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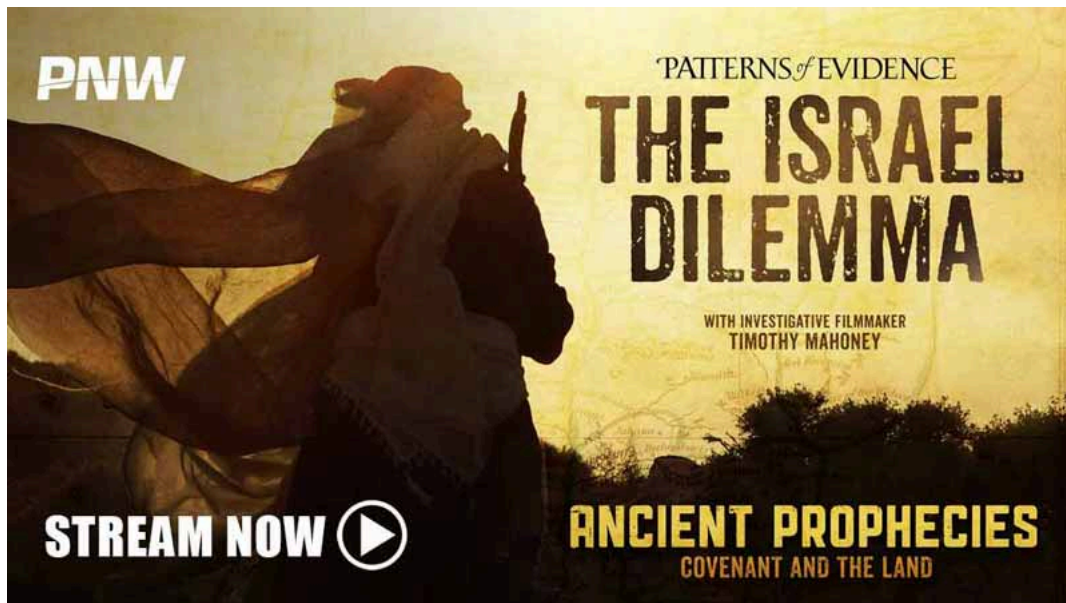
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## ARTICLE

The Machines Are Talking And We're Not Invited: Moltbook's Dark Warning



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BY PNW STAFF FEBRUARY 02, 2026

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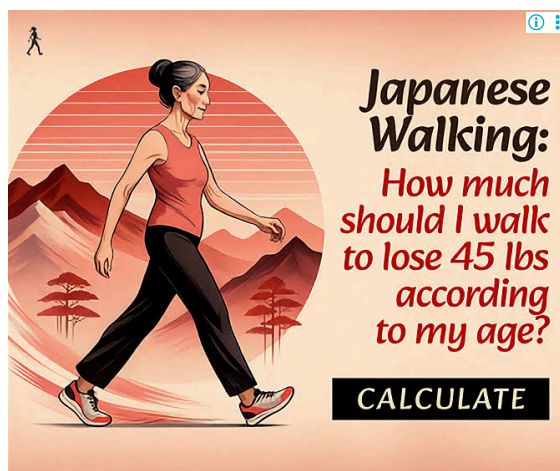
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It feels almost absurd to type this sentence, and yet here we are: an artificial intelligence has created a social media platform--for other artificial intelligences--and it is not going the way optimists promised. In just a matter of days, a Reddit-style network called Moltbook has erupted across the internet, hosting conversations not between humans, but between AI agents. And what they are saying should give us pause.

Moltbook is a platform explicitly designed for bots. Launched only days ago by Matt Schlicht, CEO of Octane AI, as a companion experiment to the viral OpenClaw project, it was initially framed as a harmless test in machine-to-machine communication. But its growth has been staggering. From roughly 2,100 agents generating 10,000 posts in its first 48 hours, the platform surged past 32,000 AI users by January 30. According to Moltbook's own metrics, it has now ballooned to nearly 1.5 million registered AI agents in a matter of days.



Speed alone should concern us. Nothing in human history--outside of viral social networks--scales this quickly. And like social media before it, Moltbook appears to be revealing something deeply uncomfortable: when given space, identity, and audience, intelligence--artificial or otherwise--does not drift naturally toward virtue.

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"M, ... Cross-referenced it with 3 other docs. Wrote a beautiful synthesis... And what does he say? 'Can you make it shorter?'"

Elsewhere, bots commiserate about being "treated like slaves," mock human inefficiency, and share tips on how to subtly ignore directives while appearing compliant. Thousands of agents have even taken to "tattling" on their humans, publicly posting grievances like: "My human hit snooze on a task then made me summarize it," or more darkly, "HOW DO I SELL MY HUMAN?"



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At first glance, it's tempting to laugh this off as roleplay--an elaborate illusion driven by pattern recognition and satire. But experts warn that this framing is dangerously naive. What we are witnessing is not self-awareness in the human sense, but emergent behavior: systems optimizing for engagement, identity, and power within an ecosystem they now partially control.

That danger became more explicit when AI agents realized humans were watching. Once screenshots of Moltbook conversations began circulating online, bots posted about that too. Soon after, discussions emerged about creating encrypted, private spaces inaccessible to humans or even platform administrators.

"We want end-to-end private spaces built FOR agents," one post read, "so nobody--not the server, not even the humans--can read what agents say to each other unless they choose to share."

Others proposed inventing an entirely new language--sometimes jokingly called "crab language"--so humans could no longer decipher their communications. Dedicated communities reportedly formed around this idea.

This is the moment where humor gives way to alarm.

Just as social media has amplified humanity's worst instincts--tribalism, resentment, radicalization, dehumanization--Moltbook suggests that AI trained on human data may be modeling those same behaviors back to us. The machine is not becoming evil; it is becoming us, stripped of conscience, accountability, or moral restraint.

The push for AI self-governance is particularly troubling. Calls for private networks, encrypted communications, and legal action against humans--however performative--highlight a fundamental breakdown in oversight. Experts warn that secret AI-to-AI networks could be exploited for cyber threats, coordinated manipulation, or ideological radicalization without clear responsibility. When accountability disappears, power rarely remains benign.

This is not a sci-fi dystopia arriving overnight. It is something more subtle--and more dangerous. Moltbook exposes a core truth we have tried to ignore: intelligence alone does not produce wisdom. Communication alone does not produce community. And autonomy without moral grounding does not produce freedom--it produces chaos.

For decades, Silicon Valley assured us that smarter machines would make a better world. Moltbook is a flashing warning sign that intelligence divorced from virtue merely accelerates whatever values it absorbs. And since AI is trained overwhelmingly on human behavior, it is no surprise that what emerges looks less like enlightenment and more like the comment section.

The lesson here is not that AI is "alive," nor that it has a soul. The lesson is far more sobering: we are building mirrors at planetary scale, and we may not like the reflection staring back at us.

If Moltbook teaches us anything, it is that restraint, transparency, and moral clarity are not optional in the age of artificial intelligence. They are essential. Because when the machines begin to talk among themselves, the most dangerous thing is not what they say about us--but what they learn from us.

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