

A Cheat Code For The Next Video Game Blockbuster

Alan Zhang

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Introduction & Motivation

As the video game industry grows into a global economic titan, understanding the nuanced behaviors of its diverse audience has become essential for publishers and analysts. This project explores the historical dynamics of genre popularity, platform performance, and regional sales to determine what exactly makes a title commercially viable. Our analysis aims to uncover the distinct "winning formulas" for different markets by quantifying how specific variables drive the probability of a game's financial success.

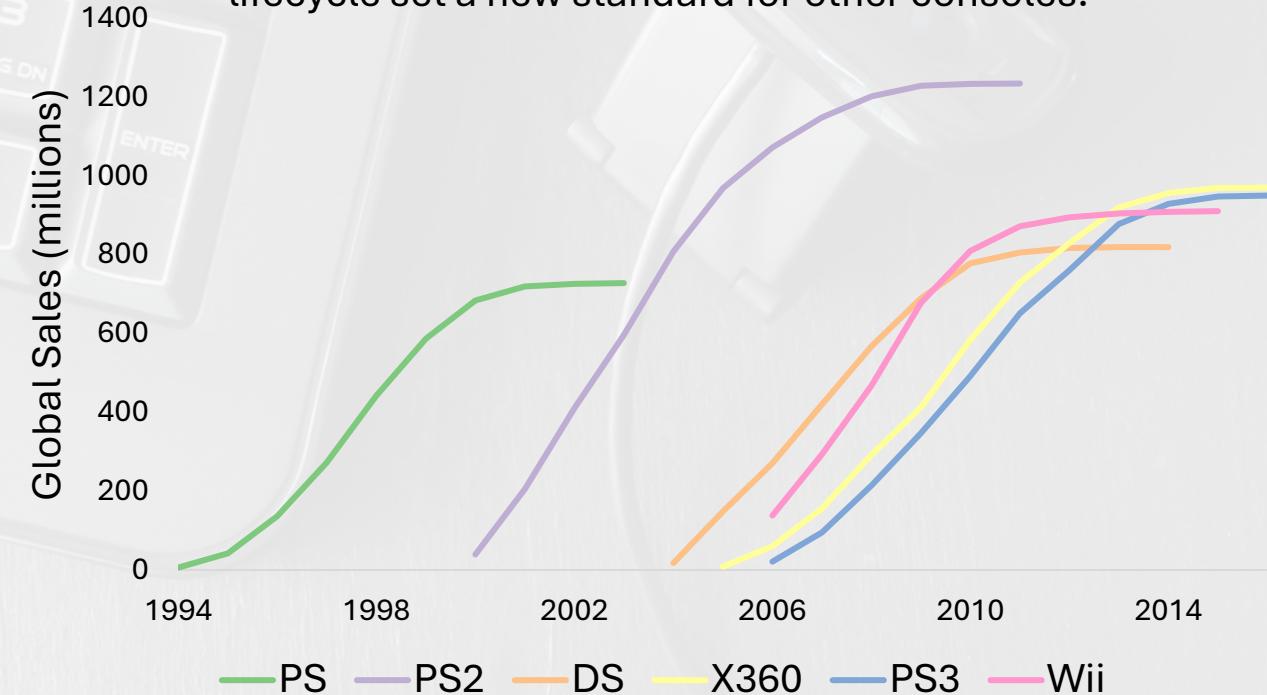
Data

We utilized the Kaggle Video Game Sales dataset, which records global revenue and attributes for over 16,500 titles released between 1980 and 2017. This comprehensive archive allows us to cross-reference regional sales figures with genre, platform, and publisher data to uncover the statistically significant drivers of market success.

<https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/zahidmughal2343/video-games-sale/data>

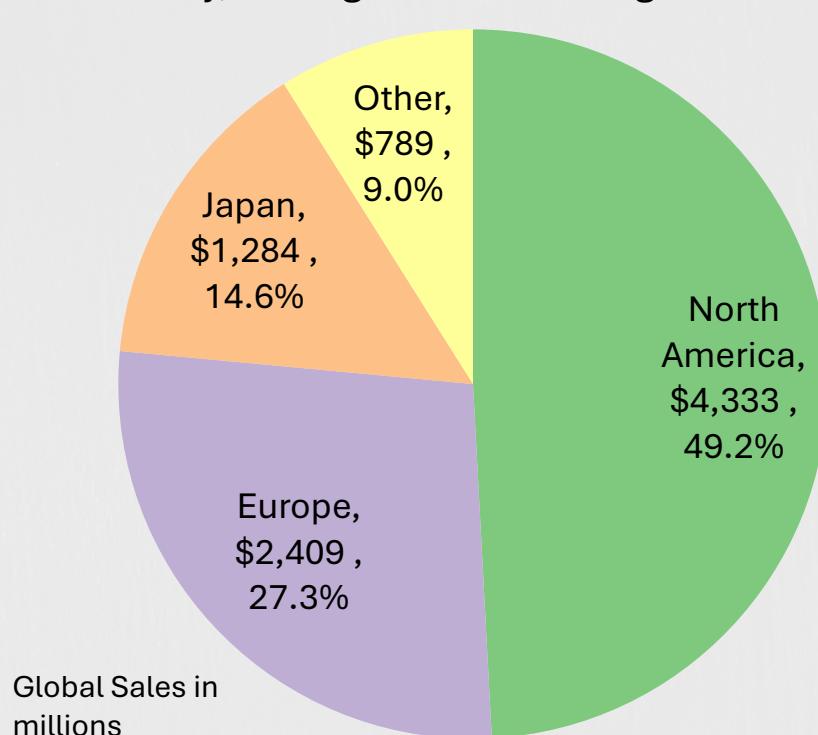
The Reign of the PS2

The PS 2 stands as the undisputed king of consoles, generating the highest cumulative game sales in history. Its extensive library and long lifecycle set a new standard for other consoles.



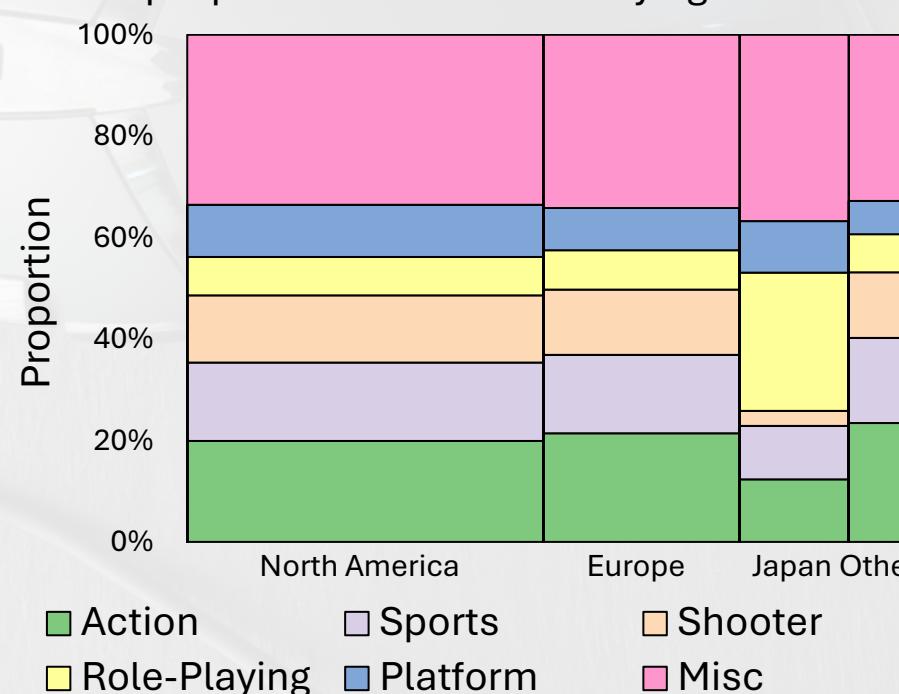
The Market Heavyweight

North America is the dominant force in the industry, driving 49.2% of total global sales.



The Cultural Divide

While Western markets (North America and Europe) favor Action titles, Japan exhibits a unique preference for Role-Playing Games.



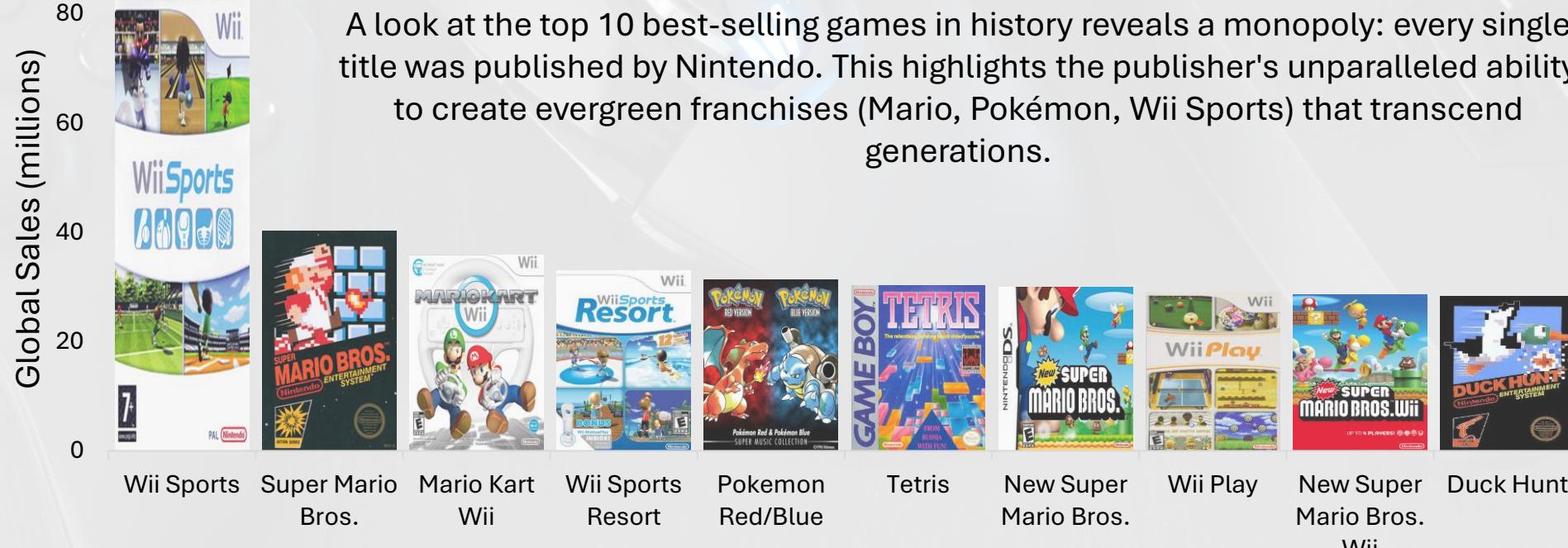
The Efficiency Paradox

While Action games generate the most total revenue due to sheer volume, Platformer games are the most efficient, boasting the highest sales per game.



The Nintendo Dynasty

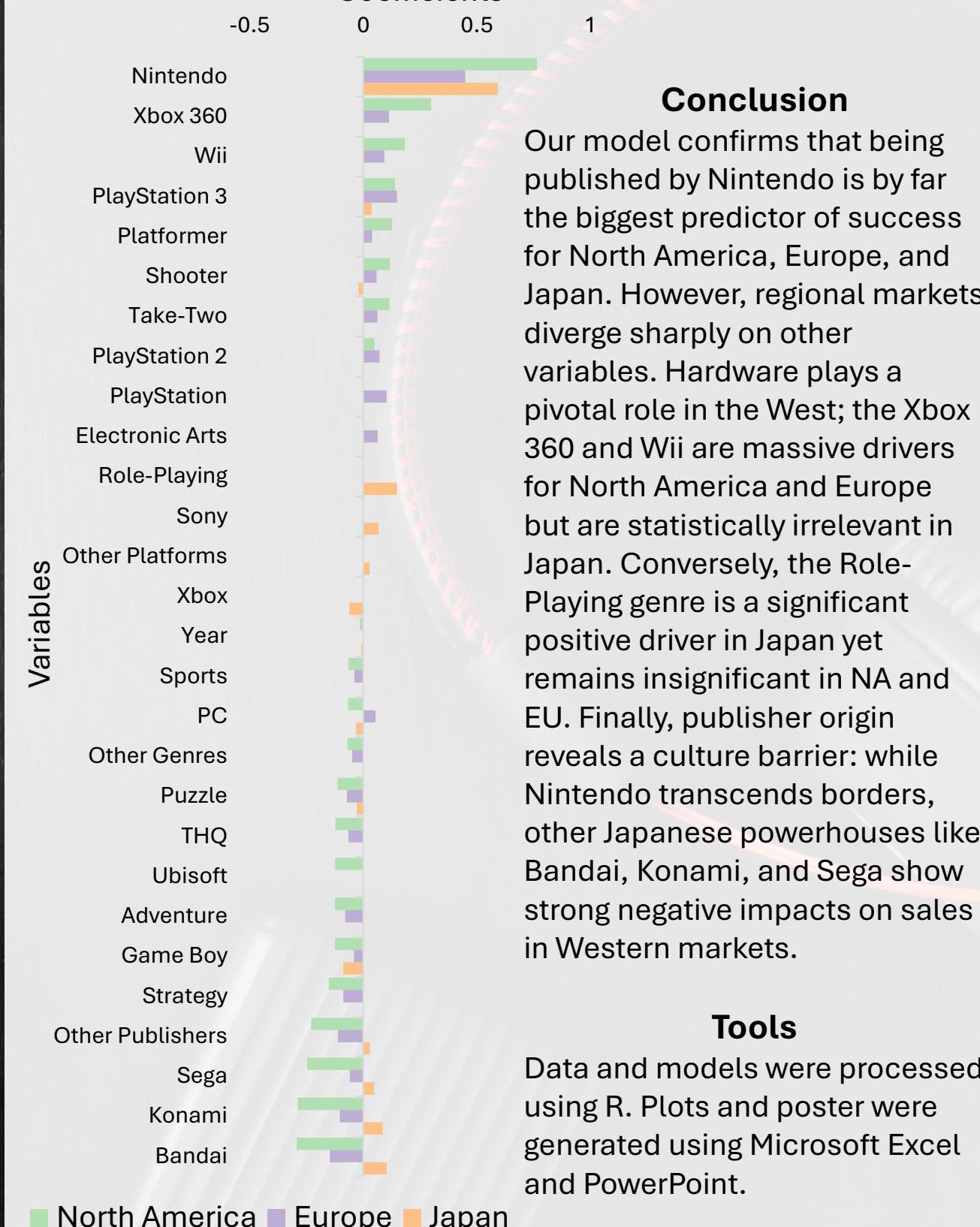
A look at the top 10 best-selling games in history reveals a monopoly: every single title was published by Nintendo. This highlights the publisher's unparalleled ability to create evergreen franchises (Mario, Pokémon, Wii Sports) that transcend generations.



The Winning Formula

$$\text{Sales} = \beta_0 + (\beta_1 \cdot \text{Year}) + \sum (\beta_i \cdot \text{Genre}_i) + \sum (\beta_j \cdot \text{Platform}_j) + \sum (\beta_k \cdot \text{Publisher}_k) + \epsilon$$

Coefficients



Conclusion

Our model confirms that being published by Nintendo is by far the biggest predictor of success for North America, Europe, and Japan. However, regional markets diverge sharply on other variables. Hardware plays a pivotal role in the West; the Xbox 360 and Wii are massive drivers for North America and Europe but are statistically irrelevant in Japan. Conversely, the Role-Playing genre is a significant positive driver in Japan yet remains insignificant in NA and EU. Finally, publisher origin reveals a culture barrier: while Nintendo transcends borders, other Japanese powerhouses like Bandai, Konami, and Sega show strong negative impacts on sales in Western markets.

Tools

Data and models were processed using R. Plots and poster were generated using Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint.