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Sky rides Marvel's "Ghost"

By Jill Goldsmith

As Marvel Studios aggressively strikes film deals for its heroes, Steven Paul's Crystal Sky Entertainment has agreed to jointly finance a feature film based on the Marvel Comic Book character Ghost Rider.

Pic, budgeted at about \$75 million, is scheduled to go into production early next year. Marvel CEO Avi Arad, Crystal Sky CEO Paul and Jon Voight will produce. Screenplay is by "Blade" scribe David Goyer. Voight, a producing partner in Crystal Sky, may take an acting role in the pic as well.

Ghost Rider, introduced by Marvel in 1972, is a motorcycle stuntman able to perform superhuman feats; by night he's transformed into a fiery demon who stalks bad guys.

MM Media Capital Partners, which recently concluded a \$400 million line of credit agreement with Crystal Sky, will finance the pic.

Revenue from distribution as well as from licensing and merchandising opportunities will be shared equally by Crystal Sky and Marvel Enterprises.