

AUTOMOTIVE

Porsche revs up with cameo in Cyberpunk 2077

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The Porsche 911 Turbo is a model from a range launched in 1974. Image credit: Porsche

By ELLEN KELLEHER

German automaker Porsche is aiming to recruit gamers as drivers by featuring the Porsche 911 Turbo in the upcoming video game, Cyberpunk 2077.

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A relic of the seventies, the Porsche 911 Turbo has been painstakingly recreated for the game, created by the studio CD Projekt Red, which debuts on Nov. 19. A slick marketing campaign has also been kickstarted by Porsche to celebrate its cameo role and appeal to the gamers.

"This is a savvy move by the Porsche brand," said David Undercoffler, editor in chief of [Autolist.com](https://www.autolist.com), San Francisco. "Gaming has exploded in popularity in recent years and automakers know this."

"By integrating their brands and products into games like Cyberpunk 2077, they can speak to an otherwise hard-to-reach demographic of younger people, for whom cars don't hold the same appeal as they did for older millennials xennials Gen-X or even Baby Boomers."

Ingenious marketing

The only real car in Cyberpunk, the 911 Turbo is driven by the game's lead character, rocker Johnny Silverhand. He is played by Keanu Reeves, a long-time Porsche owner in life.

The car striped in red and grey retains its classic '70s style thanks to vehicle artists going to elaborate measures to use sketches, photographs and photogrammetry to put it together.

The 911 Turbo is currently on display at the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart

The 911 Turbo plays a critical role in the game, which puts players in a futuristic hellscape where men are locked in a dystopian battle against mega-corporations.

Cyberpunk will be released next month for PC, Xbox One, PlayStation 4 and Stadia.

Just a few adjustments to transport the car to 2077 have been made. These include a set of sensors to identify the vehicle from the air and electronic mirrors with monitors inside.

A model of the car has been on display outside the Porsche museum in Stuttgart since Oct. 15.

Additionally, it also features in a commercial shot at the museum, which describes the story of a mysterious connection to its previous owner.

In the elegant footage, an elderly bearded security guard working on the display floor hears car noises and launches an investigation.

Sirens in the building wail in response as an engine of the 911 Turbo revs up on its own and its lights flash. Two more employees join the first investigator.



Johnny Silverhand's Porsche 911 Turbo for the video game Cyberpunk 2077. Image credit: Cyberpunk

The three guards find a pair of keys with a red devil key chain lying on the ground. The car turns quiet, but as they walk away, its engine erupts again.

The end of the footage is equally existential as an ad for Cyberpunk 2077 flashes across the screen.

"The soul of an owner and its Porsche never part ways," reads the closing caption. "Ready to rock Night City on Nov. 19."

Porsche in focus

Porsche's collaboration with CD Projekt Red is not the first time it has teamed up with a game developer for marketing purposes.

Two years ago, the automaker did a deal with Zynga, the maker of a top mobile racing game, for a docu-series celebrating the brand's 70th anniversary.

As part of that, players of the popular mobile racing game CSR Racing 2 were able to get behind the virtual wheel of each car featured in the docu-series, providing an interactive extension of the content. Some of the supercars featured were a Porsche 911 and Porsche 959 ([see story](#)).

Earlier this year, Porsche hit the big time by running a Super Bowl ad for the first time since 1997.

Porsche's commercial at this prized event for advertisers focused on its electric Taycan. It worked with agency Cramer-Krasselt to create a 60-second spot that blended action and humor.

Titled "The Heist," the short was somewhat similar to its commercial for Cyberpunk 2077. It is also shot at the Porsche Museum and also features a security guard making the rounds with a flashlight, unaware that there is a hooded figure sitting in the driver's seat of a Taycan ([see story](#)).

"Initiatives like this are becoming increasingly common as automakers are forced to rethink traditional media strategies of reaching consumers," said Mr. Undercoffler.