

= X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse =

X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse is an action role @-@ playing game developed primarily by Raven Software and published by Activision . It is the follow up to 2004 's X @-@ Men Legends . It was first released in September 2005 for the GameCube , Microsoft Windows , N @-@ Gage , PlayStation 2 , PlayStation Portable and Xbox video game platforms . It is set after the events of X @-@ Men Legends and features the mutant supervillain Apocalypse as the primary antagonist .

The developers intended the game to have a greater sense of scale than its predecessor , and writers created a story where the villains known as the Brotherhood of Mutants would need to ally themselves with the heroic X @-@ Men to defeat a greater threat . High quality cinematics were created by Blur Studio . Online multiplayer was also added .

The game was well received by gaming critics on all platforms . Critics felt that the inclusion of online play , additional mutant powers , and a larger cast made the game an improvement over its predecessor . Some reviewers were critical of the game 's voice acting and felt that the gameplay was repetitive . It sold enough copies to be added to the budget line known as PlayStation 2 's Greatest Hits .

= = Gameplay = =

X @-@ Men Legends II is an action role @-@ playing game . It unites two Marvel Comics superhero teams , the heroic X @-@ Men and the villainous Brotherhood of Mutants as they together face the mutant supervillain Apocalypse and his minions . Players can choose up to four characters to use at once from a larger roster . Players unlock additional characters as they proceed through the game . Four players can play on one machine cooperatively , and players can join or leave at any time . The game also features online play for up to four players , a first for the series . A new game plus mode is included that allows players to play through the game a second time while retaining all character stats .

As characters gain experience points their mutant superpowers and unique abilities can be upgraded . 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 punch or kick a single enemy at the same time . The character 's special abilities can also be used in the same manner to create a Super Combo which inflicts massive damage on enemies . Each character has several mutant powers that players can assign to controller buttons . The game also features a skirmish mode , which allows players to fight against each other or waves of computer @-@ controlled enemies .

X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse features a central hub that players return to between missions . It is a designated area free from enemies , and its setting changes to coincide with the current act of the game . Here players can view loading screen art , cinematics , and comic book covers acquired during gameplay . Biographies of the X @-@ Men and their enemies can be accessed here . Players can also participate in an X @-@ Men trivia game which awards experience points for correct answers . Additionally , players can access the a virtual combat environment known as the Danger Room to play additional missions unlocked during gameplay .

The mobile phone version of the game is primarily a beat ' em up with role @-@ playing elements . Unlike the console versions the game plays as a side @-@ scroller in the same vein as the 1992 X @-@ Men arcade game . There are five selectable characters , and players upgrade each through experience points earned . Players control one character at a time , and can switch to another at the press of a button .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting = = =

X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse is not set in any particular Marvel Comics universe . The game takes place some time after the events of X @-@ Men Legends . The mutant supervillain Apocalypse , having witnessed the X @-@ Men 's defeat of Magneto remotely , declares that the Age of Apocalypse is nigh . Prior to the game 's campaign he kidnaps Professor X and Polaris for unknown purposes . Locations include a military prison in Greenland , the fictional mutant sanctuary of Genosha , the Savage Land and Egypt .

= = = Plot = = =

The game begins with the X @-@ Men and Brotherhood of Mutants uniting forces to save Professor X and Polaris . Cyclops , Storm , and Wolverine meet up with Magneto , Mystique , and Sabretooth at a military prison outpost in Greenland to free Professor X. Upon freeing him , the teams relocate to the fictional mutant haven of Genosha . They find the island ravaged by Apocalypse 's forces , and work through the wreckage and find out what he was searching for . They learn that Quicksilver was kidnapped by Apocalypse , who also kidnaps Beast from the X @-@ Mansion . Beast manages to point the team in the direction of the Savage Land , a secret prehistoric preserve in Antarctica .

The teams work their way through the Savage Land , temporarily hindering Apocalypse 's plans . Apocalypse then travels to conquer New York . The teams work at sabotaging his army and resources , but Emma Frost and Angel are kidnapped as well . Angel is unwillingly transformed by Apocalypse and Mister Sinister into Archangel , a Horsemen of Apocalypse . He is assigned as a sentry to Apocalypse 's tower . The teams defeat Archangel and infiltrate the tower where they find Beast , now under the control of Mister Sinister ; he kidnaps Sabretooth and escapes with Apocalypse and Mister Sinister to Egypt .

They learn that Apocalypse 's plan is to use Polaris , Quicksilver , Emma Frost , and Sabretooth ? four mutants with what he refers to as Harmonic DNA ? as part of a machine to fuel an experiment to grant him massive amounts of power . The teams then follow Apocalypse to Egypt where they defeat Mister Sinister , freeing Beast from Sinister 's control . After besting the final guard , the Living Monolith , the teams battle Apocalypse and defeat him by stealing the powers from his machine . In the final cutscene , Magneto and Professor X part once again as adversaries , noting that Apocalypse was defeated but not destroyed . Beast ponders why the machine did not work properly , wondering if sabotage was a factor . As the X @-@ Jet flies away , Sinister is seen on top of the pyramid , laughing , hinting that he sabotaged the machine .

= = = Characters = = =

Several playable characters return from X @-@ Men Legends , a and select members of the Brotherhood of Mutants are also playable . Some non @-@ playable X @-@ Men and Brotherhood characters appear during levels . In some instances dialogue throughout the game can be character @-@ to @-@ character specific , depending on the player character 's alignment and relationship with the non @-@ player character .

^ a Jubilee , Magma , and Psylocke do not appear in X @-@ Men Legends II . Beast and Emma Frost appear , but are not playable . ^ b Playable in the mobile version of the game ^ c Only appeared on PSP 's extra mission

= = Development and marketing = =

X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse was announced on October 21 , 2004 , exactly one month after the release of X @-@ Men Legends . It was shown at Electronic Entertainment Expo ( E3 ) and San Diego Comic @-@ Con in 2005 . It was first released in North America on September 20 , 2005 for the Gamecube , PlayStation 2 , Xbox and Windows platforms . The PlayStation Portable version was released approximately one month later on October 19 , 2005 . It was released

on the first @-@ generation N @-@ Gage handheld platform on October 31 , 2005 . A mobile phone version was launched on December 19 , 2005 . A playable demo was released for the Windows version of the game on November 3 , 2005 .

Developer Raven Software sought to expand on the preceding game 's scale . As such , characters were given additional powers to choose from . Locations were also made more diverse . " With the environments we tried to create [ something ] more exotic and organic " stated Dan Vondrak , Project Lead on X @-@ Men Legends II . Locations span from the fictional mutant haven of Genosha , to the Marvel Comics jungle known as the Savage Land , to ancient temples in Egypt . Raven Software collaborated directly with Marvel to write the game 's story . Man of Action , a group of former Marvel writers who were responsible for the previous game 's story , were not involved . The music was composed by Gregor Narholz . Gameplay and story aspects were adjusted to ensure that four players can play continuously , whereas in the previous game certain missions were limited to one player . The CGI cinematics were created by Blur Studio , who would go on to create cinematics for games such as Marvel : Ultimate Alliance and Star Wars : The Force Unleashed II .

Vicarious Visions 's engine powers Rise of Apocalypse and its predecessor . They also were responsible for the PlayStation Portable version of the game . Karthik Bala , CEO of Vicarious Visions felt strongly that the PSP version should have the same gameplay as the consoles . " One of our main goals [ ... ] was to really bring the depth and detail of the console game over to portable form on the PSP . " Four new exclusive characters were added to the PSP version along with nine new side missions . The control system had to be modified to accommodate the PSP 's fewer buttons . Online play is available on the PSP , both in ad @-@ hoc and infrastructure modes . Bala stated that it was a priority for his team . SuperVillain Studios was brought on to the project to focus on the online component of the game . Beenox ported X @-@ Men Legends II to Microsoft Windows .

= = Reception = =

X @-@ Men Legends II : Rise of Apocalypse received generally favorable reviews . All platforms hold aggregate scores in the 80 ? 85 % range at aggregate review websites GameRankings and Metacritic . Reported scores at Metacritic ranged from 59 % to 100 % approval . According to the NPD Group , Rise of Apocalypse sold over 63 @, @ 000 units on the Xbox during the month of its release . It sold enough copies to be added to the budget line known as PlayStation 2 's Greatest Hits . PALGN 's Jeremy Jastrzab felt that Rise of Apocalypse " caters for X @-@ Men fans and if you can gather three others , you ? re going to have a great time . " Tom Byron of 1UP.com praised several aspects of the game , and felt that amidst the The Incredible Hulk : Ultimate Destruction , Ultimate Spider @-@ Man and Fantastic Four game releases in 2005 X @-@ Men Legends II was the best release from Marvel that year .

Commentary on gameplay was generally positive . G4TV 's reviewer lauded the destructible environments , but felt that the gameplay lacked variation . The reviewer from VideoGamer.com noted that the co @-@ operative gameplay was strong , and that the addition of online play " opens the [ gameplay ] up to a wider range of people . " PALGN 's Jeremy Jastrzab felt that the game 's menus were convoluted and difficult to navigate , and also felt that the game began to drag near the end of the story . GameTrailers 's reviewer The inclusion of additional mutant powers and online gameplay were points of praise . GameSpot 's Greg Mueller praised the game 's vast cast of characters , destructible environments and unlockable content , but felt that the user interface was awkward . Mueller also felt that the game loaded content far too frequently . GamesRadar 's Raymond Padilla had similar complaints about the frequency and length of the game 's load times . Padilla praised the addition of online play and the automatic upgrade system .

Reviewers have high marks on the game 's cast of characters , but were divided in their opinions of the choice of voice actors . GameTrailers 's reviewer disliked that several famous X @-@ Men and Brotherhood characters were not playable , but appeared only as side characters . They also cited issues with voice acting and a convoluted story . Unlike the critic from GameTrailers , G4 's reviewer praised the overall story , and further praised the selection of characters for the cast . Greg Mueller

of GameSpot also praised the game's vast cast of characters .

Critics were split on their assessment of the game's visuals . The reviewer from GameTrailers noted that the game's visuals had improved greatly , citing the effects , environments and cinematics as some of the largest upgrades . Inversely GamesRadar's Raymond Padilla felt that the game's graphics felt dated . Steve Steinberg of GameSpy conceded that while the visuals were generally improved over the game's predecessor , it still lacked in quality and variation . Steinberg stated that the characters now felt like " a part of the environments , as opposed to cut @-@ outs floating on top of it . " He noted that even with the improvements that players may lose their character amidst the environment , causing confusion .

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 Microsoft Windows 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 .