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Playing to Wiin: Nintendo and the Video Game Industry's Greatest Comeback

Daniel Sloan

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Daniel Sloan : Playing to Wiin: Nintendo and the Video Game Industry's Greatest Comeback before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Playing to Wiin: Nintendo and the Video Game Industry's Greatest Comeback:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting topic, and well written book. By Inon Zuckerman Let me start by saying that I read this book right after finishing another book on the same topic, "Nintendo Magic: Winning the Videogame Wars" by Osamu Inoue. While I pretty much enjoyed "Nintendo Magic", and ended up

giving it 4 stars in my review, I think that "Playing to Wiin" is a much better book, and everyone who is debating between them should definitely pick Daniel Sloan's book. "Playing to Wiin" contains an historical perspective of Nintendo and the video games war. The book takes you chronologically from the first days of Nintendo as a Japanese cards manufacturer, its first deal with branded Disney characters on the cards, and all the way to the world of electronic games and video consoles and software. There are two main reasons to pick this book over the competitor: first, editing-wise, the book provides a chronological perspective of the history, which makes lots of sense and reads a lot better than the other (which goes back and forth in time and includes many repetitions). Second, we also get lots of information on Nintendo's competitors at different parallel time lines (Sega, Sony, Microsoft), which allow us to grasp the market in a more complete way. However, one has to keep in mind that the video game market is rapidly changing and adapting, and I think the book might become dated in a year or two. For instance, currently it looks like that Nintendo will probably won't survive Apple's surge on its popular hand-held devices. The first huge crack in its hand-held market is starting to show with the recent amazing \$80 reduction of the 3DS's lunch price, and the declining stock price in the last couple of months. I think Nintendo's immediate future should be as interesting as its history. I think this book makes an interesting read for everyone who is interested in the industry, but also to young Business schools' graduates who can easily learn a thing or two about somewhat different style of managing a large international business (e.g. keep a large amount of liquid cash on the side for dark days). Overall, for me this is a 5 stars book. 4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Not a Single Original Source for this Book! By Game Over I started reading this book with high hopes and belief in the author, who is apparently a Columbia Journalism school educated correspondent. As I kept on reading, I was struck that the author HAS NOT INTERVIEWED A SINGLE PERSON FROM NINTENDO. It's a complete cut and paste job! I was flabbergasted. As someone who is a former journalist herself, I was taught there is no such thing as a single source story. This is an entire book written without a single original interview by the author. If this is the state of journalism these days, no wonder there is so much distrust of the press. I investigated the author, and he is now a PR man for a Japanese car company (Nissan). I could not believe that such a book could be published, frankly.

How Nintendo reclaimed its spot at the top of one of the world's most competitive industries Nintendo was once the dominant force in home video gaming--until Sony and Microsoft pummeled them with powerful new consoles. As those two giants battled each other for market share, Nintendo looked dead and buried. Then, true to its secretive, low-profile approach, Nintendo roared back into the market with its revolutionary Wii console and portable Nintendo DS system. Taking a completely different approach to gaming while embracing its creative roots, the company was back at the top of its game. But how did a struggling Japanese family company, with its origins in nineteenth-century playing cards, come to dominate a competitive, high-tech industry? Playing to Wiin details the key succession issue for Nintendo, the development of the DS and Wii consoles, and the creation of remarkable new gaming software. All these factors combined to drive Nintendo back to the top of the gaming world. Reveals the business strategy that led Nintendo back to the top of the gaming industry amidst fierce competition from bigger rivals An inspirational story of a stunning business turnaround and the hyper-creative minds behind it Written by an acclaimed financial and business journalist based in Tokyo Offering a fascinating inside look at a market-leading company once left for dead, Playing to Wiin is a must-read for executives and leaders interested in one of the greatest business turnarounds in history.

'...rarely told story of the comeback kids of Kyoto...thorough and well researched'. (Financial Times, January 2011). ' Nintendo was founded in 1889 as a playing card firm...a story wonderfully detailed in the new book Playing to Wiin.' (City AM, February 2011). ' Sloan tells the story well, offering detail and insight. As comebacks go, this is a story worth retelling.' (Director, March 2011). From the Inside Flap Nintendo's award-winning home console; the Wii; changed the face of global gaming. While many expected Sony and Microsoft to dominate the market, Nintendo shocked them all with the launch of their revolutionary product. But the story of this secretive, low-profile company has rarely been told. How did a struggling Japanese family company, with its origins in nineteenth century playing cards, come to dominate one of the world's most fiercely competitive industries? In Playing to Wiin, Daniel Sloan details the key succession issue for Nintendo, the development of the DS and Wii mega-hit consoles and the creation of remarkable new gaming software. All these factors combined to expand the gaming population and drive Nintendo to the top of its industry. This fascinating book is essential reading for any executive looking for an inspirational story about creative turnaround strategy. From the Back Cover An intelligent, well-crafted, thoroughly researched and wonderfully entertaining look at one of Japan's oldest and most successful companies. A must-read for anyone interested in gaming industry and/or Japanese business in general. Among its many pleasures is the portrait Dan Sloan paints of Hiroshi Yamauchi, one of the world's most enigmatic corporate leaders. Robert Whiting, Author of You Gotta Have Wa and Tokyo Underworld The last decade was a period of tremendous change for a broad range of technologies affecting the industries of Japan and those across the globe. Playing to Wiin very interestingly details the story of one major industry and leading company, Nintendo, which made change a key to its even greater success. Dr. Sachio Semmoto, Founder, Chairman and CEO EMOBILE Ltd.

Daniel Sloan gives us a riveting tale told uncommonly well, peppered with insights from the front lines and anecdotes that make this a compelling analysis. This tale of creative adaption sits uneasily with pervasive images of woeful Japanese business management, helping us to peel back layers of misleading stereotypes. It is also an interesting read of how Nintendo swept its customers off their feet. — Professor Jeff Kingston, Temple University Japan Author of Contemporary Japan: History, Politics and Social Change since the 1980s In a thorough, modern history of not only Nintendo, but of its rivals Sony and Microsoft, Dan Sloan offers a delightful read about a real life “strategy game” played by some of the most creative minds on earth. Here is one of the best tales I know of a Blue Ocean strategy that shocked the competition and enthralled a new — and still growing — class of global gamers. — John Beck, President, North Star Leadership Group Author of The Kids’ are Alright and Japan’s Business Renaissance Playing to Win is a fascinating account of one of the most challenging and interesting growth industries. Any top executive, new entrants, observers or customers interested in gaining a better grasp of the video games industry must read this book. It is engaging, insightful and strategic. — Martin Roll, Business Brand Strategist, Martin Roll Company Author of global bestseller Asian Brand Strategy Playing to Win is a fast-paced and fascinating narrative of gaming history laced with anecdotes about the individuals who created and shaped a multi-billion dollar industry. Readers will not only find it a very informative history of video games and those who created them, but discover insights into Japanese culture and how it was likewise changed by the gaming phenomenon. Like a good video game, there is a depth to it one can discover through repeated reading. — Richard A. Moe, Professor, Faculty of Global Media Studies Komazawa University