



 **The Harris Poll**

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NINTENDO CASE STUDY: BRAND TRACKING

Companies must measure the impact of their decisions on brand health to ensure that their actions strategically further brand goals. Our industry-leading [Harris Brand Platform](#) provides the real-time insights into consumer brand perceptions that brands need. This always-on business intelligence tool surveys thousands of people daily to keep a continuous pulse on the brand metrics essential to marketing professionals.

In addition to tracking brand equity, Harris Brand Platform tracks customers' progression through the sales conversion funnel – awareness, familiarity, trial, usage, and recommendation. The platform further illustrates crucial consumer touchpoints and the emotional attributes that consumers associate with each brand.

USE CASE: HARNESSING THE PULL OF NOSTALGIA

To illustrate the value of brand tracking, we analyzed the impact of Nintendo's nostalgia-driven product development and marketing in late 2021 and early 2022 on their brand equity. In this case study, we see how the gaming giant's decisions echo players' youth to generate ongoing enthusiasm for the Nintendo brand.

While nostalgia (a sentimental longing for the past) can be triggered by anything that reminds an individual of either an item or event from the past, researchers have found that **video games' immersive quality makes them a better catalyst for nostalgia than other forms of entertainment**. When playing a video game, players *experience* the story rather than *watch* events unfold, cementing a stronger memory and emotional pull. Researchers found that player nostalgia becomes even stronger when the game play is tied to socializing, a common component of gaming. **Since the original Nintendo console was released in 1983, Millennials are the first generation where adults can feel nostalgia for video games.**

Nintendo cleverly plays off video games' strong nostalgic pull by reimagining their already popular games rather than investing in completely new characters and concepts. Classic Nintendo games such as Pokémon, Super Mario Bros., and Super Smash Bros., have been modified and remade countless times. Even lesser-known games, like Luigi's Mansion, are being recreated (currently on its third iteration). Despite the similar story lines and characters, gaming enthusiasts eagerly await the latest versions of each game. **This strategy provides a unique mix of the novel and the nostalgic, as the latest releases allow players to simultaneously keep one eye on the past and play games of today.**

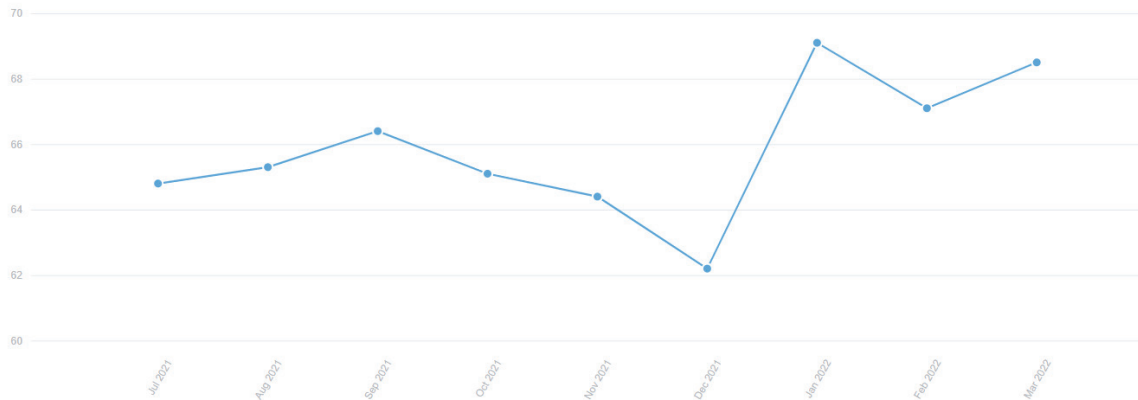
In early January 2022, Nintendo announced that they are working on a **ninth iteration of the popular Mario Kart franchise**, teasing a "new twist" in gameplay. A longtime favorite of Nintendo enthusiasts, it is no surprise that this announcement garnered a lot of excitement, and speculation. Gamers took to social media, and the term "[Nintendo Kart](#)" took off as fans speculated whether the latest edition would be a mash up across the entire Nintendo universe, similar to Super Smash Bros.' eclectic mix of Nintendo characters. The commentators had clearly played earlier versions of Mario Kart, and Nintendo's announcement arguably spurred greater discussion than a completely new game would have. **Releasing new versions of beloved titles lowers the developer's financial gamble.** By reimagining a tested favorite, Nintendo can be confident that a large consumer base will swipe their credit cards the instant they release the title.

In addition to game development, **Nintendo has overtly woven nostalgia into their marketing collaborations**. In November 2021, Nintendo announced a partnership with late 90s/early 2000s [singer Christina Aguilera](#). Aguilera is a cherished piece of many Millennials' childhoods, adding a layer of nostalgia to the video game maker's campaign. She also puts nostalgia front and center as she explains her partnership with Nintendo. Aguilera reminisces on her favorite childhood video games and explains how she and her kids can now bond over their shared love of Nintendo characters and games.

Aguilera's story shows how Nintendo seeps across the modern American family ethos. Original Nintendo enthusiasts are now old enough to share their beloved childhood games with their own kids. **This is the first time this shared cultural understanding can extend across generations.** Today's youth share the same love of Mario, Luigi, and Princess Peach as their Millennial parents.

Looking at Nintendo's Harris Brand Platform brand equity data, you see a **substantial jump in brand equity from December 2021 (62.4) to January 2022 (69.0)** that aligns with the timeline for the company's "nostalgia-powered" Mario Kart announcement and Christina Aguilera partnership.

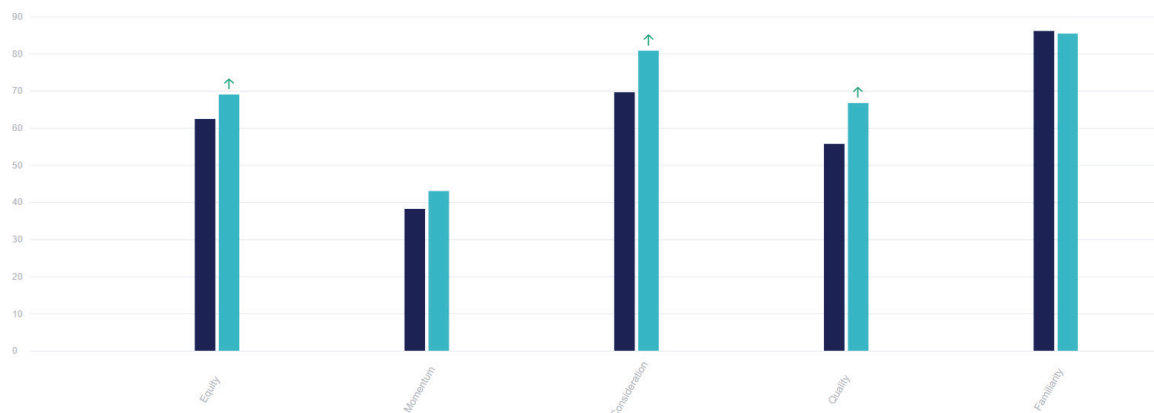
NINTENDO'S MONTHLY CHANGE IN BRAND EQUITY



Base: US adults familiar with the Nintendo brand, 7/1/21-3/31/22 n=6,697.

Looking more closely at the four components that make up Nintendo's equity score (familiarity, quality, consideration, and momentum), the most significant growth is seen in **consideration of purchase (+11.2)** and **perceived brand quality (+11)**. These numbers reflect consumers' excitement in Nintendo's product developments and desire to experience their latest releases.

NINTENDO'S BRAND EQUITY DECEMBER V. JANUARY



Base: US adults familiar with the Nintendo brand, 12/1/21-12/31/21, n=739. 1/1/22-1/31/22, n=731.

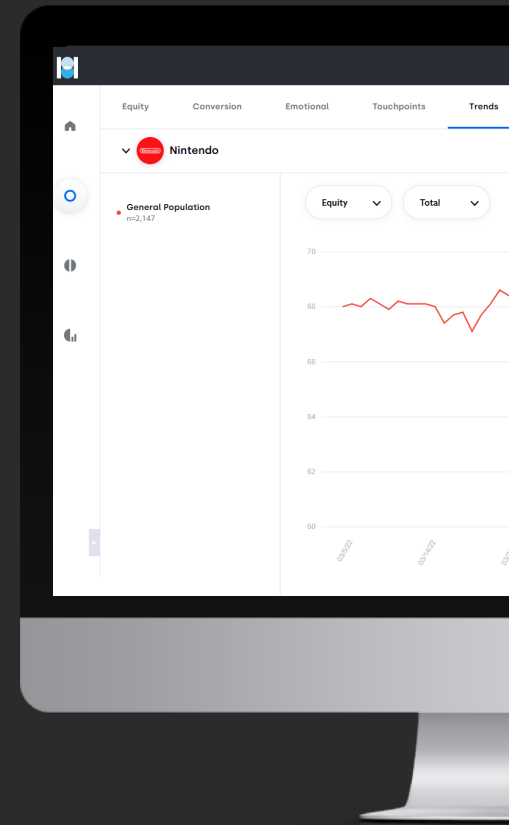
Not all consumers approve of this strategy. An [article from The Atlantic](#) loudly states its viewpoint with the no nonsense title "Nostalgia Is Ruining Video Games." **The author goes on to argue that companies are playing on consumers' nostalgia to increase sales, but at the expense of creativity and innovation within the gaming space.**

But for now, this strategy seems to be paying off for Nintendo, both in game purchases and brand equity as their loyal fanbase looks forward to the latest version of their favorite Nintendo franchise. In decades to come this strategy may fall flat, and consumers may desire more novel game concepts, but for now it is helping this gaming giant remain strong.

BRAND INTELLIGENCE BUILT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Harris Poll Brand Platform offers real-time consumer insights for your brand. Don't wait to hear what your customers are saying about you and your competitors - get up and running in less than 24 hours

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METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted online within the United States between December 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021 among 739 US adults familiar with the Nintendo brand and January 1, 2022 - January 31, 2022 among 731 US adults familiar with the Nintendo brand by The Harris Poll via its Harris Brand Platform.

ABOUT THE HARRIS POLL

The Harris Poll is one of the longest-running surveys in the U.S., tracking public opinion, motivations and social sentiment since 1963. It is now part of Harris Insights & Analytics, a global consulting and market research firm that strives to reveal the authentic values of modern society to inspire leaders to create a better tomorrow. We work with clients in three primary areas; building twenty-first century corporate reputation, crafting brand strategy and performance tracking, and earning organic media through public relations research. Our mission is to provide insights and advisory to help leaders make the best decisions possible.