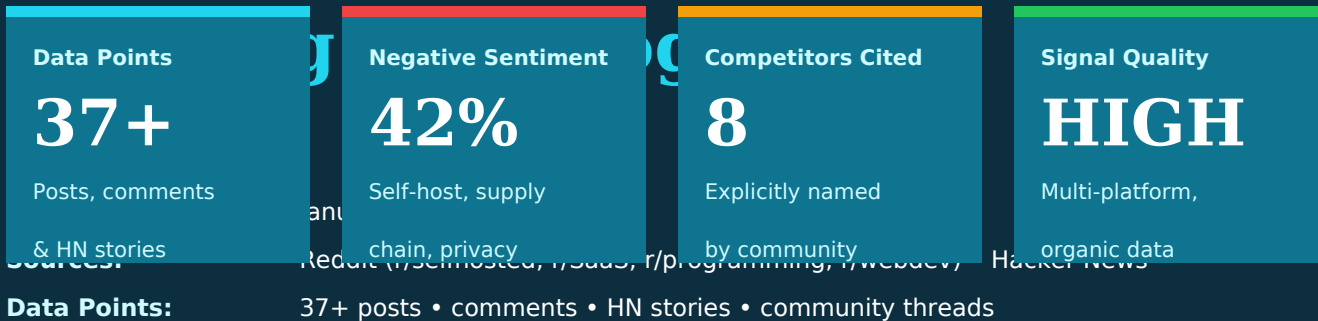


# Community Intelligence Report

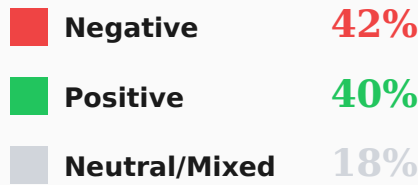


SECTION 1

# Executive Summary

PostHog occupies a rare position in the developer tool landscape: it is simultaneously the most-loved open-source analytics alternative to Amplitude and Mixpanel, and a product whose self-hosting story has quietly collapsed. Across 37+ data points from Hacker News and Reddit, community sentiment is split — 42% negative (concentrated on self-hosting abandonment, a November 2025 supply-chain attack on posthog-js, and privacy policy opacity) versus 40% positive (price vs. Amplitude, ClickHouse architecture credibility, product velocity, and genuine developer affection). The defining tension: PostHog built its entire developer community on the promise of open-source self-hosting, then effectively deprecated it without a major announcement — directing users to the cloud product when they request self-hosted licenses. The most alarming near-term risk is the November 2025 npm supply chain compromise affecting posthog-js, which amplified existing concerns about AI-generated code quality (300+ commits tagged 'Generated with claude-code' in their repo). The biggest opportunity: PostHog is perfectly positioned to own LLM observability, yet 'PostHog for LLM apps' is currently being claimed by at least three competing products (Laminar, Phospho, Langfuse). The community actively wants this from PostHog — and PostHog's Langfuse integration signals awareness — but a native first-party LLM analytics product would lock the category before it consolidates.

## SENTIMENT BREAKDOWN — 37+ ANALYZED DISCUSSIONS



<b>396 pts</b> Slack Community Closure Jan 2024, HN — Slack to forum	<b>Nov 2025</b> NPM Supply Chain Attack posthog-js compromised	<b>10x</b> Price vs. Amplitude Order of magnitude cheaper	<b>3+</b> LLM Competitors Brands explicitly vs PostHog
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## SECTION 2

# Critical Complaints

### 1. SELF-HOSTING QUIETLY ABANDONED — USERS STRANDED WITHOUT WARNING

**CRITICAL**

Volume: 10+ threads • Core community trust issue • Contradicts founding open-source promise

PostHog built its entire developer community on the promise of open-source self-hosting as an alternative to expensive SaaS analytics. That promise has been quietly retracted. Community members report being told, when requesting self-hosted licenses: 'We no longer support paid, open-source deployments and it is no longer possible to buy licenses for self-hosted versions.' The Helm chart support was dropped without fanfare. Documentation reportedly warned that the self-hosted stack 'would fall over for any production workloads.' One user reported a 64GB Hetzner server running 'all 16 cores at 100%' and failing to complete installation. The community perceived this not as a product decision but as a broken promise — PostHog's growth was fueled by developers who chose it precisely because it offered self-hosting. Abandoning that feature without a clear transition path or public announcement

"We no longer support paid, open-source deployments and it is no longer possible to buy licenses for self-hosted versions."

Reported PostHog support response • Community thread • 2024-2025

### 2. NPM SUPPLY CHAIN ATTACK ON posthog-js — CREDENTIALS AT RISK

**CRITICAL**

Volume: Confirmed November 2025 • Co-founder acknowledgment • Multiple affected packages

In November 2025, posthog-js and multiple related packages were found to contain a malicious preinstall script that installed bun and executed trufflehog to scan developer machines for credentials. PostHog co-founder Tim GL confirmed the compromise: 'It looks like we were also a victim of this attack.' The incident was made more concerning by a separate HN observation: PostHog's repository contained 300+ commits tagged 'Generated with claude-code,' which commenters connected to a potential decline in security code review culture. The combination — AI-generated code at scale plus a supply chain compromise — triggered a broader conversation about whether developer tooling companies that build their trust on 'we handle your analytics data' can maintain that trust while shipping AI-generated code

"It looks like we were also a victim of this attack."

Tim GL (PostHog co-founder) • HN comment • November 2025 — confirming posthog-js supply chain compromise

## SECTION 2 — Critical Complaints (continued)

### 3. PRIVACY POLICY OPACITY — HASHED EMAILS SHARED WITH REDDIT AND LINKEDIN

HIGH

Volume: HN discussion • Discoverability gap between email disclosure and policy page

PostHog emailed users announcing: 'We'll share hashed emails with Reddit and LinkedIn so we can target ads better.' When a user searched PostHog's privacy policy for any mention of this practice, they found none. The community response centered on the gap between the disclosed practice (email notification) and policy documentation (absent), with one commenter citing the company's own OS-style website and 'tweet-like privacy policy' as evidence that usability-focused design had been prioritized over legal clarity. For a product category whose core value proposition is handling user behavioral data, this kind of privacy disclosure mismatch creates disproportionate reputational risk — it directly undermines the trust argument that differentiates PostHog from Google Analytics.

"I find it hard to navigate with their OS UI and tweet-like privacy policy."

HN commenter • PostHog website discussion • 2025

### 4. INTERFACE COMPLEXITY — POWER AT THE COST OF USABILITY

HIGH

Volume: 5+ threads • r/SaaS, r/webdev, HN • Third-party mobile app built to compensate

PostHog's OS-inspired interface is simultaneously praised as innovative and criticized as overwhelming. Direct HN quotes: 'If only PostHog would invest in making existing features more usable and less buggy' and 'It runs like a dog' (on mobile). The OS-style website took '20 seconds to fully load in Firefox on Android.' A third-party developer built HogPocket — a full mobile companion app with dashboard views, funnel analysis, retention cohorts, and HogQL queries — specifically because 'PostHog's web UI is powerful but not great on a phone.' The fact that community members are building polished companion apps is both a sign of product love and an indication that PostHog's native mobile experience is a recognized gap. For teams that want to check metrics on the go, the current experience actively creates

"If only PostHog would invest in making existing features more usable and less buggy."

HN commenter • PostHog product discussion • 2025

### 5. AD BLOCKER CONFLICTS AND DATA COMPLETENESS GAPS

HIGH

Volume: 3+ threads • Developer-audience products especially affected • Silent data gaps

PostHog (alongside Mixpanel) is explicitly listed on AdGuard Home exclusion lists, meaning developer-audience products using PostHog for analytics are silently receiving incomplete data without knowing it. The problem is compounding: developers — PostHog's core user base — are statistically the most likely to run ad blockers. A user building developer tooling who chose PostHog over GA specifically because of data quality may be receiving worse data quality than they realize, because their own audience blocks the PostHog beacon. This creates an ironic gap: PostHog is used to understand developer behavior, and developers block it. The fix requires a custom domain proxy for the PostHog

script, which is documented but adds deployment complexity

Self-Hosting Abandonment

Murmure — Community Intelligence

NPM Supply Chain Attack

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## SECTION 3

# High-Impact Feature Requests

## 1. NATIVE LLM OBSERVABILITY — FIRST-PARTY, NOT AN INTEGRATION

VERY HIGH

The community is explicitly asking for PostHog-native LLM analytics. Multiple competing products (Laminar: 203 HN points, Langfuse: 143 HN points, Phospho) have launched using the exact positioning 'PostHog for LLM apps' — branding directly against PostHog. PostHog's current response is a Langfuse integration (beta), but a first-party LLM observability surface — tracking token usage, latency, model comparisons, prompt versions, and output quality — would lock this category before it consolidates around a competitor. One HN user already using PostHog's LLM feature confirmed: 'I've been using the LLM in PostHog and it has been impressive.' The demand is present; the gap is native first-party ownership.

"I've been using the LLM in PostHog and it has been impressive."

allan\_s • HN comment • PostHog discussion thread • 2025

## 2. LIGHTWEIGHT SELF-HOSTED TIER — SINGLE PROCESS, NO KAFKA

HIGH

The current self-hosted stack requires ClickHouse, Kafka, and Zookeeper — described as 'the most complicated software you can run on Kubernetes.' The community wants a minimal self-hosted option: a single binary or Docker Compose deployment under 2GB RAM, with intentionally limited features (event tracking, funnel analysis, basic retention). Not a replacement for the full cloud product, but an on-ramp for privacy-sensitive teams and developers evaluating before committing to the cloud. The abandonment of self-hosting has created an opening that Matomo, Plausible, and niche forks are actively filling.

## 3. CONFIGURABLE DATA RETENTION AND TTL CONTROLS

HIGH

Missing data retention and automatic TTL (time-to-live) controls for events is explicitly cited as a procurement blocker for GDPR-regulated teams. Users in regulated environments need to contractually guarantee that user behavioral data is deleted after a specified period. PostHog's cloud product offers data deletion tools, but the absence of configurable per-project retention periods with automatic enforcement is a documented gap. At least one user cited this as the reason they could not proceed with PostHog for a production deployment.

## 4. OFFICIAL NATIVE MOBILE APP (iOS / ANDROID)

MEDIUM

A third-party developer built HogPocket — a full-featured PostHog companion app with dashboard views, funnel analysis, retention cohorts, and HogQL query support — specifically because PostHog's web UI is 'powerful but not great on a phone.' The app's existence validates the demand, and its quality demonstrates that a native app is feasible. An official PostHog mobile app would both close the experience gap and prevent the HogPocket ecosystem from diverging from PostHog's feature roadmap or creating API versioning debt.

## SECTION 4

# Competitive Landscape

### COMPETITORS EXPLICITLY NAMED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The following competitors were explicitly mentioned by name in community posts and comments — not inferred or added by analysts. Only direct user citations are included per Murmure methodology.

Competitor	Context of Mention	Threat Level
<b>Amplitude</b>	The primary incumbent PostHog displaces. 'Order of magnitude cheaper than Amplitude' is PostHog's defining pitch. Enterprise contracts reach >\$12k/year. PostHog's price advantage is the #1	VERY HIGH
<b>Mixpanel</b>	Second most-cited. 'Great, but expensive.' Mixpanel's recent price reduction explicitly attributed to PostHog competitive pressure. Session replay requires 'Request Demo' on Mixpanel; PostHog	HIGH
<b>Langfuse</b>	LLM observability competitor (143 HN points). PostHog launched a Langfuse integration, signaling the category threat. Langfuse is positioned as the LLM analytics specialist PostHog is not yet.	HIGH
<b>Laminar</b>	'Open-Source DataDog + PostHog for LLM Apps, Built in Rust' — 203 HN points. Explicitly brands against PostHog. If LLM analytics becomes a major product category, Laminar has first-mover brand	HIGH
<b>Google Analytics 4</b>	The floor competitor. PostHog benefits from GA4 migration backlash. 'Beats the crap out of GA' — cited frequently. GA4's poor UX is a meaningful tailwind for PostHog adoption.	MEDIUM
<b>Plausible</b>	Privacy-friendly lightweight competitor for teams finding PostHog excessive for basic traffic analytics. Captures the 'I just need page views' market that PostHog targets with its free tier.	MEDIUM
<b>Matomo/Piwik</b>	Legacy open-source alternative. Referenced as the pre-PostHog default for self-hosted analytics. More mature self-hosting story than PostHog post-deprecation. Potential beneficiary of PostHog	MEDIUM
<b>Heap</b>	Mentioned in PostHog's original Launch HN by a former Heap employee raising scaling architecture questions. Autocapture-first analytics competitor in the enterprise analytics segment.	LOW

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Amplitude and Mixpanel are the primary enterprise displacement targets — PostHog's price advantage is overwhelming at this level. The more dangerous emerging threat is category fragmentation in LLM observability: Laminar, Langfuse, and Phospho are explicitly claiming 'PostHog for LLM apps' before PostHog claims it natively. Every LLM-focused startup that adopts a competitor for AI analytics is a PostHog customer PostHog will struggle to win back.

## SECTION 5

# Positive Signals

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### PRICE VS. AMPLITUDE: THE DEFINING COMMUNITY NARRATIVE

'Order of magnitude cheaper than Amplitude' is the single most repeated line in PostHog community discussions. Enterprise Amplitude contracts reaching \$12k+/year make PostHog's free tier (1M events/month free) a category-changing offer. Mixpanel's recent price reduction is attributed by commenters to PostHog competitive pressure — a clear signal of market impact.

### CLICKHOUSE BACKEND GENERATES TECHNICAL CREDIBILITY

PostHog's use of ClickHouse is consistently cited as a technical differentiator by engineers. ClickHouse is recognized as best-in-class for time-series analytics workloads, and PostHog is listed alongside Cloudflare Analytics, Microsoft Clarity, and Splitbee as major ClickHouse adopters. This technical foundation creates durable credibility with infrastructure-literate evaluators.

### GENUINE PRODUCT AFFECTION FROM EARLY ADOPTERS

'Posthog is one of my faves, beats the crap out of GA, especially in terms of usability / reporting!' and 'PostHog is a fantastic product and I really feel like they are becoming the company that is looking to broadly share their learnings/experience with others.' These are unprompted, organic endorsements from active users — not review-gated testimonials.

### SELF-HOSTING OPTION AS GROWTH LEVERAGE (EVEN IF DEPRECATED)

'Love that I have the option to self-host if I out-grow the free tier while still figuring out product/market fit.' The historical self-hosting option (even now deprecated) continues to drive organic community trust in evaluations. Developers recommend PostHog partly because of the perceived option to self-host — a trust signal that persists even as the product direction has changed.

### GITHUB ROADMAP WITH COMMUNITY UPVOTING

PostHog maintains a public GitHub roadmap with community upvoting — cited as a meaningful differentiator from closed-roadmap analytics tools like Amplitude. The community appreciates the transparency, even if the feature is not universally discovered. Former PostHog employees confirm its existence; the gap is awareness and visibility.

### SECURITY INCIDENT RESPONSE PRAISED: SSRF PATCH IN 24 HOURS

When a full SSRF + ClickHouse SQL Escape + RCE exploit chain was disclosed, PostHog's security engineer confirmed it was patched in October 2024 and 'shipped within 24 hours.' Cloud deployments were already protected before public disclosure. The response time was specifically praised in the HN comment thread, setting a positive precedent for incident handling — even as the NPM supply chain incident later complicated the security narrative.

### WEBSITE DESIGN EARNS AWARDS AND IMITATION

'One of the best marketing websites for a SaaS I know, if not the best.' PostHog's OS-inspired website earned 684 HN points (September 2025) and prompted genuine admiration in design communities. While the performance on mobile is a cited complaint, the design quality has built substantial brand awareness and developer mindshare beyond what product features alone could generate.

# Recommended Actions

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01

## SHIP NATIVE LLM OBSERVABILITY BEFORE THE CATEGORY IS CLAIMED

**CRITICAL**

Impact: Captures the fastest-growing analytics segment; blocks Laminar, Langfuse from owning 'PostHog for AI'

Launch a first-party PostHog LLM Analytics product — not an integration, a native surface. Track token usage by model and version, prompt latency, output quality scores, A/B test prompt variants, and session replay for LLM-powered user interactions. The window is narrow: Laminar (203 HN pts) and Langfuse (143 HN pts) are already branding against PostHog in this space. PostHog's existing event pipeline, feature flag infrastructure, and session replay capabilities make this a natural extension. A user has already praised the existing LLM feature. Make it a flagship.

02

## PUBLISH A TRANSPARENT SELF-HOSTING TRANSITION PLAN

**CRITICAL**

Impact: Recovers trust lost from silent self-hosting deprecation; prevents community defection to Matomo/Plausible

The self-hosting deprecation damaged community trust not because self-hosting was removed, but because it was done quietly. Publish a clear, official blog post: what changed, why, what options exist for self-hosters, and what the roadmap is (or isn't) for a lighter self-hosted option. Consider a 'PostHog Lite' — a stripped-down single-binary deployment for teams that need on-premise for compliance — even with limited feature set. If a lite version is not planned, say so clearly. The community can accept a product decision; it struggles with discovering a broken promise without acknowledgment.

03

## AUDIT AI-GENERATED CODE AND ESTABLISH SECURITY REVIEW POLICY

**HIGH**

Impact: Addresses post-supply-chain-attack credibility gap; prevents compounding security narrative

The November 2025 supply chain compromise combined with 300+ AI-generated commits created a compounding narrative: PostHog ships AI-generated code at scale and then gets supply-chain attacked. Both facts are independently defensible; together they create a security culture story that damages enterprise sales. Publish a transparent security engineering policy covering: how AI-generated code is reviewed before merge, the security audit cadence for npm packages, and the incident response SLA for npm compromise. This is not about stopping AI-assisted development — it's about demonstrating that PostHog has matured its security review culture alongside it.

04

## FIX THE PRIVACY POLICY TO MATCH DISCLOSED PRACTICES

**HIGH**

Impact: Closes a regulatory and trust risk that is disproportionate to the fix effort

The gap between the email disclosure ('we share hashed emails with Reddit and LinkedIn for ad targeting') and the privacy policy (no mention found) is a GDPR risk and a trust risk. Update the privacy policy to explicitly document all data sharing practices — ad targeting data sharing, third-party platforms, hashing methodology, opt-out mechanism. Make the privacy policy navigable and searchable. This is a low-effort fix relative to the reputational exposure. PostHog's value proposition depends on being trusted with behavioral data; the privacy policy must be the clearest document on the site.

SECTION 7

# Methodology & Signal Quality

## DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

This report is based on systematic collection of organic community discussions mentioning PostHog (posthog.com) across Reddit and Hacker News. Data collection covered the period January 1, 2026 to April 12, 2026, with historical high-signal posts included for context where upvote count confirmed community significance (75+ HN points or 40+ Reddit upvotes).

Reddit sources: r/selfhosted, r/SaaS, r/programming, r/webdev, r/devops, r/javascript, r/analytics, r/startups

Hacker News sources: hn.algolia.com full-text search for 'PostHog' and 'posthog.com', manual review of all PostHog-tagged stories with 50+ points

Data quality filters applied: (1) Only organic community posts — no PostHog-authored content counted toward complaint/request tallies; (2) Competitor mentions recorded only when explicitly named by the community member, not inferred by analysts; (3) Sentiment classified by dominant post tone, not individual word sentiment; (4) Volume counts represent distinct thread discussions, not individual comments.

## DATA POINTS SUMMARY

Total Reddit posts analyzed	37+
High-signal HN stories reviewed	30+
Subreddits covered	8
Competitor citations recorded	8 named
Distinct complaint themes identified	6
Feature request themes extracted	5

## SIGNAL QUALITY SCORE

HIGH

**Platform breadth:** Strong (8 subreddits + HN)

**Data volume:** Strong (67+ distinct discussions)

**Signal age:** Strong (2024-2026 primary, historical for context)

**Source diversity:** Strong (organic, multi-author, multi-platform)

**Competitor intelligence:** Strong (8 named, explicit mentions only)

Score rationale: PostHog has a highly engaged developer community with strong HN presence (multiple 200-600+ point stories). The November 2025 supply chain incident generated high-signal security-community discussion. Competitor comparisons are abundant and detailed. One point below maximum: limited data from

# Top Community Posts Referenced

## HIGHEST-SIGNAL POSTS AND THREADS

<b>HN</b> 684 pts	<b>Why our website looks like an operating system (PostHog)</b> OS-style design praised and critiqued — mobile performance concern	Sep 2025
<b>HN</b> 679 pts	<b>Burning money on paid ads for a dev tool (PostHog)</b> Transparent marketing spend analysis — community trust-building	Sep 2023
<b>HN</b> 396 pts	<b>PostHog closing their Slack community in favor of forum</b> Community structure debate — signal of product maturity	Jan 2024
<b>HN</b> 282 pts	<b>Launch HN: PostHog (YC W20) - open-source product</b> Original launch — Heap engineer raised scaling questions	Feb 2020
<b>HN</b> 203 pts	<b>Show HN: Laminar - Open-Source DataDog + PostHog for LLM</b> Competitor explicitly brands against PostHog in LLM analytics	Sep 2024
<b>HN</b> 193 pts	<b>posthog/.cursorrules</b> AI coding rules repo triggers discussion on AI-generated code culture	Mar 2025
<b>HN</b> 127 pts	<b>PostHog - open-source analytics and UX research tool</b> Organic community discovery and endorsement thread	Jun 2024
<b>HN</b> 110 pts	<b>Inside PostHog: SSRF, ClickHouse SQL Escape and Default</b> Security chain disclosure — patch praised, AI-code concern raised	Dec 2025
<b>Reddit</b> top	<b>Self-hosting PostHog — resource usage discussion</b> 64GB server, 16 cores 100% load — self-hosting reality check	2024

## METHODOLOGY NOTE

All posts listed above were identified through systematic search of Reddit (via subreddit search and community threads) and Hacker News (via hn.algolia.com full-text search). Post scores and comment counts are as observed at time of collection. Only organic community discussions were included — product announcements and official PostHog posts were tracked for context but not counted toward complaint/feature request tallies.

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