

= Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock =

Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock is a music rhythm game , the third main installment in the Guitar Hero series , and the fourth title overall . The game was published by Activision and distributed by RedOctane . It is the first game in the series to be developed by Neversoft after Activision 's acquisition of RedOctane and MTV Games ' purchase of Harmonix , the previous development studio for the series . The game was released worldwide for the PlayStation 2 , PlayStation 3 , Wii and Xbox 360 in October 2007 , with Budcat Creations assisting Neversoft on developing the PlayStation 2 port and Vicarious Visions solely developing on the Wii port respectively . Aspyr Media published the Microsoft Windows and Mac OS X versions of the game , releasing them later in 2007 .

Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock retains the basic gameplay from previous games in the Guitar Hero series , where the player uses a guitar @-@ shaped controller to simulate the playing of lead , bass , and rhythm guitar parts in rock songs by playing in time to scrolling notes on @-@ screen . The game , in addition to existing single @-@ player Career modes , includes a new Co @-@ Op Career mode and competitive challenges that pit the player against in @-@ game characters and other players . Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock is the first game in the series to include an online multiplayer feature , which is enabled in the PlayStation 3 , Wii and Xbox 360 versions . Initially the game offers over 70 songs , most of which are master tracks . The PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 versions feature the ability to download additional songs . The musicians Tom Morello (of the bands Rage Against the Machine and Audioslave) and Slash (of Guns N ' Roses and Velvet Revolver) make appearances both as guitar battle opponents and playable characters in the game . The PlayStation 3 , Xbox 360 and Microsoft Windows versions also include Bret Michaels (of Poison) as a non @-@ playable character .

Critics were generally favorable towards the game , but reviewers noted a difference in the game 's style compared to previous installments , associating it with it being Neversoft 's first development attempt with the series . The game is often cited to be too difficult , creating " walls of notes " that are difficult to complete , and led to alterations in note placement for future games in the series . According to Activision , Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock is the best @-@ selling video game of 2007 , both in terms of units sold and revenue earned , and that it is the first single retail video game to exceed one billion dollars in sales . The company also claimed that it is the second @-@ best selling video game title since 1995 , following Wii Play , and is one of the best @-@ selling third @-@ party games available for the Wii .

= = Development = =

Activision purchased RedOctane in 2006 for \$ 100 million to achieve " an early leadership position in music @-@ based gaming " . In September of that year , MTV acquired Harmonix , the developer of all Guitar Hero games up to that point ; this purchase would later lead to the development of the competing music @-@ game series , Rock Band . Without Harmonix 's availability , Activision selected Neversoft Entertainment to develop Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock . Neversoft president Joel Jewett stated his company was asked to develop the game because of a conversation that Jewett had with RedOctane 's founders Kai and Charles Huang at the 2006 E3 Convention , in which Jewett mentioned how the first Guitar Hero game helped reduce the stress in the Neversoft offices during their development of Tony Hawk 's Project 8 . Several months later , Jewett was contacted by the Huangs , asking if Neversoft wanted to work on Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock . Dusty Welch , head of publishing at RedOctane , recognized Neversoft had a " 10 @-@ year track record of launching a game every single year and being in the top of the charts " and felt that the development group " brought a better and deeper sense of music sensibilities " to the series . Despite the experience from the previous games , Alan Flores , head of development at Neversoft , commented that the game was " deceptively simple " and that it took much work for their 30 @-@ person team to recreate the gameplay for Guitar Hero III . Though they " wanted to take the Guitar Hero experience to the next level " by adding additional instruments in the same manner as Rock

Band , they opted to focus on perfecting the guitar gameplay . In 2010 , Activision CEO Bobby Kotick stated that they believed Neversoft would help them to develop great games for the series , but has since come to regret their failure to seek Harmonix for further development responsibility and believed this would have been a better move for both companies .

The note tracks , on @-@ stage motions of the band , and stage lighting and effect synchronization were created by the same team of developers who were all musicians and had previous experience in note tracking either from other music video games or from MIDI tracking . The note tracks were developed by placing notes in time with the song ; for sections that had difficult parts to track within the game 's engine , they opted to use sequences of notes that would seem to match the music but still be playable . Hammer @-@ ons and pull @-@ offs (" HOPOs ") for the previous Guitar Hero games were automatically placed by the software ; in this iteration , the engine was designed to allow manual placement of HOPOs to make it easier to create certain effects in songs , such as sustained string bends . Character animations were selected from several made available by the animation team , while stage lighting and effects were selected to mimic those used in live performances from YouTube or from concert appearances . A separate team came up with the concepts for the various stages and arenas in the game . The team wanted keep the same art style as the previous Guitar Hero games but add " a certain spark " to improve upon previous designs . Once a stage idea was brainstormed , the team sought visual references from real stages to expand upon , and a 2D drawing of the envisioned stage was prepared for review and to remain a constant goal of the stage design . From that , a " pop up " three @-@ dimensional version of the stage was created , and elements from the 2D concept art were added to determine the appropriate placement of set decorations . This team worked with the animation department to place the band members , stage lighting , and other effects in the game before the final 3D version of the stage was completed . The final stages included several animated elements to help further bring the stage to life .

For the game 's characters , the developers intended to keep the comical looks from the previous games , but they decided to update their appearances with realistic materials and textures to take advantage of the more powerful level of graphics capabilities of seventh @-@ generation consoles . The designers first drew character sketches to determine the characters ' looks and clothing , creating a main and an alternate outfit for each character , which were then made into reference artwork . Afterward , low @-@ level meshes for each character were created , with details added with Zbrush , resulting in characters that , before being scaled down for the game environment , had more than six million polygons . Textures and pixel shaders were added using the team 's previous work on Tony Hawk 's Project 8 to match the style of earlier Guitar Hero games . Unlike the Tony Hawk games , each character in the game was given a unique skeleton to match their variations in sizes and shapes , allowing the animators to create unique moves for individual characters . Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock introduces three new characters modeled after real @-@ life musicians . Slash , Tom Morello , and Bret Michaels , each performing one or more songs from their past recordings . All three were brought into the game using motion capture from the Motion Analysis Corporation .

= = Soundtrack = =

= = Release = =

Activision 's original announcement of Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock indicated a planned release in their 2008 fiscal year , ending on March 31 , 2008 . ; RedOctane later clarified a release in the last quarter of 2007 , and further revealed that all versions of the game would feature wireless controllers as well as online multiplayer and downloadable content . The game was officially announced by Activision and RedOctane on May 23 , 2007 for the PlayStation 2 , PlayStation 3 , Wii and Xbox 360 . Budcat Creations ported the game to the PlayStation 2 , and Vicarious Visions ported it to the Wii . In September 2007 , Aspyr Media announced they would be publishing Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock for the Microsoft Windows and Mac OS X ports . Demos of Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock

appeared in Tony Hawk 's Proving Ground for the Xbox 360 in the Xbox Live Marketplace , and from the Internet as an ISO image . The demo features five songs (" Lay Down " , " Rock You Like a Hurricane " , " Even Flow " , " Hit Me with Your Best Shot " , and " The Metal ") played within the Desert Rock Tour venue . As shipped , the game did not offer offline Co @-@ Op Quickplay mode , a feature that was included in Guitar Hero II . This mode was added to the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 versions via a patch .

Activision called Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock its " largest product launch ever " , selling more than 1 @.@ 4 million copies , and making over \$ 100 million in its first week of release in North America ; another 1 @.@ 9 million copies were sold in the following month . Subsequently , the company was concerned that they were unable to meet the game 's demand for the 2007 holiday season . As of July 15 , 2008 , the game has sold more than eight million copies . During the first seven months of 2008 , the game sold 3 @.@ 037 million units in the United States , 412 @,@ 000 in the United Kingdom , and 26 @,@ 000 in Japan , for a total of 3 @.@ 475 million units , according to the NPD Group , GfK Chart @-@ Track , and Enterbrain . More than two million copies of the game were sold for the Wii platform , making it the best @-@ selling third @-@ party title for the platform . Game sales during the first 12 months after the game 's release were over \$ 750 million . At the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show , Activision CEO Mike Griffith stated that Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock is the first retail video game to exceed one billion dollars in sales . According to accumulated data from NPD Group in January 2010 , Guitar Hero III is the second best @-@ selling video game in the United States since 1995 , following Wii Play . In March 2011 , the title had become the top selling game with \$ 830 @.@ 9 million in lifetime sales .

= = = Reception = = =

Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock generally received positive reviews , although it scored lower than its predecessors on review aggregator Metacritic . The Gibson Les Paul controller included with the game 's bundled version received particular praise . GameSpy , in a review of the four console versions , favorable reviewed the new controllers , and called the Wii guitar the best guitar peripheral that they had seen , praising the vibration option .

Several reviews criticized the changes made to Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock compared to previous games in the Guitar Hero series . IGN 's review of the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 versions considered the game a " pretty safe effort " from Neversoft , doing little to change the game due to it being their first time working on the series . They also criticized the lack of customizable characters . IGN 's review of the Wii version described the game 's presentation and art direction as feeling " forced " , and , as a result , less visually appealing than previous installments . GameDaily questioned the " white boy soundtrack " and would have liked to have seen more tracks from legends like Jimi Hendrix and Prince in the mix . " GameSpy criticized some of the difficulty tweaks in the game . They stated that " Medium simply feels like Hard @-@ minus @-@ the @-@ orange @-@ button , " and that the Star Power phrases were too long , comparing the overall game to a " trial by fire " in contrast to the previous games in the series . They were also critical of the dongle approach used for the PlayStation 3 controllers , and failings in the online support for the PlayStation 3 version . GameSpot criticized the game for its " heavy dose of in @-@ game advertising . " GameSpy stated that the PlayStation 2 version received " the short end of the stick " because of a lack of online play . Official Xbox Magazine also criticized the game for being " too competitive " , a facet not readily found in the previous games . The PC version has been criticized for its high system requirements , and for lag and slowdown problems even on high @-@ end systems .

= = = Guinness World Record = = =

Recognizing the game 's popularity , Guinness World Records created a category for the Highest Score for a Single Song on Guitar Hero III : Legends of Rock in its Gamer 's Edition , using the song " Through the Fire and Flames " , noted as the most difficult song in the game . The record has been

traded back and forth between Chris Chike , who also won the 2008 Play N Trade National Guitar Hero III Tournament , and Danny Johnson , the present holder of the record . Both Chike and Johnson have completed the song without missing a note , documenting their performances on YouTube , though both Chike and Johnson have hit 100 % of the notes at an official event leading to a hard world record breaker .

= = = Lawsuit = = =

In November 2010 , Axl Rose sued Activision for \$ 20 million for misuse of Guns N ' Roses music and its musicians (specifically Slash) in Guitar Hero III . In the lawsuit , Rose claims that when he learned that a Slash @-@ like character and other Velvet Revolver songs would be included in Guitar Hero II , he refused to allow Activision to use " Welcome to the Jungle " within Guitar Hero III , nor promotional images of Slash that had already been created . According to Rose 's claims , Activision stated that these would only be used as promotional material for a trade show , but ended up using them within the game . Furthermore , Rose asserts that Activision had used " Sweet Child o ' Mine " , which was only licensed for use on Guitar Hero II , was used for promotional material within Guitar Hero III . The judge in the case has allowed the trial to move forward after an initial hearing in March 2011 . A jury trial was expected to start in May 2012 . At initial hearings in August 2012 , the judge dismissed a fraud claim made by Rose , considering that it took three years for Rose and his publisher Black Frog Music to file these claims after the release of the game , an excessively long time for such a claim . The judge maintained the likelihood of the breach of contract argument , setting a jury trial to likely occur in early 2013 . In January and February 2013 , the judge dismissed the case , indicated that the lateness of the filing of the lawsuit , about three years since the release of the game , gave him grounds to throw out the suit , though Rose stated that the delay was due to promises made by Activision for a Guns N ' Roses @-@ themed game as compensation for the violation of contract terms .

= = Technical issues = =

Although the Wii version of the game was advertised as supporting Dolby Pro Logic II , players reported that the game would output audio in neither Pro Logic II nor stereo , providing only mono sound . Activision had offered a free replacement remastered game disk that corrects this issue for North American and European releases . Later , Activision further extended the replacement program to include a full refund of the game 's purchase price as an alternative to obtaining a replacement disc . A class @-@ action lawsuit over the mono sound issue was settled out of court , and Activision agreed to ship free faceplates for the Les Paul guitar controller to those who requested a replacement disc . Additionally , during the first few days of the game 's release , players experienced difficulties uploading their scores to the official Guitar Hero website . Neversoft attributed the problem to " heavy amounts of traffic " .