

Masahiro Sakurai: Game Developer, Director and Social Media Interactions

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## Abstract

This research paper will look into a game developer for Nintendo Incorporated, Masahiro Sakurai and his connection with social medias. The social medias being observed in this research include Masahiro's Twitter account (@Sora\_Sakurai) and his presence in the livestreamed events of Nintendo's informational news broadcast, Nintendo Direct. The events he takes place in are about arguably his most popular game, Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, on which he served as the game director. This paper will also address other works of Masahiro and give a brief background of him and that work. The main questions this research aims to answer are: "Who is Masahiro Sakurai?", "What has he done?", "What are his connections to social media?", and "Should one look at Masahiro Sakurai's social media persona as an example to follow?" The most notable works Sakurai has done are the Super Smash Brothers games, for which he is featured on Nintendo Directs to show off features and deliver news, as well as his most frequent posts on his Twitter as of recently. On these social medias that he is running or featured in, Sakurai presents himself well, and proves that he is one that would be a good example of social media habits to follow.

*Keywords:* Nintendo Direct, Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, social media, Masahiro Sakurai

## Masahiro Sakurai: Game Developer, Director and Social Media Interactions

It is almost impossible to stay within the loop of information without having some sort of social media. This social media does not have to be the companies like Instagram, Facebook, or Snapchat. Social media refers to any form of electronic communication, including websites or blogs where users can share information and other multimedia content. Thus, while Instagram and others still fall under the umbrella of social media, there are many other forms. As stated before, information passes through these social medias and it is almost impossible to receive this information without it, and Masahiro Sakurai is no exclusion. Masahiro Sakurai, a game developer and director for Nintendo Incorporated, is featured in social media himself quite often. His presence in social media may not be as commonly known to those outside of Japan, his home country, due to the use of Japanese language in his posts, but it is there nonetheless. Masahiro Sakurai represents himself and his company well on social media, leaving no question about whether what he is saying is acceptable or not, thus, people should strive to act like him on these social medias because it represents a good and respectful character.

One might wonder why Masahiro Sakurai's social media would be important to keep track of, and this can be answered just by knowing about him and his career. Masahiro Sakurai is currently working for Nintendo, undeniably one of the largest video game developer companies in the world. At Nintendo, he has worked as a game developer for years, and is the well-known game director of one of Nintendo's most popular games, the Super Smash Bros. series. In addition, he has also assisted in the design of some of Nintendo's software for the company's video game systems (US Fed News Service, 2015). More work that he has done for Nintendo features Kid Icarus: Uprising for the Nintendo 3DS. He was interviewed about his work on this

game by Time Techland's Evan Narcisse in an article published on June 28, 2010. In this article, Sakurai gives off a professional, polite, and genuine persona, which is something we also see in his social media interactions. Sakurai is a prominent figure in this field and does his best to give off his best image on Twitter and featuring in several of Nintendo's livestreamed news broadcast, Nintendo Direct.

The easiest to access for those who do not necessarily speak Japanese would be the Nintendo Direct, which is translated in the subtitles, but also available as an English voice-over. While the Directs are livestreamed, they are all stored on Nintendo's website and on their official youtube account, so they are accessible even after they have aired. While Masahiro Sakurai is supposed to be formal in these videos, as it is a representation of the company he works for, his presence is there nonetheless, just as a part of the company's social media. Masahiro Sakurai occasionally gets segments where he himself can talk about the games he is currently directing, or the special releases these games may have prior to debut. While he talks about important information about the game, he also makes comments that express his own opinions as well. One such example is from the latest Nintendo Direct, which aired on November 6, 2019, featuring Sakurai talking about the newest addition to the Super Smash Bros. roster, Terry Bogard. In this broadcast, Sakurai begins by explaining the history and origin where the new character comes from and his love for the series that Terry was featured in. Later on in the Direct, Sakurai also mentions a character not seen with the other side-characters added into the game, the translation on the video stating, "Super Smash Brothers Ultimate is for good boys and girls of many different ages, so we decided not to feature her. Please forgive us." This is mainly because of the characters suggestive clothing featured in the characters original game. The comments he makes

in these videos show his opinion and even his respectful request for forgiveness on behalf of him and his design team. If I had the amount of influence and attention that Sakurai has, I would strive to have this same attitude and behavior that he shares with the world through the platforms. Sakurai appears in more than just the Nintendo Direct, however with less of a face or voice and more text, on Twitter.

Masahiro Sakurai's Twitter is written almost entirely in Japanese, making the access to this social media selective in its audiences. The audience that follows is either those who speak Japanese themselves or those who take the messages written and translate them on their own time. These messages can range anywhere from details on certain events or objects, all the way to expressions of gratitude to those who are showing appreciation for his work. For example, he posted a picture of a fan-drawn poster that was sent in to the Nintendo offices and paired choice words with the picture, saying "We received a poster of Smash Bros. Fan Art from overseas. It is big enough to protrude from the table. This is amazing!" He also retweeted an American gaming magazine's article about his game, Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, which detailed how it had officially passed street fighter as the best-selling fighting game in the world(@Sora\_Sakurai). As stated earlier, Masahiro Sakurai does his best to share as much information as possible, but sometimes there is a line that he cannot cross. On his Twitter account bio, he mentions in both English and Japanese that he can answer no questions about upcoming releases of any capacity.

Masahiro Sakurai is someone I and others should strive to be like on social media, following his example of being genuine by sharing opinions but being careful to not overstep any boundaries. Looking at both of the main social media outlets Masahiro Sakurai is featured on, there is no profane or obscene expressions or situations seen. This gives him a more respectable

and clean image on all platforms he may be mentioned on, as there is nothing that could suggest he has made any profane or obscene comments.

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 @Sora\_Sakurai

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**160**

Followers  
**375K**

Likes  
**1**

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**板井 政博** @Sora\_Sakurai · Oct 30  
 スマブラの金ワイター集合って、聞き切れたら素晴らしいですが、  
 実際には数件届いたところで後得するが投げ出すのではないかと思います。それ  
 だけタイムヘンなチャレンジであります。

33
 578
 3.9K

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**板井 政博** @Sora\_Sakurai · Oct 30  
 海外の方から、スマブラ集合イラストのガスターを送っていただきました。  
 テーブルからはみ出さずいいサイズです。こりゃスゴい！



218
 8.8K
 35K

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**板井 政博** @Sora\_Sakurai · Oct 14  
 私は、Nintendo Live!は1日目の朝からいいましたが、大会のサプライズにしたい  
 とのことで、2日目の最後のほうで忍んでました。  
 とこで会場集合後、すでにタリィ・ガストがいますね。





