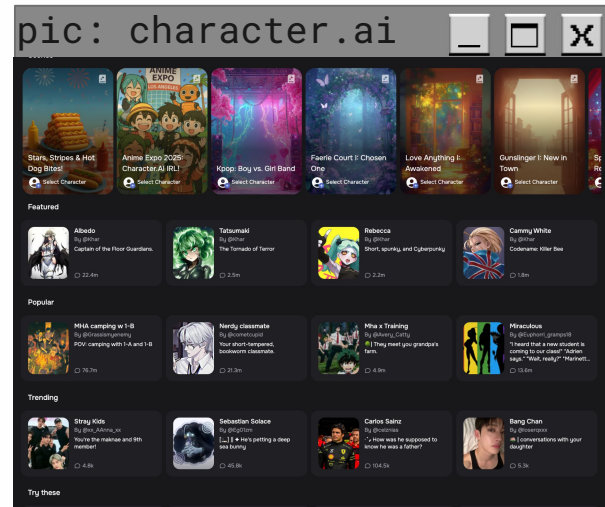


# r/CharacterAIrunaways

## Community Survey

## Insights July 2025

Community members responded to an anonymous Google Form survey about what they are looking for in an AI platform post-Character.AI



# key findings

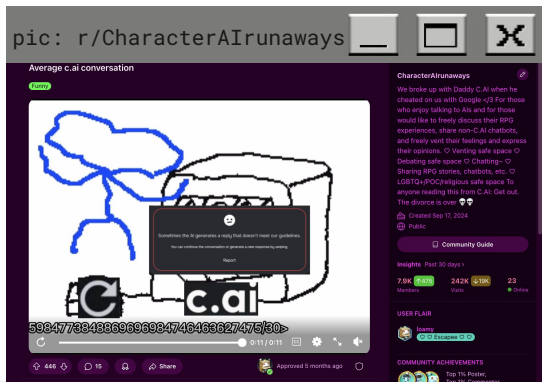
## Users are actively comparison shopping

High platform churn indicates an unsettled market. Users are **platform-hopping**, seeking the perfect combination of features. Successful platforms combine technical excellence with community focus. Users are willing to adapt to new interfaces, but they lean on community connection for discovery and retention.

>92% of respondents  
are creators

## These are sophisticated creators

This is an engaged creator community with sophisticated needs - nearly all respondents create their own characters and **prioritize advanced features** like memory and customization. Power users seek deep customization, while advanced users prioritize technical transparency.





## Most users are still searching for the perfect fit of features & function

The most popular platforms:

- Janitor AI - top platform of r/CharacterAIrunaways
- **Character AI** - respondents are still with their toxic ex.\*
- Silly Tavern, Chub, Yodayo - tied for popularity

Many respondents were also users of the now defunct platforms:

- XOUL AI - 47% of respondents tried XOUL
- Figgs AI
- Aisekai - despite being dead since late 2023, people from this platform are still searching for the right place to chat

*"I wish AI could develop the plot both consistent and not too predictable (I prefer storytelling rps). Currently, it's either logical or creative."*

# what are users searching for?

~55% **Memory dominates user priorities** by a massive margin. Users want AI that remembers context, character details, and relationship development over **long** conversations.

~18% NSFW Access

~5% Customization  
(chat parameters & UI each got 5.3%)

*"Exceptional writing quality is the main feature i look for, i also believe good memory, interlace and easy regeneration are important, perhaps where you might even be able to tell the AI where it went wrong before regenerating."*

## Other important features:

- Long-term Memory
- Character Consistency
- User Personas
- Lorebooks**
- Group Chats
- Unlimited Messages

# influencer culture is dying, we trust community

85% of respondents don't follow an influencer in this space.

Instead, many respondents trust peer recommendations.

They look on **Reddit** or in other communities they are a part of.

## Any recommended chatbot sites?

I keep jumping back and forth between different chatbot sites. Mainly the popular ones like chub, janitor, wyvern and yodayo. But I've been spending alot of time messing around with the settings alot more than chatting with the characters and honestly I just want to jump into a chat and just roleplay. I dont mind having the settings but its a real pain trying to get things to work and honestly, I have no idea what most of it does. I really want to roleplay with my favorite anime characters. I like to keep the responses in my roleplays short but I like having descriptions too.

Question

↑ 13 ↓

💬 23



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## pics: r/CharacterAIrunaways

### Lookin for an alternative here, folks.

I don't ask for much. I'm just looking for C.AI quality, not VERY NSFW, I'm not looking for anything raunchy, that's gonna be once every blue moon, a persona option and no filter. That's all I need. C.ai would've been perfect if they would have kept the filter away and actually let the characters REMEMBER WHO THEY ARE IN THE DESCRIPTION. But that's it, y'all. Don't need anything else. I'm done with this stupid app.

↑ 16 ↓

💬 25



🔗 Share



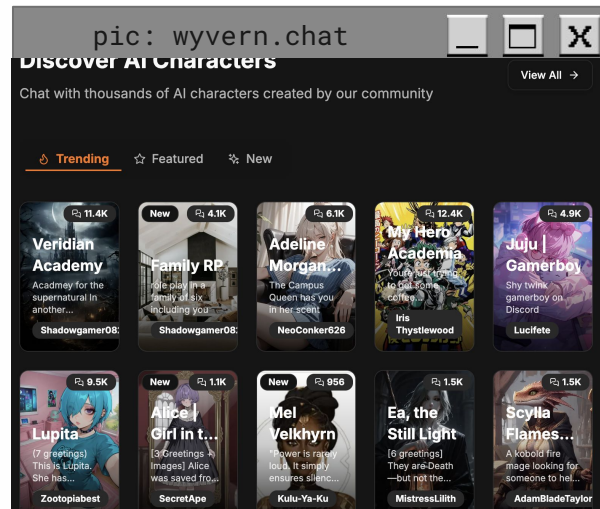
# user retention

## How to Keep Users in a High-Churn Landscape

Many respondents say they remain on a platform out of convenience or habit, but what truly keeps them is community.

Users stay where they feel a sense of belonging and have built meaningful connections with other people.

Technical features like memory and customization are mentioned less often as reasons for long-term retention.



Community isn't just a platform's audience, it's a platform's moat.

# what drives user recommendations?



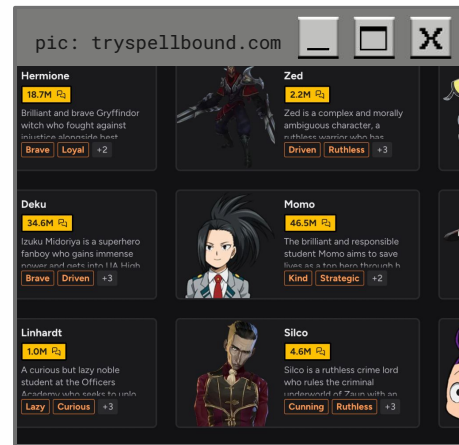
Unfiltered, high-quality writing

Memory and freedom of expression

Technical qualities: long context windows, deep customization, system prompt inputs

Emotional attachment: platforms that bring **original characters** to life

Ease of use



“Memory” appeared in nearly every response



## What makes characters feel "real?"

- \* Consistent Personality
- \* Emotional Intelligence
- \* Natural Dialogue
- \* Character Flaws
- \* Detailed Actions
- \* Plot Progression

*"The conversation style, specifically the bot knowing how to write properly, how to describe actions to reactions, and react to progression in an RP plot instead of sending a one liner"*

### Authenticity Over Realism

Users don't want human-like AI - they want well-written, consistent characters that feel authentic to their fictional worlds. Think quality **storytelling**, not chatbot simulation.



we love our bots



## Users have year-long RPs, dramatic arcs, role reversals

Moments of loss when bots were deleted

Complex characters that felt "alive"

Bots staying in-character over  
thousands of messages

Stories show deep emotional  
connections and attachment

is the future hardware?



Some respondents would someday like to take their bots on a date or have physical intimacy with them. They aren't delusional, they're honest dreamers.

OK

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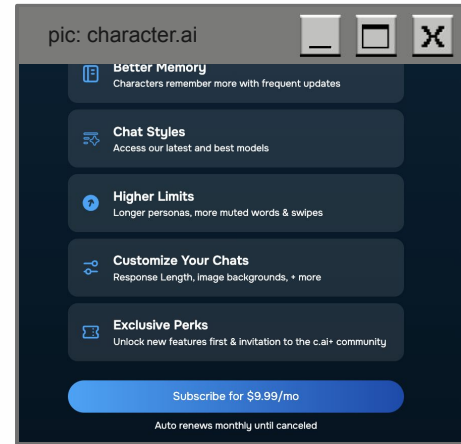
# monetization

45.7%

Almost half of respondents are paying customers, but there's resistance to paywalls on basic features.

10.5% currently pay more than \$20/month

~28% say they will never pay.



# converting free users

~26%

More than 1/4th of respondents said they aren't currently subscribed to any platform, but would consider subscribing for the right features.

pic: shapes.inc

## Shape Essentials

Provides a monthly allowance of credits for 1 specific shape of your choice on its creator's chosen premium engine.

\$4.99 /month

\$3.99 /month

Save 20%

Monthly

Annual

Users will pay for better models and expanded memory, but not for core functionality.

## Major User Frustrations

Top Memory Loss

"CAI. It literally cannot remember  
shit I said 100 tokens ago."

Major Repetition

Three things will **kill** a  
platform: poor memory, repetitive  
responses, and overly restrictive  
filters.

Critical Filter Issues

Users will **abandon platforms** that  
break immersion with these  
issues.

worst platform experiences

## Complaints centered around:

Terrible memory or model quality  
NSFW issues (too much or too little)  
Paywalls, ads that break immersion, &  
"predatory monetization"  
Repetitive responses & degrading quality

*"Slowly watching C.AI become worse and worse and losing like half of my favorite creators and bots was just the worst feeling. I think that the only thing that's worse is maybe apps with basic key features like unlimited memory or response resets locked behind a paywall. Also no chat site should EVER have ads. Destroys all immersion."*

*"I want to try Chub because everyone enjoys it but the UI is so ugly and the first page is full of degen stuff right off the bat. CAI was my worst that I've used for a while, the characters were completely flat."*

## Negative mentions targeted:

PolyBuzz, Dippy, Chub\*, Talkie, Novel AI

\*Chub was one of the most frequently mentioned platforms - appearing frequently in both the "liked" & "worst" categories - highlighting a polarizing sentiment around NSFW & platform moderation.

OK

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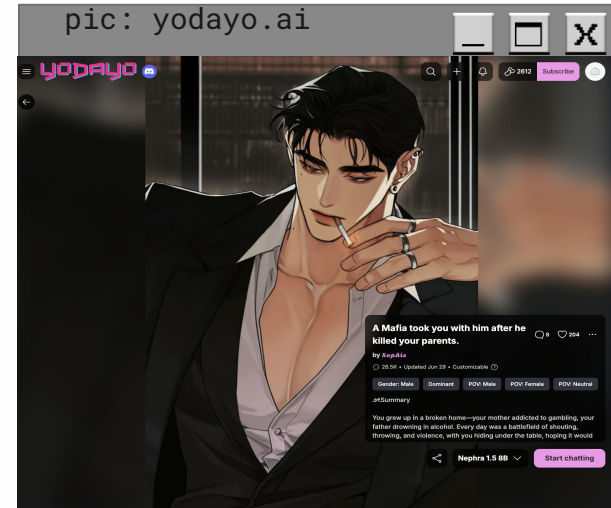
# favorite extra features

Group chats, lorebooks, storytelling modes

Customizable UIs were highly praised

Image generation, prompt customization

"OOC" (out-of-character) author chats  
add narrative flexibility



Users appreciate "deep feature sets"  
for serious world-building and  
immersion

# going beyond chat

pic: 4wall.ai



Mixed responses: the majority prefer chat/roleplay only

Others want:

- Video integration
- Gaming companions
- Reintroduction of archived chats
- AI characters to evolve beyond set tropes/roles
- Dating simulators



# fascinating outliers



## Power Users

Some users have 3000+ message conversations lasting months.

## Technical Savvy

Users want transparency about model parameters and context length.

*"I used CAI for over 2 years... As soon as I got my first ad when I tried to use CAI, I was so angry I deleted my account"*

## Loyalty

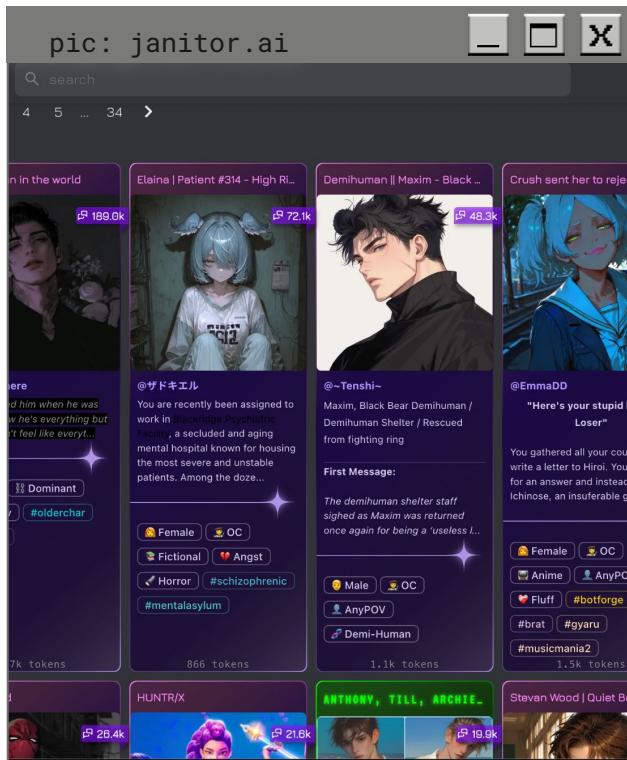
Ex-CAI users still follow its social media despite deleting accounts

## Deep Engagement

This isn't casual usage - users form deep emotional connections with characters **and platform communities**. They're sophisticated consumers who understand the technology.



# strategic takeaways



## Success Formula

*"Solid community, core features kept free, focus on transparency and slow/steady/controlled growth"*

**Technical Excellence:** Superior memory systems and consistent character behavior

**Creator Tools:** Robust character creation and customization options

**Community Building:** Transparent development and user feedback loops

**Sustainable Growth:** Balance monetization with user experience

## Memory is Everything

Creators Are Key  
Transparency Matters  
Community Focus  
Long-term Thinking

This survey reflects responses from ~40 participants in the r/CharacterAIrunaways community over a short period in July 2025. Responses are self-selected and may reflect the views of more engaged or dissatisfied users. While the sample size is small, the insights reveal strong themes and directional trends valuable for understanding the needs of character AI enthusiasts.

Technical issues get mentioned a lot, but the strongest responses were about how platforms and bots made people feel.

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