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The Self-Hosted Alternative to Google Notebook LM Is Here.

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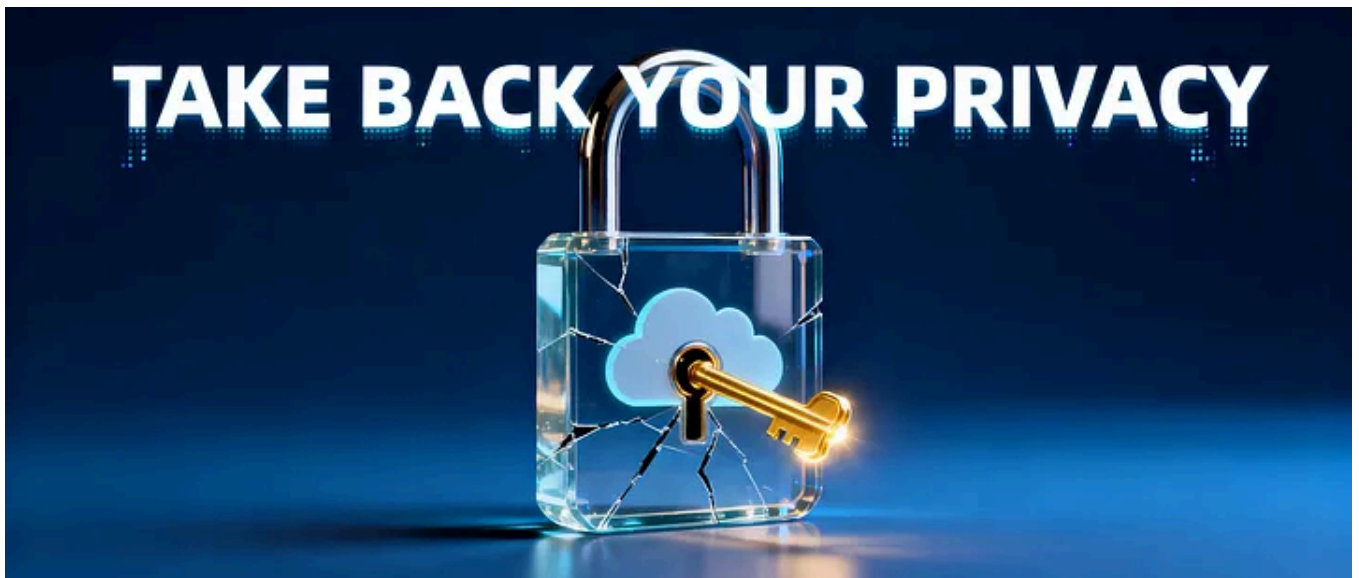
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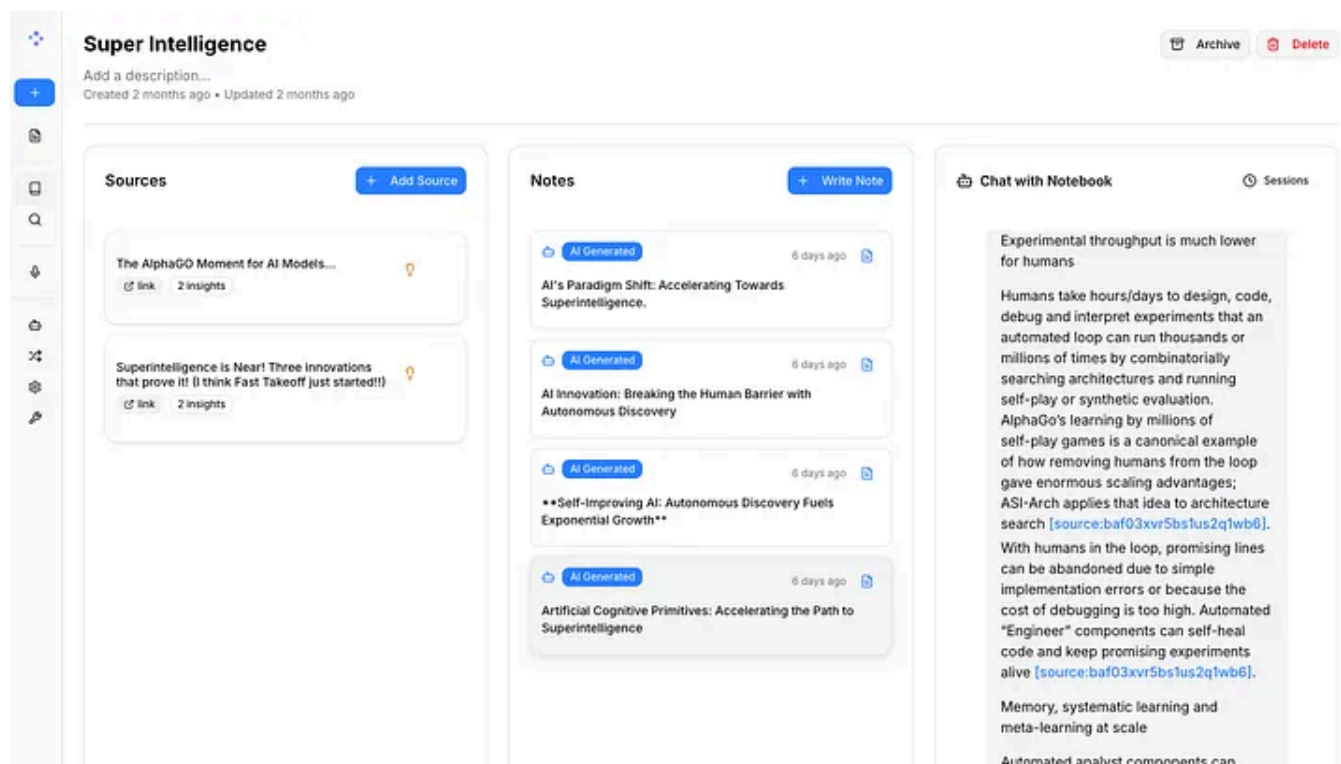👤 Bytefer   (Follow)

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As artificial intelligence has become fundamental infrastructure, must we entrust our most valuable thinking and research data entirely to a single cloud service provider? When a useful tool, such as Google Notebook LM, locks us into its ecosystem, do we truly have alternatives?

The developer, Luis Novo, answers with a resounding **no.** He firmly believes that the capacity to acquire new knowledge and engage in critical thinking should neither be a privilege reserved for a few nor be restricted by any single vendor.

Guided by this conviction, he developed **Open Notebook** — a private, multi-model, fully local, and fully functional open-source alternative to Notebook LM.

Breaking Free from the "Data Tax" and Model Lock-In

Many developers experience a sense of unease when using cloud-based AI services. Is my sensitive research data truly secure? If I want to switch to a more affordable or more powerful model, is that even possible? Can I integrate it into my own workflows via API if needed?

When it comes to Google Notebook LM, the answers to these questions are mostly negative. Open Notebook's design philosophy, however, directly addresses these pain points:

Open Notebook vs Google Notebook LM

In short, Open Notebook puts you back in control. You can deploy it anywhere to ensure complete privacy for your research materials, freely choose the most cost-effective AI models — even running them locally via Ollama at zero cost — and seamlessly integrate it anywhere you want through its API.

Quick Start

Open Notebook offers an incredibly simple Docker deployment — you can have your own private knowledge base running in just two minutes.

Navigate to a new `open-notebook` directory and execute the following command:

```
# Create a new directory for your Open Notebook installation
mkdir open-notebook
cd open-notebook

# Using Docker - Get started in 2 minutes
docker run -d \
  --name open-notebook \
```

```
    -p 8502:8502 -p 5055:5055 \
    -v ./notebook_data:/app/data \
    -v ./surreal_data:/mydata \
    -e OPENAI_API_KEY=your_key \
    lfnovo/open_notebook:v1-latest-single
```

After executing the command, two new folders will be created locally to store your notes and database files respectively. Your data will be persistently saved here, remaining entirely under your control.

Now, open your browser and navigate to:

- Main Interface: `http://localhost:8502`

- API Access: `http://localhost:5055`

- API Documentation: `http://localhost:5055/docs`

A fully functional private AI knowledge base is now ready for you.

More Than Notes — A Powerful Research Tool

Open Notebook's capabilities extend far beyond basic functionality:

- **Multimodal Content Support:** It can process PDFs, videos, audio files, and webpages — just feed them in.

- **Intelligent Search:** Performs full-text and vector search across all your content.

- **Context-Aware Chat:** Enables AI-powered conversations based on your research materials.

- **Professional Podcast Generation:** Features advanced multi-speaker podcast creation with full control over scripts and host configurations.

- **Powerful Content Transformation:** Customizable automated actions for summarization and insight extraction.

Summary

Open Notebook is a rapidly evolving open-source project with a clear and exciting roadmap. Amid the current wave of AI advancements, it offers a valuable alternative: a truly developer-owned tool for thinking and research that provides complete control and limitless extensibility.

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Robert Klugseder
1 day ago (edited)

Works perfectly. I defined also a Claude Code Skill. Now CC can use the notebooks directly via API. Super knowledge base for CC.

👏 6   💬 1 reply   Reply

Ernest Tan
1 day ago

cool! i just installed it yesterday, it works great

👏 2   💬 1 reply   Reply

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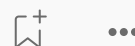
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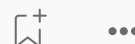
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