

= X @-@ Men Legends =

X @-@ Men Legends is an action role @-@ playing video game developed by Raven Software and published by Activision . It was released on the GameCube , PlayStation 2 and Xbox consoles in the fall of 2004 . Barking Lizards Technologies developed the N @-@ Gage port of the game , which was released in early 2005 . Players can play as one of fifteen X @-@ Men characters , with the ability to switch between four computer- or human @-@ controlled characters at any time .

X @-@ Men Legends follows Alison Crestmere , a young mutant who has the ability to summon and control volcanic activity . As Alison is taught to control her powers at the X @-@ Mansion , the X @-@ Men are sent on several missions . Eventually the X @-@ Men learn of Magneto 's plan to cover the Earth in darkness from his base on Asteroid M.

X @-@ Men Legends received generally positive reviews from critics . The Xbox version was the best received , garnering aggregate scores of 83 % and 82 / 100 on the review aggregating websites GameRankings and Metacritic respectively . Reviewers praised Raven 's variation on cel @-@ shaded graphics . Due to the success of the game a sequel was made , X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse .

= = Gameplay = =

X @-@ Men Legends is played as an action role @-@ playing game . Players choose a team of up to four characters from a larger group of X @-@ Men . As players proceed through the game additional X @-@ Men are unlocked . On the console versions up to four players can play in the cooperative campaign , with the ability to add or remove players at any time . Cooperative play features a refined combat system and the ability to interact with non @-@ player characters . The game also features a skirmish mode , which allows players to fight against each other or against waves of computer @-@ controlled enemies .

As characters gain experience points players can upgrade their four main powers and other abilities unique to that character . Items found during gameplay can also be equipped to further enhance a character 's abilities . Characters can combine attacks to create a combo , in which two or more players use their mutant powers on a single enemy at the same time . The characters ' special abilities can be used to create a " Super Combo " when combined with an " Xtreme Power " which become available at level 15 .

The X @-@ Mansion serves as a hub that the team returns to after each mission . While at the mansion , one player controls Alison Crestmere as she explores , and learns about herself and the other X @-@ Men . Here players can also view loading screen art , cinematics , and comic book covers acquired during gameplay . Biographies of the X @-@ Men and their enemies can be accessed on computers located in the mansion . Players can participate in an X @-@ Men trivia game , which rewards experience points for correct answers . Additionally , players can access the Danger Room 's computer to play challenge missions unlocked during gameplay .

The players have two vendors available to them : Forge , who sells equipment and the Morlock Healer , who provides health and energy packs as well as training disks for use in the Danger Room . Forge becomes available after Alison contacts him accidentally from the X @-@ Mansion , and Healer can be accessed following the third mission .

The N @-@ Gage version of X @-@ Men Legends contains most of the features found on the console versions . However , the game is played from an isometric point of view . Characters are two @-@ dimensional sprites based on their three @-@ dimensional console counterparts , and levels are redesigned to meet the limitations of the isometric point of view . Cutscenes were reused from the console versions , but are rendered at a much lower frame rate . Players can link with other N @-@ Gage systems for four @-@ player cooperative gameplay using GSM cellular technology .

= = Plot = =

X @-@ Men Legends is not set in any particular Marvel Comics universe . It is played from the

perspective of a teenage girl named Alison Crestmere , a mutant with the ability to control volcanic activity . At the start of the game Alison is abducted by the Genetic Research and Security Organization (GRSO) . As GRSO soldiers take her away , Mystique arrives with Blob and takes Alison from the soldiers . She is in turn rescued from Mystique and Blob by the X @-@ Men Wolverine and Cyclops , who take her to the Xavier Institute to explore her powers . As Alison trains , the X @-@ Men investigate an Alaskan research facility controlled by the Brotherhood of Mutants , then rescue Gambit from the Morlocks . They then try to stop the Brotherhood from rescuing Magneto from captivity aboard the U.S.S. Arbiter . Mystique is able to penetrate the defenses and free Magneto , and the ensuing damage caused by the Brotherhood leaves the X @-@ Men to rescue several Arbiter crew members .

With Alison ' s training complete , she takes the codename Magma and the X @-@ Men travel to Russia to help Colossus prevent the Brotherhood from obtaining weapons @-@ grade plutonium . After accomplishing this mission , they discover that Colossus ' s sister , Illyana , is in a coma from a psychic hold placed on her by the Shadow King . Professor Xavier , Emma Frost , and Jean Grey enter the astral plane to save her . They succeed , but in the process Xavier is captured by the Shadow King . After Xavier ' s capture the X @-@ Men learn that General William Kincaid , a leader in the anti @-@ mutant movement , is building mutant @-@ hunting Sentinels . Magneto travels to his base on Asteroid M , where he reveals his plan to cover the Earth in darkness . Meanwhile , the X @-@ Men free Xavier who defeats the Shadow King in a psychic battle . The X @-@ Men travel to Asteroid M , where they discover that the asteroid is on a collision course with Earth . After defeating Magneto they search for the Gravitron , a device used to pilot the asteroid . They encounter General Kincaid , who pilots Master Mold , a prototype sentinel larger and more powerful than other sentinels . After defeating General Kincaid , the X @-@ Men locate the Gravitron and Magma uses her powers to steer the asteroid back into space . The X @-@ Men ' s victory on Asteroid M is watched by Apocalypse who makes his upcoming plot from his base .

In the game ' s epilogue , a television news anchor reports that Magneto is still at large and General Kincaid has been arrested for crimes against humanity . The game ends with the President of the United States thanking the X @-@ Men for their service .

= = = Characters = = =

^ a Only playable during sections of the Astral Plane missions .

= = Development = =

X @-@ Men Legends was announced in a press release by Activision on April 23 , 2003 . The game is Raven Software ' s first console title ; after a number of successful titles for personal computers , it wanted to expand into the console market . The company developed the three console versions simultaneously , and used Vicarious Visions ' Alchemy engine as a base for the game . After deciding to make an " X @-@ Men RPG " , staff began brainstorming story , gameplay and design ideas . Raven wanted to feature a team @-@ based dynamic , something it felt was absent in previous X @-@ Men games . The original concept featured turned @-@ based gameplay , similar to a Final Fantasy game . However , the team concluded that players would prefer more action that allowed control of the character ' s super powers . The genre switch proved problematic to maintaining the team aspect of gameplay .

The group experimented with several gameplay models , and opted for one that allowed players to freely switch characters . The final product mimics isometric dungeon crawling video games . Raven designed gameplay with strategy in mind ; each character ' s abilities allow different interactions with the environment and other characters . For example , a physically strong character like Colossus can break walls but is unable to reach certain areas that require the ability to fly , and Iceman is able to freeze enemies so that other characters can easily defeat them . Staff hoped that the differences would force players to switch characters regularly during missions . Extraction points , specific locations that players can switch characters , were added to allow players to continue without a

game over in the event one or more team member was defeated . Raven included flash back missions as an homage to the franchise and based some on specific comic book issues . Originally a single @-@ player game , Raven eventually incorporated simultaneous co @-@ operative gameplay . The developers chose to not create an online multi @-@ player mode , stating that the gameplay was " designed around localized encounters . "

The game 's story was penned by a group of former Marvel writers known as Man of Action , consisting of Duncan Rouleau , Joe Casey , Joe Kelly , and Steven T. Seagle , with Stan Lee consulting . Man of Action chose the character Magma as their lead because she was an " appropriately blank slate as a character . " Man of Action also stated that the script for X @-@ Men Legends was in excess of five hundred pages . The writers created a story that would allow for players to change their active team throughout the game and not affect the overall flow of the story .

The game 's voice cast consists largely of television and film stars as well as veteran voice actors . Patrick Stewart reprised his role as Professor Xavier from the X @-@ Men films , while Tony Jay voiced Magneto . Ed Asner lent his voice as Healer , a Morlock shaman . Lou Diamond Phillips voiced Forge , a Native American mutant whose power grants him intuitive talent for inventing mechanical devices . Danica McKellar voiced Jubilee , a young mutant who generates plasmoids from her fingertips . Veteran voice actors Steven Blum , Grey DeLisle , Dee Bradley Baker , Robin Atkin Downes and Dorian Harewood also lent voices as Wolverine , Mystique , Nightcrawler , Cyclops and Shadow King , respectively . Music for the game was composed by Rik Schaffer of the Los Angeles @-@ based Womb Music .

Characters were selected from different time lines in the X @-@ Men universe . Art lead Brian Pelletier stated that they took the most memorable characters from the last 40 years and grouped them together . X @-@ Men Legends uses cel shading to give the characters a comic @-@ like appearance . However , Raven cited that they opted for then @-@ high resolution textures to stay away from " cartoony looking " characters . Character costumes were inspired by Marvel Comics ' Ultimate X @-@ Men . However , some of the X @-@ Men playable in X @-@ Men Legends had not appeared in the comics at the time of its release so , with permission from Marvel , Raven created unique looks for those characters . During development Raven tried visual formats for the X @-@ Men , including using their New X @-@ Men uniforms as well as removing the cel @-@ shaded look from the characters . In contrast , the back stories , relationships and personalities of the X @-@ Men were taken from Marvel 's mainstream universe . Angel was also to be included in the game , and was to be voiced by André Sogliuzzo , but was cut from the final build .

= = Reception = =

X @-@ Men Legends received mostly positive reviews , with the Xbox version receiving the highest aggregate scores of 83 @. @ 36 % at GameRankings and 82 / 100 at Metacritic . The GameCube version was rated next highest , scoring 81 @. @ 98 % at GameRankings and 81 / 100 at Metacritic . Though the PlayStation 2 version received the lowest scores of the console versions , it still fared well , scoring 80 @. @ 50 % at GameRankings and 79 / 100 at Metacritic . The N @-@ Gage version garnered scores similar to its console counterparts , receiving 76 @. @ 13 % and 79 / 100 at GameRankings and Metacritic , respectively . In 2011 , GamePro retrospectively listed " the melee combat , ability to customize your stats , and multiplayer " among the strong points of X @-@ Men Legends , adding that the game " was so successful that it created a well @-@ received sequel and paved the way for the Marvel Ultimate Alliance series . "

Critics generally praised the game 's use of cel @-@ shading . IGN 's Hilary Goldstein stated , " To capture the ' comic book feel , ' Raven Soft chose to go for a cel @-@ shaded look with Legends . It 's not that the characters look two @-@ dimensional , but they have very basic textures and a cut @-@ out look " . GameSpot reviewer Jeff Gerstmann pointed out that though the characters are cel @-@ shaded , the environments are not , making them easy to distinguish . The gameplay was lauded for its role @-@ playing elements , character powers and melee combat . Eurogamer praised the Xbox version 's control system for character powers and melee attacks , as well as the " fluid " combat .

Reviewers found that the artificial intelligence (AI) was lacking , and recommended the game 's multiplayer . Opinions were generally mixed on the subject of voice acting . X @-@ Play reviewer Russ Fischer called it " purely average " , though he made an exception for Patrick Stewart 's portrayal of Professor Xavier . IGN noted that while some voice acting fit the characters well , others seemed out of place .

The N @-@ Gage version was praised for the ability to play cooperatively using the N @-@ Gage 's bluetooth technology . Reviewers also found that the game 's graphics were " very strong " and that " everything looks amazing " . The presence of voice acting in the N @-@ Gage port was also praised , with GameSpy reviewer Justin Leeper stating the audio clips seemed to be " lifted right out of other versions " . He criticized the AI , however , for being " [a] bit stupid at inopportune times " and for failing to use the game 's healing abilities at important moments .

= = Legacy = =

X @-@ Men Legends sold enough copies to be inducted into the budget lines for all three consoles on which it was released : PlayStation 2 's Greatest Hits , GameCube 's Player 's Choice , and Xbox 's Platinum Hits . A sequel , X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse was released for all major platforms in the fall of 2005 , and the N @-@ Gage later that year . Barking Lizards again helped port the game , this time to mobile phone devices . Vicarious Visions ported the game to the PlayStation Portable (PSP) , and Beenox developed the PC port .

The success of the X @-@ Men Legends series led Raven Software , Marvel , and Activision to create the video game Marvel : Ultimate Alliance , which was released on several consoles , handheld devices and the PC in 2007 . Barking Lizards , Vicarious Visions and Beenox handled the ports for different platforms . Marvel : Ultimate Alliance was followed by Marvel : Ultimate Alliance 2 , jointly developed by Vicarious Visions , n @-@ Space and Savage Entertainment . Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2 was released on several consoles and handhelds in the fall of 2009 . Vicarious Visions developed the PS3 and Xbox 360 versions , while n @-@ Space developed the Nintendo DS , PSP and Wii versions . Savage Entertainment ported the version developed by n @-@ Space to the PSP .