

inFAMOUS 2

Sony's comic book blockbuster

- Developed by **Sucker Punch Productions**
- Published by **Sony Computer Entertainment**

So you wanna be a super hero, huh? If you're a mere mortal like I am, you've dreamed of being a super hero. I don't care how old you are, you've done it. You escape into the fictional worlds by Marvel and DC, comic books, cartoons, movies, and of course -- your imagination.

Videogames have always tried to emulate this feeling of being the ultimate badass (or goodass?), but only in recent years have game developers actually got it right. See Spider-Man 2 and Batman: Arkham Asylum as games that broke the mould. Although the inFamous property was created specifically by Sucker Punch, it still feels like Cole McGrath is a hero straight from the comics (funnily enough they do come full circle with a [comic book published by DC](#)). If you haven't seen it, there's a [neat video at Sucker Punch](#) where they talk about comics and the inspiration for the character. If you missed the first game you would've missed the birth of Superhero Cole. Basically one day Cole existed as an ordinary courier, the next, due to no fault of his own, and a rather explosive package, he became an electricity wielding superhuman.

Now this was all well and good, but for the sequel there was a big todo over the character of Cole when he was completely redesigned and [looked like this](#). After the outcry of fans, Sucker Punch gave in, returning to the original design. However, a new voice actor was needed to pull off their new motion capture system. Like Naughty Dog, they wanted to record voice and motion capture at the same time. Taking an-

other cue from Naughty Dog, like Uncharted 2, inFamous 2's environments are a lot more destructible, and the action, especially the melee combat, was made to feel a whole lot more cinematic. These features were purely inspired, there is a friendship between the two studios and has been for many years. Anyhow, back to Cole. The voice actor sounds quite similar -- in saying that I actually haven't picked up the first game in a while, but he does seem to be less gravely, which is a lot nicer on the ears.

So that's the backstory out of the way! Before starting, inFamous 2 will let you import your finished save from the previous game, Mass Effect 2 style. Although none of the story changes are immediately obvious, I did notice that a few of the Dead Drops (audio logs) mentioned events relating to the good path I chose in the original inFamous. inFamous was fantastic by the way, and is still worth playing (and hey,

[didn't you get it for free anyway?](#)).

Unfortunately the crazy-ass ending didn't seem to play much into the sequel apart from introducing the big villain of inFamous 2, simply called 'The Beast'.

A showdown between Cole and The Beast forces Cole to make his way down to New Marais, a city inspired by New Orleans, the architectural design

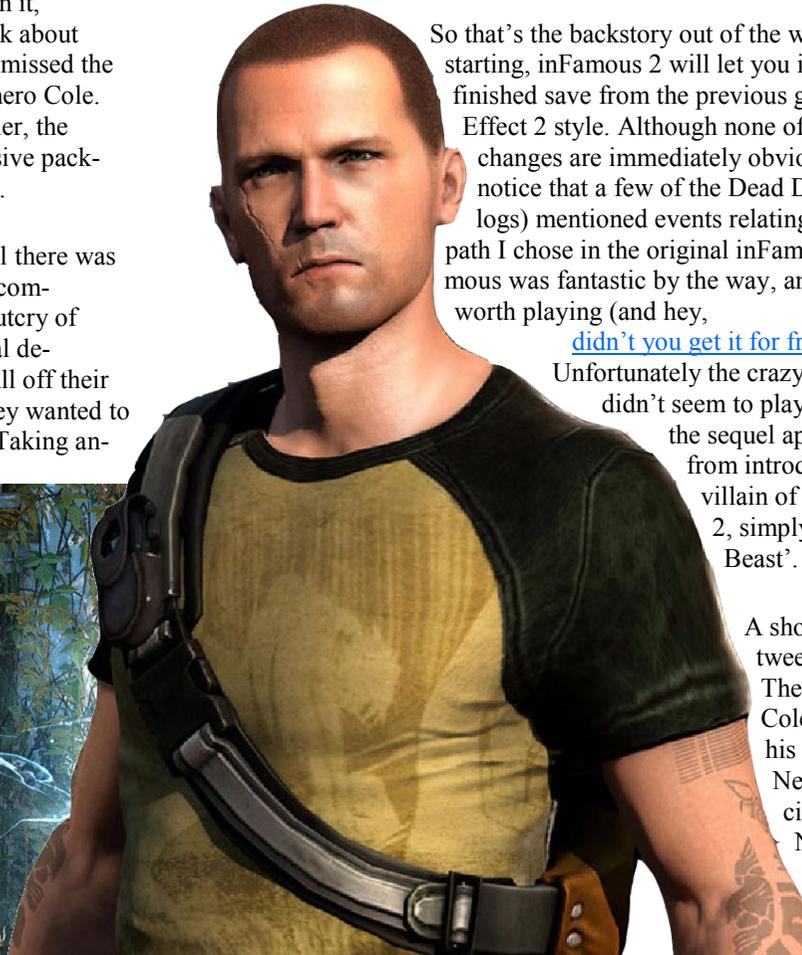


is close -- even half the city is flooded. There, Cole needs to grow stronger in order to take on the beast. Whilst doing this Cole also encounters a new foe; a sketchy politician named Bertrand. And of course along the way you'll be duking it out with the militia, swamp monsters, and ice people.

If you mention inFamous 2 to me, the first thoughts that come to my mind are zipping around the city building to building, and harnessing Cole's electrical powers to glide and grind along rooftops. Forget Assassin's Creed where Altair or Ezio will slowly climb a building and hop from roof to roof on foot. Utilising his powers, Cole can get to the end of a street in under a few seconds.

Not all of Cole's powers are for traversal. Adding to Cole's electrical abilities mid-way through the game you will learn new elemental powers, either Ice or Fire depending on your good or evil karmic choice -- see if you can figure out which is which. From time to time Cole can unleash a large elemental power. The one you start with (which also just happens to be my favourite) is the Ionic Vortex -- a furious electrical storm released from Cole's palms which tosses your targets into the air. It doesn't work on the larger enemies, but if you see a group of guys all huddled together, you know exactly what to do. I don't always stick with it, I do like to mix up powers from time to time.

I like to think I'm not the addictive type. Sure I can get a little obsessed by a TV show and watch a complete season in under a week, but videogame collectables aren't my bag, and just forget Achievement/Trophy hunting. That was until now... **Next page >>**



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<< inFamous 2 rewrote my entire gaming DNA. Firstly you have Blast Shards scattered about the city, much like Crackdown's Agility Orbs. And like Crackdown they actually improve your character, increasing Cole's charge capacity. When I spot one I stop whatever I'm doing and go and get it. An innocent citizen held at gunpoint? Who cares when there's a shiny thing over there that makes me stronger! New powers are discovered as you play the story, but to actually use them you have to do a few things first. Each power has a requirement to unlock it, say blast 10 guys off a rooftop. Then you need to spend your XP to finally unlock the power. It's a rather addictive little system. Then there's the side missions, which as well as awarding XP, also lead to exclusive upgrades. Remember that you can also gather XP using the much touted user-created content.

My first experiences of the user-created missions were nothing but ring racers and this bizarre 2D platformer -- where by moving Cole along a suspended beam, a box would move

along a parallel beam in the sky, and you had to make sure both you and the box didn't fall. I found it rather clumsy, and unforgiving, and after a few deaths I quit the mission entirely. Unlike LittleBigPlanet 2 you can't strip out the main character entirely when creating levels, which is where these half-baked systems come into play. So Sucker Punch might've over-hyped this feature. But it's early days yet. The game has only been out a little while so there may still be a chance to see something really cool.

inFamous 2 builds on the first game as any good sequel should; fixing problems, adding new features -- a lot of which I probably didn't even realise was in there. But I can just feel when playing that it's a much better experience. The story is easier to follow and you spend most of your time talking to characters you actually care about. As you grow Cole's powers you'll see just how kickass you can be. inFamous 2 will make you feel like a real comic book super hero. And that's what it's all about. >> **Michael Gray**

