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BLOG | SHOPIFY APP DEVELOPMENT

How To Add Your App to the Shopify App Store

If you're a web developer ready to submit your new app to the Shopify platform, you're one step closer to being a valued member of the Shopify community. However, before you add your new app to the Shopify App Store, you need to ensure you're covering all your bases from a technical and user experience perspective.

by Matt Fish
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[September 2022] New app listing guidelines

As of September 2022, we've updated the requirements for app listings in the Shopify App Store. Some of the information in this article may be out of date. To make sure your app listing is optimized for merchant installs, please visit our documentation for the newest guidelines.

Visit docs

Every year, Shopify publishes hundreds of new apps that help online merchants optimize and grow everything from accounting and marketing to localization, productivity, and more.

If you're a web developer who's getting ready to submit your new app to the Shopify platform, congratulations! You're one step closer to being a valued member of the Shopify community, as well as a key player in the global ecommerce revolution.

However, before you add your new app to the Shopify App Store, you need to ensure you're covering all your bases from a user experience perspective. The technical aspects of your application must be top-notch, and your app's listing should be optimized to reach as many merchants as possible.

This blog post will walk you through the most important components of adding your app to the Shopify ecosystem. You'll gain a comprehensive understanding of everything you need to breeze through the submission process, as well as the steps you can take if you want to remove your app from the Shopify App Store.

How Shopify apps work

As an app developer looking to break into the Shopify ecosystem and **make money online** building apps for merchants worldwide, there are two main avenues you can take:

- **Create a custom app for a specific client**. This option involves using the Shopify API to build and sell an app that delivers targeted functionality to the client's Shopify store.

- **Build a public app and sell it in the Shopify App Store**: This is the more popular option since it enables any business owner to download and install your app through the Shopify App Store. In this scenario, you earn 80 percent of each app sale.

This blog post will focus on building and submitting public apps for inclusion in the Shopify App Store. The same best practices apply to both listed and unlisted apps.

Check out the Shopify developer website for more details on:

- **Important requirements** for Shopify apps

- **Tips for success** post-Shopify App Store approval
- **Shopify APIs** documentation

> You might also like: How to Build a Shopify App: The Complete Guide.

Do this before adding your app to the Shopify App Store

Once you've developed a functional, dynamic app, the next step is to submit it to the **Shopify App Store**. But, before it goes live and can be used by merchants to help run their daily business activities, your app must be vetted by the Shopify App Review team.

To ensure a quick, efficient review process, use this checklist when finalizing your Shopify app for submission.

App name

Like a blog post title or book cover, your app's name is the first thing a prospective user will see in the Shopify App Store. It must also serve the dual purpose of being both relevant and memorable, blending clarity and smart keyword use with a unique sense of style.

This balancing act means naming your app can be one of the most challenging parts of the process, so take the time to sketch out multiple ideas before selecting the best option.

App listing graphics

Your Shopify App Store listing—a submission requirement for all listed and unlisted public apps—needs to have some visual pop to make a strong first impression with merchants. With that in mind, a high-quality app card, app banner, and **app icon** are crucial listing elements.

These graphics must also clearly communicate your app's purpose and value to potential users without overcomplicating or bloating your listing.

App description

Beyond your app's name, a successful app listing contains the following elements:

- **A tagline** that contains unique messaging and relevant keywords
- **Key benefits** that explain your app's value to merchants in precise, concise wording
- **A detailed description** that builds on those key benefits and highlights how your app provides solutions to specific merchant needs

Similar to your listing's visual aspect, your description should be polished and error-free before submission. You can also leverage on-page SEO fundamentals to strengthen your listing's Shopify App Store ranking.

After reading your app listing's description, merchants should have a firm grasp of all the basics, from functionality to how it will support their business's growth. If your app caters to a particular niche or subset of users, make that clear in your description to avoid misunderstanding and disappointment.

> You might also like: 6 Shopify App Reviewer Insights for a Faster App Review.

Documentation

Creating **technical documentation** for your app is another vital part of the pre-submission process. Explaining, in as much detail as possible, how to install your Shopify app and get the most out of its features go a long way in improving the merchant experience. Leverage formats like videos, FAQs, in-depth techniques, and more to ensure users understand your product.

In addition, make sure your documentation is easy to find, view, and download. You should also have a straightforward uninstall procedure defined to avoid merchant frustration and possible negative reviews.

Support

Before submitting your app, plan out effective support channels for your users. At a minimum, we recommend listing a phone number and an email address in your Shopify App Store listing. This way, merchants can quickly identify the best support channel for their needs and contact you if they need to talk about the app or troubleshoot any issues.

> You might also like: 5 Key Strategies to Improve Your App Support.

Demo or beta versions

If you're adding exciting functionality to your Shopify app, you can showcase it in advance of an update through a test store. Simply link to the test environment in your app description to allow interested users to experience the latest features first-hand.

Monitoring

Once they've downloaded and installed your app, merchants will be counting on it to be reliable. To check on your app regularly and automatically alert you to any technical problems, we recommend setting up a monitoring tool like **Pingdom** or **New Relic** for your app (both of these are paid tools). Once implemented, it will save you lots of time and prevent protracted issues or outage times for users.

Scope and theme changes

During the installation flow, your Shopify app will ask for scopes to access your customer's store. It's important to identify these scopes and any limitations before submission so it's clear to merchants what technical specifics your app requires to function well.

If any theme changes are necessary, be sure to keep them as simple as possible. You can embed JavaScript in the storefront using the **ScriptTag API**, which brings additional efficiency to your app since it's automatically removed if your app is uninstalled.

Uninstallation and reinstallation

Uninstallation and reinstallation of your Shopify app must be an intuitive, seamless process. If a merchant decides to remove your app from their setup and try installing it again at a later date, they need to be able to do so gracefully and without hiccups.

It's recommended that you register the app/**uninstall webhook** to ensure your app is notified of an uninstall request and can then perform the necessary cleanup at a software level.

Billing

Billing is a critical ingredient in any Shopify app launch. To ensure your app charges are seamlessly integrated into a customer's sales process, we highly recommend using the **Billing API**. It enables app developers to combine their app charges with a customer's Shopify invoices.

Linking the two together creates a smoother experience for all involved and eliminates the hassle and potential technological bottlenecks that can come with setting up an independent billing system.

> **You might also like:** **Introducing New Tools for App Billing Management in Your Partner Dashboard**.

Marketing

Before submission, consider how you will market your app before, during, and after its launch cycle. Syndicating launch-related marketing content across various formats, like a press release, social media posts, an email blast, and even partner co-marketing, can help you effectively build some buzz around your new app.

Your marketing messaging should also be consistent with the key benefits and value propositions outlined in your app description. If you're appealing to a smaller subset of merchants, ensure you understand the best digital channels for that audience.

How to remove apps from the Shopify App Store

Removing your app from the Shopify App Store can have potentially severe consequences for merchants who rely on it in their daily business activities, so you must follow established best practices when doing so.

Thirty days before you wish to remove your app, contact Shopify Partner Support to have it unpublished from the Shopify App Store. This action prevents new users from downloading the app in the runup to its removal.

Next, email your existing users explaining that your app's departure is imminent. Provide them with the precise removal date, and suggest they start planning for alternative solutions.

Two weeks prior to removal, post a notice within your app, notifying users that it won't function after a specific date. You can also offer users support if they need it during this process.

We also recommend sending an email reminder one week before your app's removal. Direct merchants to the Shopify App Store for possible alternative apps. Finally, on the day of your app's removal, contact Shopify Partner Support to confirm the action and remove the app from your servers rather than deleting it from the **Apps** page in the Partner Dashboard.

For more information on the established steps recommended for developers who wish to remove their app(s), the Shopify Developer website covers **sunsetting your app**.

Getting your app submitted and approved

By following the guidelines in this blog post, adding your app to the Shopify App Store can be a quick, painless process. Focusing on several key elements during the pre-submission finalization of your app's details will go a long way to securing a spot in the App Store and reaching as many customers as possible.

For more insight from Shopify app reviewers about best practices for a successful submission to the Shopify App Store, watch the full Live AMA video now!
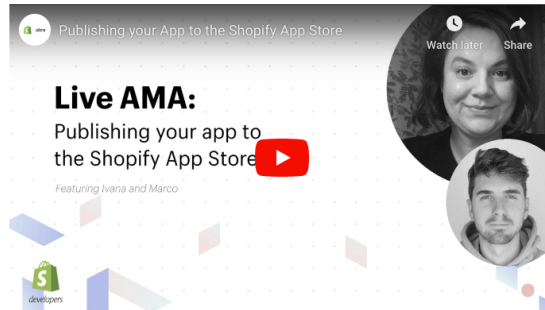
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Sell online	Ecommerce website	Mobile commerce	Point of sale	24/7 support	Contact
Examples	Domain names	Online store builder	Features	Shopify Help Center	Partner program
Website builder	Shopping cart	Dropshipping Business	Hardware	Shopify Community	Affiliate program
Online retail	Ecommerce hosting	Store themes		API documentation	App developers
				Free tools	Investors
				Free stock photos	Blog topics
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