



## **Ghost Rider sequel rides without Nicolas Cage?**





An unwarranted sequel to GHOST RIDER has been sputtering along for a while, but it's about to hit the throttle hard. Possibly out of necessity. And without its original star.

Vulture says that Columbia wants -- nay, needs -- to get a sequel into production by November, or it risks losing the rights to the character. You may recall that in the 90s during their financial devastation, Marvel sold off movie rights for various characters -- X-Men, Daredevil, Fantastic Four, Spider-Man -- and as long as their current homes continue to actively utilize the characters under their umbrella, they'll keep the rights.

The sticking point here is that Nicolas Cage may not have room in his schedule by then, since he's got a third NATIONAL TREASURE in the pipe after finishing Patrick Lussier's 3D revenge flick DRIVE ANGRY. Cage has expressed interest in returning as stuntman-turned-fireskulled-spirit-of-vengeance Johnny Blaze, and the studio seemed to want him back (despite recently describing the sequel as "pushing the reset button on the franchise").

The studio supposedly has a draft from "FlashForward" writers Scott Gimple and Seth Hoffman (overseen by producer David Goyer), and is putting together a list of possible directors (dry your eyes -- Mark Steven Johnson won't be back). The question is whether the sequel would be viable without Cage, who is still globally associated with the character (the first movie overcame lousy reviews and a February dump release to make \$230 million worldwide).

**Tags:** [Nicolas Cage](#) [1]

[Ghost Rider 2](#) [2]

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