
Critical Brand Review



Oscar Lewu

Section 1: Background

Origins

Founder:

Fusajiro Yamauchi (1859-1940)

Founding date:

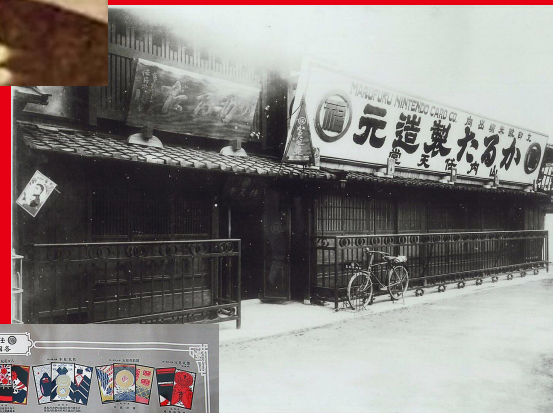
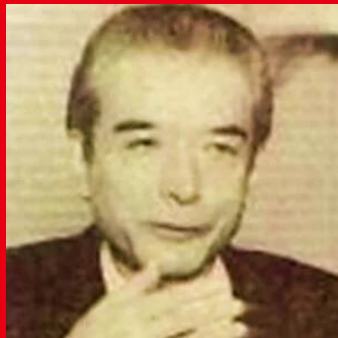
September 23, 1889

Founding Location:

Kyoto, Japan

Initial Product:

Handmade Hanafuda Cards



Operating Regions/Countries



Japan

- **Japan**

Operating Regions/Countries

The Americas

- United States
- Canada
- Mexico
- Brazil
- Colombia
- Argentina
- Chile
- Peru
- Anguilla
- Antigua & Barbuda
- Aruba
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Bermuda
- Bolivia
- British Virgin Islands
- Cayman Islands
- Costa Rica
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- St. Lucia
- St. Vincent & Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Turks & Caicos Islands
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

Operating Regions/Countries

Europe (EMEA)

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russia (until 2023)
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- Albania
- Angola
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Benin
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Cape Verde
- Congo
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Egypt
- Gabon

Operating Regions/Countries

Oceania

- **Australia**
- **New Zealand**
- Fiji
- Micronesia
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Solomon Islands

Asia Pacific

- **Hong Kong**
- **Taiwan**
- **South Korea**
- **Singapore**
- **Thailand**
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Bangladesh
- Brunei Darussalam
- Cambodia
- India
- Indonesia
- Laos
- Macao
- Nepal
- Sri Lanka
- Vietnam

Operating Regions/Countries

China	<ul style="list-style-type: none">China Mainland (only available to Tencent Switch users)	
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">United Arab EmiratesBahrainBhutanJordanKyrgyzstanKuwaitKazakhstanLebanonLiberiaMoldova (Republic of)MadagascarMaliMongoliaMauritaniaMauritiusMalawiMozambiqueNamibiaNigerNigeriaOmanPakistanQatarRwandaSaudi ArabiaSeychellesSierra LeoneSenegalSão Tomé and PríncipeEswatiniChadTogoTajikistanTurkmenistanTunisiaTanzania (United Republic of)UgandaUzbekistan	

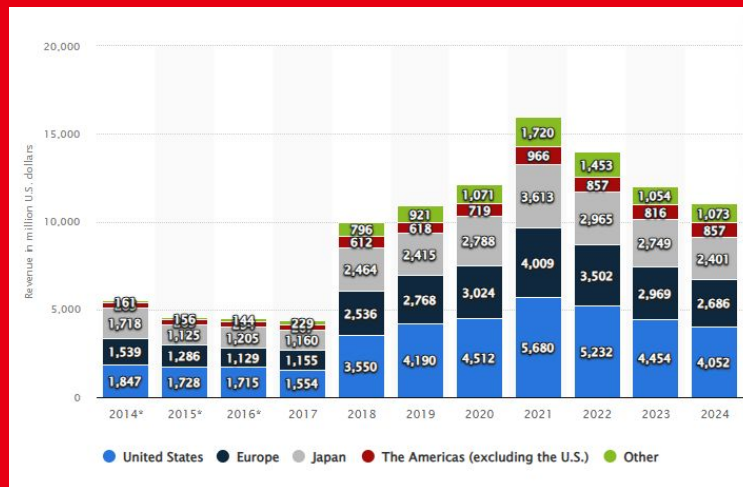
Global Sales Revenue

Financial Year 2024

In the 2024 financial year, Nintendo generated over \$4 billion USD solely from American sales. Combining every region's revenue together, the company has amassed just over \$11 billion USD; just \$1 million USD shy of the previous year's earnings.

Best Financial Year

Of the data shown here, Nintendo found the most financial success in 2021 - almost closing in on \$16 billion USD. That said, the company's success can be attributed to the circumstances surrounding that year. In 2020, the world found itself in the midst of a pandemic, forcing everyone to stay inside for the first years of the 2020s. During this time, many tech companies found themselves struggling, as a chip shortage caused issues in production pipelines. However, Nintendo found themselves in the right place at the right time, as their systems were already in large stock and already amassed a large library of video games available.



Source: [statistica.com](https://www.statista.com)

Key Product Lines

Hardware - Video Game Console

Nintendo Switch, Nintendo Switch Lite, Nintendo Switch OLED, Joy-Cons

Software - Video Games

Physical game cartridges, digital games & codes

Online Services

Nintendo Switch Online, Nintendo Switch Online + Expansion Pak, Nintendo eShop



Section 2: Brand Personality and Personal Connection

Part A: Brand Imagery

Animal Embodiment

Shiba Inu

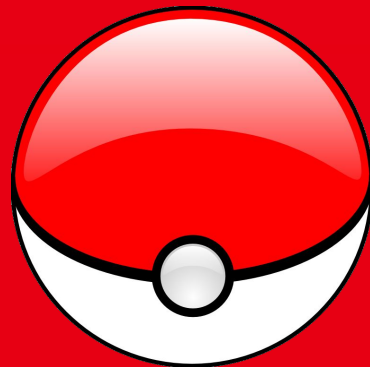
- Generally friendly, especially with families
- Slightly temperamental
- Often doing their own thing
- Very much well liked
- Can be nice and sweet, but takes time to warm up to you



Colour Embodiment

Vibrant Red

- The colour of their company and Switch logo, generally all of their current marketing
- Associated colours of Mario and Pokemon, two of their biggest first-party video game franchises
- Bold, daring
- Bright, pops right out at you



Part B: Emotional Response

How does the brand make you feel?

Generally, Nintendo as a company makes me feel happy and joyful, with a bit of nostalgia. They provided me with childhood moments that I can look fondly on, and have essentially grown with me. With that, Nintendo has become my favourite franchise/video game brand.

With that said, some of their decisions do give me a bit of pause to said feelings. As much as I continue to love what they produce, it isn't easy to overlook some of their more glaring issues behind the scenes. Whether it comes down to business practices or consumer practices, the company would need to take more steps before I can consider them perfect.

What emotions or memories does it evoke, and why?

General joy and nostalgia, but with some concern in the background.

I was fortunate enough to have my grandpa introduce me to the Game Boy SP when I was a child with my cousin, and continued that with the DS. From him, I gained my love for video games and the love that Nintendo put into their work. Whether it was trekking through Yoshi's Island, getting the family together for Wii Sports Resort, or running through a grand prix in Mario Kart DS, they were with me in memories I feel fondly.

These days, I'm tuning in to the latest Nintendo Direct and keeping up with the news and new releases. While I'll always be excited for what comes next, there's a catch.

It's hard not to see that not everything they did/do is absolutely good, and not everyone was able to grow up on Nintendo the way others have. When I see them involved in lawsuits and other disappointing news, there's a pang of sadness. No matter what, however, it'll always be overridden with optimism.

Macro Environment Analysis

Part A: Recent Campaign

Recent Ad Campaign

Which demographic is the promotional campaign targeting?

- Older Gen Z who have played the original release on the Wii
- Younger Gen Z who've played the remaster on the 3DS
- Older generations whom had some experience/curiosity regarding the DK franchise

Why does the campaign appeal to this target audience?

With the legacy that Nintendo has, they can tap into nostalgia to harken back to a previous era when they were younger, while modernizing the games so that the experience is more relevant to today's audiences.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbiojK-Taac>

Part B: Macro Forces

Macro-environment forces that impact/could impact Nintendo

Demographic: As Nintendo continues to follow their mission to make products for everyone, it becomes a balancing act for which games to put out and when. The brand tends to skew younger for their target demographic, but only within the last 10 years or so have they leaned into more mature marketing, since their audience of the 2000s was growing up.

Economic: Amongst the 3 major video game console manufacturing companies, Nintendo was always considered the more budget-friendly option - both in their consoles and games. Despite this, not everyone was/is able to afford their products, for one reason or another. With the current economic climate of inflated prices and improved technology becoming more expensive, the company will have to get creative with how they price things going forward.

Technological: Industry pundits and executives from rival companies push this narrative of an all-digital future, where physical media ceases to exist and the consumer owns nothing but licenses to their chosen media. Not only that, but they're going on 8 years with the Switch, so the community is getting antsy for a spec bump.

Political: With recent events involving Donald Trump ordering executive actions towards international tariffs (and promptly halting them for 30 days after discussions), there's a non-zero chance that this could affect imports.

How Nintendo is/could respond to these impacts



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itpcsQQvgAQ>

On January 16, 2025, Nintendo released a trailer for the Nintendo Switch 2 - the future successor to the original Nintendo Switch. Along with this, they've increased their employment numbers and partnerships over the years to better cater to their increasing player population, so they'll be able to create games for numerous audiences. As that demographic ages, they've proven that they can shift their marketing and advertising to better suit their target for a more mature tone.

While Nintendo hasn't listed any prices yet for the system, it's safe to assume that Nintendo could continue to be the comparatively budget-friendly option to their console competition. Industry executives have been pushing for the idea of 100\$ games, but Nintendo has outright stated that they wouldn't apply that to all of their output. If things get even more dire, the company could reach into their marketing history and re-implement their Nintendo Selects line - a curated line of games selected for discount that ran during their Wii-Wii U days.

Technologically, Nintendo has been known to push creativity with their systems, and the successor is the next in line. While it's a more subtle jump compared to previous generational transitions, they still keep their crown while tastefully implementing their brand's charm with a spec bump. After that, Nintendo has confirmed that they will stay the course of physical games via their reveal trailer. In it, they show off the system's cartridge slot and announce its backwards compatibility with the majority of the predecessor's library, both digital and physical. With this, each party wins something.

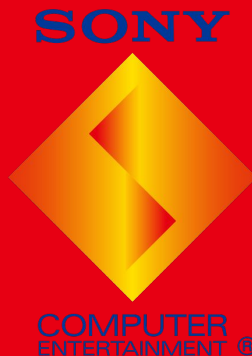
Unfortunately, there's no predicting what will happen on the political side of things for the next four years. Current events are ever-changing, so they'll just have to play it safe from here on out.

Micro-Environment Analysis

Competitors

Sony/Playstation

Nintendo's most direct competitor in the market, Sony has been going toe-to-toe with them for over 20 years now after their failed collaboration years ago. Holding the record for the most units of a system sold (PS2), Sony has lately been having a rocky time with their current iteration, the PS5, but still persevering in spite of it.



Competitors

Microsoft/Xbox

The other member of the console gaming's "Big 3". While Xbox held a lot of North America's attention in the late 2000s-early 2010s with the Xbox 360, that has been dwindling steadily over the years with their later successors, to the point where people tend to forget about them in the conversation. These days, they've shifted their focus to playing friendly with their competition by allowing their first-party games to release on other consoles and PC, going so far as to shift their marketing around it via their "This is an Xbox" campaign.



Microsoft



XBOX

XBOX
SERIES
X



VALVE



Competitors

Valve/Steam Deck

A newer contender in the market, and PC gaming's primary shopfront. Steam has been the go-to distributor for PC players for around 20 years, as they've amassed a large catalogue, adopted consumer-friendly business practices, and continuously give back to their community of players and developers. In 2022, Steam publicly released their widely-lauded handheld console competitor in the Steam Deck. Sony has a competing product on the market as well (the Playstation Portable), but the Steam Deck is considered the first real competitor to the Nintendo Switch, as it's fully portable and powerful enough to act as a miniature computer. Capable of wielding a user's entire Steam library in a truly portable form-factor without an internet connection, Nintendo will really have to knock it out the park this time.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Part A: Strengths



What does the brand do particularly well?

Overall, Nintendo does very well with catering their audience with a vast collection of video game franchises. While not every game they publish will achieve universal acclaim, it's undeniable that there's something for everyone on their systems. Couple that with said games being first-party exclusives, they provide experiences that keep audiences coming back.

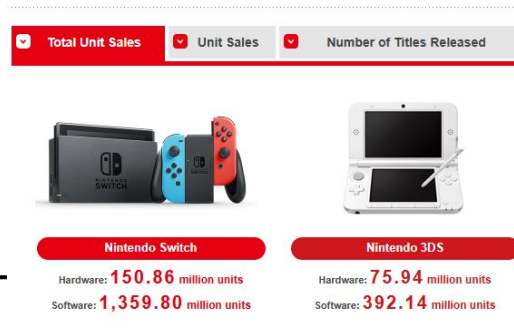
Amongst the industry titans, Nintendo also has another ace up their sleeve - their charm. Whether it's their system designs, their system UI/UX, their in-house developed games, etc., virtually everything they do is done in a way that reminds you of them. In a world where corporations are sterilizing their work for wider market appeal, Nintendo continues to pour love and personality into the products they make.

Part B: Concerns & Recommendations

What concerns do you foresee for the brand or product?

With how well the Nintendo Switch sold in its lifetime so far, it's difficult not to feel wary about the overall success of the successor. 150+ million Switch consoles have been sold to date, so it'll be a tough act to follow.

In recent years, the company has become slightly more hostile in the legal department, and the public has grown aware of it. They've gone after many parties who either developed emulators to play their back catalogue of games/systems that are no longer supported, modified their games for the sake of their own pleasure, or simply uploaded content that included their music, despite never making them publicly accessible in the first place.



Provide actionable recommendations for improvement

- Stay to the current course of their identity (good-hearted fun for all)
- Adopt more consumer-friendly practices
- Collaborate with parties in ways that will benefit everyone, rather than simply strike them down
- Give back/support the communities that got you here

Thank you

Credits

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nintendo.svg>

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<https://www.gettyimages.ca/photos/nintendo-switch-lite>

<https://gameandrepair.com/>

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Credits

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SAKIKO plays with Nintendo Switch. %2851356889046%29.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SAKIKO_plays_with_Nintendo_Switch._%2851356889046%29.jpg)

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<https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/finance/hardsoft/index.html>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/216627/revenue-of-nintendo-by-region/>

<https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Support/Purchasing/Download-games/Countries/Countries-from-which-you-can-purchase-download-games-on-the-official-Nintendo-website-1094121.html>

<https://nintendo.fandom.com/wiki/Regions>

<https://www.edn.com/nintendo-is-founded-september-23-1889/>

<https://www.nintendo.com/en-ca/>