Spec Review Process

Draft | CY16Q3 - Aug

# Overview

## Opportunity

## Hypothesis

## Success Outcomes + Metrics

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Success Outcome | Tracking Metric |
|  |  |

# Plan

If you are receiving this then you are in the RDX Spec Review Outlook Group which we will use to help facilitate the communication of RDX Specs and the review process. Our objective is to be slightly more systematic about cataloging all the spec reviews going on across the team to drive enough consistency to get value while not making the process super intrusive. To satisfy this, after some research on options we have decided to go with an Outlook Group.

Outlook Groups are ideal because they are basically an enhanced alias that fits nicely into the existing e-mail workflow by providing an address that can be simply included on spec review announcements and reviews that then gives us a single place to see all review-related conversations and content.

# Writing the Spec

As mentioned in previous process guidance every feature is expected to have a spec, where “spec” is defined as whatever the right written asset is to capture the work that is going to be done to complete that feature be that a full Word document, PowerPoint storyboard, OneNote page, or just a short list typed up within the Feature in VSO itself.

## Requirements for Specs

* All spec content should be placed in the RDX team documents library (unless the “spec” is simply captured in the VSTS item itself). The precise location in the folder structure is up to you
* Each feature should contain a link to whatever asset represents the “spec” for that feature. The link should be put in the description field of the VSTS item. If small enough, the entire spec can be captured in the description field of the Feature Item in VSTS

Then you need to decide if the feature needs a design review to get the right level of visibility and signoff. If not then just send an e-mail to the group address ([rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com](mailto:rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com)) with a short description and a link to the spec (or VSTS feature if the spec is captured in the feature description). For consistency the announcement should have the title “Spec Announcement: <feature name>”

If the feature needs a full design review then refer to the following section.

# Scheduling the Design Review

If you determine that a full spec review is needed to get sign-off on your feature then the following expectations should be met:

* Make sure you have the right minimum set of people in the room
  + You, the Eng Lead and Project Lead
  + (Updated) Anil and Dan are optional, and if they are a bottleneck for approval we’ll setup regular office hours on Friday for them to review specs but you can proceed with engineering lead approval only
* Schedule the review at a time that works for the key stakeholders
* Include [rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com](mailto:rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com) on the invite to ensure that all PM’s get the review and that it shows up on the shared spec review calendar
* To drive consistency title the review “Design Review: <feature title>”
* The body of the invite should contain a link to the spec (wherever it is located)
* The spec should be complete for review at least 24 hours prior to the review’s scheduled start time to give people time to review and comment on the spec

# Exit Reviews

As we get closer to the end of this month we’ll send out more information about expectations for exit reviews.

# Tips

* Using Outlook Desktop/E-Mail
  + One great benefit of Outlook groups is that you can treat them just like a distribution group and interact just as you do with traditional group aliases.
  + Sending a new message to [rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com](mailto:rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com) alias will start a new thread in the group which will appear just like a regular thread in everyone’s inbox
  + You can use your existing Outlook tools (like rules) to manage the inflow of messages
  + To schedule spec reviews you can simply create a meeting request and copy [rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com](mailto:rdxspecreviews@service.microsoft.com) and the meeting will be sent to everyone in the group and also placed on the shared group calendar
* Using the Shared Calendar
  + As long as all invites include the group, the shared calendar is a single place to see all design and exit reviews going on across the team
  + You can “turn on” the group shared calendar in Outlook Desktop and Web to see if there are spec reviews that you might want to attend

# Appendix

## Resources / Links

Existing Spec Guidance: <https://microsoft.sharepoint.com/teams/office_rdx/PM%20spec%20%20feature%20guidelines/Home.aspx>