

We'd like Nintendo to support all of their grassroots communities actively, but if they are unable to do that, at minimum we'd like them to not continue their longstanding record of blocking community development and growth through C&Ds, threats, broken agreements, or discouragement of third-party community investors. Communities have bent over backwards for years to try to encourage Nintendo to get involved, but after years of failed attempts and their continued community harm, it's hard to imagine a positive relationship going forward.

Supporting the community could mean supporting third-parties to create tournaments with proper prize pools, putting real prizes towards their tournaments and just (at minimum) recognizing their games for their eSports potential. It'd include valuing the work of TOs and community volunteers as something to take pride in and support; organizers have put thousands of hours and dollars into making events that benefit Nintendo directly (in encouraging folk to buy the game, to continue to play the game, etc) - instead of supporting these folk, Nintendo has actively tried to squish any sort of innovation or larger development of not just the competitive communities but the casual ones as well.

It's important to note, however, that much of this lack of support and active harm has been limited to Nintendo of America. Nintendo of Europe has a history of actively supporting and running LANs and Nintendo in Japan has been incredibly involved and supportive of that community development.

Nintendo has: sent about 2 tweets per LAN event that they have sponsored and occasionally provided docks for some tournaments, in exchange for tournaments following their explicit rules and providing advertisements that they control. They often have come through at the last second for this support, leaving organizations running events to flounder to find hardware and sponsors last minute and not being able to set rules properly. This runs the gambit from shutting down specific games at tournaments (through often vague threats to TOs, something that's become public more recently) to whether or not game music can be played on stream at all - even things as minimal as whether some songs can even be played next to each other.

Decisions are usually made behind closed doors and not explained to the community plainly and solely done through legalese, not even acknowledging the harm that they have done (if they acknowledge their behavior at all). NDAs frequently have strangled TOs involved in being able to explain decisions made. Nintendo's involvement in most of their games communities has been a bait-and-switch situation -- they hang the idea of active involvement in front of TOs (and third-party organizations!) so that concessions they want are made at the expense of the thriving community and then pull out their support at the last minute.

Splatoon (and Melee, and Ultimate, and Arms, etc) can all dream of an amazing gaming utopia of supported, paid tournaments where players can make a proper living off of their tournament involvement and where tournament organizers can actually be employees, rather than volunteers - but we are all dreaming right now and that continues to be proven, time and time again. We'd love to have Nintendo actively support us or even listen to the community but they aren't willing to come to the table. It's quixotic to spend the emotional energy in bending backwards to please a company that when push comes to shove, will continue to cause harm. It's time to recognize that we are all dreaming, or for Nintendo to meet us at the table.