

# Murder/Mystery Dinner Fundraiser

Dark Shadow Ghost Tours

[www.darkshadowghosttours.com](http://www.darkshadowghosttours.com)

**[WE CAN HELP YOU  
GENERATE AT LEAST  
\$2000.00 FROM ONE  
EVENT!]**

This packet will outline how our organization can help your organization generate at least \$2000.00 from one event. We will help with the production, planning, co-ordination, ticket sales, and promotion... You supply us with some workers and take on the responsibility for the venue, food, and alcohol (with our help).

## CONTENTS

---

Who we are and how we can help .....	2
Why Murder/Mystery Dinners? .....	2
Available Themes .....	2
About our Murder Mystery Dinners .....	3
Your Groups Responsibilities .....	4
Dark Shadow Ghost Tours Responsibilities .....	5
Estimated Production Budget .....	6
Estimated Production Budget explained .....	7
How to get started.....	11
Frequently Asked Questions from Groups.....	12
Frequently Asked Questions from guests.....	13

---

## WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE CAN HELP

---

Dark Shadow Ghost Tours has produced several successful and sold out tours and dinners. We have built a following of over **7000 fans** and we offer a night of excitement and entertainment that cannot be matched with any other production company in this area.

By providing the production and coordination of your event, we can take the worries off of you and let you focus on providing great customer service to your guests, as well as, generating some great income for your group.

As the cover of this packet states: "We can help you make at least \$2000.00 from one event," and the following pages will outline just how we can do that.

---

## WHY MURDER/MYSTERY DINNERS?

---

Why Murder/Mystery Dinner? The answer is simple. It is just something different. A lot of people do not like change, but when it comes to entertainment and relaxing, they do like something just a little different. Although our dinners are murder/mystery related, there is underlying humor involved as well.

Our guests have ended each of our dinners in the past by asking us when we were going to put on the next one, and that is our goal. We want them to come back to the next one. We have been extremely successful and have worked out all of the kinks when it comes to providing an evening of entertainment. Your guests will not be disappointed.

---

## AVAILABLE THEMES

---

As part of the Dark Shadow Ghost Tours team is a writer and director that can help create any type of custom themed murder/mystery dinner for your needs to meet your event. We can also offer ideas based on dinners we have performed in the past or dinners that we have in our catalog that we have not produced yet. Either way, each dinner is produced within the same manner, or even if we used the same theme in the past, we always change the outcome so that the same result is never duplicated.

## ABOUT OUR MURDER MYSTERY DINNERS

---

Although each of our dinners have different themes, each dinner has the same structure and format that we have tuned over our last several productions to make a great working production that focuses on one thing. Guest entertainment and great value for the money they spend for the tickets.

The following are some of the keys to our success (We cannot share them all at this time, but if we proceed with this venture you will see them all).

1. We provide a website for the purchase of tickets on-line that has a built in credit card processing system.
2. We promote our dinners heavily on-line to our current fans (over 7000) through Facebook, Twitter, and Tumbler.
3. We sell individual tickets and we sell discounted tickets for an entire table (Tables sell great).
4. We always provide a cash bar (People are going out, they want to relax and have a great time).
5. Our staff focuses on being very customer service oriented and polite. The guests spent their hard earned money to come to our production; we treat them with respect as if they are a guest in our home.
6. Each production has at least 8 actors.
7. Our writer, director is present at each dinner (and sometimes is an actor).
8. We have an event production manager at each dinner. Their job is to make sure that everything is on time, on task, and going well. If something changes or during the production (or does not go as planned), they can quickly make adjustments to ensure everything goes smooth.
9. We strive to include the audience (guests) as part of the production.
10. We strive to ensure that there is a quality meal during the event. The event is promoted as a murder/mystery DINNER so the guests are going out and should be able to dine on some good food.
11. We plan out our events at least a month ahead of schedule and have weekly status meetings either in person or on-line.
12. Most of the play is improvised. This allows the actors to adjust to the crowd and make the dinner very interactive. Our dinners are not stage performers. This is an interactive dinner theater and we even sometimes seat the actors at the guest's tables. Some of our themes even have the actors come in as if they were guests.
13. All guests will walk away with souvenirs from the dinner. These are provided through the playbill they receive when they come in, to the FREE photograph, to the table favors.

## YOUR GROUPS RESPONSIBILITIES

---

Pre Productions	During the Production	Post Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain/Schedule Venue</li> <li>• Obtain/Schedule Table and Chair rentals if needed.</li> <li>• Organize food.</li> <li>• Organize Alcohol.</li> <li>• Schedule and obtain security.</li> <li>• Purchase and decorate venue based on the theme of the dinner.</li> <li>• Setup tables and chairs for guests, food, DJ, give-a-ways, etc.</li> <li>• Obtain Sponsorships.</li> <li>• Hand-out flyers and promote ticket sales.</li> <li>• Obtain door prize give-a-ways.</li> <li>• (Optional) Sell tickets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve Alcohol.</li> <li>• Serve Food and bus tables.</li> <li>• Any other sales for auctions or give-a-ways.</li> <li>• Assist with the distribution of photos.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean-up venue.</li> <li>• Prep for return of rentals.</li> <li>• Send out thank you notes to vendors.</li> </ul>

## DARK SHADOW GHOST TOURS RESPONSIBILITIES

Pre Productions	During the Production	Post Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create all graphics and ads for the production.</li> <li>• Create and provide worksheets for sponsorships and donation letters.</li> <li>• Create and provide customize thank you letters to sponsors</li> <li>• Create printed flyers.</li> <li>• Establish a Facebook event page for the production.</li> <li>• Promote the event on-line heavily to our existing fan base.</li> <li>• Organize and rehearse actors.</li> <li>• Create or procure props for the actors if needed.</li> <li>• Design and create all playbills.</li> <li>• Create seating chart.</li> <li>• Manage credit card ticket sales.</li> <li>• Create or procure table favors.</li> <li>• Organize the entire production project, key track of budget, and conduct status update meetings with all parties involved before the production.</li> <li>• Setup/Test the sound equipment the day of the show.</li> <li>• Procure grand prize.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct check-in and provide seating assignment.</li> <li>• Sell 50/50 tickets for actor's tip.</li> <li>• Take and produce photos on-site.</li> <li>• Conduct Play.</li> <li>• Instruct guests on how the voting works.</li> <li>• Tally votes.</li> <li>• Announce winners and give-a-ways.</li> <li>• Provide sound system and actor prompts.</li> <li>• Provide actors</li> <li>• Provide production crew for play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pack sound equipment.</li> <li>• Pack photo equipment.</li> <li>• Pack actor props.</li> <li>• Close out project with group.</li> </ul>

## ESTIMATED PRODUCTION BUDGET

Line #										
1	Total Guest Tickets		200							
2	Table Ticket Sales	\$	4,950.00	22		225				
3	Regular Ticket Sales	\$	780.00	24		32.5				
4	Alcohol Sales (Based on \$3.00 per @ 500 drinks)	\$	1,500.00							
5	Sponsorships	\$	3,500.00							
6	Intermission Contest	\$	350.00							
7	Gross Sales/Income	\$	11,080.00							
8	Bank (Guaranteed Profit)	\$	3,240.00	6.20		\$ 1,240.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 2,000.00		
9	Security	\$	100.00					\$ 100.00		
10	Programs/Playbills (\$3 per)	\$	600.00			\$ 600.00				
11	Alcohol (Beer, Liquor, Wine)*	\$	650.00					\$ 650.00		
12	Photograph (each person get's a photo \$3 per)	\$	600.00			\$ 600.00				
13	TV (Grand Prize)	\$	200.00			\$ 200.00				
14	Completely Off Prize	\$	15.00			\$ 15.00				
15	Lottery Tree (\$100 in prize tickets, plus roll of tickets to sell)	\$	115.00			\$ 115.00				
16	Promotion/Advertising (On-line, printed flyers/posters)	\$	600.00			\$ 600.00				
17	Table Favors	\$	800.00			\$ 800.00				
18	Table cards and/or guest interactivity card	\$	200.00			\$ 200.00				
19	Sponsorship Signs (10)	\$	80.00			\$ 80.00				
20	Food (\$12 /per) (salad, entre, dessert, water, coffee, tea)	\$	2,400.00					\$ 2,400.00		
21	Production Staff Dinner (8 Actors/ 8 production crew)	\$	192.00					\$ 192.00		
22	Venue	\$	500.00					\$ 500.00		
23	Table Rentals (Estimated \$10 per) 8 seated/table	\$	250.00					\$ 250.00		
24	Chair Rentals (Estimated \$1.50 per)	\$	300.00					\$ 300.00		
25	Intermission Contest Supplies	\$	20.00					\$ 20.00		
26	Decorations	\$	200.00					\$ 200.00		
27	Extra Income Off-Set	\$	18.00					\$ 18.00		
28	Total Costs	\$	11,080.00			\$ 4,450.00		\$ 6,630.00		

## ESTIMATED PRODUCTION BUDGET EXPLAINED

---

We wanted to provide some explanation about the estimated production budget in case you are reviewing this document without a formal presentation by Dark Shadow Ghost Tours.

This is an estimated production budget with the key phrase estimated. These numbers will be exact since there are so many variable that will change the budgeting such as, maybe you can do the food cheaper. Maybe you will purchase less alcohol. Maybe we will sell more individual tickets instead of tables. All of this will adjust the budget accordingly, and one of the items that will be reviewed in each status meeting is where we stand on the budget.

*One thing that will remain constant, based on an event with 200 guests, is the amount on Line #28 under DSGT of \$4450.00. We will not go over that price. If additional revenue is generated for this event, it will go back to your group. We do not split the profits from the event. The amount displayed is our maximum for a 200 person event, and we will never go over that price.*

Each line item is explained in detail below.

**Line #1 (Income): Total Guest Tickets** – The budget is based on a total number of 200 guests at the event. Of course this is not a fixed number and we can work with you to adjust the number of guests according to the size of your venue how the size of dinner you would like to have.

**Line #2 (Income): Table Ticket Sales** – It has been our experience that tickets sell best when they are sold by the table. Guest have even gone in together to help make a table in which it makes the sales portion of the project much easier.

**Line #3 (Income): Regular Ticket Sales** – This is an estimate on how many tickets would be sold on a couple or individual basis.

**Line #4 (Income): Alcohol Sales** – This is an estimated income that will be generated if 500 drinks were sold at \$3.00 per drink.

**Line #5 (Income): Sponsorships** – This is the amount that would be generated by selling sponsorships. See the “Sponsorship Opportunities” section for more details.

**Line #6 (Income): Intermission Contest** – This can be a contest that is ran during the intermission of the dinner. It can also be an additional raffle or drawing.

**Line #7 (Income Total): Gross Sales / Income** – This is the total of the gross income for the event.

**Line #8 (Expense): Bank (Guaranteed Profit)** – As we started working with this production budget, we decided that the whole point of spending the time on putting on a major production like this is to generate a profit. So right from the beginning we are budgeting this amount to set aside as profit.

**Line #9 (Expense): Security** – In the state of Ohio if you are having alcohol at an event, you are required to have security present. This is the price allocated for the security.



**Line #10 (Expense): Programs/Playbills** – Everyone attending the dinner will receive a playbill. The playbills will contain information about the dinner, but also double as the ballots for those who guess the murder/mystery.

**Line #11 (Expense): Alcohol** – Based on 200 people, we have used a utility that is used for weddings to calculate how much alcohol is needed to serve 200 people and the estimated cost involved.

**Line #12 (Expense): Photograph** – Each person who attends the dinner will take home a photograph as a keepsake from the event. We will take their picture when they come in on a green screen and have a custom background that will be used for the event. All of the photographs are printed and handed out during the event.

**Line #13 (Expense): TV (Grand Prize)** – If the guest guesses who did it, why they did, and how they did it, they are entered into a drawing to win the grand prize for the evening. In the past we have done 32" LCD TV's which is valued at \$200.00.

**Line #14 (Expense): Completely Off Prize** – If the guest is completely wrong on the guess at the end, they are entered into a drawing for a "booby" prize. In the past we have done Clue DVD movies.

**Line #15 (Expense): Lottery Tree** – To spruce up the 50/50 give-a-ways in which ½ of the 50/50 is used to tip the actors, we have offered a secondary drawing from the 50/50 of a \$100 in lottery tickets. Since we have started doing this, our 50/50 drawings have been up over \$1000.00.

**Line #16 (Expense): Promotion/Advertising** – Although we will promote this on-line on all of our Facebook and Twitter account, there are some additional costs involved when it comes to printed flyers and additional short term ads for events on-line. This is how we have sold out dinners in the past and we have optimized our advertising efforts to be as reduced as possible in order to achieve maximum sales.

**Line #17 (Expense): Table Favors** – In addition to the photograph, each guest will receive party favors at their seat. We have budgeted \$4 per guest for this item and we strive to provide an experience that the guests receive a lot for the purchase of their tickets.

**Line #18 (Expense): Table cards and/or guest interactivity card** – With each of our dinners, we find some way to involve the guests into the production. The way we incorporate this is by placing an interactivity card on each of the tables explaining their role during the dinner. These are also great sponsorship opportunities. See the "Sponsorship Opportunities" section for more details.

**Line #19 (Expense): Sponsorship Signs** – This is the cost to produce 18" X 24" yard signs for the super sponsors at the event. One sign will be placed inside next to the area and one will be placed outside and displayed as the guests come into the venue. There are a total of 10 signs that are made for the dinner. See the "Sponsorship Opportunities" section for more details.

**Line #20 (Expense): Food (\$12 /per)** – This is what we have budgeted for food and will be promoting this as a murder/mystery dinner; therefore, we do ask that at least a salad, entree, dessert, water, coffee, and tea be provided as the meal. If your group can provide that for less than \$12 per person, the extra generated revenue will go back to the group as additional funds. WE DO NOT WANT TO SCRIMP on this line item.

**Line #21 (Expense): Product Staff Dinner** – As part of the payment to the production staff and the actors, we have always provided food for these workers. They are the ones making the entertainment happen and will need to eat as well.

**Line #22 (Expense): Venue** – This is a line item for the rental of the venue. If the venue rental is included as part of the food price or at a reduce amount, the extra funds will go back to the group.

**Line #23 & #24 (Expenses): Table and Chair Rentals** – This is an estimated price for item rentals if they are not provided by the venue. Again, if not needed this money goes back to the group.

**Line #25 (Expense): Intermission Contest Supplies** – This is just an allocated expense for tickets or other items that may be needed for the intermission contest.

**Line #26 (Expense): Decorations** – This line item is for any decorations needed to decorate the venue for the theme of the dinner.

**Line #27 (Expense): Extra Income Off-Set** – This item is used to balance the income and expenses and all of these funds go back to the group. If there are any changes to the estimated budget and there is an excess income, it is show on this line item.

**Line #28 (Balance total):** This line item just balances out the allocation of income.

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

---

We have outlined a great way to generate the \$3500 in extra funds that may be needed in order to produce the event. We have some good news about this, you will actually start out with having 3 of the 5 major sponsors already sold. As part of the advertising budget, we will provide you with worksheets

Here is how this will work:

### ***Table Sponsors (\$1000.00 in revenue)***

Based on 200 people in attendance, there are 25 tables of 8 people. So, let's sell sponsorship for each table at the rate of \$40 per table which will generate \$1000.00.

Here is what they will get:

- First, there are table cards at each table telling the guest what role they will play during the evening and, on that card we will list the business name.
- Also, we will put together a list of all 25 table vendors and stuff them within the playbill. On that list will be the business name, phone number, and web address.
- In addition, Dark Shadow Ghost Tours will promote out on our social network (of over 7000+ fans), a thank you to that business for sponsoring a table.

### ***Playbill Ads (\$1500.00 in revenue)***

In the playbill, we have set aside 20 extra full size pages for ads. 15 of the pages can be sold to pretty much any small business at the following prices:

- Full page ad \$100.00
- ½ page ad \$50.00
- ¼ page ad (About the size of a business card) \$25.00.

Not only where each guest (200 people) get a copy of the playbill to take home, but again, we will thank each vendor out over our social network.

### ***Major Sponsorship (\$1000.00 in revenue)***

There are 5 major sponsors available: Actors Sponsored By, Food Sponsored By, Sound and Audio Sponsored By, Grand Prize Sponsored By, and Photographs Sponsored By. The good news is, 3 of these will already be sponsored for you. Grand Prize – DNSTC, Photographs – DoItHere.net, and Actors – Dark Shadow Ghost Tours.

Here is what major sponsors will receive:

- Full Page ad in Playbill
- A sign by the area (if possible) of their sponsored ship.
- A sign outside (as people are coming in)
- A thank you going out over the Dark Shadow Ghost Tours social network.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

---

To get started with our project it is quite simple. Just get in touch with Shawn Donley, the owner of Dark Shadow Ghost Tours (cell: 330-507-2270) and let's get together to work out a great package for your group.

Once we have decided on a package, we will provide your group with donation letters, sponsorship worksheets, tickets, and whatever else is needed to get the project going.

Everything is based on the venue date and theme. This is what is going to allow us to generate any graphics and promotional items needed. So the first thing that has to be done is setting the date and picking a theme. There are 3 things that determine the date; 1) Is the venue open? 2) Is your group members free on that date? 3) Is the Dark Shadow Ghost Tour production team available on that date? Once the date is picked, we are now producing and promoting the event, and sometimes, this may be the hardest part of the whole project.

Picking the theme is the fun part. Once we get the idea for a theme (if it is not from our catalog), our creative team will get together and begin the script and start working on the entertainment ideas for the evening.

If the venue requires a deposit to hold the venue, we ask that your group pays that deposit.

We will front the advertising and marketing costs needed to create the graphics, forms, tickets, and advertising.

This is the only out of pocket money needed in order to get the project going.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM GROUPS

---

### ***Do we have to sign a contract?***

No. We only ask 2 things. 1) This is a dinner show and we ask that the quality of the food being provided is at the quality you would expect at an event such as a wedding or formal gathering. If we are selling tickets at a higher price, our guest will be highly disappointed at a covered dish or lower quality food option. 2) We ask that all who are working the event treat the guests as if they are “guests” in their home. This is the quality of customer service that we offer our fans and by having the Dark Shadow Ghost Tours name and brand, this is the customer service our guests have come to expect. We feel that these two items are not difficult, but are extremely important to our productions. The point of having this in a signed contract is not needed. If your group requires some kind of commitment from us saying that we will produce your event for a certain price, then in reality there is an issue with trust and this will have to be discussed before we would consider the production.

### ***Do we need workers at the event?***

If there is a need to setup (decorating), tear down, clean up, sell extra items not within this plan, then yes. Dark Shadow Ghost Tours production crew is there to produce and run the evening. To keep our costs as low as possible, we have 8 people on the production crew, and 8 actors. We do not have the staff for setup, tear down, and clean up. Our production staff will handle our props, sound system, photography equipment, etc... In most cases, the venue may even handle most of this.

### ***Do we have to sell the sponsorships?***

Unfortunately, yes. Some sponsorship money is needed to cover the costs of the production and to keep the ticket prices low enough to sell out the dinner. Some places produce the dinners without sponsorship; however, the ticket prices are much great and there is a less chance of selling tickets. We have outlined a great program to assist in selling the sponsorships for the event.

### ***Do we have to provide alcohol?***

This is actually a pretty good question, and may be an issue is selling tickets. We have not produced a dinner without the alcohol being available, and haven't wanted to take the chance to test this theory out due to the cost of production. It's possible to produce an event without alcohol and this is worth discussion; however, I feel that it depends on the market we are trying to sell the tickets too. Do most people who want to go out and have a good time what to have a few drinks? Maybe they do?

---

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM GUESTS

---

The following are some of the common (or frequently asked) questions that we get from guests when purchasing tickets. We are providing them here so that you and your group knows how we deal with certain questions in case some come up when you are talking with people.

***Is your dinner age appropriate?***

We always tell our guests, the dinners are appropriate for age 13 and above. If a parent wants to bring their child to the dinner, we will not turn them away, but we have had some guests in the past want to be seated at a table with no children so that they can concentrate on the entertainment.

***I am getting tickets with another couple [and we are not purchasing a whole table] can we sit together?***

Yes. Just let us know when you purchase your tickets. We will seat you together when we make out the seating chart.

***My child is coming but they do not eat that much, do you have a children priced ticket?***

No. All tickets are the same price. Although in the dinner this is a dinner, food is only a secondary thing that is given to the guest. Mainly, all guests will receive the same souvenirs, the same entertainment, and the same opportunities to win the prizes and give-a-way. This is why we do not offer a discounted ticket for children.

***What is your refund policy on your ticket purchases?***

Unfortunately we do not have a refund policy. Unless there is an extreme circumstance, once the tickets are sold, the seats are added to the guest count. We try everything that we can to resell the tickets to someone else, but we encourage the person to try and sell their tickets. If someone purchases tickets and does not show up at the dinner, there is no refund policy.

I have purchased 5 tickets, but want to buy 3 more. Can I upgrade to a table?

Yes. We can work with you to upgrade your tickets. In fact what we do is refund your previously purchased tickets and allow you to purchase a table.

***What should we wear to the dinner?***

This depends on the theme. For example, we produced a dinner that was a mock wedding reception. We told the guests to wear what they would to a wedding reception. We produced another dinner that was a Victorian wake theme. We told the guests to wear period clothing. Another dinner was a Christmas theme... we had an ugly Christmas sweater contest.

***What kind of food are you serving at the dinner?***

Once we have the menu for the dinner, we will post this information out on the website. This does make a difference to those who have issues with certain foods.