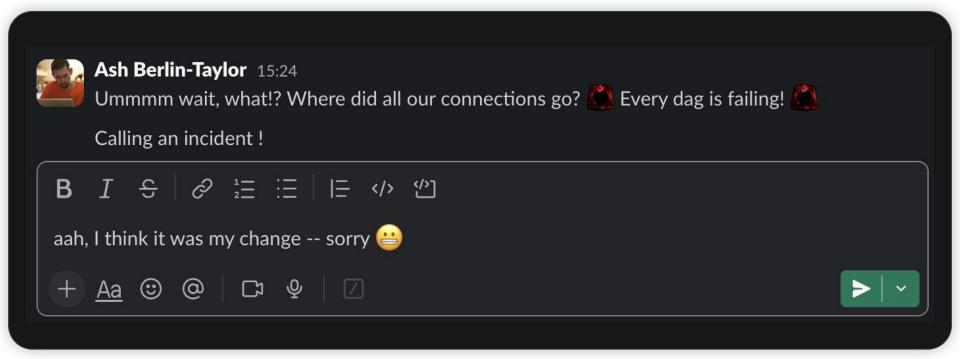






```
@task
def delete_snowflake_connections():
    with create_session() as session:
        deleted_count = session.query(Connection).filter(
            Connection.conn_type == 'snowflake'
        ).delete()
        session.commit()
        print(f"Deleted {deleted_count} Snowflake connections")
        return deleted count
              25 Snowflake connections DELETED !!
```







The Real Damage

Security

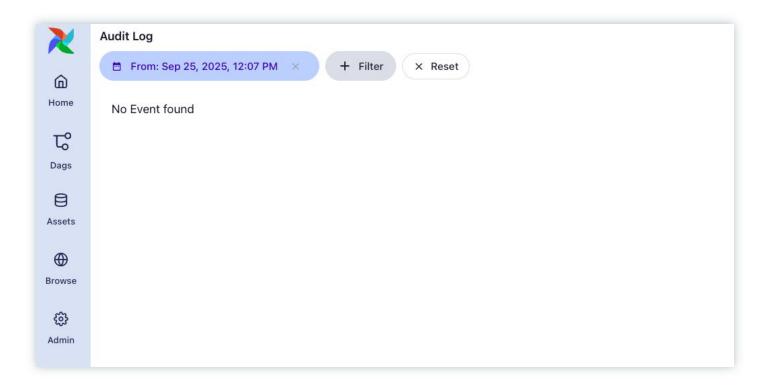
Compliance

Performance

Operations



The Real Damage



The Real Damage



airflow-maintenance-dags

A series of DAGs/Workflows to help maintain the operation of Airflow

DAGs/Workflows

- backup-configs
 - A maintenance workflow that you can deploy into Airflow to periodically take backups of various Airflow configurations and files.
- clear-missing-dags
 - A maintenance workflow that you can deploy into Airflow to periodically clean out entries in the DAG table
 of which there is no longer a corresponding Python File for it. This ensures that the DAG table doesn't
 have needless items in it and that the Airflow Web Server displays only those available DAGs.
- db-cleanup
 - A maintenance workflow that you can deploy into Airflow to periodically clean out the DagRun,
 TaskInstance, Log, XCom, Job DB and SlaMiss entries to avoid having too much data in your Airflow MetaStore.

The Real Damage



```
airflow trigger_dag --conf
'{"maxDBEntryAgeInDays": 30}' airflow-db-cleanup
```

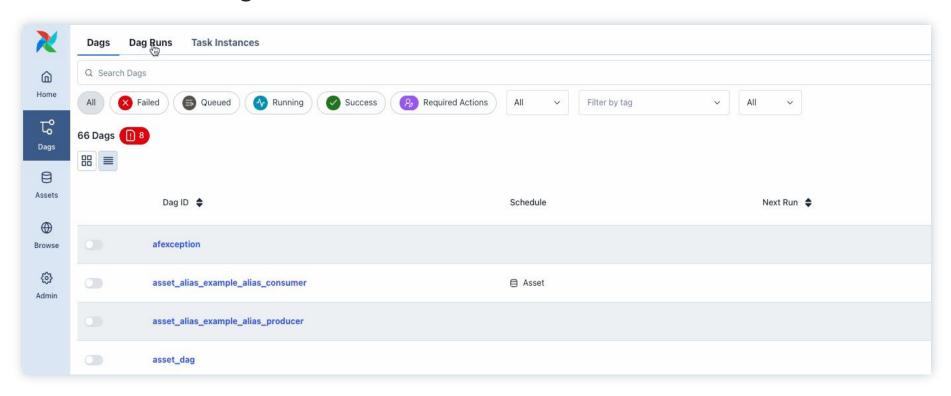




```
airflow trigger_dag --conf
'{"maxDBEntryAgeInDays": 0}' airflow-db-cleanup
```



The Real Damage





Security?

Performance?

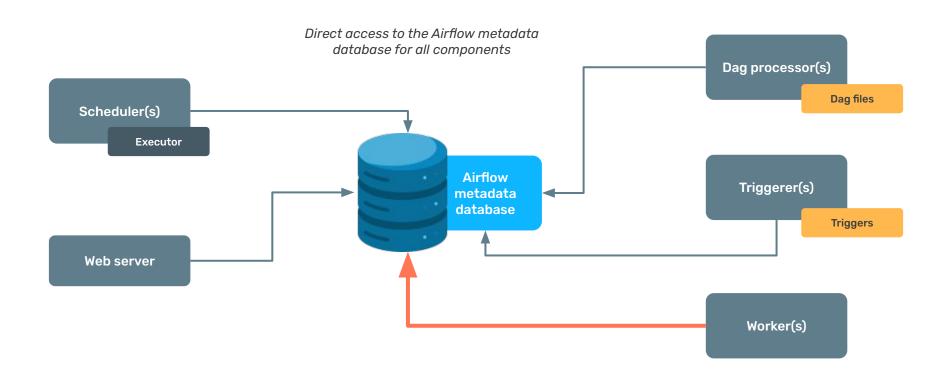


We needed a fundamental change.

Not a band-aid, but surgery.

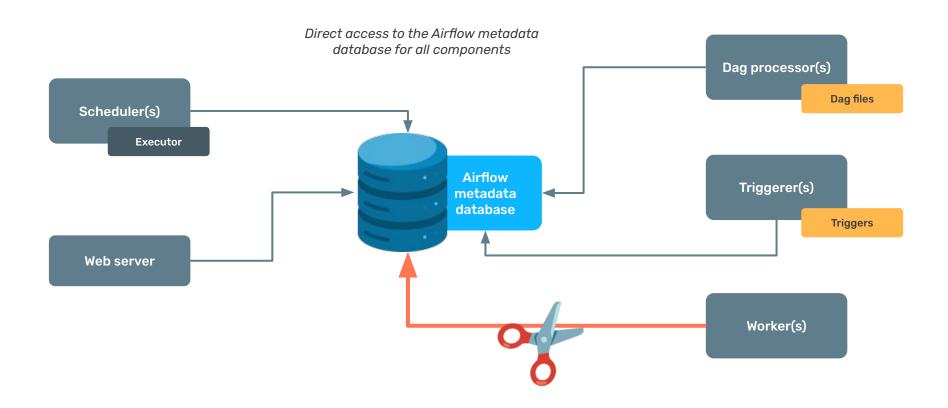
Airflow 2.x: Everything in one place



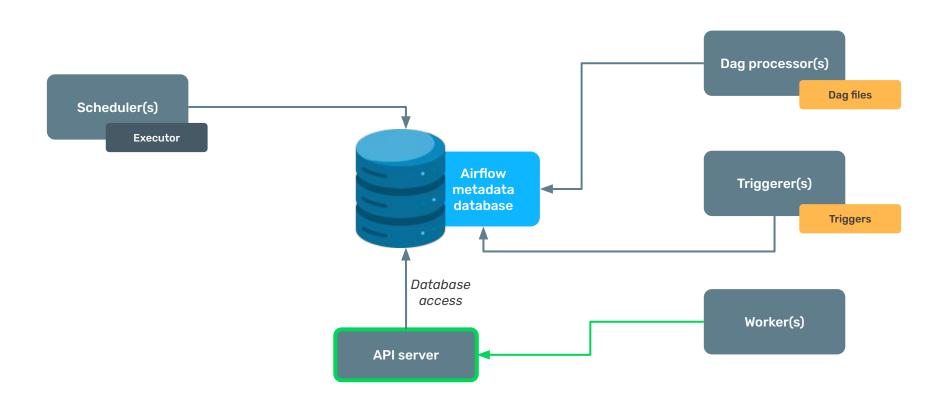


Airflow 2.x: Everything in one place

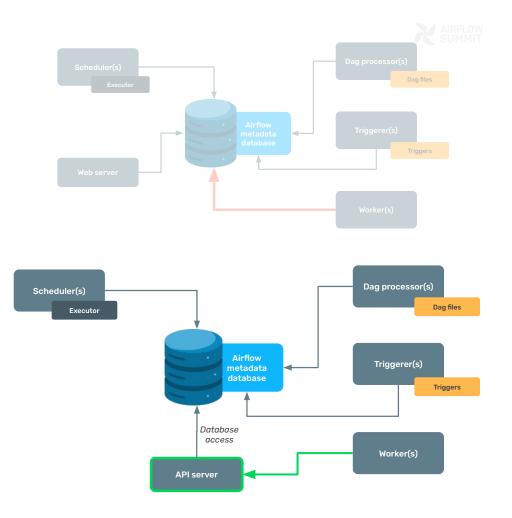






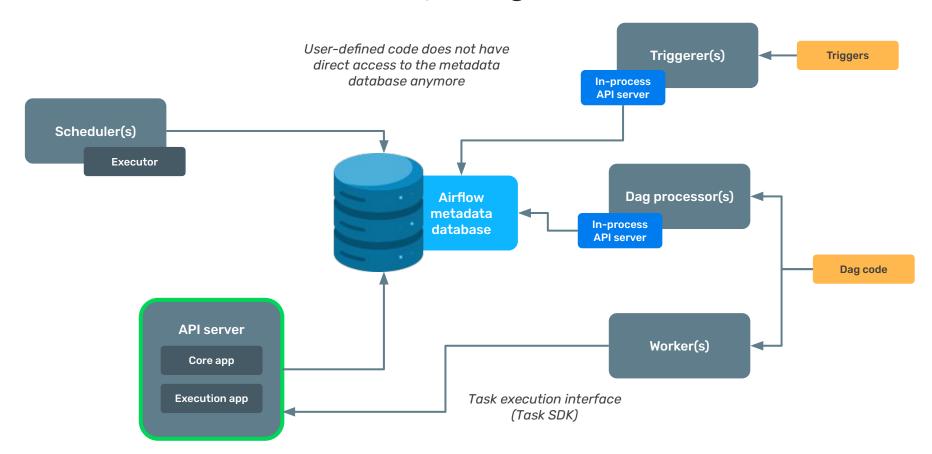


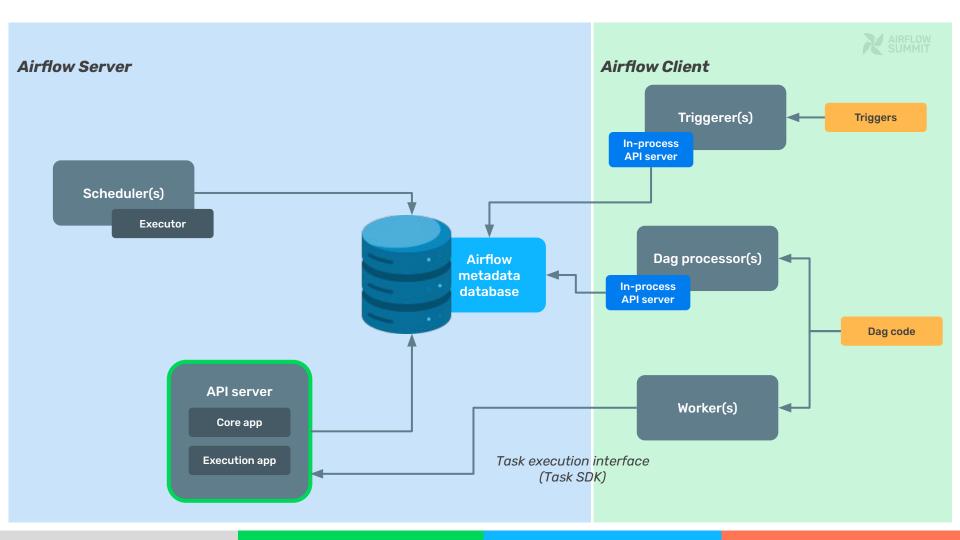
But What About Dag Processor & Triggerer?



Airflow 3 Architecture: Completing the Isolation









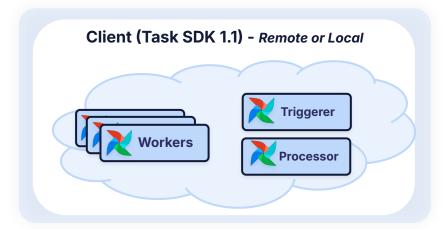


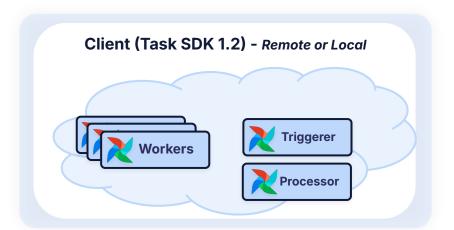


Enables - Independent Upgrades











Run Tasks Anywhere:

Edge Executor

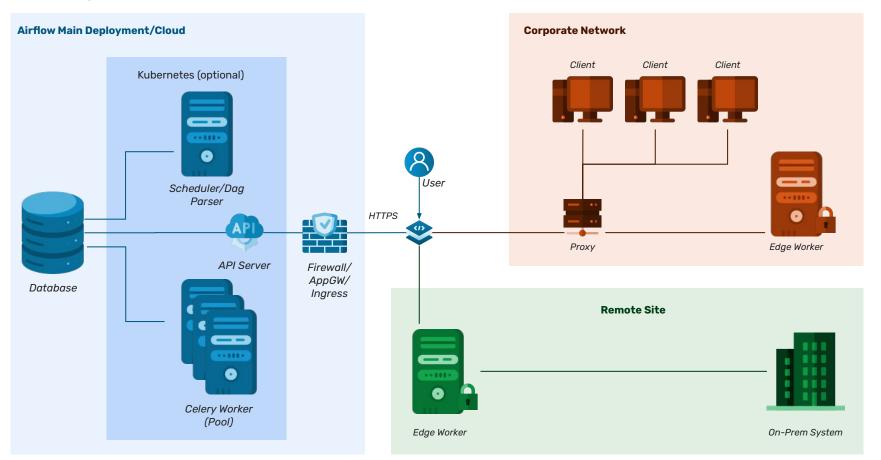
Jens Scheffler

Cluster Technical Architect @ Bosch Airflow Committer & PMC Member



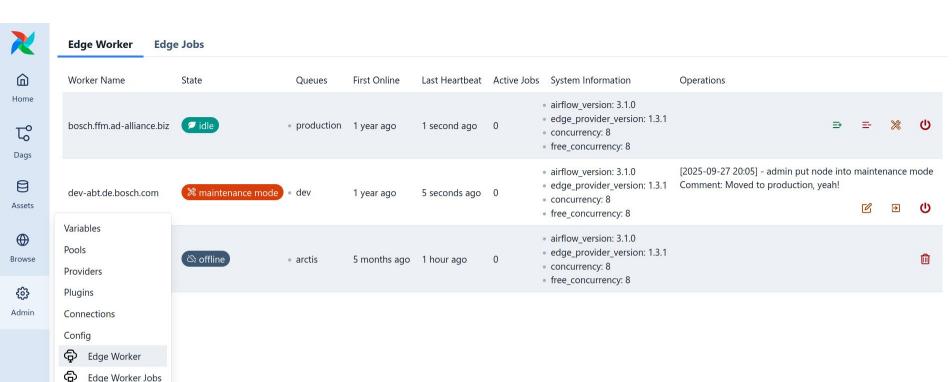
Edge Executor





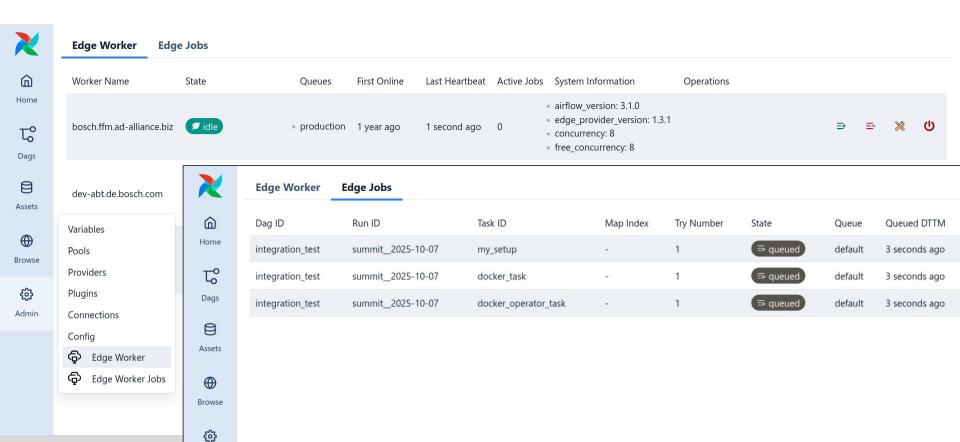


Edge Executor - with Airflow 3.1 including UI Plugin





Edge Executor - with Airflow 3.1 including UI Plugin



×	Edge Worker	Edge Jobs								
☆ Start	Dag ID	Run ID	Task ID	Map Index	Try Number	State	Queue	Queued DTTM	Edge Worker	Last Update
	integration_test	summit_2025-10-07	my_setup	ē	1	= queued	default	8 minutes ago	seattle	8 minutes ago
Ľ°	integration_test	summit2025-10-07	docker_task	-	1	= queued	default	8 minutes ago	seattle	8 minutes ago
Dags	integration_test	summit_2025-10-07	docker_operator_task	-	1	⇒ queued	default	8 minutes ago	seattle	8 minutes ago
Datensets (Assets)										
⊕										
Browsen										
@										
Verwaltung										



中 Doku

9





Airflow CTL

Buğra Öztürk

Apache Airflow Committer Senior Data Engineer Mollie







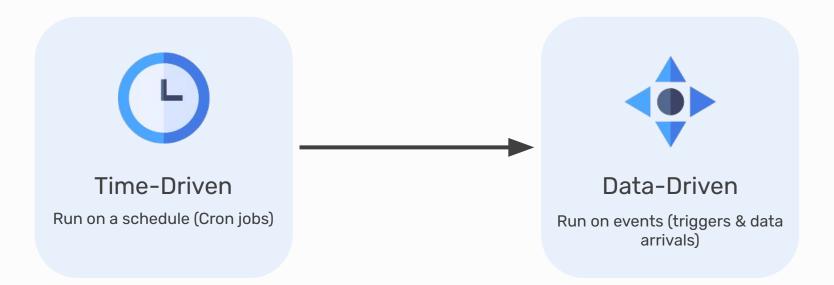
Run Tasks at any Time

Constance Martineau Vincent Beck





From Time-Driven to Data-Driven



Stop waiting for midnight. Start reacting in (near) real time.

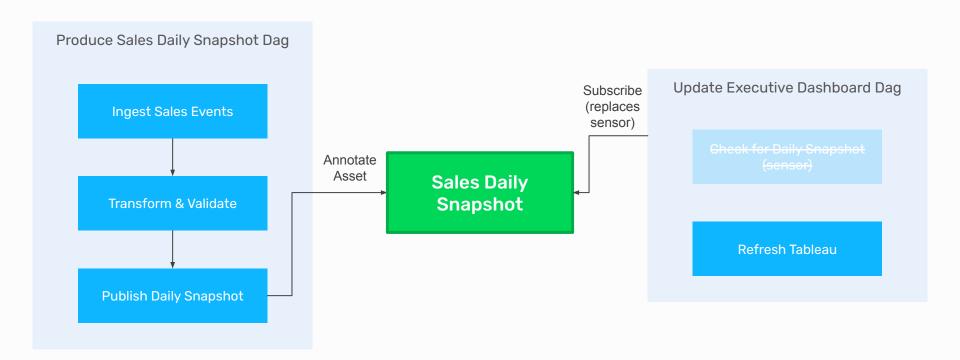
Assets: Orchestrate Around Data





Assets: Orchestrate Around Data





Assets: Orchestrate Around Data



```
from airflow.sdk import asset

@asset(schedule='@daily')
def sales_daily_snapshot():
    # ingest sales events
    # transform & validate
    # publish daily snapshot

@asset(schedule=[sales_daily_snapshot])
def executive_dashboard():
    # refresh tableau
```

Equivalent (and matter of personal preference)

```
personal preference)
```

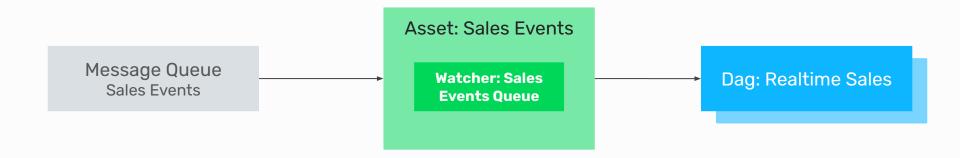
```
from airflow.sdk import Asset, dag, task
sales daily snapshot = Asset(name='sales daily snapshot')
def produce sales daily snapshot dag():
  def sales daily snapshot task():
  sales daily snapshot task()
sales daily snapshot dag()
@dag(schedule=sales daily snapshot)
def update executive dashboard dag():
  @task(outlets=Asset(name='executive dashboard'))
  def refresh tableau():
update executive dashboard dag()
```



But isn't that first Dag still running on a schedule?

Event-Driven Scheduling (Asset Watchers)





Queue \rightarrow Watcher (polls for new events) \rightarrow Asset \rightarrow Dag

Event-Driven Scheduling (Asset Watchers)



```
from airflow.sdk import Asset, AssetWatcher, dag
from airflow.providers.common.messaging.triggers.msg queue import MessageQueueTrigger
trigger = MessageQueueTrigger(scheme='sqs', queue='sales-events')
sales_events_asset = Asset('sales_events', watchers=[AssetWatcher(name='sqs_sales_queue', trigger=trigger)])
@dag(schedule=[sales events asset])
def realtime sales():
realtime sales()
```

Inference Execution: The Old Way



Predict Customer Churn Dag

Dag run with logical date = '2025-01-01'

Dag run with logical date = '2025-01-02'

Dag run with logical date = '2025-01-03'

Great for backfills.
Painful for live
inference

Traditional Dags have **fixed Logical Dates**

Inference Execution: The New Way





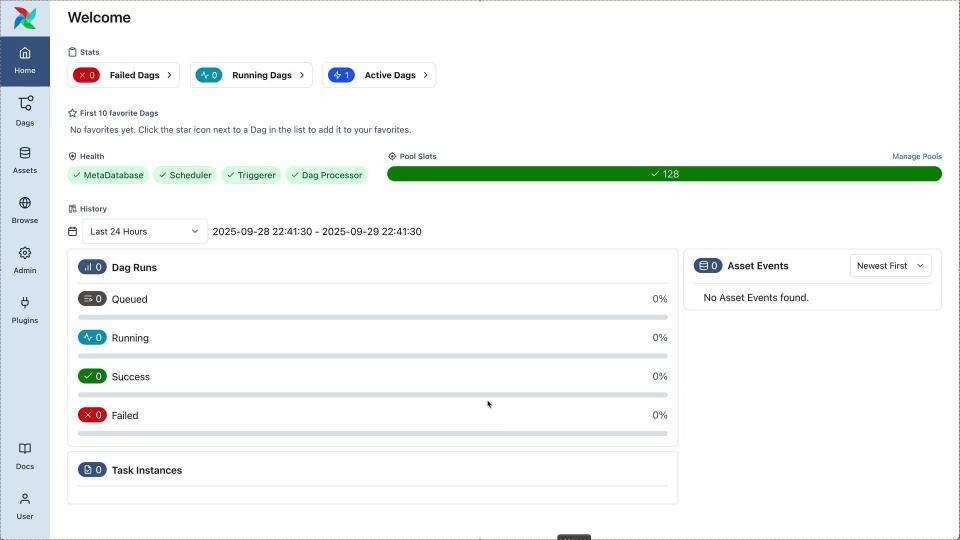
Synchronous Execution: $Run \rightarrow Predict \rightarrow Respond$, all in one flow

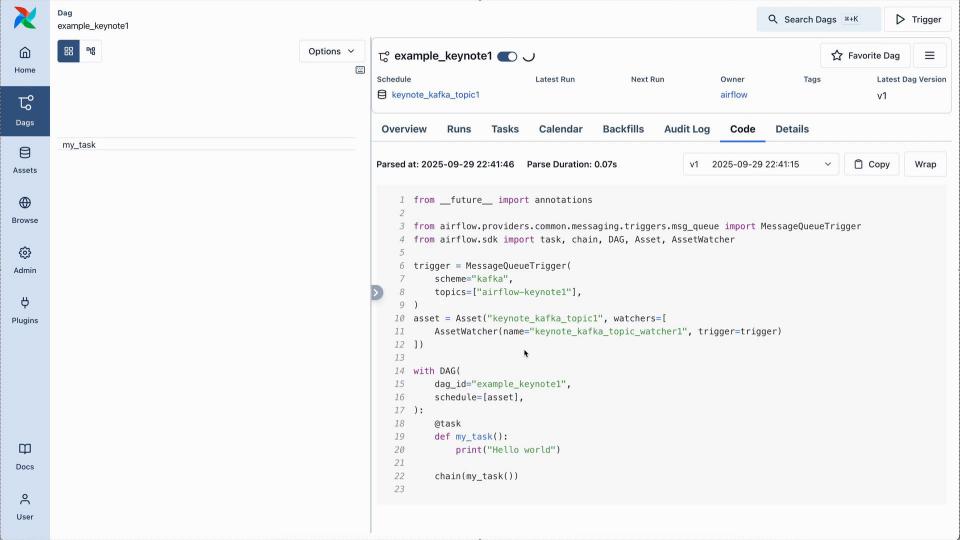
API Response Example

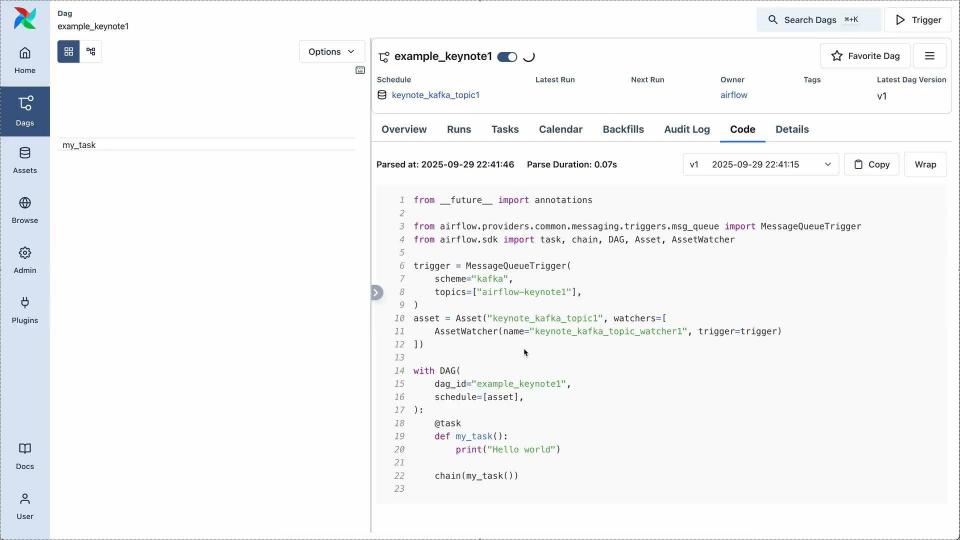
```
{
   "state": "success",
   "results": {
        "prediction": "Customer likely to churn"
   }
}
```

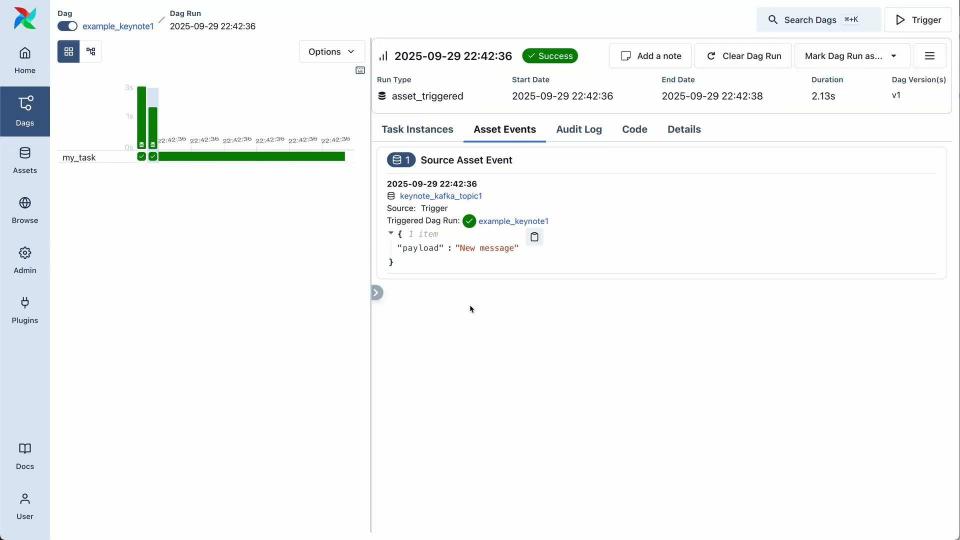


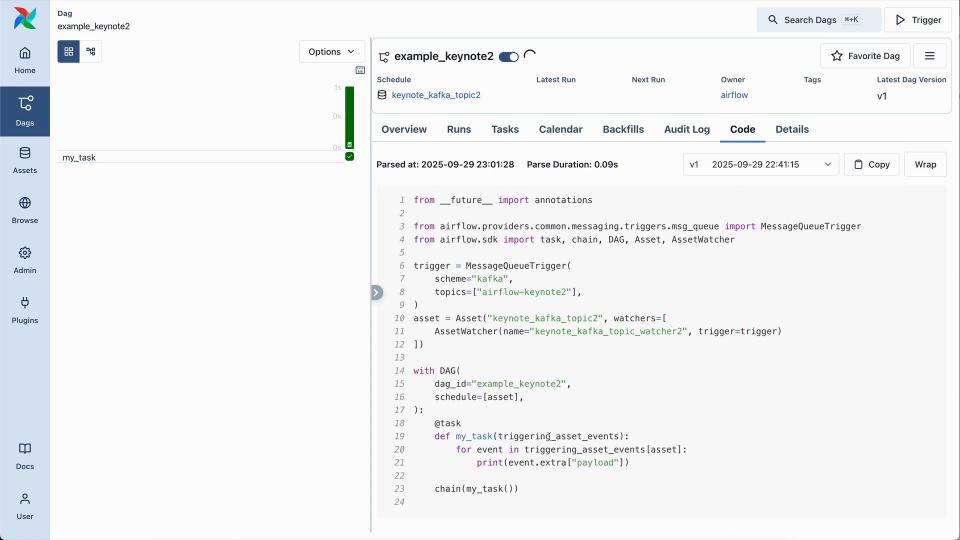
Event-Driven Scheduling Demo

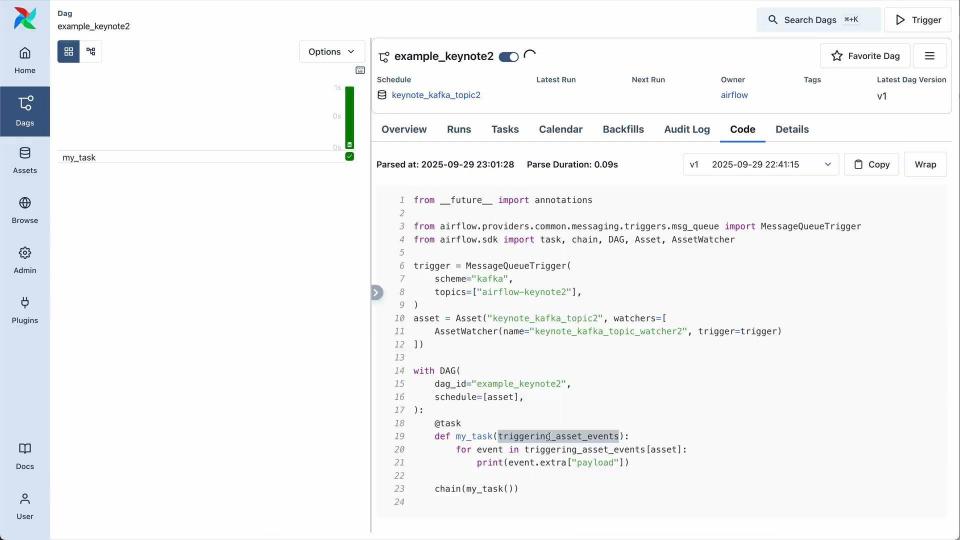


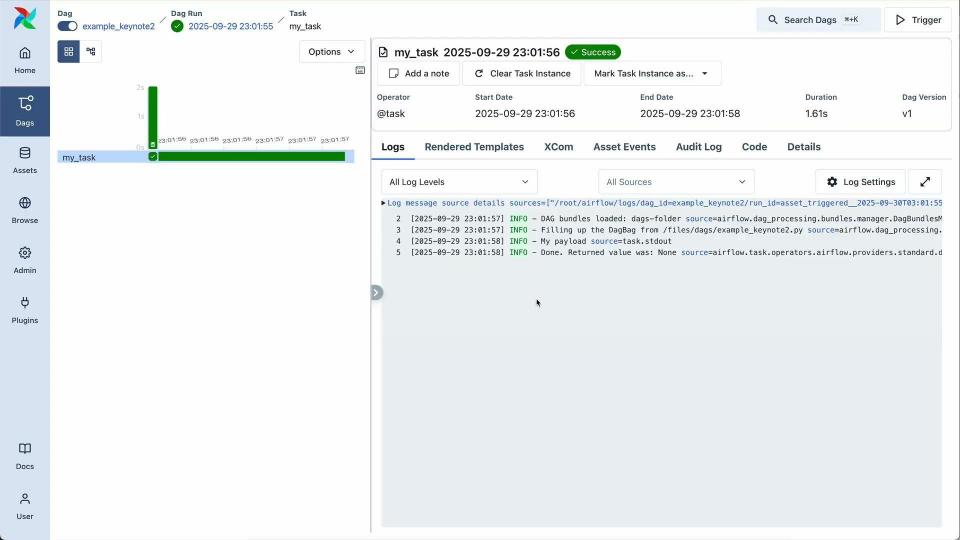


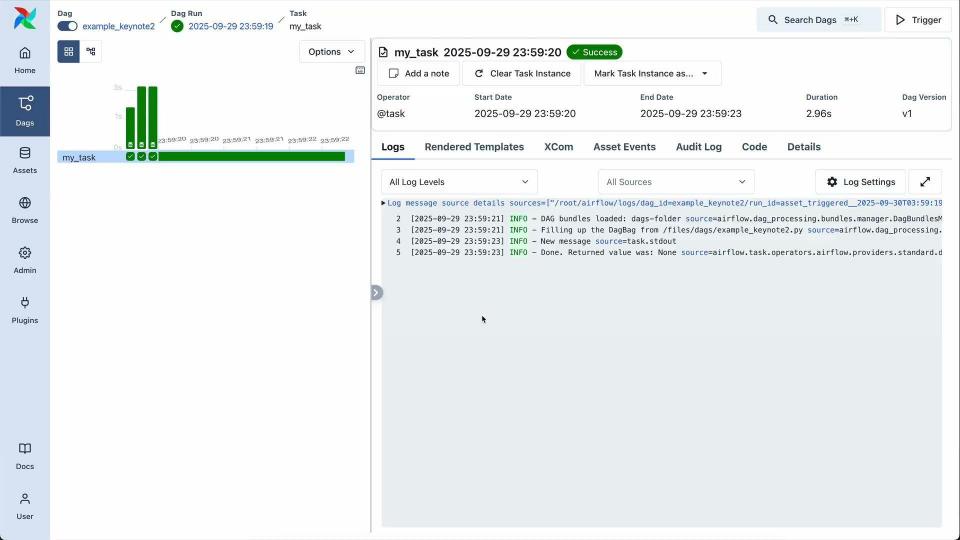


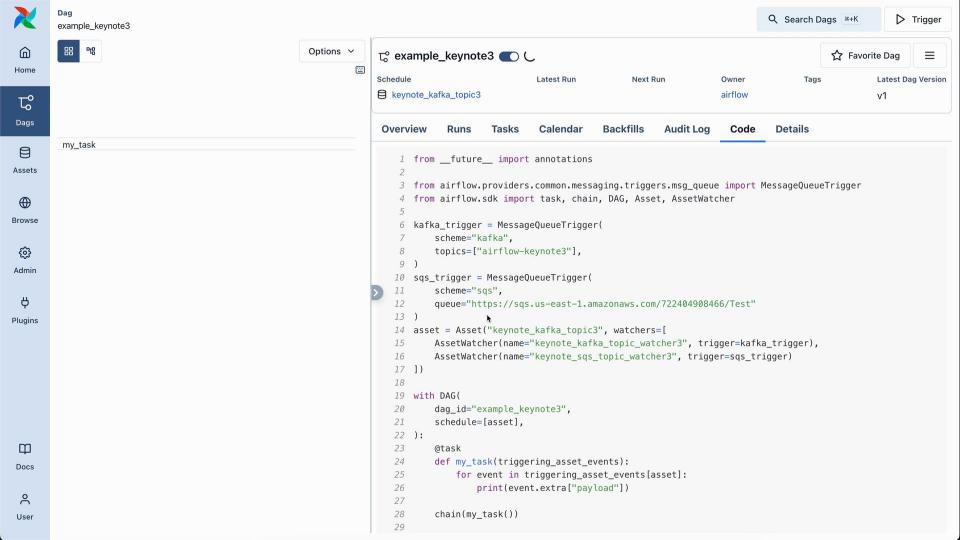


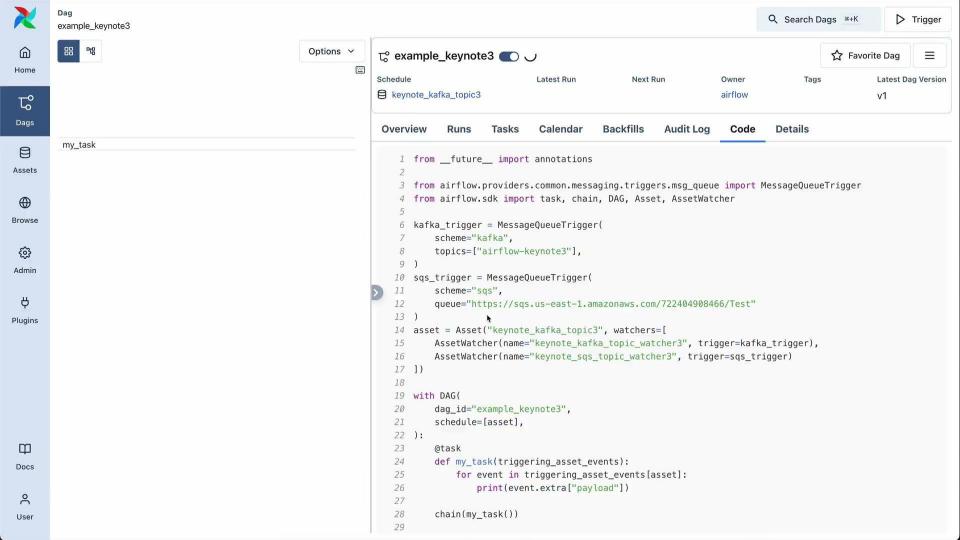












What's Next: Expanding the Asset Model



- Partitions & Watermarks → Define evolving assets by da, hour or key; track freshness and history
- Targeted Updates→ Refresh only what's new or stale, instead of reprocessing everything
- Asset Validations → Validation and status surfaced directly in the UI
- At-a-Glance Visibility → Validation and status surfaced directly in the UI
- End-to-End Event Tracking → Trace events from message queue → asset → downstream dags



Run Tasks in any Language

Ash Berlin Taylor

Member of Apache Airflow PMC; and Director, Airflow Engineering Astronomer



Tasks in any language: Goal





Enable integrations with applications

- Pull / push data from/to existing apps
- Expand Airflow's role as "integration platform"
- Enable non-python teams to leverage Airflow



First Language: Golang, Java to follow

- Stepping stone for compiled language support



Non-goal at this time:

- Writing entire workflows i.e. Dags in other languages

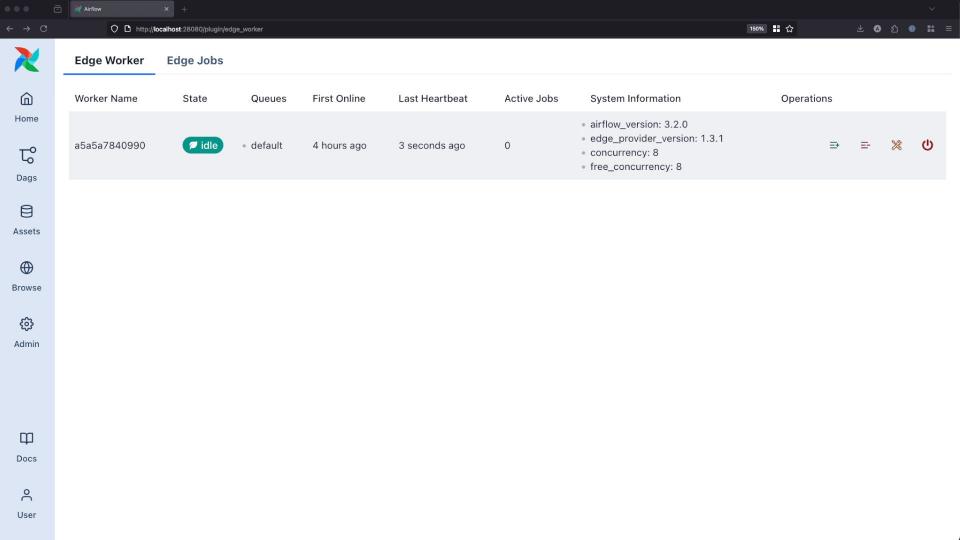
Introducing Go SDK: 1.0.0-beta1

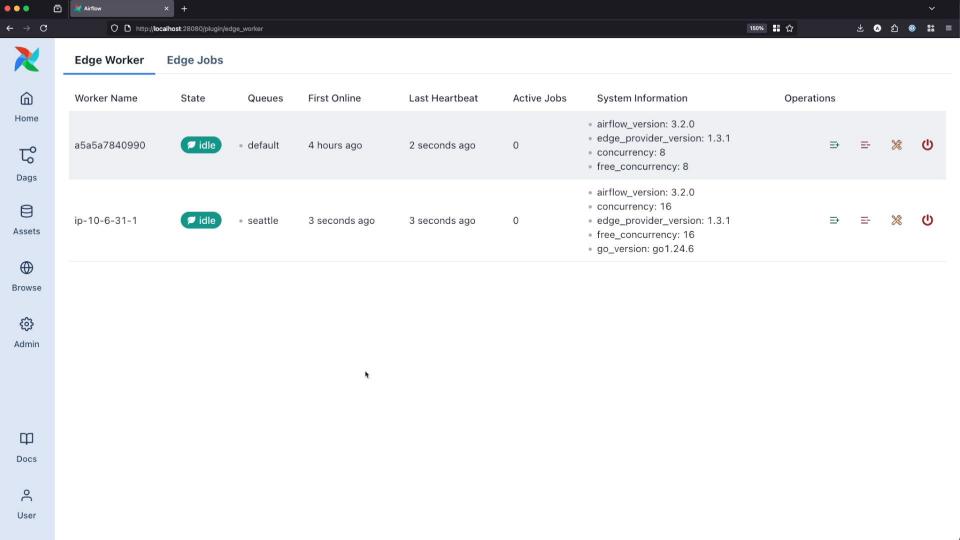


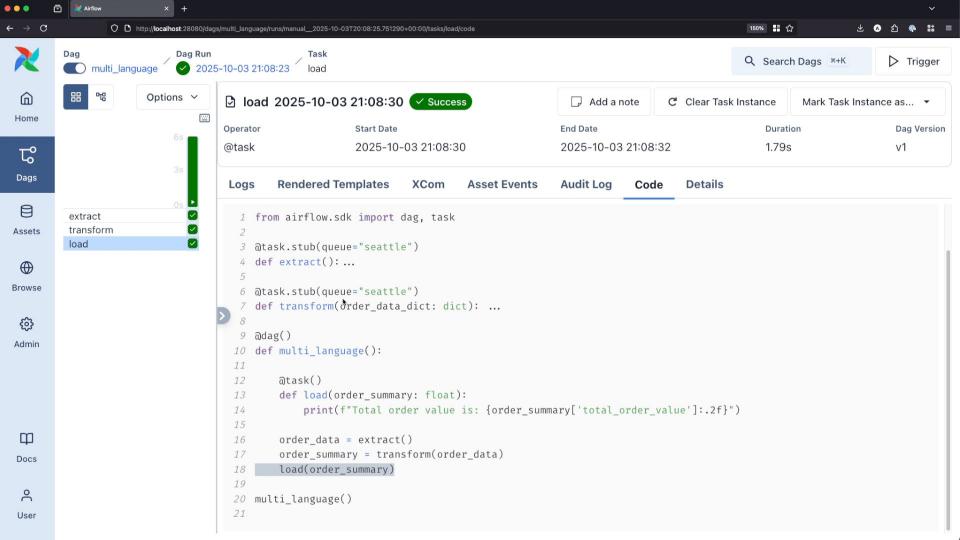
- Airflow Tasks in Go
- Full power of Airflow
 - Connections, Variables, XCom and more
- Feels like natural part of Go ecosystem

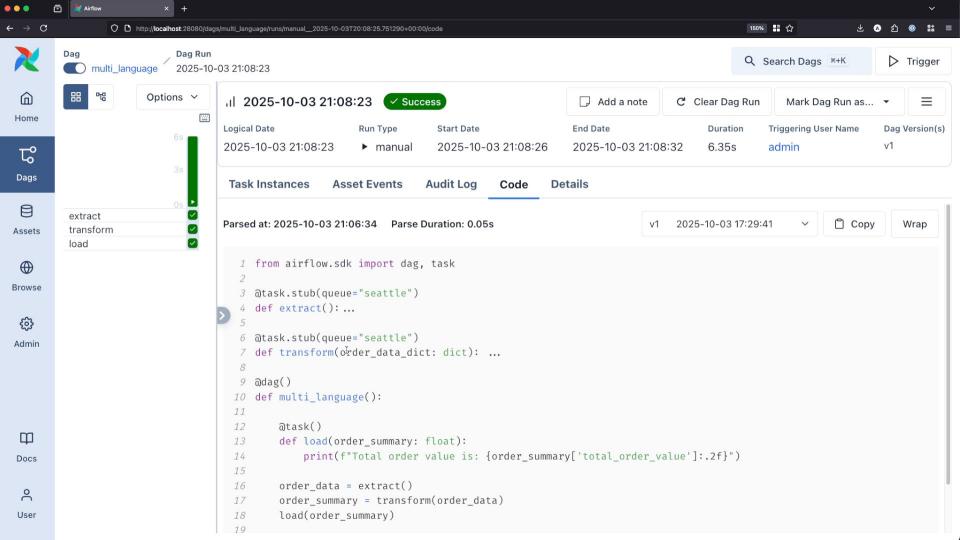


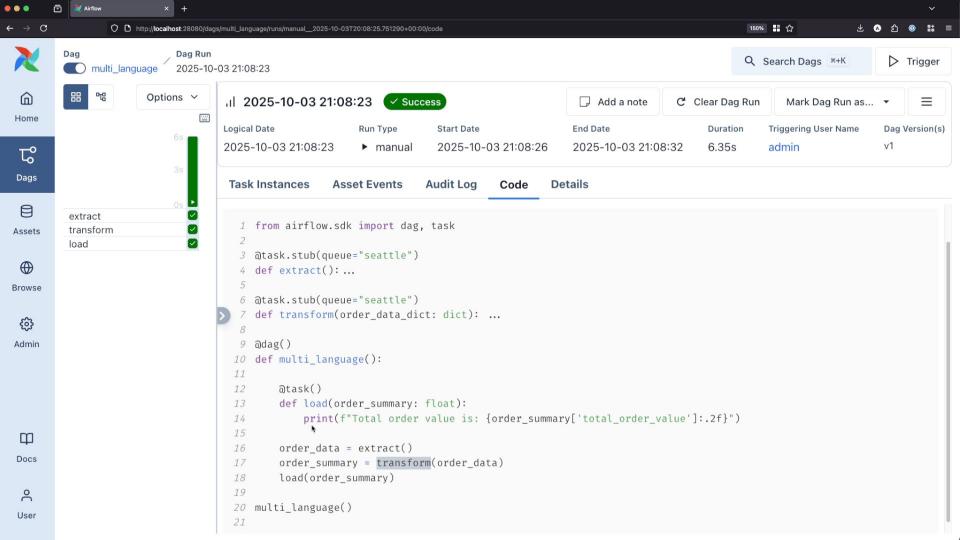
Polyglot Dag Demo

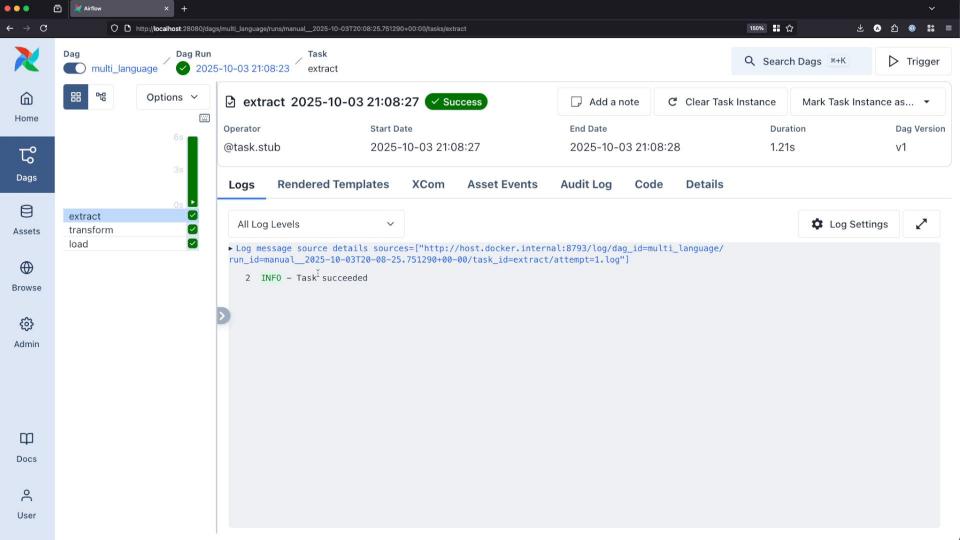


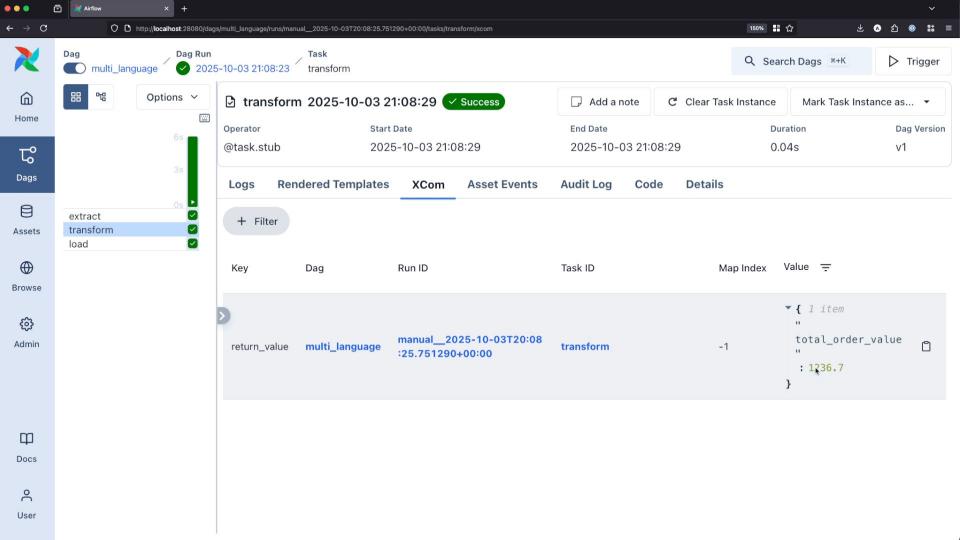












Compiled tasks: are stubbed



Operator "stub" definition in calling Dag

Still need a python file

```
from airflow.sdk import task, DAG
@task.stub
def extract(output: str, tables: list[str]):
with DAG("keynote"):
  extract("loc1", get_tables())
```

Compiled tasks: are registered



Real operator code in Golang in separate file

Compiled into Go binary

```
func (m *myBundle) RegisterDags(dagbag v1.Registry) error {
    dag := dagbag.AddDag("keynote dag")
    dag.AddTask(extract)
    return nil
func task1(ctx context Context, client sdk Client) (any, error) {
    conn, err := client.GetConnection(ctx, "test_http")
    if err != nil
        return err
    return map[string]any{
        "go_version": runtime Version(),
       "host": conn.Host,
    }, nil
```



Which language we should build next?

Come to the next session in this room



Closing Remarks

Vikram Koka

Chief Strategy Officer
Astronomer



Airflow 3 is already being widely used



Hundreds of Enterprise deployments running Airflow 3

Summit sessions include: Uber, Qualcomm, and DataDog

Most have taken: Upgrade, then expand approach

Airflow 3: Foundation for more contributions





Rewritten React-based UI:

- UI plugins (Airflow as a platform)
- Translations, expanded contributors



Data Assets:

- Watchers / Common Msg Interface: Event Driven Scheduling



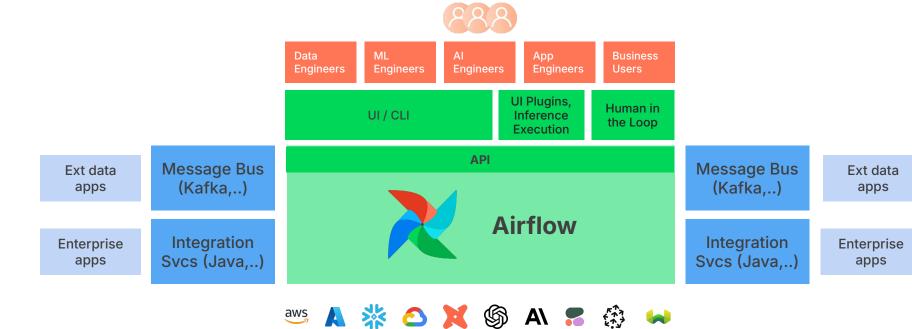
Task SDK in additional languages

Around 3,500 contributors now

Airflow ecosystem

Expanded with Airflow 3





Upgrading to Airflow 3





Min Versions:

- Airflow 2.7 and Python 3.10
- Database cleanup: Can save a lot of time!



Pre-upgrade: use the checks

- Dag Code: ruff check dags/ --select AIR3
- For Airflow config, use airflow config update from Airflow 2.11



Upgrade:

- Database upgrade
- Startup scripts: web server to api server

Note: Upgrade guide at <u>Upgrading to Airflow 3</u>

TODO: Airflow 3 - Expert opinions





Best practices:

- Use Assets and Tasks together for best results. Use Assets as interface between Airflows, rather than using "Trigger Dag".
- Use common.abc interfaces whenever possible



Anti-patterns:

- Storing credentials in Airflow db, use Secrets back-end instead
- Using the Airflow metadatabase for large data sharing between
 Tasks. XComs are for passing small data, ideally references

Dive Deeper into Airflow 3!



Tues Oct 7 · 11:30AM

Security made us do it: Airflow's new Task Execution
Architecture

Columbia A

Tues Oct 7 · 4:15PM

EdgeExecutor / Edge Worker - The new option to run anywhere

Columbia C

Tues Oct 7 · 12:15PM

Airflow That Remembers: The Dag Versioning Era is here!

Columbia A

Wed Oct 8 • 12:30PM

Airflow 3 UI is not enough? Add a Plugin!

Columbia A

Tues Oct 7 · 2:00PM

Unlocking Event-Driven
Scheduling in Airflow 3: A New
Era of Reactive Data Pipelines

Columbia A

Weds Oct 8 · 3:45PM

Assets: Past, Present, Future

Columbia A

Dive Deeper into Airflow 3!



Wed Oct 8 · 10:30AM

Get started with Airflow 3.0

Workshop

Room 301

Wed Oct 8 · 12:30PM
Airflow 3 UI is not enough?
Add a Plugin!

Columbia A

Weds Oct 8 · 3:45PM
Assets: Past, Present, Future

Columbia A

The 2025 Apache Airflow® Survey is here!



Fill it out for a free Airflow 3
Fundamentals or Dag Authoring in Airflow 3 certification code



Congratulations



New members of Project Management Committee





New committer

Suan Ming



Questions?

