Socrata and CKAN: a comparison of key features

Feature	Socrata	CKAN
Focus	Socrata focuses on publishing and managing data and the development of data catalogues, all within the overall Socrata data platform, which is a closed and proprietary system.	CKAN is powerful and sophisticated open source software widely adopted by governments, including in the US, to power open data portals, internal data management catalogues and metadata catalogues.
Vendor lock-in	Proprietary software that prevents users from accessing, modifying, or distributing the underlying source code. This leads to vendor lock-in and makes it challenging to customise or switch to alternative solutions.	CKAN is free to use, modify and distribute. There is no vendor lock-in, making it accessible and cost effective. Users keep complete control of their data and metadata.
Customisable	It can be difficult and expensive to modify Socrata software to suit the client's needs or integrate applications seamlessly with their existing systems.	CKAN is highly customisable through a variety of open source extensions that vastly increase its basic functionality and integrate seamless with a user's existing data and digital operations.
Support and maintenance	Users are completely dependent on Socrata to meet all their support and maintenance needs.	In addition to any support provided by third-party vendors, users draw on global community of users and contributors. This community also helps to create a rich ecosystem of customisation extensions.
Usage	Socrata is used by large-scale companies and government bodies, mainly in the United States.	Used in some of the many governments, including United States open data portal, the state of Illinois open data portal, Oklahoma's Open Data and the city of Boston.
Data publishing and management	Users can access and update their data and metadata within the framework created by Socrata software's dataset.	Integration with any data format or data source is possible, it seamlessly fits into existing data publishing and management workflows and integrate with existing as well as legacy systems.
Data platform	Socrata is designed to help users share and analyse data within its data management platform.	Used to power data management involving public facing and internal data platforms for governments at all levels around the world.
API access	Has built-in SODA (Socrata) API allowing users to access and interact with data stored in Socrata's system of datasets. Developers can use API to build applications, dashboards and other tools.	CKAN's API provides great functionality in terms of build applications, and developing portals, and tools to integrate with CKAN-powered data repositories, including complex integrations between systems.
Data Visualisation	Socrata offers data visualisation capabilities that enable users to create interactive charts, maps, graphs, and dashboards to explore and communicate insights from their data.	Comes with a range of extensions for data visualisation designed to integrate seamlessly with user's existing data tooling and present as part of an attractive, customised front-end experience.
Integration with other services	Socrata provides a RESTful API that enables developers to interact with all the data hosted on the Socrata platform.	API enables users to access datasets and other services stored on CKAN data portals and catalogues. Includes a RESTful API allows developers to interact with all aspects of its open data platform
Metadata cataloguing	The Socrata metadata API is a standardised way for authenticated users to retrieve and modify asset-level metadata on all Socrata assets.	CKAN comes with advanced metadata and cataloguing features to organise and structure internal data, supporting better data governance and discovery.
Data control	Has data control features to enable users to effectively manage data access, security, and privacy.	Delivers enhanced security, including the ability to limit access to datasets by setting group and individual permissions and introducing data validation and audit trails that enable users to track change.
Security	Socrata provides a suite of security measures. Its proprietary nature means that all security updates and maintenance are handled by the vendor.	Can be made highly secure through proper configuration and adherence to best practice security protocols/access controls. Security is user hosted but driven by the CKAN community and developer expertise.