= Infamous Second Son =

Infamous Second Son (stylized as inFAMOUS Second Son) is an open world action @-@ adventure video game developed by Sucker Punch Productions and published by Sony Computer Entertainment for the PlayStation 4 . The game was released worldwide on March 21 , 2014 . Like in previous Infamous games , the player @-@ controlled protagonist possesses superpower abilities that players use in combat and when traveling across the city . The story follows protagonist Delsin Rowe fighting the Department of Unified Protection (D.U.P.) in a fictionalized Seattle . Over the course of the game , Delsin acquires new powers and becomes either good or evil as player choices influence his morality .

Sucker Punch began planning the game as early as 2010 , when they began discussion with Sony to bring the Infamous series onto a new generation of hardware . They provided feedback to Sony on what hardware evolutions they would like to see on the PlayStation 4 system . Second Son was considered a fresh start for the series because it features a new protagonist . Delsin Rowe 's superpowers were designed to feel fluid and suited to the open world design .

Infamous Second Son was met with generally positive reviews ; critics praised its gameplay , dynamic combat , visuals and design , while criticism was aimed at the game 's morality system , which some found to be dated and binary , as well as the game 's repetitive side missions . The story was met with a mixed response , with some critics finding the narrative and characters to be a step backwards from previous installments in the series , while others viewing the writing as an improvement over its predecessors . Infamous Second Son was a commercial success , and sold over a million copies within nine days , making it the fastest @-@ selling entry within the Infamous franchise .

= = Gameplay = =

In Infamous Second Son , players control the main character Delsin Rowe from a third @-@ person perspective and freely roam open world Seattle . Players parkour @-@ style climb vertical surfaces like high @-@ rise buildings . Delsin is a Conduit , which allows him to use superpower abilities by manipulating materials such as smoke , neon , video , and concrete . These materials can be weaponized (such that Delsin can perform melee attacks or fire projectiles from his fingertips) or used to deftly navigate the game world (such as using neon to dash up buildings) . Using powers depletes a meter in the head @-@ up display (HUD) , which can be replenished by drawing from power sources such as smoke from exploded vehicles . Delsin earns new powers as he progresses through the story , which sees him fight against the Department of Unified Protection (D.U.P.) during missions . Each time Delsin gains a new power set he must destroy mobile D.U.P. command centers to learn the basic abilities that correspond to it . Delsin upgrades and acquires new abilities by spending Blast Shards that have been collected , they are scattered throughout Seattle . Players become more powerful in combat by expanding Delsin 's suite of abilities .

Players may choose to act in either a good or evil way . Examples including healing civilians , doing drug busts , and stopping suspect brutality for good , or killing civilians , obliterating enemies and completing missions with evil karma for bad . Several times throughout the story , Delsin finds himself in a scenario where he must make a good or evil choice , such as whether to encourage Conduit vigilante Abigail " Fetch " Walker to stop slaying drug dealers , or to train her to become a more prolific killer . Player choices influence outcomes in some later missions . In combat , Delsin may use his abilities to incapacitate foes or obliterate them with headshots . He may choose to open fire on innocent civilians . Delsin 's choices manifest in a logo displayed on his jacket and the HUD , which features a blue (good) and red (evil) bird . Performing actions that are villainous gradually change the logo so that the red bird dominates the other , with the opposite happening with heroism . This is a visual representation of Delsin 's Karma level , that increases as good or evil depending on his choices . As his Karma level increases , Delsin can acquire new powers that correspond to his play @-@ style (e.g. very destructive powers with high levels of evil Karma) and his jacket also changes . If you have good karma , the jacket completely changes white whereas if evil the jacket

turns red . A continual streak of either good or evil actions fills up a bar in the HUD , which then lets Delsin perform a powerful finishing move called a Karma Bomb .

When not completing story missions , players can explore the city and complete activities such as tagging graffiti spots or assassinating D.U.P. secret agents . The city is split into districts that are all initially controlled by the D.U.P. , but Delsin gradually liberates each district by completing activities . When D.U.P. control of a district falls below 30 percent , Delsin can enter a District Showdown that requires him to eliminate a wave of D.U.P. forces , eradicating D.U.P. presence there .

= = Plot = =

= = = Setting and characters = = =

Second Son takes place in 2016 , seven years after Infamous 2 's Conduit protagonist Cole MacGrath sacrifices himself to cure humanity of a plague and destroy The Beast . Cole uses the powerful Ray Field Inhibitor weapon , which kills him and most of the other Conduits . The United States government establishes the D.U.P. to hunt down and capture the world 's remaining Conduits , dubbing Conduits with the pejorative " Bio @-@ Terrorists " . The protagonist is Delsin Rowe (Troy Baker) , a graffiti artist and the local delinquent of the Akomish reservation . Delsin has the unique Conduit ability of Power Absorption , allowing him to use other Conduits ' powers . His brother , Reggie (Travis Willingham) , is the local sheriff , and often arrests Delsin for his acts of vandalism . Both are Akomish Native Americans , whose territory lies at the shore of Salmon Bay , Washington . The antagonist is Brooke Augustine (Christine Dunford) , the director of the D.U.P. and a Conduit with power over Concrete . Her actions in the Akomish reservation drive Delsin to travel to Seattle , now under lockdown by D.U.P. forces . Delsin and Reggie encounter three other Conduits : Henry " Hank " Daughtry (David Stanbra) , a convict with control over Smoke ; Abigail " Fetch " Walker (Laura Bailey) , an ex @-@ junkie who uses her Neon powers to hunt down the illegal drug dealers in Seattle ; and Eugene Sims (Alex Walsh) , a reclusive video gamer who uses his Video (digital materialization) powers to save suspected Conduits from the D.U.P.

= = = Story = = =

After Reggie catches Delsin vandalizing a billboard , their subsequent argument is interrupted when a military truck carrying three Conduit prisoners crashes on the Akomish reservation . Two of the Conduits escape . Delsin pulls the third , Hank , out of the wreckage , and inadvertently absorbs his smoke powers . Shocked and frightened , Delsin pursues Hank in an effort to figure out what has happened and how to control his powers . However , they are both cornered by Brooke Augustine . She encases Hank in concrete and questions Delsin , suspecting him of hiding something . Delsin can choose to either tell Augustine the truth about his powers or reveal nothing . Regardless , Augustine renders him unconscious before moving on to the other tribe members .

Delsin awakens a week later and discovers that Augustine has tortured the rest of the tribe in an unsuccessful bid to gain information . However , she has left them to gradually die from concrete shards buried into their bodies , including their leader Betty (Karen Austin) . Reggie , who was spared from the torture , learns that the only way to remove the shards is to use Augustine 's power on them . Delsin realizes that he can absorb Conduit powers and resolves to go to Seattle to take Augustine 's powers and save the tribe . Reggie reluctantly accompanies Delsin to keep an eye on him . They reach Seattle and find that it has been put under strict martial law by the D.U.P. in order to find the other escaped Conduits . With Reggie 's help , Delsin battles D.U.P. forces and tracks down core fragments to develop his powers . He eventually encounters the other two escaped Conduits , Fetch and Eugene , and absorbs their powers . After both confrontations , Delsin defends the Conduits from Reggie , who initially views them as " freaks " , and can choose to either redeem or corrupt them .

Now possessing three powers , Delsin encounters Hank , who has escaped again . Hank tells

Delsin that Fetch and Eugene have been captured by the D.U.P. , and are being held on an artificial concrete island in Puget Sound . However , the situation turns out to be a trap set by Augustine . Reggie appears and rescues Delsin with a rocket launcher . While the brothers free Fetch and Eugene , Augustine encases Reggie 's feet in concrete and blasts them off the platform . As they dangle above the ocean , Reggie realizes that Delsin cannot save both of them , tells him that he is proud of him , and lets Delsin 's hand go and falls to his death . Distraught and enraged , Delsin climbs back up onto the platform and battles Augustine , destroying the entire island .

Augustine flees back to the D.U.P. headquarters . Delsin tracks Hank down to the docks , where he is fleeing from D.U.P. forces . Hank begs for forgiveness , saying that he only worked with Augustine because she threatened to hurt his daughter . Delsin can choose to either kill Hank , or let him escape Seattle with his daughter . Aided by Fetch and Eugene , Delsin rallies an assault on the D.U.P. headquarters . After breaking through the building 's defenses , Delsin confronts Augustine and reveals to her that he has figured out she staged the Conduit escape at Akomish to instill fear in the population and give the D.U.P. a reason to continue their regime . Augustine lets Delsin absorb her powers , and tells him that she wants to save the Conduits by imprisoning and protecting them from the population . Delsin battles and eventually defeats Augustine with his new concrete powers .

If Delsin has good Karma , he spares Augustine and exposes her crimes to the world . She is arrested and the D.U.P. disbands . Delsin , Fetch and Eugene convince the humans that they can peacefully coexist with the Conduits . All of the imprisoned Conduits are freed . Delsin returns to the reservation and heals the tribe members , then paints a mural dedicated to Reggie .
If Delsin has evil Karma , he kills Augustine and , together with Fetch and Eugene , takes control of Seattle . He releases all of the imprisoned Conduits and absorbs their powers . Upon returning to the reservation , Delsin is met by a wheelchair @-@ bound Betty who banishes him from the tribe for the killings in Seattle . Shocked and angered , Delsin destroys the entire reservation .

= = Development and release = =

= = = Origins and PlayStation 4 = = =

Sucker Punch Productions began to develop Second Son while the PlayStation 4 was still being designed . Having finished work on Infamous : Festival of Blood , they began to plan a new entry in the Infamous series under the working title Infamous 3 . As early as 2010 , they discussed with Sony their desire to bring Infamous to a new PlayStation platform .
Sucker Punch were in close connection with the PS4 's lead system architect Mark Cerny , who visited the studio several times . They gave Cerny feedback about how much power a new PlayStation system would require to render their ideal open world , how fast it would be capable of doing so and to what degree of texture detail . " We had some experience there that was useful for that team when they were planning some aspects of the hardware design " , producer Brian Fleming explained . He found that during the PS4 's development , there was a great level of interactivity between the system 's designers and game developers such as Sucker Punch .
Sucker Punch made suggested improvements they would like to see for the DualShock 4 gamepad . Second Son 's designer Jaime Griesemer traveled to Sony 's headquarters in Japan to discuss such improvements . The developers found they were able to adopt the DualShock 4 's touchpad into Second Son 's gameplay (for example , players emulate the in @-@ game fingerprint scanner using the DualShock 4 touchpad) .
The game was envisioned to take full advantage of the hardware , without the imposition of porting to older platforms like the PlayStation 3 . The hardware let developers improve the particle system that lights Delsin 's face up while he draws neon power from billboards and add detailed reflections to the game world . The increased memory bandwidth let the team render characters with higher fidelity . They found the PS4 's simplified architecture so easy to work with that they were able to reach very high graphical quality even though the hardware was new .

Over 110 developers worked on the game , a number that director Nate Fox considered small . He felt that working with a small team necessitated having a defined vision for the game from the outset , " to answer those first questions about what you want your game to be " . Sometimes , ideas came about during development that would have to be thrown out for not fitting with the game 's original vision . " We kill our darlings at Sucker Punch . It 's not easy ; it 's necessary " , Fox explained . Second Son displays a native resolution of 1080p at 30 frames per second .

= = = Design = = =

Sucker Punch elected to set Second Son in their hometown of Seattle as they could draw from their personal experiences in the open world 's design . During early development when team members debated where Second Son would be set , Seattle rated high on a list of possibilities . Fleming considered that the city had not been featured in many games prior to Second Son and so would not be " overblown " , and felt that Seattle 's weather and mixture of " old and new " architecture would make it an interesting setting . The team conducted fieldwork in Seattle 's nearby forests with audio and video equipment , which was used to reproduce local flora and the chirping sounds of local American robins . Seattle landmarks such as Pioneer Square , the Space Needle and Elephant Car Washes feature in the game . The developers licensed logos and signs from local businesses . Griesemer called the game world an " abstraction " of Seattle rather than a re @-@ creation since its layout did not suit Second Son 's gameplay and required the team to make necessary changes . The team wanted to thematically explore Seattle 's heritage of Pacific Northwest , Native American tribes in the game .

The designers used graphic sliders in the game engine to determine the amount of water covering the streets . Like Seattle , rain is frequent in the game . The lighting effects (such as neon light from Delsin 's powers) coupled with reflections help bring color into Seattle 's dark and rainy atmosphere . Because of the move to the PS4 , Sucker Punch were able to render more open world than what was possible in previous Infamous games . " You get a better feel of the city when you can see more of it " , said Griesemer .

After deciding on Seattle for the setting , the developers began to think about the superpowers that Delsin would possess . They added neon lighting to the city to amplify the " beautiful reflective streets " , and subsequently decided to make neon a source of power for Delsin because of its prevalence . Animation director Billy Harper considered Delsin 's smoke powers challenging to design , as the team wanted to make powers feel more fluid than in previous Infamous games . They removed Cole 's " contorted hand poses " to improve the connection between Delsin and his powers . Fox felt that smoke helps Delsin deftly navigate the game world by letting him zip up buildings and through enemies . Griesemer (who previously worked with Bungie on the Halo series) wanted to bring the fluidity of first @-@ person shooters to Second Son 's combat . The team reviewed the control scheme of previous Infamous games and " removed some of the complexity that was preventing people from interacting with the game " .

Griesemer said that a recurring theme throughout Infamous games that they wanted to continue with Second Son was the idea of " modern elemental powers " , variations on commonplace powers drawn from the game world . Producer Brian Fleming found that the graphical effects helped to inform players of the amount of power Delsin possesses . " This is a game about super powers , so for us , the way the effects look tells you a lot about how you 're playing the game " , he explained . Fox considered that the game world 's resemblance to Seattle helped the superpower elements feel authentic . " Because we have that sweet foundation of plausibility , you buy into the super @-@ powered element " , he explained .

= = = Character development = = =

Second Son 's premise is built from the ending of Infamous 2 that sees protagonist Cole MacGrath sacrifice himself to save humanity . They looked at Trophy data and found the majority (78 %) of Infamous 2 players chose this ending , and concurred with the popular choice . This allowed them to

create the new protagonist , Delsin , from scratch . " Moving forward onto [Second Son] , we said ' Alright , Cole 's dead . People have voted for this . Let 's make a new hero ' " , Fox explained . Griesemer felt that taking the Infamous series to the PS4 signified a new era , and that departing from the story of previous games would help them reach new audiences . " We needed a new entry point , and Delsin was the first step for that " , he explained . The idea to move away from Cole 's story came about during pre @-@ production staff meetings , and was confirmed after discussions both internally and with Sony Computer Entertainment . Griesemer described the contemporaneous sentiment as " It 's going to be new hardware , a new platform and we 're going to have a new audience " .

 Delsin 's Native American heritage came from the game 's setting in the Pacific Northwest , which features a large Native American population . Delsin wears a beanie inspired by one that Harper would wear around the studio (Harper recounted one particular staff meeting where four of the six team members were wearing hats) . Delsin 's character was inspired by United Kingdom street artist Banksy , as the development team appreciated Banksy 's clandestine , satirical work . Developing Delsin 's personality , the team posited the hypothetical : " What if Johnny Knoxville had powers ? What would he do with it ? " . Harper considered Delsin " full of reckless abandon " , the kind of character that would , upon gaining superpowers , jump off a cliff to see what happens . Fox considered Delsin " flawed in a way I think a lot of us can relate to " , trying to live up to his successful brother Reggie . He called the game 's story a " hero 's journey " .

 Digital Domain were brought on board for the motion capture work . Fox helped direct the actors ' performances , but found that they did not need much guidance for their roles . " You need to let them understand what you need from a scene , but the actors are so much better equipped to deliver that than me " , he explained . Fleming considered that using motion capture added authenticity to the characters . " The ability to capture [Delsin 's] facial reaction when he 's like ' Oh , shit ' , but doesn 't say ' Oh shit ' ? that 's a big deal " , he explained .

 Most of the non @-@ player characters (NPCs) that inhabit the open world were motion captured . The developers contacted casting agencies , and asked their friends and families if they would like to appear as extras in the game . Over 75 people were scanned in a three @-@ day period . They were seated in chairs and told not to move or smile , and a high @-@ definition digital camera captured a 3D model of their faces . The camera sent out strobe light patterns to capture the volume and shape of each face . A 360 @-@ degree setup captured the actors ' moving bodies , but mannequins were also used to help capture different clothing styles . Data collected from the cameras was used by the designers to render digital models , each composed of roughly 1 @.@ 4 million polygons ? any blank spots on the models would be digitally filled in by the designers . To render the models in the game , the data would be compressed by reducing the polygon count .

 = = = Marketing and release = = =

 On February 20 , 2013 , Sony held a conference in New York that announced the PS4 . Fox appeared on @-@ stage during the conference and recounted participating in an anti @-@ globalization protest in Seattle in 1999 . He then announced Second Son , and a debut trailer was shown that introduced the game 's premise and lead character . The game was privately demoed at E3 2013 , and its March 21 , 2014 , North American release date was confirmed during a PS4 launch event on November 14 , 2013 . By February 25 , 2014 , Second Son went gold (finished development) .

 On March 8 , it was announced that Second Son 's pre @-@ order sales had surpassed those of The Last of Us in the United Kingdom . Two special edition versions of the game were produced ; pre @-@ ordered and first @-@ run copies of the game received the Limited Edition , which includes the Cole 's Legacy mission pack that explain story events between Infamous 2 and Second Son . The Collector 's Edition includes a unique box cover , a replica of Delsin 's beanie , eight pins from his vest , an exclusive in @-@ game vest , and a D.U.P.-themed patch . All pre @-@ ordered copies of the game included four in @-@ game vests for Delsin .

= = = Downloadable content = = =

Paper Trail is a free downloadable content (DLC) with alternate reality game features . The story is split into six parts , with the first being available after reaching a certain point in the main story . Each subsequent part was made available each Friday from March 28 , 2014 in North America and , concluding with the release of the final part on April 25 , 2014 .

At E3 2014 , the DLC package Infamous First Light was announced and was released on August 26 , 2014 in North America and August 27 , 2014 in Europe . In First Light , the player controls Fetch . It is a stand @-@ alone expansion and Second Son is not required to play the game , but ownership of Second Son grants players access to exclusive content . Infamous First Light received mixed to positive reviews from critics .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

The game received generally positive reviews with a normalized rating of 80 out of 100 based on 90 reviews on Metacritic . GameRankings assigned a rating of 81 % based on 61 reviews . The game sold over one million copies within nine days of its release , making it the fastest @-@ selling installment in the series .

Vince Ingenito of IGN recalled being left " staring slack @-@ jawed " at the visuals , and called the open world " beautifully and diversely realized " with impressive lighting effects . Tom Mc Shea of GameSpot called the visuals " incredible " . Oli Welsh of Eurogamer praised Seattle 's art direction , and found the draw distances and frame rate consistent . David Meikleham of PlayStation Official Magazine (OPM) was very impressed with the graphics and 1080p definition , but cited occasional frame rate dips during intense combat . He enjoyed playing in Seattle and using his powers to level the destructible environments . Tamoor Hussain of Computer and Video Games (CVG) praised graphical details like the particle and lighting systems . " [The game is] colorful , rich in detail and has some of the best effects we 've seen on console " , he wrote .

GameSpot 's Mc Shea considered the combat well @-@ balanced between Infamous 's slower pace and Infamous 2 's frenetic action , and enjoyed Delsin 's agility and power . Chris Carter of Destructoid considered the combat 's simplicity its strength , finding Delsin easy to control and navigate the world . Edge were underwhelmed with the game 's opening because of its " skittish " parkour , but noted that once Delsin gained powers and reached Seattle , the game became very fun . They felt that enemies were clever enough to make combat a fun challenge , and called the main missions " for the most part well designed and generously proportioned " . IGN 's Ingenito enjoyed using Delsin 's powers in combat , and called each set " strong enough to hang an entire game on " . He found upgrading Delsin 's powers helped keep the combat fresh and made for good replay value . Philip Kollar of Polygon favored using neon power , but praised the balance and variety between all of them . He called the combat " a hell of a lot of fun " . Eurogamer 's Welsh found the combat imperfect yet fun , but did not think that upgrading Delsin 's skills made enough of a difference to his power .

Destructoid 's Carter thought that Delsin was a more interesting protagonist than " wooden " Cole , which helped his investment into the story . IGN 's Ingenito thought Delsin was an interesting lead character , especially because of the chemistry with Reggie . He found Troy Baker 's performance of Delsin " [imbued] with a charm and youthful abandon that keeps it from feeling tropey [sic] or overwrought " . However , he found supporting characters like Fetch underdeveloped and the narrative too straightforward . Although calling the characters clichéd , Edge felt that they were written and acted well . GameSpot 's Mc Shea called Delsin annoying and immature , and found the gameplay more interesting than the " tired " story . Eurogamer 's Welsh considered the plot driven by " inconsequential MacGuffins " and thought the ending rushed , but praised the story for not stretching on too long . Polygon 's Kollar felt that the story did not explore its themes of surveillance

and security @-@ over @-@ freedom well enough , such that its impact was diminished . He was overall disappointed with the narrative , despite finding the main characters written better than in previous Infamous games . OPM 's Meikleham was put off by Delsin 's arrogance and was underwhelmed with the story , but he was impressed by the quality of the motion capture performances .

Edge and Eurogamer 's Welsh faulted the morality system because they did not think it had enough influence on the story . IGN 's Ingenito called it " woefully outdated " , and felt that making evil choices severely jarred with Delsin 's character . He found the system redundant because Delsin became more powerful when he strictly adhered to either a good or evil play @-@ style , rather than crossing in @-@ between . GameSpot 's Mc Shea felt that the morality system was too binary because there was no " moral gray area " between playing good and evil . Polygon 's Kollar reflected Mc Shea 's opinion that the morality choices were too binary , and had difficulty connecting to his choices because they were too polarized between good and evil . OPM 's Meikleham felt that the morality system had " little to no impact on gameplay " . Danny Cowan of Joystiq thought that the morality system was well @-@ balanced , with equal incentive and drawback tied to Delsin 's choices .

GameSpot 's Mc Shea found Second Son 's open world beholden to a dated formula . He described Seattle as " a playground for you to go nuts in " instead of " a living , breathing world " , with the Seattleites existing only as fodder for players . CVG 's Hussain called Seattle " hauntingly empty " , with the sparsely distributed NPCs behaving inanimately . He felt that the open world 's lifelessness was the game 's biggest detractor , and he drew unfavorable comparison with Grand Theft Auto V , Sleeping Dogs and Assassin 's Creed IV : Black Flag , which he felt featured better open worlds . Eurogamer 's Welsh felt that Second Son did not innovate the open world genre as well as it could have because it relied too heavily on many of the genre 's tropes . Polygon 's Kollar felt that there was not enough variation in the missions and activities , as " virtually all culminate in the goal of beating up more soldiers or thugs " . Edge found the amount of content in the game thin , finding little merit in additional playthroughs because of the repetitive side @-@ missions . " Approach [Second Son] as an action game that just happens to be set in a nonlinear environment and it makes more sense " , they wrote . Destructoid 's Carter found the amount of content ample , and enjoyed liberating the city and collecting Blast Shards .

= = = Sales = = =

Infamous Second Son sold over one million copies nine days after its launch .