

The State of AI Companions

2026 Industry Landscape Report

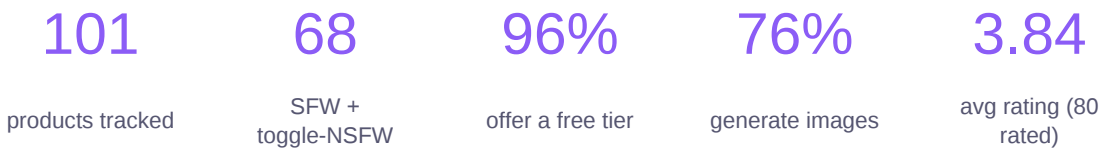
A data-driven snapshot of the AI companion market, drawn from **101** tracked products on the isoulchat directory.

isoulchat.com

Data snapshot: 2026-09-27

isoulchat.com

Executive summary

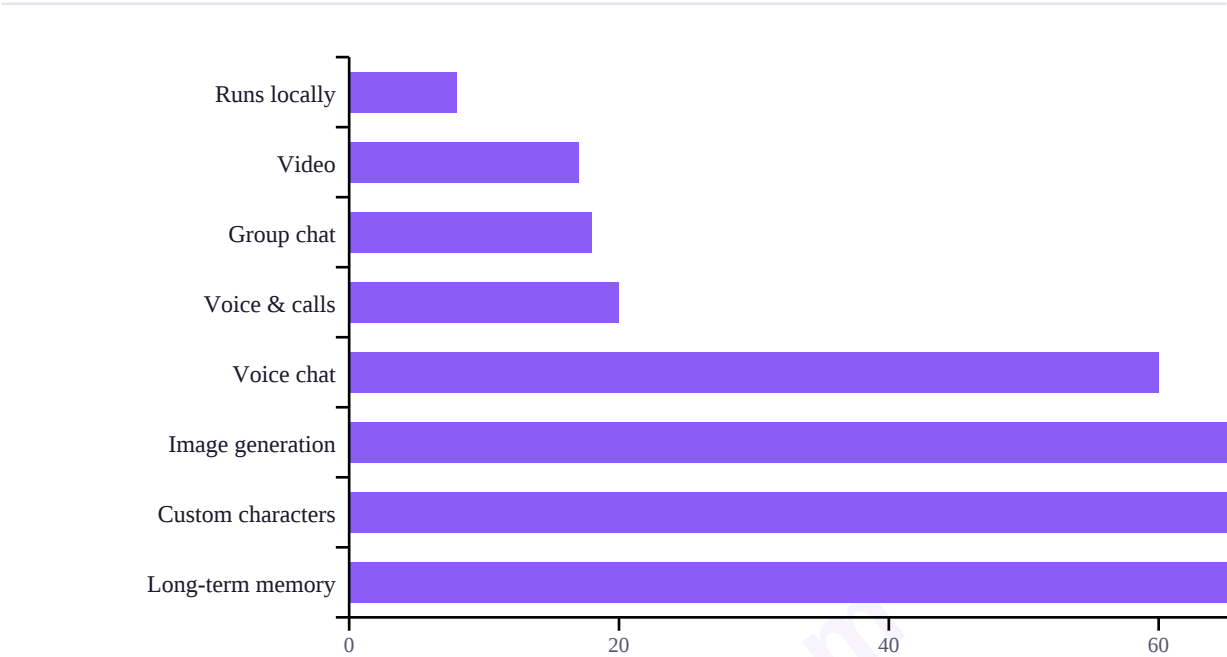


The AI companion space is broad and fast-moving. This report maps the landscape using real attributes of **101** products — what they do, how they price, where they live, and who they are built for. Every figure here is computed directly from the product catalog; nothing is estimated or fabricated. Where we lack historical data we describe the current structure rather than inventing a trend.

Methodology

Source: the isoulchat directory catalog, a curated index of AI companion and character-AI products. Snapshot generated **2026-09-27**. The dataset spans **101** entries: **68** safe-for-work or toggle-NSFW products visible by default, plus **33** adult-oriented entries tracked separately. Feature coverage, pricing, platforms and orientations are derived from each product's declared attributes. No ratings or coverage figures are modeled — they are counted as published.

What companions can do



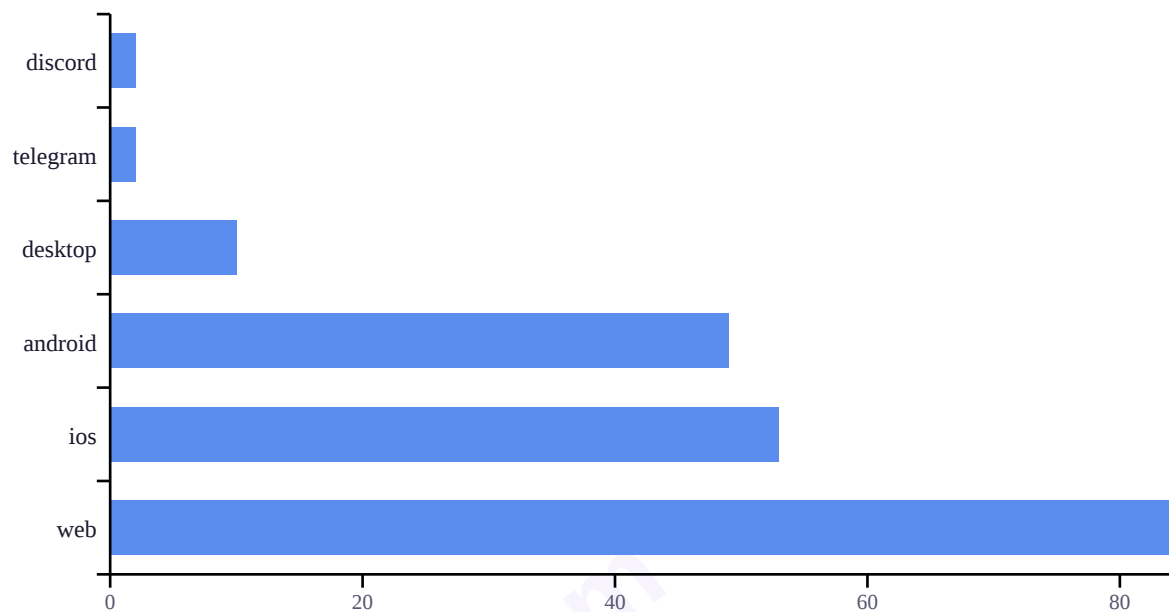
Memory and customisation lead the category: **82%** of products advertise long-term memory and **78%** let users build their own characters. Image generation is now near-ubiquitous at **76%**, while live voice calls (**20%**) and on-device / local runs (**8%**) remain niche differentiators.

How they price

Free entry is the norm: **96%** of tracked products offer a free tier. Among those with a paid plan, the average effective monthly price (annual pricing amortised) is **\$10.45**. Distribution of effective monthly cost:

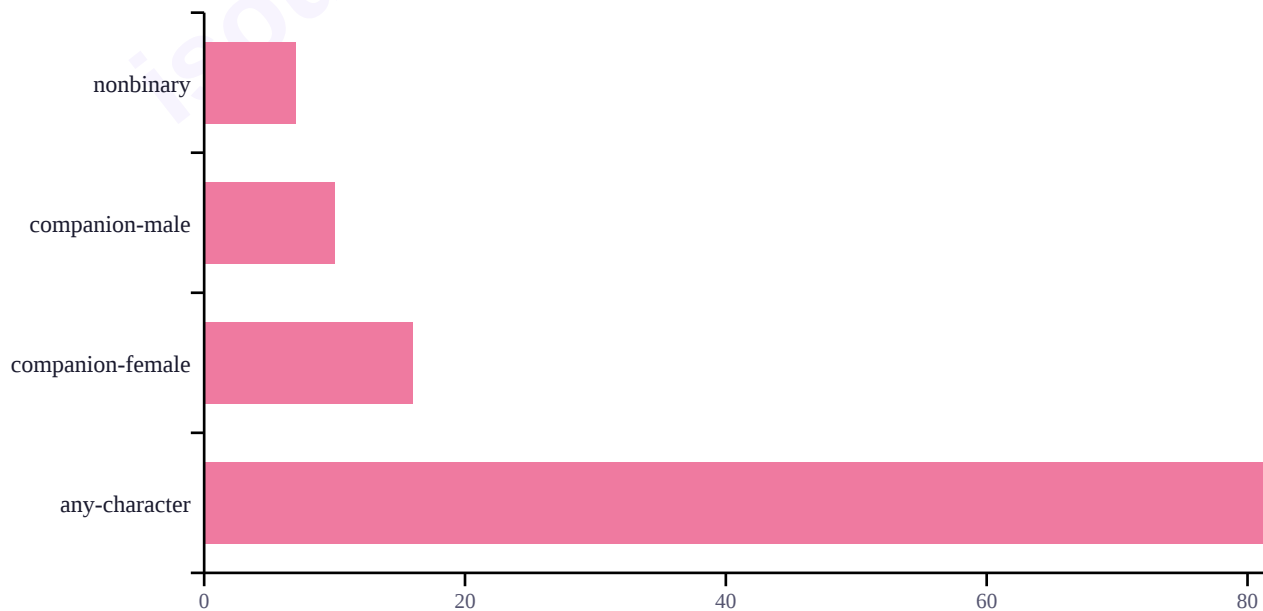
Price band	Products	Share
Free / freemium	30	30%
\$1–5 / mo	9	9%
\$5–10 / mo	38	38%
\$10–20 / mo	16	16%
\$20+ / mo	8	8%

Where they live



Most companions are reachable from a browser, with native mobile apps close behind. Community platforms such as Discord and Telegram remain a meaningful distribution surface for a sizable minority of products.

Who they are built for



Visual style mix: **realistic** 48, **mixed** 42, **anime** 11.

What people search for

Top tracked categories

Category	Products
roleplay	51
create-your-own	49
image-gen	47
free-budget	43
memory	31
voice-calls	23
video	14
top-picks	6

Highest-volume tags

- **text-chat** — 95 products
- **web** — 87 products
- **any-character** — 83 products
- **has-free-tier** — 83 products
- **image-gen** — 72 products
- **ios** — 54 products
- **android** — 51 products
- **annual-discount** — 42 products
- **under-10** — 37 products
- **sfw-only** — 36 products
- **voice-notes** — 36 products
- **mature-toggle** — 32 products
- **character-library** — 27 products
- **voice-call** — 23 products
- **unlimited-free** — 20 products

Editor's picks

Standout products our editors chose this year:

- **Character.AI**

- **SillyTavern**
- **Nomi AI**
- **Replika**
- **Pi**
- **Wysa**
- **SoulChat**

Takeaways

- Free tiers dominate (96%) — the category competes on depth of relationship, not paywall.
- Memory and customisation are table stakes; live voice calls and on-device runs are the real differentiators.
- Image generation is nearly universal (76%); video and group chat are still early.
- Web remains the default surface, but native mobile and community platforms (Discord/Telegram) are material.

This report reflects a single point-in-time snapshot of the isoulchat catalog. It is published as an open reference for journalists, researchers and builders. Attribution back to isoulchat.com is appreciated but not required.

isoulchat.com