

# Originating Document

Date: March 26, 2003

**Product Title:** The Simpsons Hit & Run

**Series/Branding:** The Simpsons

**Series Tagline (if applicable):**

**Developer:** RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT

## **Approval Signatures**

Brand Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Jack Van Leer

Marketing Director: \_\_\_\_\_

V.P. of Marketing \_\_\_\_\_

Sr. Producer/Executive Producer: \_\_\_\_\_ John Melchior

**Genre:** Driving Adventure \*(w/out of the car gameplay)

**Platform(s):** PlayStation 2, Xbox & Game Cube

**Recommended Peripherals:** Analog controller

## **Target Audience:**

**Primary:** *Demographics:* SIMPSONS FANS  
Males 12-34, console gamers

*Description of audience/Psychographics:* Simpsons fans are heavy media consumers of the show evidenced by the strong syndication ratings. Likely to be collectors of merchandise including items such as episode guides, action figures and comic books. Also fans of MTV, Comedy Central, gaming magazines and men's lifestyle such as Maxim.

**Secondary:** *Demographics:* HOLIDAY GIFT BUYERS  
Relatives/friends of Simpsons fans, parents of gamers.

*Description of audience/Psychographics:* Influenced by retail marketing, "wish lists" and word of mouth. The Simpsons benefit from 90+% awareness so it's simply a matter of communicating that this a game that will be liked by both hard core and more casual Simpsons fans.

**ESRB:** Projected Teen for Mild Language, Suggestive Themes & Violence.

**Pricing:** wholesale: \$ retail: \$

**Gold Date/Ship Date with Platforms and Languages:**

Master candidate date (console games only): Gold date: Ship date: Sept 9  
Platforms: PlayStation 2, Xbox & Game Cube  
Languages: English, French, German, Spanish & Italian. All include the localized VO talent that records the show in each territory.

**Demos/Trailer**

Availability Date: July 1  
Number of demos/trailers: TBD  
Size of Demo/Trailer: TBD

**New Product Forecast (domestic, direct, oem):**

Domestic:	units (cy 2002)	units (cy2003)
Europe:	units (cy 2002)	units (cy2003)
Asia pacific:	units (cy2002)	units (cy 2003)

**Category Background:**

Action Oriented Racing	Units	Dollars
2000	209,203	\$10,164,354
2001	4,114,939	\$221,411,718
2002	7,020,783	\$288,978,991

**Positioning Statement:** A brand-new self-contained interactive experience, *The Simpsons Hit & Run* is the hilarious mission based driving game featuring out-of-the-car gameplay, and the irreverent humor of The Simpsons set in the interactive world of Springfield.

**Unique Selling Point:** Hit & Run provides authentic Simpsons story, characters and humor combined with gameplay that will appeal to novice and more experienced gamers.

**Tone:** Hilarious, irreverent adventure

**Background:**

Currently in it's 14<sup>th</sup> season, The Simpsons is the longest running entertainment show in primetime TV. The show has won a total of 19 Emmy Awards, was the 2002 Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards winner for Favorite Cartoon and was also voted by TIME MAGAZINE as the "Best TV Show of the 20th Century." It has earned over \$1 billion in retail sales of licensed merchandise including action figures, clothing, books, comic books and interactive products. Videogames based on The Simpsons include ROAD RAGE released in 2001 for PS2, Xbox & Game Cube (currently approaching 2MM units sold worldwide) as well as THE SIMPSONS SKATEBOARDING released in late 2002 for PlayStation 2.

**Product Overview:**

The aliens, Kang and Kodos come to earth to tape and transmit a reality television show based on Springfield back to their home planet, but for much of the game the player and the townspeople have no idea that they are there. As the game progresses, Kang and Kodos and their show will be discovered. The game will then transition to the final Evergreen Terrace Halloween level where the player must stop Kang and Kodos’s show before the final episode—an episode where Kang and Kodos plan on destroying Springfield.

The story is set up as a series of “strange” happenings in the town; e.g., people are missing, very strange and Simpsons-themed crop circles appear, and electronics randomly fail or act erratically. The core characters investigate and try to discover the reason behind these occurrences—a strange new cola is revealed as the cause of many strange happenings, but that is not all. In the first part of the game, the core characters, or “walkables,” take the user through investigative missions in the style of The X-Files, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, etc. Part one ends with the revelation that the aliens are in town to transmit a reality television show over intergalactic airwaves.

The game builds to the season finale of the alien reality show that will be filmed during Halloween in which Kang and Kodos transform Springfield and its denizens into a Treehouse of Horror style world complete with zombies, ghosts, and other Halloween paraphernalia. In the final missions the user must free the town of the alien presence.

**Characters:** Drivable and out-of-the-car characters include: Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Apu. Other driving characters include: Cletus, Comic Book Guy, Abe Simpson, Barney, Moe and Principal Skinner with his Mother as a backseat driver. Over 40 unlockable cars include: Homer’s Mr. Plow, Abe Simpson’s WWII jeep, and Cletus’s Pick-up truck.

**Product Features and Benefits:**

<b>Features:</b>	<b>Benefits:</b>
Over 56 character based driving missions in 7 huge levels.	Incredible depth and diversity. All of Springfield created in 3D
5 main playable characters for driving and out of the car adventure. (12 additional driving characters)	Explore Springfield on foot and go inside buildings such as the Kwik e Mart.
Original dialogue and recording from TV show.	Brings the authentic humor and wit of the show to the game.
Animated & NIS interactive gags.	Delivers all of the humor of The Simpsons
Real world behavior AI	Cars take damage, switch lanes, signal to provide more realistic driving environment.
“Collector cards” in provide authentic Simpsons icons	Collectibles lead to added rewards encouraging replayability.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Simpsons brand</li> <li>• Popular among youth and adult demographics</li> <li>• 50+ Driving missions, out of the car gameplay, collectible cards.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must differentiate from RR so it’s not viewed as a sequel.</li> <li>• Perceived as derivative of GTA3.</li> <li>• Past perceptions (Wrestling, Skateboarding)</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Original script from award-winning Simpsons writers.</li> <li>Voice-over talent from the show.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenged Xbox &amp; Game Cube install base.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotional stunt of building Homer's car on Monster Garage.</li> <li>Tie ins with DVD Season 3 launch in August.</li> <li>Highly targeted TV media buy on Simpsons in Spot/Syndication</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weak Simpsons Skateboarding sales.</li> </ul>

### Competitive Products:

Product	The Simpsons Road Rage	The Getaway	Spy Hunter	Stuntman
<b>Platform</b>	PS2 GC Xbox	PS2	PS2 GC Xbox	PS2
<b>Publisher</b>	EA/Fox Interactive	Sony	Midway	Infogrames
<b>Developer</b>	Radical	Team Soho	Midway	Reflections
<b>Genre</b>	Action Oriented Racing	Combat Racing	Combat Racing	Action Oriented Racing
<b>Gamerankings Rating</b>	PS2 – 66% GC – 67% Xbox – 59%	PS2 – 77%	PS2 – 83% GC – 70% Xbox – 72%	PS2 – 73%
<b>Strengths</b>	Actual Voice-actors. Accurately mimics the look of the show. Best Simpsons game to date.	Great driving engine. Good city detail. Mimics gangster flick.	Great driving controls. Faithful to 2D predecessor. Tons of unlockables	Unique Concept. Unlicensed recreations of famous driving scenes. Great car control. Amazing physics
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Limited Gameplay. Random slowdowns. Repetitive dialogue.	Poor camera. Poor controls.	No depth to multiplayer. Graphics are adequate at best.	Frustrating Gameplay. Below average graphics. Long loading times.
<b>Key Marketing Highlights</b>		Huge marketing spend by Sony.		
<b>Release Date</b>	PS2 – Nov. 2001 GC – Dec. 2001 Xbox – Dec. 2001	PS2 – Jan. 2003	PS2 – Sept. 2001 GC – Mar. 2002 Xbox – Mar. 2002	PS2 – June 2002
<b>Units Sold*</b>	PS2 – 714,760 GC – 152,578 Xbox – 172,205	PS2 – 566,093	PS2 – 658,081 GC – 69,497 Xbox – 84,350	PS2 – 432,018
<b>Note:</b>	Huge Entertainment Franchise		Update of immensely popular 2D game	Unique Concept.

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\*The NPD Group