

## Case Study

# When Virtual Meets Reality: How AKA Virtual Created Digital Avatars That Actually Feel Human





Picture this: You're rushing through Singapore's bustling transit hub when a friendly digital character catches your eye at a NaviSPOT kiosk. She greets you in perfect Japanese, switches to flawless English when she notices your confusion, then seamlessly transitions to Mandarin when your friend joins the conversation. She's charming, culturally aware, and responds to your questions with the kind of natural flow that makes you forget you're not talking to a real person. This is the reality AKA Virtual has created.

## The Visionaries Behind the Magic

From their Tokyo headquarters, AKA Virtual has been quietly revolutionizing what it means to be "real" in the digital age. Founded in 2017, this 43-person company has grown far beyond its Japanese origins, with significant operations across Indonesia and the United States, creating a truly global virtual entertainment ecosystem.

"Our vision is simple but powerful," explains Jian Shen, CEO and Co-Founder, "to create immersive, natural interactions with virtual characters." The numbers tell a compelling story: 39 virtual talents spanning multiple languages and cultures, with 28 hailing from Indonesia alone, making them the second-largest VTuber agency in the country.





The standout success is Akemi Nekomachi, who joined AKA Virtual in September 2022 with 40,000 YouTube subscribers and has since exploded to over 2 million, becoming the most subscribed male VTuber globally. Each character comes with rich backstories, distinct personality quirks, and the kind of authentic charm that makes you genuinely invested in their world. But Shen had an even bigger vision brewing.

## The Multilingual Challenge



"So for us, it's really all about the detail," Shen reflects, "like the subtle shifts in the accent, the choice of the words, even the way the characters move and react—these are what make interactions feel real and memorable. We want people to feel genuinely connected with our Digital Avatars, no matter who they are or where they're from."

The challenge was monumental. With talents fluent in English, Indonesian, Japanese, and other languages, creating seamless real-time multilingual interaction required solving complex technical problems that had stumped the industry.

As Jayaku Komatsu, Sales Director, explained: "Creating natural and engaging interactions in multiple languages simultaneously was honestly not easy. Especially for Asian languages like Japanese and Chinese, capturing subtle nuances with voice synthesis technology was quite difficult. What we aimed for was to create characters that could switch languages as smoothly as anime characters change expressions." The technical requirements were staggering: massive language datasets, real-time responsiveness that could work even in noisy environments like airports and shopping malls, and cultural authenticity that went beyond mere translation.

## Finding the Right Partnership

AKA Virtual's search for a technology partner led them to BytePlus, but the decision wasn't made lightly. After evaluating multiple providers, BytePlus emerged as the clear choice due to superior accuracy, real-time response capabilities, and seamless integration possibilities.

"When we first connected with BytePlus, there was this instant sense of shared purpose," Shen recalls. "BytePlus wasn't just a tech provider—it was a team of innovators who really get it. Through expertise in artificial intelligence, they bring real power and scale to our vision."

What followed was collaborative innovation that addressed AKA Virtual's exact needs. Using advanced artificial intelligence, BytePlus enabled multilingual conversation that preserved each character's personality across languages—a breakthrough that had eluded the industry.

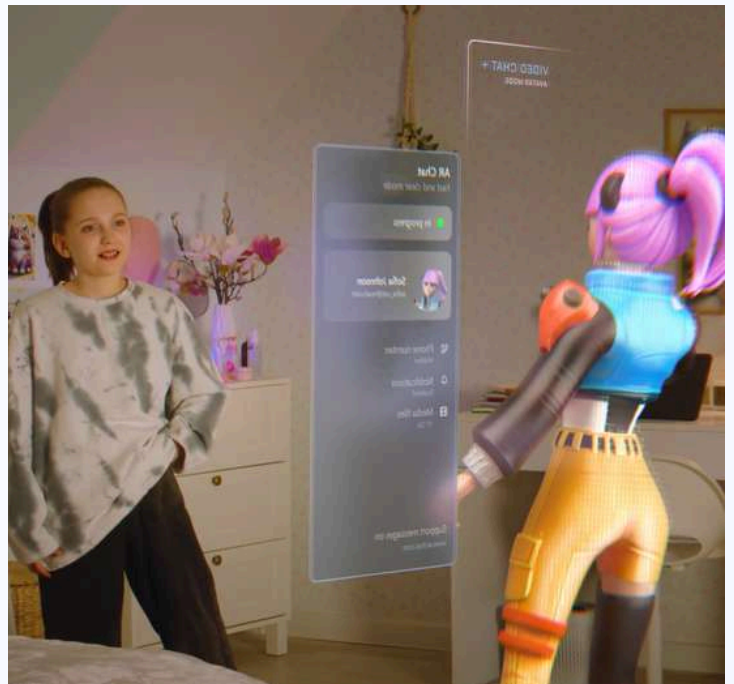
## Real-World Applications

The technology has been deployed across multiple high-impact venues, transforming how people interact with digital characters.

At anime conventions and V-Tuber events, visitors approach AKA's virtual characters with curiosity and leave with genuine connections. The characters can display QR codes for users to scan, unlocking promotions and creating memorable digital moments that extend beyond the initial interaction.

The commercial applications extend far beyond entertainment. Through partnerships with INFORICH and SBS Transit, the same technology powers NaviSPOT—AI-driven concierge kiosks rolling out across Singapore's public transport network and expanding to high-traffic locations in Japan.

"The technology is the backbone, allowing us to make the impossible happen and to do it seamlessly," explains Shen. The system can understand up to 50 languages but responds in specifically programmed ones, allowing for customization based on market needs—whether adjusting for Spanish-speaking audiences or fine-tuning for local cultural contexts.



## Advancing Digital Realism



The collaboration has significantly improved the believability of AKA Virtual's characters, addressing one of the biggest challenges in digital avatar development. "BytePlus helped our characters reach a new level, overcoming the uncanny valley phenomenon — where characters that are too realistic actually create discomfort and anxiety. We can now create characters that feel genuinely real, not just in appearance but in actual presence."

This emotional authenticity has become the foundation of AKA Virtual's success in influencer marketing and brand storytelling, where audience connection determines everything.

## A New Generation of Digital Influence

"Working with BytePlus, we've been able to build a new kind of digital influencer," Shen explains, "one that connects with audiences just as authentically as any human could. Together, we're pushing the boundaries in ways that keep our audiences excited and engaged."

The technology resonates particularly well with younger audiences, who often test AI limits with unusual prompts and creative challenges, adding a playful dynamic that keeps interactions fresh and engaging.





As the AKA Virtual continues expanding — recently launching the SANDAIVA sub-group with three Indonesian talents in February 2025, and pursuing ambitious collaborations like Akemi Nekomachi's special "Ebi Mentaiko Mayo Udon" menu launch with Marugame Udon Indonesia—BytePlus remains their trusted partner in bringing each vision to life. The company's goal of creating "Pixar-level" 3D content at accelerated speeds requires the kind of technological foundation that can keep pace with their creative ambitions.

## A New Generation of Digital Influence

Standing at the intersection of entertainment and technology, AKA Virtual and BytePlus have proven something remarkable: the future of human-computer interaction isn't about making machines more like humans — it's about creating genuine emotional connections that transcend the limitations of both.



"Our journey with BytePlus has been transformative," Shen concludes. "For anyone out there who's looking to create immersive, lifelike digital experiences, now is the time. Reach out to us, see the future with BytePlus, and let's build something incredible together."

Ready to explore what's possible when virtual meets reality? The future is speaking your language.

If you would like to learn more about our products and solutions, please reach out to us at [www.byteplus.com/en/contact](https://www.byteplus.com/en/contact).

