

Joel Hanson

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Open to relocate

SUMMARY

Software engineer with 8+ years building scalable backends, event-driven platforms, and AI-powered products across startups and enterprise. Deep experience with Apache Kafka, Kubernetes, and Python/Java/Go services—from IBM Event Streams connectors and operators to ML evaluation pipelines and full-stack product delivery. Known for owning systems end-to-end, mentoring engineers, and shipping measurable reliability and performance gains.

EXPERIENCE

- **IBM** Kochi, India
Software Engineer August 2021 - Present
 - **Event Streaming Platform:** Contribute to IBM Event Streams (Apache Kafka on Kubernetes/OpenShift): operators, schema registry, connectors, and observability. Led Keycloak-based auth enabling SSO across IBM products—adopted by 100% of new deployments.
 - **Kafka Connectors & Reliability:** Maintainer on IBM MQ Kafka source/sink connectors; shipped exactly-once delivery for financial workloads. Built unified App Connect Kafka connector used by customers including HSBC and JLR; optimized MQ source polling (3× lower idle CPU).
 - **Schema Registry Migration:** Led Apicurio Registry V2→V3 migration across 5+ repos with hybrid auth for gradual rollout; zero data loss and no service interruption for customer environments.
 - **Tooling, CI/CD & Leadership:** Added SCRAM-SHA-512 auth to the Go Event Streams CLI; built nightly Jenkins pipelines for full-stack E2E testing. Mentored 5+ engineers; 1st place internal hackathon (RAG with Kafka + Flink), later adopted for internal LLM chatbots.
- **Impress.ai** Singapore
AI Engineer / Software Engineer September 2018 - August 2021
 - **AI Essay Evaluation Platform:** Designed and built ML essay scoring for Ngee Ann Polytechnic (BERT / Naive Bayes), cutting manual assessment from 470+ hours to under 2 hours. Event-driven GPU pipeline on AWS (S3, SQS, EC2 Spot) reduced compute cost by over 70%.
 - **Backend Platform & Tooling:** Built Python services (Django, DRF, Celery, Redis) for enterprise clients including BCG and DBS. Shipped chatbot config export/import that cut environment migration from weeks to days.
 - **Quality & Observability:** Drove unit, integration, and E2E coverage across a legacy Django codebase; centralised logs/metrics in Elasticsearch and Kibana. Promoted to AI Engineer (2021).
- **Travidux Technologies** Thrissur, India
Software Engineer October 2017 - September 2018
 - **Full-Stack Product & Ops:** Built KTDC travel booking platform (Django, JWT, CCAvenue payments) and CRM/HCM dashboards (Angular). Cut analytics latency from 60+s to under 5s via SQL tuning; automated GitLab CI/CD and HTTPS rollouts.

EDUCATION

- **Calicut University (Sahrdaya College of Engineering)** Calicut, India
Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) in Computer Science and Engineering June 2013 – June 2017

PROJECTS

- **kafka-mcp-server / ContextLayer:** Open-source MCP tools so AI assistants can manage Kafka and expose REST APIs as MCP servers (GitHub).
- **SSE → Kafka Connector:** Adopted in Event Streams demo materials; bridges Server-Sent Events into Kafka topics.
- **Vector Sync RAG Chatbot:** ACL-aware RAG over Box docs (Pinecone, Redis, FastAPI); Eureka Incite Gold Badge.

SKILLS

- **Languages:** Python, Java, Go, JavaScript, TypeScript, SQL, Bash
- **Distributed Systems:** Apache Kafka, Kafka Connect, Kubernetes operators, event-driven architectures, Apache Flink
- **Backend & Data:** Django, DRF, Celery, Redis, PostgreSQL, Elasticsearch, REST APIs, Apicurio Registry
- **Cloud & DevOps:** AWS (EC2, S3, SQS, EKS), Docker, OpenShift, Jenkins, GitLab CI, CircleCI, Keycloak
- **Frontend:** React, Angular, Next.js