= Saints Row : The Third =

Saints Row : The Third is a 2011 open world action @-@ adventure video game developed by Volition and published by THQ . It is the third title in the Saints Row series . As in the previous games , the player @-@ character leads the Third Streets Saints gang in a turf war against three rival gangs using a variety of weapons and vehicles in single @-@ player and cooperative play . The series , and especially this title , is known for its crazy scenarios and lighthearted gameplay . It was released on November 15 , 2011 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 3 , and Xbox 360 , and later abroad .

Game development began by late 2008 . There was high staff turnover from the previous Saints Row team with one @-@ fifth of the final 100 @-@ person staff having worked on a previous title in the series . They aimed to improve on the series by giving the game a coherent tone , and found it in films such as Hot Fuzz and the game 's signature sex toy bat . Saints Row : The Third was built using the Havok physics engine .

The game received " generally favorable " reviews , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . Reviewers noted its general zaniness and praised its customization options . Critics thought the setting was insipid and that its humor occasionally fell flat , and others thought the game perfected the Saints Row formula . It was a nominee for Best Narrative at the 2012 Game Developers Conference , an IGN Editor 's Choice , and a recipient of perfect scores from GamesRadar and G4 . A complete edition including the three downloadable content packs was released a year after the original release , and its planned Enter the Dominatrix expansion became the game 's sequel , Saints Row IV .

= = Gameplay = =

Saints Row : The Third is an action @-@ adventure game played from the third @-@ person perspective in an open world , such that players explore an unrestricted environment . Similar to the premise of the previous Saints Row games , the player 's goal is to lead the Third Street Saints gang to overtake its rival gangs in the city turf war . While the protagonist is the same , the game introduces a new setting , the city of Steelport , with its new gangs : the Morningstar , Luchadores , and Deckers , together known as the Syndicate . Once The Syndicate is defeated , the government 's Special Tactical Anti @-@ Gang unit (STAG) is summoned to quell the Saints . The Third is the first in the series to intertwine the narratives of its three @-@ gang structures , and also presents the player with story @-@ altering decisions .

The series has historically been considered a clone of Grand Theft Auto that later positioned itself as more " gleefully silly " in comparison . In combat , players select weapons from a weapon selection wheel , including regular pistols , submachine guns , shotguns , and rocket launchers alongside special weapons such as UAV drones and a fart @-@ in @-@ a @-@ jar stun grenade . Player melee attacks include running attacks such as DDTs and a purple dildo bat . Players may use vehicles to navigate the city , including a hover jet (known as the F @-@ 69 VTOL) and a pixelated retrogame tank that are unlocked through story missions . Once special vehicles are unlocked , they are in unlimited supply and can be delivered directly to the player @-@ character 's location . Player actions are intensified with what Volition calls the " awesome button " , where for example the player will divekick through the windshield into the driver 's seat of a car . The main story campaign missions can be played alone , or cooperatively either online or via System Link offline . Some elements are added to the campaign for the second player . There is no competitive multiplayer , but a " wave @-@ based survival mode " called Whored Mode that supports up to two players .

Players customize their characters after the introductory mission . Player @-@ character bodies , dress , and vehicles can be customized , as well as home properties . Players can additionally share their character designs in a Saints Row online community . Apart from the main story missions , there are optional diversions to make money and earn reputation , such as Insurance Fraud , where players hurt themselves in traffic to maximize self @-@ injury before a timer expires , or Mayhem ,

where players maximize property destruction before a time expires . Some of these diversions were introduced in previous Saints Row games . Activities serve the plot and are positioned as training the player @-@ character or damaging the Syndicate . They can also be repeated . Outside of structured diversions , players are free to make their own fun by purchasing property , shopping for items , finding hidden sex doll and money cache collectibles , and wreaking unsolicited havoc . There are also " flashpoint " gang operations that grant respect when disrupted . Attacking others increases the player 's notoriety level , as depicted with stars .

Saints Row : The Third introduced experience levels and weapon upgrades to the series . Most actions in the game come with incentives in the form of money and respect (reputation) . Money buys land , weapons , and other upgrades , and respect is a kind of experience point that can unlock player abilities like " no damage from falling " or " infinite sprint " , as well as upgrades to the player 's computer @-@ controlled gang member support . In turn , players receive further incentive to nearly miss car collisions , streak naked through the streets , shoot others in the groin , blow up Smart cars , and kill mascots in ambient challenges to earn more respect . Lack of respect does not hinder story progress , as it has in previous games . Player progress and unlocks are managed by an in @-@ game cell phone menu that also lets the player call for vehicle deliveries and non @-@ player character backup . The computer @-@ controlled support will also dialogue with each other .

= = Plot = =

Three years after the destruction of Ultor Corporation , the 3rd Street Saints street gang have become a media empire with their own energy drink , Japanese commercials , toys and large fanbase , with a movie in the works . However , when the Saints ' leader , The Boss , and two lieutenants , Shaundi and Johnny Gat , attempt to rob a bank as a publicity stunt , the bank tellers unexpectedly start shooting back . The police , who they had paid off beforehand , intervene and arrest the Saints . They are shortly released to the man who owned the bank , Phillipe Loren , the leader of a criminal organization known as " the Syndicate ; " on his private jet . Loren offers to let the Saints live if they turn over most of their earnings . The Saints ' leaders refuse and break out , but Gat is seemingly killed as the Boss and Shaundi escape via parachute .

Upon landing , the Boss and Shaundi find themselves in Steelport , a dystopian criminal city controlled by the Syndicate 's three gangs : The Morningstar , a gang controlled by Loren with advanced technology equipment ; The Luchadores , a Mexican gang led by the killer wrestler Eddie " Killbane " Pryor ; and the Deckers , a hacker @-@ based gang led by Matt Miller . The Boss quickly calls in Saints lieutenant Pierce Washington and begins attacking the Morningstar 's businesses , culminating with an attack on Loren 's headquarters . After rescuing and recruiting the giant superhuman Oleg Kirrlov , the basis of the cloned " brutes " the Syndicate uses , The Boss kills Loren .

The Saints return to their hometown of Stilwater for Gat 's funeral at the Hughes Memorial Bridge , but Killbane attacks the Saints and destroys the bridge . To retaliate , the Boss seeks out anti @-@ Syndicate talent , recruiting ex @-@ FBI hacker Kinzie Kensington ; Zimos , the oldest pimp in Steelport ; and Angel de la Muerte , Killbane 's vengeful former tag @-@ team partner . With Zimos ' help , The Boss clears out the Morningstar , during which Viola DeWynter , one of Loren 's twin lieutenants , joins the Saints after Killbane kills her twin sister Kiki out of rage due to a failed assassination attempt on the Boss . Her defection , however , coincides with the arrival of paramilitary Special Tactical Anti @-@ Gang (S.T.A.G.) forces in Steelport , led by Cyrus Temple and created by Senator Monica Hughes to end gang violence once and for all . The Saints take on STAG whilst also dealing with the Syndicate , resulting in Steelport going under martial law .

The Boss works with Kinzie and Angel to eliminate The Deckers and The Luchadores , providing Kinzie with technology to enter the Deckers mainframe and killing the other wrestlers in Killbane 's Murderbrawl XXXI pay @-@ per @-@ view to gain entrance . The Boss defeats Matt Miller 's avatar in a virtual reality fight to drive the Deckers out of town , and defeats Killbane at Murderbrawl with Angel 's help . Following his humiliating defeat , Killbane instigates several attacks throughout Steelport to cause chaos . Whilst quelling the fighting between the Luchadores and STAG , the Boss

is simultaneously informed by Angel that Killbane is escaping the city , while STAG second @-@ in @-@ command Kia is holding Shaundi , Viola , and Mayor Burt Reynolds hostage at a Steelport monument rigged to blow to frame the Saints . The Boss is given the choice to kill Killbane or save Shaundi .

In the canon ending , the Boss chooses to save Shaundi , disarming the explosives to save the monument and killing Kia to save Shaundi . The Saints are then held as heroes and STAG are kicked out of Steelport for their brutality . The ending shows the Boss tracking Killbane down to Mars and killing him , but it is revealed to be a scene from the Saints sci @-@ fi film Gangstas in Space , which the Boss and several members are acting in . If the Boss kills Killbane , The Saints are framed as terrorists and the monument 's destruction is used as a pretext by STAG to attack Steelport with the airborne aircraft carrier Daedalus . The Boss destroys the Daedalus , killing Cyrus Temple in the process , and declares Steelport an independent city @-@ state under the Saints ' control .

= = Development = =

Saints Row 2 's design philosophy was to " put everything ... into the game " , which made for a disjointed title with varied tone . Design director Scott Phillips said the series ' legacy of lightheartedness made the sequel 's tone hard to define . The development team withstood a high turnover between the two releases , with only a fifth of the final 100 @-@ person team having worked on a title in the series before . Saints Row : The Third was in development by September 2008 . For its first six months of development , the team tested a choice @-@ based adventure concept featuring an undercover agent infiltrating the Saints , which was dropped for not aligning with the spirit of the series . Now without a vision , the team made a " tone video " with film segments and songs that would define the new title . The final version featured bits from Bad Boys II , Shoot ' Em Up , Hot Fuzz , and Mötley Crüe 's " Kickstart My Heart " . The team worked in this direction to find a personality for Saints Row : The Third , which it found in its signature " dildo bat " . The idea started as one @-@ off mission @-@ specific weapon and the artists ran with the concept . Their design mantra became " Embrace the Crazy ; Fun Trumps All " .

They came to the conclusion that " everything had to be ' over the top this time around ' " so as to distinguish Saints Row : The Third from other open world titles and to make the franchise into a AAA title . The team increased playtesting to check for the action 's pacing and " setpiece moments " within its overall flow . Producer Greg Donovan considered Saints Row : The Third a reboot of the franchise , " cohesive " in a way the prior two " semi @-@ serious " entries were not . Other than " over the top " themes , the team wanted " holy shit " " water cooler moments " that players would remember forever and want to share . Phillips also " didn 't want the player to be a dick " .

The city of Steelport was designed such that the player could identify locations without needing a minimap , with a spatially recognizable skyline and iconic gang vehicles in specific regions .

The title was not shown at the 2010 Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) with the explanation that the company had spent the year " rebuilding the technology " , but a tie @-@ in movie was mentioned as in production and a Saints Row 3 announcement was expected at the December Spike VGAs . Saints Row : The Third was finally announced officially in March 2011 . The team wanted to include many different features and items , so scoping the final product became an issue . They laid out their ideas on a schedule and began to cut until over " 4000 man @-@ days of scheduled work " were removed , including features such as free @-@ running (called " freegunning ") and a cover system . Competitive multiplayer was removed due to its lack of popularity in the previous series entries . In retrospect , Phillips said he wanted to remove more . The studio borrowed people from other parts of the company to finish the project . Writer Drew Holmes expressed the difficulty in determining what was too risqué for the game . In keeping with series advertising , Saints Row : The Third included a porn star , Sasha Grey , in the production as a character voice . Other celebrity voice actors include Hulk Hogan and Daniel Dae Kim .

The development team also pre @-@ visualized rough drafts to sketch ideas for others to advance . For example , the introductory airplane level was pre @-@ visualized two years prior to its creation as a demonstration for the development team and publisher . Levels were built in Volition 's Core

Technology Group (CTG) editor , which was continually built in the four years preceding release . Like the other two titles , Saints Row : The Third was built in the Havok physics engine with customizations . The engine let the team build vehicle drifting physics and the VTOL aircraft . The studio considered the Red Faction series ' Geo @-@ Mod 2 engine but chose against it due to the implementation 's difficulty and not wanting that degree of destruction . Phillips gave a game development postmortem at the 2012 Game Developers Conference , where he advised studios to let development team members run with their ideas . Volition began to add modding support to the title and series in mid 2013 .

= = = Audio = = =

Saints Row : The Third has a licensed soundtrack available as radio stations when driving in vehicles . Players can switch between the playlists , which range from classical to electronic to hip @-@ hop , rock , or customize their own station based on their preferences . The original soundtrack was composed by Malcolm Kirby Jr . , who had previously worked on The Love Guru 's soundtrack . It was released through Sumthing Else Music Works alongside the game via compact disc and digital download . Kirby said the series ' over @-@ the @-@ top nature influenced the score , and that he was a huge fan of the series before he received the opportunity . In his composition , each gang has a theme and specific characteristics that range from " menacing orchestral to gangster hip hop to heavy metal " .

= = Marketing and release = =

The game was released for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 3 , and Xbox 360 simultaneously on November 15 , 2011 , in the United States and Australia , and three days later in the United Kingdom . The November 17 , 2011 , Japan release had the veins removed from the Penetrator weapon (the three @-@ foot long phallus bat) due to regulatory restrictions on depictions of genitalia . In lieu of exclusive game content scheduled for the PlayStation 3 version that did not ship with the game , early North American and European players who purchased that version received a complimentary download code for Saints Row 2 . The summer before Saints Row : The Third 's release , THQ pledged to support it with a year 's worth of downloadable content . Around the time of release , Danny Bilson of THQ announced that Saints Row IV was already in planning .

Those who preordered the game received Professor Genki 's Hyper Ordinary Preorder Pack , which included Genki @-@ themed downloadable content (a costume , a vehicle , and a weapon) . A North American limited edition box set release called the Platinum Pack included the preorder content , the soundtrack , and a custom headset . Australia and New Zealand received two limited editions : the Smooth Criminal pack from EB Games and the Maximum Pleasure bundle from JB Hi @-@ Fi , each of which included tie @-@ in items along with the game and preorder content .

Though the game wasn 't shown at E3 2010 , THQ spoke of extensive tie @-@ in merchandising (collectible card game , books) and a Saints Row film in production as part of a " robust transmedia play " . Instead , THQ announced Saints Row : Drive By , a tie @-@ in game for the Nintendo 3DS and Xbox Live Arcade that would unlock content in Saints Row 3 . After the game was announced in March 2011 , it was featured on the cover of Game Informer 's April issue . Closer to release , THQ sent rap group the Broken Pixels a development kit with a pre @-@ release version of the game and asked them to record track about " all the wacky things " to do in the game . The group wrote the rap in a day and later produced a YouTube video set to clips from the game . THQ hosted an event in Redfern , Australia where women in skintight clothes pumped free gas for three hours , which generated an estimated 35 times return on investment . Eurogamer recalled that the game was " marketed almost exclusively on the basis of all the wacky stuff it will let you do " from the costumes to the sex toy weapons , and Edge described Saints Row : The Third as " marketed by sex toys and porn stars " .

Two weeks before the game 's release , Saints Row : The Third had four times the preorder count of Saints Row 2 at its comparable point . By January 2012 , the game had shipped 3 @.@ 8 million

units worldwide , which THQ cited as an example for its business model change to focus on the big franchises . THQ President and CEO Brian Farrell expected to ship five to six million copies of the game in its lifetime . It had reached four million by April , and 5 @.@ 5 million by the end of the year . Saints Row : The Third was an unexpected continued success for the company . It was featured in the Humble THQ Bundle in November 2012 , the PlayStation Plus program in June 2013 , the Humble Deep Silver Bundle in July 2013 , and the Xbox Live Games with Gold program in May 2014 .

 In April 2016 , Volition released a Linux port of the game .

 = = Reception = =

  The game received " generally favorable " reviews , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . Reviewers said the game did not try to be more than a good time , and described it as a variant of " ridiculous " , " zany " , or " absurd " . In another way , others called it " juvenile " . Critics praised the degree of customization options , and had mixed views of the array of activities , but found Professor Genki 's Super Ethical Reality Climax a high point . Some found the game 's ironic sexism to verge on misogyny , and that its other humor sometimes fell flat . Several critics referred to the game as the perfection of the Saints Row formula It was a nominee for Best Narrative at the 2012 Game Developers Conference , an IGN Editor 's Choice , and a recipient of perfect scores from GamesRadar and G4 .
 Edge said that the series " wants to be the WarioWare of open @-@ city games " , " a cartoon flipbook of anything @-@ goes extremity " to Grand Theft Auto 's " ostentatious crime drama " . They wrote that the game 's " single @-@ minded " " puerile imagination " demanded respect and noted the game 's escalation of video game tropes and cultural references from Japanese game shows to text adventures to zombie apocalypses to lucha libre . Famitsu described the game as " ' pop ' crime action " , and IGN 's Daemon Hatfield called the game " an open world adult theme park " . He said that calling it " a good time would be a severe understatement " and praised its method of incentivizing almost every action in the game as " fantastic game design " . Hatfield was " addicted " to efficiently expanding his in @-@ game hourly income . GamesRadar 's Michael Grimm wrote Saints Row : The Third was nearly surreal , and praised the player @-@ character 's running attacks .

 Referring to the historical comparison between the Saints Row and Grand Theft Auto series , Dan Whitehead of Eurogamer wrote that Grand Theft Auto IV 's serious turn let the Saints Row series be a " gleeful silly sandbox game " , and noted that Saints Row : The Third was " marketed almost exclusively " based on its wackiness , from the costumes to the sex toy weapons . He felt that the " wacky hijinks " quickly became " predictable and repetitive " and the activities felt " sanitized and generic " . Edge wrote that they were " one @-@ off gags " . Eurogamer 's Whitehead added that the tiger escort Guardian Angel missions appeared to draw from Will Ferrell 's Talladega Nights , and that the Prof. Genki 's Super Ethical Reality Climax shooting gallery drew from Bizarre Creations ' The Club shooter . Eurogamer and PC Gamer both found the game easy .
 Ryan McCaffrey of Official Xbox Magazine thought that the game resolved some of the problems of open world design and thus allowed for an experience with good times and no filler , such as Burnout @-@ style arrows on the streets instead of hidden in the minimap GPS . He added that this was the game Volition " was born to make " . Grimm from GamesRadar similarly praised Volition for their " http : / / deckers.die " mission , which was " so insanely creative and funny that it single handedly makes the game worth playing " . He added that the game 's unrealistic driving made the game more fun . IGN 's Hatfield was " really won ... over " by his character and both was convinced she cared about her friends and impressed by her voice actress . Whitehead of Eurogamer found Zimos , the pimp who speaks in Autotune , to be the game 's best character . Edge found some of the writing " sharp " and executed well by the voice actors . PC Gamer 's Tom Senior found the major story missions to be a highlight . Hatfield of IGN thought the single @-@ player game fell apart at the end and called the two endings either " a super downer " or nonsense . He found the cooperative mode easy to set up , but felt like the game 's missions were not designed well for

multiple players , and that the visiting player became a " third wheel " . On the other hand , CBS News 's Christina Santiago called the cooperative mode " near perfect " and exemplary .

IGN 's Hatfield considered the game 's graphics average for the age . He " loved the neon @-@ lit towering skyscrapers of Steelport " but thought the streets were sometimes " lifeless " , as the game may be " open world " but not a " living world " . Edge added that the city was easy enough to navigate , but that it was missing character . Grimm of GamesRadar said it didn 't look bad , but wasn 't interesting . Multiple reviewers complained of " pop @-@ in " , or of graphical errors . 1UP.com reported the PC version 's graphics to be more stable , and Eurogamer 's Digital Foundry face @-@ off recommended the PlayStation 3 release for its lack of screen tearing .

Eurogamer 's Whitehead felt that the game crept closer " from ironic sexism to outright misogyny " in missions such as " Trojan Whores " and set pieces like " Tits n ' Grits " and " Stikit Inn " , even in the series ' " gloriously lowbrow standards " . Edge added that intent of humor in the sex trafficking @-@ related mission " The Ho Boat " did not come across well , and seemed to be included only for shock value . Hatfield of IGN related that some of the game 's more juvenile aspects made him cringe , and Edge wrote that the game felt " largely meaningless " in response to the desensitizing barrage of " context @-@ free frippery " . PC Gamer 's Tom Senior said he was almost offended during much of the game but stayed more happy than disgusted , adding that while the game has a " huge purple dildo " , it doesn 't have the prostitute @-@ killing liberties or " other moments of nastiness " associated with the Grand Theft Auto franchise .

Whitehead of Eurogamer wrote in conclusion that the game doesn 't propose " anything particularly inventive " and instead ends up with a toy box of gadgets . Edge felt that the game was weakest where it leaned on Grand Theft Auto 's precedent without adding a social commentary . Eurogamer 's Whitehead added that Saints Row : The Third missed an opportunity to separate from " the GTA formula " , which Edge thought was done well in the last third of the game . IGN , however , felt the game was explicitly not a Grand Theft Auto clone , and G4 called it " a knockoff no more " .

Speaking to the future of THQ in June 2012 , its president , Jason Rubin , said that there is no place in the company " for a game that features a purple dildo " and that Volition chose that route because of the limited options and their " environment at the time " .

= = Downloadable content = =

Downloadable content for Saints Row : The Third has included additional story missions , weapons , and characters . A " definitive edition " , Saints Row : The Third ? The Full Package , contains all post @-@ release downloadable content ? including all three mission packs (" Genkibowl VII " , " Gangstas in Space " , and " The Trouble with Clones ") and bonus items (clothes , vehicles , and weapons) ? in addition to the main game . The Full Package was announced in September 2012 for release two months later on PC , PlayStation 3 , and Xbox 360 .

THQ announced an Enter the Dominatrix standalone expansion as an April Fool 's joke in 2012 . It was confirmed as in development the next month . In Enter the Dominatrix , the alien commander Zinyak imprisons the Saints ' leader in a simulation of Steelport called The Dominatrix so as to prevent interference when he takes over the planet . The expansion also added superpowers for the player @-@ character . In June , THQ said the expansion would be wrapped into a full sequel , tentatively titled " The Next Great Sequel in the Saints Row Franchise " and scheduled for a 2013 release . Parts of Enter the Dominatrix that weren 't incorporated into the sequel , Saints Row IV , were later released as downloadable content for the new title , under the same name .