



Super Mario: How Nintendo Conquered America

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The first princess Mario saved was Nintendo itself.

In 1981, Nintendo of America was a one-year-old business already on the brink of failure. Its president, Mino Arakawa, was stuck with two thousand unsold arcade cabinets for a dud of a game (*Radar Scope*). So he hatched a plan.

Back in Japan, a boyish, shaggy-haired staff artist named Shigeru Miyamoto designed a new game for the unsold cabinets featuring an angry gorilla and a small jumping man. *Donkey Kong* brought in \$180 million in its first year alone and launched the career of a short, chubby plumber named Mario.

Since then, Mario has starred in over two hundred games, generating profits in the billions. He is more recognizable than Mickey Mouse, yet he's little more than a mustache in bib overalls. How did a mere smear of pixels gain such huge popularity?

Super Mario tells the story behind the Nintendo games millions of us grew up with, explaining how a Japanese trading card company rose to dominate the fiercely competitive video-game industry.

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