



AITOOLSPECS.COM

RESEARCH PUBLICATION



NO. 01 — TOOL CHURN

In one pass through 225 AI tools, 11 had already changed underneath us

A verification pass across our full database, and roughly 1 in 20 tools had been discontinued, rebranded on worse terms, quietly replaced, or repriced — in the time it took to check the list once.

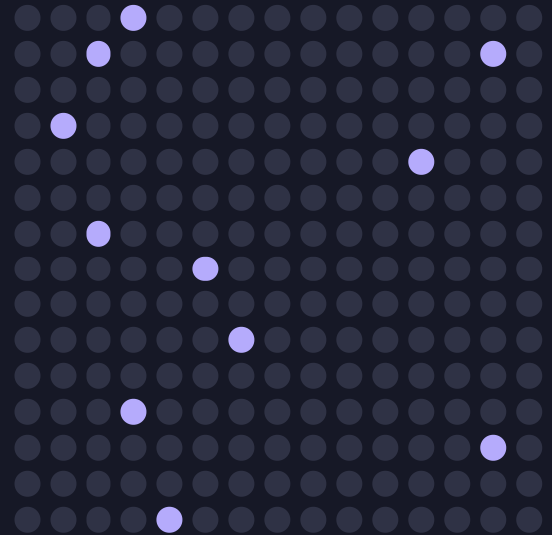
THE FINDING

A routine check — and 1 in 20 had already moved

We sat down to verify our full database of 225 AI tools — checking pricing, checking what each tool actually does, checking whether the claims on the landing page still hold up. Nothing unusual about that; it is routine maintenance.

By the time we finished one pass, 11 of those 225 tools had already changed in some material way. Not "the interface got a redesign" kind of change. Discontinued. Rebranded with worse terms for existing users. Quietly replaced. Priced differently than advertised.

This report names seven of them, with dates and sources, and sets out what the pattern should change about how you buy.



- 11 changed mid-verification
- 214 verified unchanged

Each dot is one tool in the AI Tool Specs database, August 2026.

If you have ever bookmarked a "best AI tools of 2026" article, sit with this for a second: by the time you read it, a meaningful slice of that list is probably already wrong.

3

shut down or superseded — all three from major labs

2

rebranded, with real consequences for existing customers

2

repriced in ways the headline price does not show

01 Products just... stopped existing

Three tools we checked had been fully shut down or superseded — all from major AI labs, all within months of each other.

DALL·E 3 · OpenAI

REMOVED 12 MAY 2026

OpenAI notified developers of deprecation on 14 November 2025 and removed the model from the API entirely on 12 May 2026, replacing it with GPT Image 2 inside ChatGPT.

Source · [OpenAI API Deprecations page](#)

Sora · OpenAI

WEB DARK 26 APR 2026

The flagship AI video app launched publicly at the end of 2024. By March 2026 OpenAI announced it was shutting down; the web and app experience went dark on 26 April 2026, with the API following on 24 September 2026.

Sources · [OpenAI Help Center](#); [TechCrunch](#); [The Decoder](#)

Veo 3 · Google

RETIRED 30 JUN 2026

Google shut down the original Veo 3 and Veo 3 Fast models in the Gemini API on 30 June 2026, folding everything into Veo 3.1.

Source · [Google Gemini API changelog](#)

None of these were obscure or fringe. All three came from the biggest labs in the industry, with essentially unlimited resources behind them — and all three are now, functionally, gone or replaced.

— WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

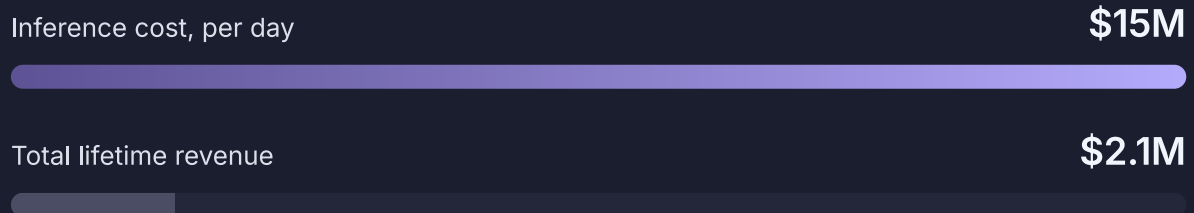
If you build a workflow around one specific AI tool — especially a flashy new one — keep a mental backup plan. "This is the best tool for the job" and "this tool will still exist in six months" are two separate questions, and only one of them gets asked in most reviews.

CASE IN FOCUS · SORA

A product does not have to be small to disappear

By some reporting, Sora was burning roughly \$15 million a day in inference costs against about \$2.1 million in total lifetime revenue. It did not get quietly discontinued — it collapsed financially within about six months of launch. A \$1 billion Disney character-licensing partnership, signed months earlier, ended with it.

REPORTED DAILY INFERENCE COST AGAINST LIFETIME REVENUE



Figures as reported by TechCrunch and The Decoder; bars are drawn to relative scale. One day of cost against the product's entire commercial life.

TIMELINE

Late 2024	Mar 2026	26 Apr 2026	24 Sep 2026
Public launch	Shutdown announced	Web and app go dark	API switched off

Unlimited resources are not the same thing as a durable product — and a billion-dollar licensing deal is no guarantee either.

02 Rebrands are not cosmetic — they can quietly cost you

Two of the changes we found came with a real, material shift for existing customers behind the new name.

Windsurf → Devin Desktop

2 JUN 2026

Renamed after its acquisition by Cognition, the company behind the Devin AI agent. Worth knowing if you were using it: a genuine, high-severity security flaw (CVE-2026-30615, a prompt-injection vulnerability that could let an attacker run commands with zero clicks) was disclosed in April 2026, shortly before the rebrand.

To be fair to the product: a patch was made available quickly, and updating to a current version resolves it. This is a "check you are updated" note, not an ongoing danger.

Sources · SentinelOne; GitHub Advisory Database; OX Security

Freepik → Magnific

28 APR 2026

As much a "things change fast" story as a risk story. Existing subscribers kept the same subscription at the same commitment, and got materially less delivered for it. The detail sits in No. 02 of this series.

Source · The Next Web, 28 April 2026

— WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

A rebrand announcement is not neutral news. Spend five extra minutes checking what actually changed for people who were already paying — and, separately, whether you are on the latest version of anything you use, since that is often where real fixes land quietly.

03 Pricing pages do not always mean what they say

Two findings that cost money quietly rather than all at once.

Cursor

SAME \$20 · ROUGHLY HALF THE ALLOWANCE

Cursor moved from a simple 500-requests-a-month plan to a dollar-denominated credit pool in mid-2025. Independent breakdowns agree on the practical effect: once you are using stronger models for real work, the same \$20 plan covers something closer to 225 premium requests. Not a hidden fee — a real, roughly halved allowance that is not obvious from the headline price.

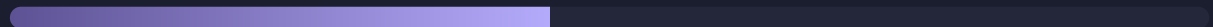
Before · flat request plan

500 requests



After · credit pool, premium models

~225 requests



Sources · eesel AI; FinTech Weekly; multiple independent 2026 Cursor pricing analyses

Notion AI

RESTRUCTURED 2026

Notion restructured its AI pricing in 2026 in a way that raised the real, effective cost for a number of existing users through usage-based agent credits — even though the headline subscription price did not obviously change.

Sources · notion.com/pricing; Fello AI; TechJack

— WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

"Credits" and "usage-based" deserve more scrutiny than a flat monthly fee, precisely because the actual cost only becomes clear once you are already using the product — not before you sign up.

04 So what do you actually do with this?

Three habits. None of them complicated.

01 Check the date on anything you read

A tool recommendation from even six months ago carries real risk of being out of date in this space. If a list does not show when it was last checked, treat it with some suspicion.

02 Watch for the phrase "existing users"

In any pricing-change announcement, that is usually where the real story is. New-customer pricing is marketing; existing-user changes are what a company does when nobody is forcing it to be generous.

03 Treat a subscription as a decision you revisit

In a market moving this fast, reviewing what you pay for every few months is not paranoid. It is realistic.

This is also the whole reason our own database is re-verified on a rolling basis rather than written once and left alone. A tool list that does not move is a tool list that is quietly getting less true every week.

METHODOLOGY

A note on scope and sources

A few things worth knowing about how this analysis was put together, so you can weigh it correctly.

This covers our database, not the whole market

AIToolSpecs.com tracks 225 tools — a curated set chosen for relevance to non-technical individuals and small businesses, not an attempt to survey every AI tool that exists. "11 of 225 changed" is a real finding within our set, not a claim about churn across the industry.

We did not do our own investigative reporting

Every specific claim above is drawn from public reporting and official company sources, cited directly — not from contacting the companies ourselves. We cite the most credible source for each claim so you can verify it yourself.

This is a snapshot, not a permanent verdict

Everything here reflects the public record as of when we checked it. In the Windsurf case the vulnerability had already been patched by then, and we say so explicitly rather than presenting it as an ongoing risk. Products, prices and policies keep changing — that is the point of the piece.

No financial relationship with any tool named

None of the tools discussed here have an affiliate or paid relationship with AIToolSpecs.com. Our recommendation engine keeps commercial relationships separate from scoring, and this publication follows the same rule.

225

tools in the verified working set

5

dimensions scored per tool, risk among them

Rolling

re-verification, rather than written once



This analysis is drawn directly from the AIToolSpecs.com tool-scoring database, current as of August 2026, cross-checked against independent public reporting for every named claim.

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ALSO IN THIS SERIES

No. 02 · Risk Patterns — We scored 225 AI tools on risk: which categories are minefields, the nine tools we will not recommend, and where the billing surprises come from.

August 2026

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Founder of AIToolSpecs.com. Twenty-three years in global operations and business transformation, including seventeen years at HSBC, with senior positions such as VP and Senior Director at HSBC and FIS.

Alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata, and a Google Cloud Digital Leader.

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We did the homework, so you don't have to.

Tell us your budget, goal, skill level and hardware, and we will match you to tools that actually fit — re-verified on a rolling basis, with commercial relationships kept out of the scoring.

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