Shopify App Reviews

What: The product & users

Partner Dashboard

Shopify App Store

What: The "before" experience

Dashboard UI

Automated review update email

Threshr is waiting for review

Apps are currently being reviewed within two weeks of submission.

When the review is complete, any required changes will be sent to ben@threshr.co. Listings are read-only. Withdraw your app to make changes.

Withdraw app

English listing Submitted

Preview listing | Open

Primary

ⓘ Your primary listing is English by default. If you create a translated listing ↗ , you can make it your primary listing.

Your app was rejected

One of more issues didn't pass our basic functionality checks during submission.

App Name	Test App 1
Current app status	Draft
App visibility	Unlisted
Review reference	65426

What: Product goals & requirements

Goals

- Reduce the number of app review rejects and re-reviews
- Reduce the time it takes for developers to submit their app

Requirements

- Implement a guided submission experience that spells out prerequisites for a complete submission
- Provide personalized transparency into review expectations based on specific app details
- Outline clear, actionable statuses for apps in review

What: User flow content audit

Apps index

JTBD

As an app creator, I want to get to the app I want to work on, and understand critical information about the state it's in.

Tara Hasouris

Column label is confusing
Suggests listing visibility, but a review status (Draft) appears

Given the job to be done, "draft" as a status label doesn't help the developer understand anything about the state of their app.

"Draft" is a more appropriate descriptor of a listing, but not of an app. It also doesn't speak to the review process.
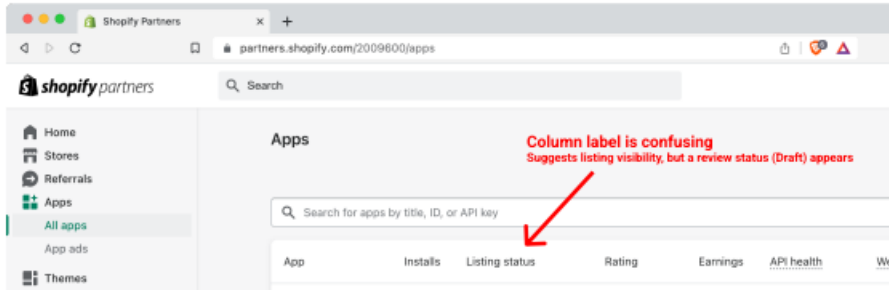
Overview

JTBD

As an app creator, I want to understand what jobs need my attention, when they need attending to, with just enough information to dive deeper, so I can consistently and efficiently provide value to Merchants.

Tara Hasouris

Status label is confusing when taken out of context
It's not clear what "Draft" means, or what it applies to.

Given the job to be done, it makes sense to include the app status on this page. However, a label with no other explanation isn't effectively communicating "what jobs need the developer's attention."

Because there's more real estate for content on this page, there seems to be more opportunity to leverage the card about "app listing" for information about the app's status.
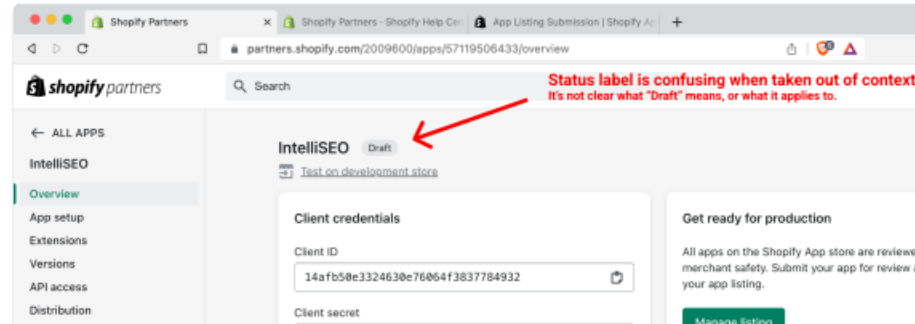
Distribution - Pre-selection

JTBD

As an app creator, I want to understand and adopt the right distribution model for my app so that I can make money in the way I need to.

Tara Hasouris

This is about app visibility
Either explain what "listed" and "unlisted" means, or use different terms.
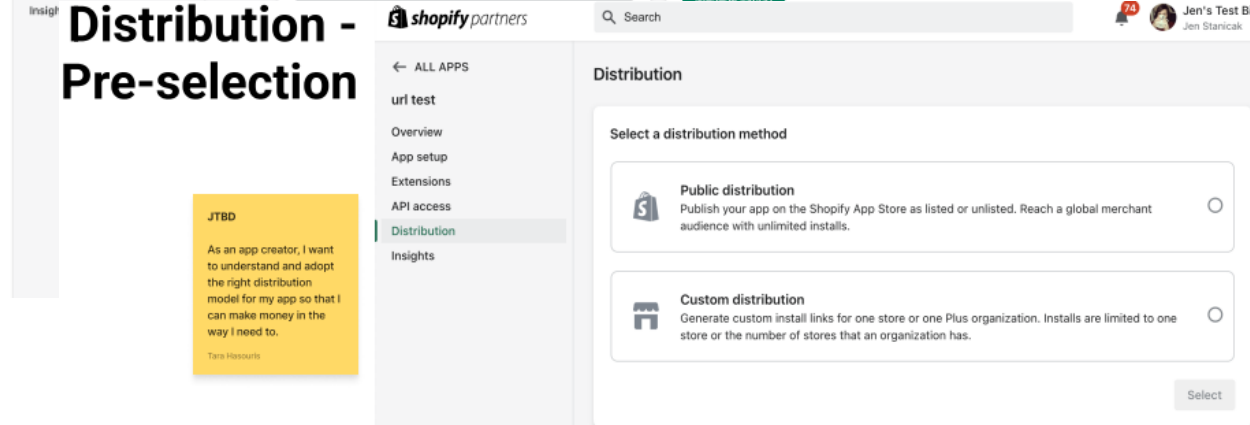
What: Content problems

- **Terminology:** Review emails use different words for single concepts than what are in the partner dashboard content
  - Causing a disconnect with partners around the status of their app in review
- **Transparency:** Statuses are vague and sometimes overlap multiple use cases
  - For example: An app can be in "suspended" status for reasons other than app review
- **Context**: There's no guidance in the UI around Shopify's App Store requirements
  - Prevents them from efficiently setting up their app, and sets them up to fail the app review
- **Communication:** No humanized element in emails
  - They're peppered with jargon and no clear structure making them hard to understand
  - They're tonally harsh which can be discouraging when a developer needs to fix something to pass review

How: Content sentiment flow
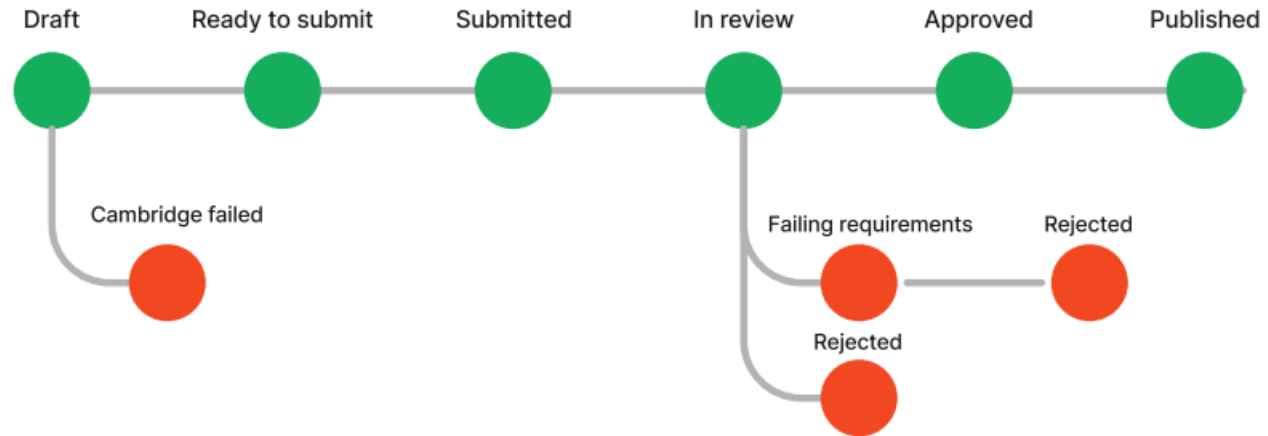
How: General review concepts content guidelines
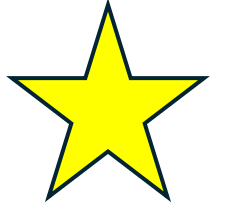
Voice and tone
- *Super clear.* Use plain language.
- *Polite but brief.* Get right to the point.

Guidelines

High level
- Essential info first. Make next steps and consequences of not taking action impossible to miss.
- Make the consequences crystal clear. When we say "delisted," make it clear that means the app is no longer on the Shopify App Store.
- Simplify the deadlines. Use concrete dates vs relative timeframes.
- Use the same simple formatting for all emails. The consistency helps reinforce that they all come from us.
- Where it makes sense, reinforce the merchant benefit, AKA the whole reason we have app requirements in the first place

Nitty gritty
- Lead with the to-do. ("fix the problems to get relisted" not "to get relisted, fix the problems")
- Make link text self evident. When readers scan text, links are one of the first things their eyes jump to. Make sure they're intuitively meaningful so even inattentive readers understand what clicking gets them. ("reinstall your app on your test store" not "reinstall your app on your test store using this method")

How: Status frameworks + principles
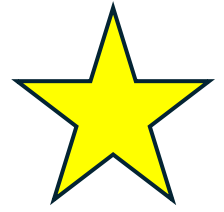
Framework
Action-oriented interface with precise, individual statuses that communicate what needs to be done.

Principles
- Lead with verbs to help partners understand when they need to do something
  - Nouns are OK for statuses not requiring partner action
- Independently understandable
  - Statuses should provide enough information to be understood out of context
  - Length isn't as important, given the design real estate of the dashboard UI
- Use similar styling for each status
  - Don't mix verbs and nouns
- Leverage iconography to help developers understand who needs to take action: the user or Shopify

How: Framework visualized
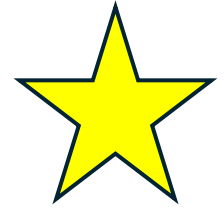
How: Terminology

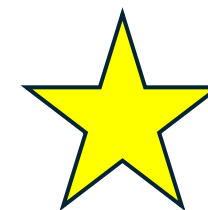| Term	Definition	Terms not to use	category	Dos / dont's
app listing	A page on the App Store that provides merchants and other visitors with crucial information about an app. The listing is the object that results from a successful review. Once published, developers manage their listing content on the app submission form in the Dashboard. Listings should be high-quality and policy-compliant to establish merchant trust.	app details page, ADP	App Store visibility	Do reference this concept more generally, when possible. ("Get your app on the Shopify App Store" or "Get your listing on the Shopify App Store" vs. "Get your app listing page on the Shopify App Store.")
App Review Specialist	The title of the human Shopify reviewers who review App Store submissions.		General review terms	
App Store status	A blanket term to generally reference the different types of statuses related to an app's standing with the App Store.	app status	General status term	
automated checks	A check of security-related App Store requirements. They are done on the back-end by the system, not by human Review Specialists. Developers initiate these checks on the App Store review page before submitting for review. They may also be done on a pre-scheduled cadence after submission.	Cambridge check, preflight check, precheck	General review terms	
core review requirements	Requirements that are checked first by App Review Specialists during review. They're critical to the continuation of the review. If not met, the review is paused. Developers will submit fixes for them on the App Store review page in the Dashboard. This submission of fixes may be assigned to a different Specialist for re-review.	blocking requirements	Requirement type	
	An app that's shared with merchants through means other than the App Store. Usually via a direct link to download the app. Custom apps are never published to the App Store. Also called custom			

How: UX writing for email updates

Your app was rejected

One of more issues didn't pass our basic functionality checks during submission.

App Name	**Test App 1**
Current app status	**Draft**
App visibility	**Unlisted**
Review reference	**65426**

Fix core review requirement issues

Your submission isn't meeting some core requirements. Follow the next steps in this email to address what's needed. Your review is paused until you submit these fixes.

Please note: You'll be able to start a conversation with an App Review Specialist **only after we've verified these core review requirements are met.**
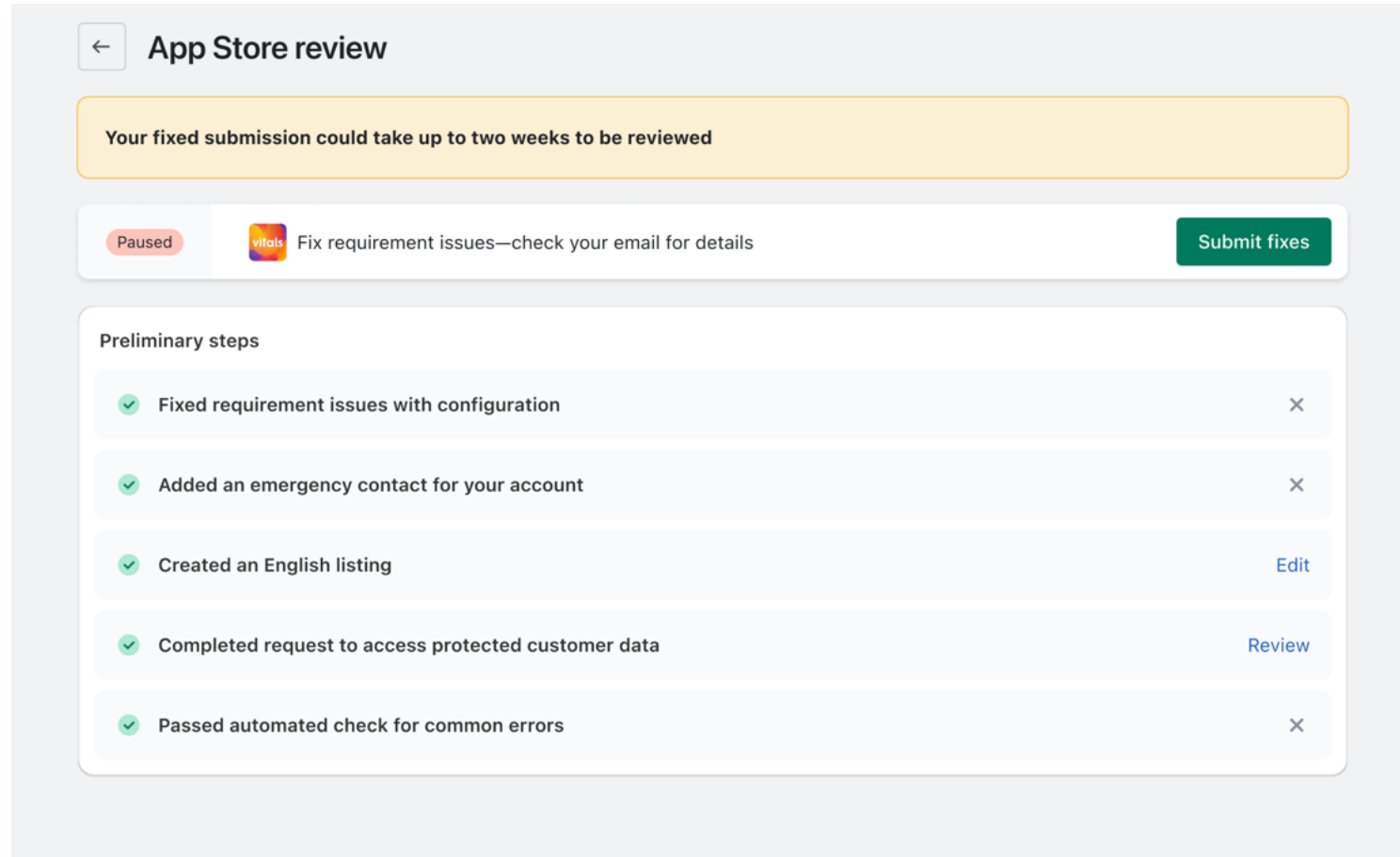
App name	**Hatity-9**
Status	**Paused**
Visibility setting	**Fully visible**
Reference number	**164**

How: Content designing the product UI

← **App Store review**

Draft | ▣ Complete preliminary steps to prepare your submission | Submit for review

Preliminary steps

✓ Fixed requirement issues with configuration ✕

✓ Added an emergency contact for your account ✕

✓ Created an [English] listing Edit

◌ Request access to protected customer data

If your app uses customer data, you'll need approval to access it. This helps to protect our merchants and their customers.

☐ My app won't use customer data

Request

◌ Run an automated check for common errors

Complete the items below, then run. The check will verify their completion. If you still haven't submitted 30 days after running it, the check will expire and you'll need to re-run.

◌ Configure mandatory compliance webhooks
◌ Implement an HMAC signature to verify webhooks
◌ Use a valid TLS certificate

Run

← **App Store review**

Submitted | ▣ We're assigning a reviewer to your submission | Withdraw

Success! We received your submission.

If there are any issues, we'll email you at [email address] with more details. It's important to respond to these emails as soon as you can to keep the review process moving.

Listing 🔒

Your listing content can't be edited while we're reviewing.

English Primary •••

App Store visibility

When your listing is published, it will appear in search and recommendations for all merchants to find.

Limit visibility

Results

In an initial MVP release of only content updates (emails and UI statuses), we decreased the average length of time taking developers to resubmit their apps for re-review after a rejection from 2.2 to 1.5 days.

We believed this to be connected to our strategy of eliminating tonally harsh words and language from the "rejected" status content, and replacing them with more encouraging, action-oriented terminology. (Rejected → Paused)